

ST. JOHNS COUNTY CIVIC ASSOCIATION ROUNDTABLE

NOTE:
MEETING WILL BE HELD IN
THE COUNTY AUDITORIUM

Agenda for
MONDAY – August 14, 2006
9 – 11 am

CANDIDATES FORUM
Qualified Candidates for
COUNTY COMMISSION Districts 2 and 4
& SCHOOL BOARD Districts 1, 3 and 4
will present their platforms
Followed by a Question and Answer Period

TELEVISED LIVE: Time Warner Channel 3, Comcast Channel 24 & 29, Channel 242 on Digital Boxes
REBROADCAST: Tuesday, August 15 at 9 am & 7pm and Saturday, August 19 at 9 am,

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS will broadcast a Candidates Forum
LIVE: Wednesday, August 23 at 7pm.
REBROADCAST: Thursday, August 24 at 9 am, Tuesday, August 29 at 9am & 7pm.

Possible Rebroadcast: Saturday, September 2 – League at 9am and Roundtable at 1pm

*Note: The Government Channel is NOT available in areas of Hastings, S.R. 207, S.R. 13,
Coquina Crossing or World Golf Village*

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ROUNDTABLE WEBSITE: www.sjcroundtable.org

Email: info@sjcroundtable.org

ST. JOHNS COUNTY: www.co.st-johns.fl.us

ST. JOHNS VISION: www.stjohnsvision.com

ROUNDTABLE INFORMATION:

Sacha Martin, Secretary, 501-5545: 133 Coastal Hollow Circle 32084

sachamartin@msn.com

Chairman: Walter Rohrer (543-9809), Vice Chair: Henry Warner (461-3245)

Treasurer: Barrie Higgins (794-1599), Secretary: Sacha Martin (501-5545)

: Committee Chairs :

Membership: Walter Rohrer (543-9809) & Linda Oakley (471-7555)

Growth Management: Marcy Silkebaken (273-8047)

Government & Budget: Dan MacDonald (273-5855)

Education: David Wiles (471-1896)

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY
CIVIC ASSOCIATION ROUNDTABLE
Minutes for July 10, 2006**

There were about 65 present including State Rep. Bill Proctor, County Election Candidates Tom Manuel, Ken Bryan, Ron Schumaker, and Joe Ciriello; representatives from the County Department of Health, Reporter Kathy Cramer, Ponte Vedra Recorder, Wayne Hickox, radio reporter and Laura Fowler, Beaches Leader, Bonnie Barnes, St. Johns Vision . Treasurer's Report: \$2,909.50.

Program: PATIENT CENTERED HEALTH NETWORK –
Delivering Basic Health Care Services in the County, A Proposal
Presented by: **S. S. Marathe, MD and Reubin Carter, President**
[240 South Park Circle East 32086, 347-3434, ssmarathemd@hotmail.com]
*Also, Greg White, West Augustine Community
Redevelopment Agency (CRA), Joyce DuPont and Sharon Koufas.*

The proposal is for two healthcare clinics – in Hastings and in West Augustine. Although this is a Quality of Life issue, considerable savings in healthcare can be realized. Early treatment may prevent acute stages of disease which are difficult and expensive to treat. A program was presented that outlines (1) A Health Care Crisis, (2) a Clear Solution and Description of the Proposed Program, (3) Resources Required, and (4) Support Needed.

The Record reported July 7 that infant mortality in our county “is higher than the state and national average and has shown an increasing trend over three years.” SJ County mortality rate of infants up to a year old = 8.3 deaths per 1,000 births vs. the national average of 6.4. African American infant mortality in St. Johns County (primarily in District 2) is 18.2%, which is higher than Baker, Clay, and Nassau Counties. Women’s health prior to conception is a contributing factor to infant death. In most cases mothers did not have access to medical care before or after pregnancy. Other diseases like diabetes are less costly to treat if caught early and the consequences to the patient are better. Prevention saves lives and dollars.

There are many citizens in our county who cannot afford basic healthcare. The pockets of poverty are in Hastings, including Flagler Estates, Elkton/Armstrong and West Augustine. In 2005 West Augustine had a population of 22,828, Hastings 3,963, or 17.3% of the county population of 155,014. There is no local access to medical care in West Augustine and the Hastings Medical Clinic is the only source there. There is no pharmacy in Hastings, nor transportation to get to one. Target population for clinics would be 15-20,000.

