

## SJC Civic Association Roundtable Meeting - Minutes 9-8-08

Attendance: 24

Press: Christina Abel, TU Shorelines

Chairman Warner called the meeting to order at 9 am.

11-8-08 minutes: minutes approved as submitted. Mark Pettus' (St. Johns Recorder) fine article covering the joint meeting of school board superintendent Joyner and Tom Manuel chairman of the BCC served as the minutes for the meeting.

Treasurer's report: \$2232.82 - this balance reflects a payment to First City for their web site management. Jim McLane requested that all submissions to the web site go through him in order to control billing. His e-mail address is [JMcLanestaug@aol.com](mailto:JMcLanestaug@aol.com).

Old business: Henry Warner stated that membership payments are not required, but donations in their place are to be encouraged and are necessary to the future of the organization. At last count, only 14 of 43 listed members had made a payment. Mary Saunders and Jim McLane are attempting to refine our membership rolls in order to improve the current level of financial participation.

Henry Warner reported further news on the wind survey by SkyeTech that resulted in an insurance savings of one-third on Henry's house. For a fee of \$150, SkyeTech will inspect your home for wind vulnerability and issue a report. This report can be used and potentially lower insurance premiums. More information is available at [MySafeFloridaHouse.com](http://MySafeFloridaHouse.com) or directly from Henry.

New business: Dan MacDonald has agreed to chair this year's nominating committee, as he did last year, charged with producing a slate of officers for the Roundtable next year. He will report to the group in November.

Roger VanGhent introduced Mark Gendzier of the St. Johns Veterinary Clinic who has done much good work as a veterinarian dealing with injured animals in the County. Mark is a proponent of the 1 cent sales tax increase being proposed to deal with the purchase of conservation land and infrastructure needs. He wondered how to participate in an organized fashion and Roger recommended the Roundtable.

This led to a discussion of the urgent need for the Roundtable to actively support the 1 cent sales tax increase as well as the Charter re-vote in November. After much discussion, it was determined that Roger VanGhent

would generate a letter of Roundtable support for the sales tax increase and Walt Rohrer would do the same in support of the change to a Charter government. These letters are to be issued as soon as possible.

### FEATURED SPEAKER

Keith Fuller  
University of Florida  
St. Johns County Extension  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

“The Greening of your Yards and Neighborhoods”

The Florida’s yards and neighborhoods program focuses on how yard care and design practices affect the environment. There are nine basic principles of the Florida yards and neighborhoods program.

Right plant, right place. Good landscaping design hinges on one basic concept: the right plant planted in the right place. The method they teach first determines the need for a particular area, second how much maintenance you are willing to undertake, a determination of the site conditions in your yard, and fourth creating a design plan. The result of a proper plan will be the reduction and the need for water, fertilizer, pesticides and pruning by using low maintenance plants suited to the site condition.

Water efficiently. A truly efficient way to use water in a yard is to design the yard so that it thrives predominantly on rainfall. Lawns should be watered only when they show signs of distress. Sprinklers systems should be calibrated to apply one-half to three-quarter inch of water per application. Lawns should be cut high to encourage a deeper more drought and pest tolerant root system. A higher cut also help shade out weeds. Rain gauges and automatic rain shut off should be used.

Fertilize appropriately. Fertilize only as needed to maintain the health of lawns and landscape plants. Use slow release fertilizers.

Mulch. Mulch helps retain moisture in the soil and moderates soil temperature. A two to three inch layer of organic mulch should be maintained over the roots of trees and shrubs and plant beds. Don’t mulch citrus trees.

Attract wildlife. With more than 1200 kind of animals, Florida ranks third in the nation in wildlife diversity. Providing adequate food, water and shelter can increase the number and variety of species in your yard.

Manage yard pest responsibly. It is unrealistic to strive for an insect, disease and weed-free yard. Many insects are beneficial helping to keep pests under natural control. In fact, less than 1 percent of insects are harmful.

Reduce stormwater runoff. Keeping rain and sprinkler water on our yards and out of storm drains can help reduce pollution of Florida's bays, rivers, lakes and springs. Because water washes off our yard, it is important to reduce the amount of pollutants on our property.

Recycle yard waste. In a Florida friendly yard, grass clippings, leaves and yard trimmings are recycled rather than thrown away. By recycling yard debris, we gain free mulch and return valuable nutrients to the soil.

Protect the waterfront. Waterfront property owners realize the special contribution our bays and waterways make to their quality of life. Establish a "no fertilizer, no pesticide" zone of at least 10 feet along your shoreline. If possible, plant a border of low-maintenance plants between your maintained lawn and shoreline/seawall to absorb nutrients and provide necessary wildlife habitat.

Keith Fuller handed out DVDs of his presentation that can be shown to interested homeowner groups.

Henry Warner adjourned the meeting at 11:15 am.