

## S.M.K.A. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2000

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President B.J. Galberaith at 1:10pm. She thanked all for coming and voiced a special appreciation to the team who folded, stamped, and labeled over 2000 items, which included Meeting notices, Membership Booklets, and an announcement to all South Manasota Key property owners about the coming Roundabout. She then turned the meeting over to Stan Parker, Vice President, who told his customary joke and introduced our guest speaker, Andrew Kelly of Charlotte County Community Development.

### GUEST SPEAKER

Mr. Kelly began by telling us that he was going to explain the bureaucratic version of the Charlotte County Turtle Policy and then give us some tips on ways we can help protect these endangered species, particularly the Loggerhead, which is both most numerous and most threatened. Turtles crawl up on the beach, usually at night, from May through July to lay clutches of eggs which will hatch about 55 days later, or before October 1. Hatchlings head for the open water where they have roughly 1% chance of surviving to breeding age (as old as 50 years).

According to Mr. Kelly, Sea Turtles tend to nest as close as possible to their individual birthplaces, probably within 50 – 100 feet. Human habitation may inhibit successful breeding, and it is suspected that artificial lighting contributes to the disorientation (failure to crawl toward the water) of 2.5% of hatchlings (hatchling disorientation in non-lighted areas has not been measured). Predators, such as birds, raccoons, ants and other animals also take a toll on hatchlings. Once in the sea, they are prey to a variety of fish and marine animals. During their lives, Sea Turtles may fall victim to poaching, entanglement in fishing nets, ingestion of plastic bags, or injury by watercraft, in addition to red tide, pollution and disease.

When Sea Turtles were officially protected by the Endangered Species Law, Florida gave the individual counties permission to monitor their own turtles, and, statewide, progress appears to have been made in reducing the number of disoriented hatchlings. Although our area only serves as breeding ground for a small fraction of Florida's turtle population (about 1800 nests), Charlotte County has adopted a Marine Turtle Ordinance similar to, but far more stringent, than that of the State and has hired additional staff, supported by volunteers, to enforce these regulations. Primarily focused on lighting, the intent of the Ordinance is to have all lights invisible from the beach and to prohibit light on nesting beaches. The County has published detailed requirements for all types of lights. In addition, people are asked to stack or "cluster" large objects left on the beach (Cabana Chairs), and vehicles and campfires are prohibited on the beaches during turtle season. Mr. Kelly estimates local compliance to be about 85-90% but has no data to show whether these efforts have lowered hatchling disorientation locally. He passed out copies of the Turtle Ordinance for our use as well as instructions for reporting a sick, dead, injured or harassed turtle, with phone numbers (1-800-404-FWCC or mobile #FWC).

### SECRETARY'S REPORT

The minutes were accepted as published.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Judy Hoffstatter reported that there is \$4890 in the Treasury, not including dues received in the last few days. Expenses from the recent large mailings have not yet been deducted.

### MSTU

BJ reminded everyone to call a member of MSTU to report problems needing County attention, such as lights, drainage, or overgrown brush.

### MAILBOXES AND TRASH CONTAINERS

Bonnie Littrell expressed appreciation for residents' cooperation in emptying the trash container and asked people to call her if there are problems. She said this may be the last opportunity to get free, secure, cluster mailboxes and directed interested parties with groups of 8 or 9 houses to contact her as soon as possible.

### COMMUNITY PLAN

Betsy McCallum reported that the County had reviewed the list of qualified Consultants and may have one on board by February 1. She urged anyone interested in working on a sub-committee or tackling a specific issue to see her about helping.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Betty Sue Carroll thanked those who have already paid their 2004 dues and reminded those who haven't. She said new members were welcome to the extra Membership Directories while supplies last, and thanked Lee Kennett for gathering enough sponsors to underwrite more than half the cost of the booklet.

#### NEW BUSINESS

BJ reported that timing for the anticipated bridge closing and construction of the roundabout has not yet been set. Starting dates for both projects depend on permitting, bidding, and other factors.

Tom Curran and others reported problems with parked cars blocking Meredith, Coquina Lane, and Friendship, and requested signage and enforcement.

An ongoing problem with dogs on the beach was also reported. BJ said that the "No Dogs" signs were on the back of our beach benches which had been removed at the request of the Coastal Wildlife organization and have not yet been returned.

Janet Potts expressed concern about live-aboard boaters, and BJ promptly appointed her to a Planning sub-committee dealing with this issue. Marion Adelman, who has been working on this problem, reported that she was making good progress and had been assured that an ordinance governing live-aboards would be in effect shortly.

BJ announced that the first of the new street signs has been erected at the corner of Gulf and Coquina. These will eventually replace all existing street signs.

There was a request for information about efforts to maintain Stump Pass, but no one volunteered new information.

#### NOMINATING/ELECTIONS

The President read the list of candidates for office and mentioned that there was need for someone to fill the position of Beautification Committee Chairman. The other officers for 2004 were then elected by a voice vote. They are as follows:

President	BJ Galbraith
President-Elect	Wayne Largent
Vice-President	Stan Parker
Secretary	Betty Sue Carroll
Treasurer	Judy Hoffstatter

#### OTHER BUSINESS

BJ announced that the next meeting will be at the end of February or the beginning of March, depending on the availability of the County Commissioners whom we have asked to speak.

She thanked everyone for coming, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Sue Carroll, Secretary