The Emergency Room at Flagler Hospital is expensive to be relied on for primary care problems. Emergency Room care averages about \$1,000 per participant. A clinic visit averages \$100. One patient to a clinic usually makes 4 visits per year = a cost of \$400 per person per year (excluding tests required). The number of patients from West Augustine/Hastings at Flagler has been increasing. In 2005, Emergency Room visits by these patients alone were 16,570 plus Flagler Primary Care visits of 2,673. Already this year to June 2006, those numbers are up to 12,106 and 2,076. There is a Good Samaritan Clinic in Lincolnville treating indigent patients. The Hastings Clinic now receives \$200,000 support from the county plus \$30,000 in kind rent, insufficient funding. A clinic open 2 days a week is not enough. It currently sees 20 patients a day, approximately 4,000 visits per year. Flagler gets funding from the County of \$1,260,000 million. They see 35 patients a day with approximately 8,500 relevant visits.

If the proposed new Health Care Clinics were used for these patients instead of Flagler, if only 50% continued use of Flagler, savings could be \$4.6 million. Proposed are two 3,000 square foot buildings (excluding dialysis and pharmacy in Hastings) with a Navigator system to provide whole patient case management and referrals. West Augustine would have a pharmacy and Hastings would also have a pharmacy, dialysis facility and dentist. Hastings treats migrant farm workers. Information technology would collect patient data, which can also provide a data bridge to the hospital or other doctors.

The total proposed budget for the new clinics is \$2 million, with expected collections of \$450,000 from medicare/medicaid, in-kind donation for rent etc \$30,000, leaving a funding balance of \$1.5 million. Provider costs are \$600,000 for 3 full time MDs, 1.5 full time ARNP. Personnel and Non Personnel Costs total \$1.4 million for 2 LPN, 3MA, 2receptionists, 2 family navigators, 2 billing, 1.0 office manager, 1.0 CEO/CMO, and other expenses like supplies, cleaning, computer, phone, postage, insurance.

The Roundtable nominated Henry Warner to look into Dr. Marathe's proposal, assisted by Ken Bryan, Barrie Higgins and Marshall Caitlin.

Program: EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER – ON SITE VISIT
Presented by: Ray Ashton, Director [824-5550, rashton@co.st-johns.fl.us]
Linda Stoughton, Asst. Dir., Web site: www.sjcemergencymanagement.org.

"We make things happen, and never say it can't be done," according to Director Ashton. Their Mission is to protect the lives and property of citizens of St. Johns County through emergency preparedness programs, develop and implement comprehensive disaster planning, mitigation and response activities, and they provide Evacuation Assistance. The School Board (where shelters are located) and Law Enforcement and Rescue Services are coordinated into programs.

Their headquarters is now in a converted Wise Potato Chip factory in back of the Sheriff's Department which opened in 1997, tested in summer 1998 by weeks of a wildfire emergency. For this they served firefighters 900 meals a day. The County Emergency Management Department is requesting a new facility be built, estimated to cost +\$4 million, which will be in a safer location on higher ground than the 14.3 foot elevation of the existing building in case of storm surge.

Their 500 kw generator now also runs the elections office next door (to prevent an election day snafu) and has a 3 day fuel supply of 2,000 gallons. Bunk rooms have 12 beds in each, and volunteers and staff serve 12 hour shifts from 7 to 7. The telephone banks, with 16 phones per bank, are grouped together by function (ESFs), for example public relations or public health, resource support. There are between 80 to 100 phones in peak operation, mostly manned by county employees from other departments who volunteer to serve. On site emergency operations begin 2 days before anticipated hurricane landfall. Computer wiring runs beneath the floor and a wireless system for laptops. Large projection size screens constantly display the Weather Channel and National Weather Service broadcasts. They have a backup Satellite communications system. Other backups are Flagler Hospital Communications and Ham Radio operators. The Government TV Channel moves over to the EOC from the County Auditorium. Each year they have made room for more media reporters who also take up residence in the building.

