

MINUTES OF MEETING Tuesday, March 20, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Steve Stump at 1:30PM. He welcomed everyone then turned the meeting over to Stan Parker, Vice President, who introduced the speaker, Frank Desguin, Charlotte County Property Appraiser, with a series of humorous anecdotes.

GUEST SPEAKER

Most importantly, Mr. Desguin explained the process of assessing Fair Market Value in the state of Florida, and told us that the County's budget, rather than appraised value, actually determines our tax bill. His office, with a staff of about 70, re-evaluates over 200,000 properties each year, generally by looking at sales or listing trends in each area. He described the various types of exemptions available and cautioned that the Homestead Exemption application period is between January and March only. While each property is only physically checked about once in five years, individuals may petition for a hearing with the Value Adjustment Board in August when Truth In Millage statements are issued. Mr. Desguin fielded many questions from the audience, including "How to cut our taxes?" The answer: by attending the County's budget meetings.

SECRETARY/MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported a current balance of \$9840.61.

NEW BUSINESS

Steve Stump told us that we will soon have a new police officer assigned to the area. There have been a few incidents of vandalism and theft, including at least one from the waterways.

MSTU/BEAUTIFICATION

Mike McClain reported on the ongoing projects supported by .8 mills of our taxes, including drainage, lighting and cleanup of the bike paths. Beach cleanup is being considered as a future project. He also told us that there soon may be night marine patrols checking our coastlines.

MEMBERSHIP

Betty Sue Carroll reported that total membership is 405.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Betty Sue Carroll explained what the Manasota and Sandpiper Advisory Committee, and its arm, the Architectural Review Committee, were working on.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was a question from the floor about whether our bank account was interest-bearing. The Treasurer said that it was not, but he would check to see whether that would jeopardize our not-for-profit status.

Pictures of the Shell Sculpture, Shell and Roundabout dedication ceremony, and an amazing vehicular crash at the beach were displayed.

SMKA is looking into the possibility of installing additional Osprey nesting platforms, since many of the Australian pines have been blown down by storms.

The President told us that voter turnout in our area is about 33 – 35%. He said that elected officials were very conscious of districts with heavy turnout rates and urged us to try to bring our numbers up.

It was reported that there have been several Iguana sightings on Manasota Key.

Steve Stump described two valuable programs available to the public: Citizens' Academy, which educates people in the workings of County Staff and Government, and CERTS (Citizens Emergency Readiness Team), which gives some basic emergency steps that can be taken while waiting for EMS professionals.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05pm.

Respectfully submitted, Betty Sue Carroll, Secretary