

**Ernesto J. Torres**

**U.S. Army Retired Campaign –“A Local for The Locals”**

**1. What are your qualifications?**

Our family have made wonderful memories and friends while living here in Anastasia Dunes. My desire to serve the City of Saint Augustine Beach started in 2014 when I was appointed to serve on the Code Enforcement Board. I have chaired the Code Enforcement Board from 2017 - 2020. Through my tenure the board has presided over very significant code violation issues affecting many of our residents. As the Chairman of the Code Enforcement Board, I have always let my moral compass guide me through all decisions...putting life, and safety at the forefront.

In August 1987 upon graduating from High School, I enlisted to serve in the U.S. Army. In 2018 I retired as a Lieutenant Colonel with 31 years of honorable service. My upbringing and service to our great nation have shaped me into who I am. Having led at many levels from Platoon thru Squadron Commander and, as well as in combat zones, have prepared me for diverse, and challenging roles. As a Staff Officer I was charged with resourcing and prioritizing funds for unit's Readiness levels based on wartime rotation schedule. Resourcefulness in a constrained environment was fundamental in my career. I understand the challenges of working with a limited budget. I also understand the virtues of integrity, respect, hard work and selfless service.

**2. If elected, what are your goals for this office and what would you like to achieve in this position?**

Challenge the status quo with a focus on a fair share of resources and revenues. I will dedicate my time and effort to maximizing the living experience for local residents of Saint Augustine Beach. Accessibility and communication with Beach residents should be an explicit task for elected officials - I will make it a priority. I contend that my campaign theme of “A Local for the Locals” is much more than a slogan. My strong commitment to Saint Augustine Beach residents is that every decision and Commission vote I cast will be made carefully measuring and evaluating the impact on my friends, neighbors, constituents and the shared border of local communities.

**3. What is your vision for the County?**

• [Keep Saint Augustine Beach Safe](#)

My commitment to favorably support any ordinance or initiative that contributes to the enhancement of our City's safety. I consider the safety of all Saint Augustine Beach residents and visitors as the highest priority and responsibility of the Saint Augustine Beach Commission.

• [Manage Growth, Prosperity and Responsibly](#)

We live in a desired destination spot. Our City relies on the financial contribution from the tourism industry. Balancing the resident's quality of life while still supporting prosperity is of the utmost importance to me.

• [Be Responsible Stewards of Saint Augustine Beach's Financial Resources](#)

My prior military experience provides me with a solid base of experience and discipline in managing resources and budgets. In my new career, I provide financial budget oversight for twelve Community Development Districts. I firmly believe in fiscal responsibility. St Johns County and Saint Augustine Beach share many resources. I will continue to advocate for a fair share of responsibility and accountability in every aspect.

**4. What is your educational background?**

Military: Infantry Basic & Advance Course, Cavalry Leader's Course, Advance Operations Course, Army Budget and Accounting Fiscal Law

Formal: Bachelor of Arts in General Studies, 1999 Columbia College and Masters of Business Administration, 2014 Touro University