A Notification System can fax reports to a couple hundred locations in 3-4 minutes. A Homeland Security Grant paid for a video conferencing system so they can talk to Flagler and Duval or other OEC operations, as well as to the National Weather Service. Conference calls to Florida EOC headquarters in Tallahassee provide a plan for the next 48 hours. There must be coordination between counties to see who will evacuate first so they can know what the evacuation traffic will look like. For the past 4-5 years, the State ESF Tracker System assigns requests to individual ESFs, for example, "We need 15 semis with water delivered to" an area.

This year they added a video camera downtown on the Wachovia Building which points East and West, and next there will be one on the Prosperity Bank Building at US1 near SR 312. They can downlink video from the county helicopter to get damage assessment through live video. Also, due to citizen request, adding a pet friendly shelter in one school, where animal control staff may furnish supplies. Special needs centers for those medically dependent on electricity are still at the Ag Center with a Hastings Community Center backup. Existing schools serving as shelters will be enhanced. It costs \$100,000 to add generators and otherwise harden certain areas of a new school costing \$26 million which can accept 5-600 people. Now the schools have no air con or power. They allow 20 square feet per person, 60 for special medical needs people. Nursing Homes must have evacuation plans filed but don't come to public shelters.

Q: What about some areas of the county that don't need evacuating? A; There is phased evacuation. All new homes built in Nocatee will have safe rooms, and won't need to evacuate in many cases, so this means fewer cars on the road.

Q: How do you interact with other counties? A: There is a mutual aid agreement to assist other counties and the State system interacts between other states. A logistical staging area or areas for supplies is set up. For Hurricane Karen 500 national guard were dispatched, 6 weeks later, 5,000 for Opal. When we responded to Harrison County, Mississippi for Katrina, we were told before arriving that the EOC had been destroyed and they had no electric, water, communication, sanitation. When we arrived we found the building had not been destroyed, but their ability to respond to the emergency was minimal. As many as 80% of county employees had fled or were disabled. One of the first things we did was get port-o-lets delivered from Florida.

Q: What happens for a Category 5? A: Everything East of US 95 must evacuate, and there are “shelters of last resort” west of the Interstate. For an evacuation route to be designated for “Contra Flow” where all traffic goes in one direction, the Governor has to make the call for a Category 3 or greater. It takes 6 hours to set up, and only I -10, I -75 and the Beeline 528 are candidates at the moment, but not I -95. An area wide exercise coming up will look at Contra Flow for our area. Remember, each storm is different. Louisiana residents made a mistake by saying they survived Hurricane Camille just fine, so they didn’t leave for Katrina. And if there is construction in your area, you need to modify your evacuation plan.

GOVERNMENT & BUDGET COMMITTEE – Dan MacDonald

We are still working with a tentative budget. A week from now there will be a workshop. Our numbers have been revised upward to a total of \$715mm. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) at \$201mm is more than double last years \$88mm. New hires = 80 vs. 88 requested. We are also concerned with the carryovers. For 2001 they were \$9.7mm, for 2002 = \$18mm, 2003 = 22mm, 2004 = \$44mm, 2005 = \$103mm, 2006 = \$109 and estimated for 2007 = \$109mm. We are not certain what the analysis is for these numbers.

Commissioner Maguire had asked us to report to him how much of the carryover of projects funded from last year did not get completed. We wrote him a letter in response that *“the entire increase from \$533 to \$700 million is in planned expenditures for 2007. With carry forwards, the budget is 39% above that of 2006. Eliminating the protective services of Sheriff and Fire/EMS [of \$52.7 and \$44.4mm], the Board discretionary increases total 46% for 2007 (\$338 million to \$494 million). Given that the CIPs are increasingly not being realized on a timely basis, a more conservative approach to their scheduling would provide some relief.”*

EDUCATION – David Wiles

The school portion of the county budget should not be overlooked, in that it is impacted by Future Land Use amendments, funding by Community Development Districts (CDDs), and questions of deferred maintenance.

A white paper is being written which will comment on FCAT test results in all county schools. Another emerging concern is a new \$145 million overall bonding obligation for capital construction. There is also the matter of Concurrency and our County’s part in the state’s pilot program, field testing for concurrency legislation for the entire state to be implemented in 2008.