

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



June 2018

Hurricane Season

The 2018 Atlantic Hurricane Season officially begins on June 1, but the threat from Subtropical Storm Alberto heralded an early beginning. All of us on or near the Gulf Coast are well advised to take stock of preparations for these dangerous storms. Resources from Escambia County include the web pages "Tropical Storms and Hurricanes" at <https://myescambia.com/our-services/public-safety/beready/natural-disasters/tropical-storms-hurricanes> with links to other resources and "Know Your Zone" at <https://myescambia.com/apps/knowyourzone/>. Another local resource is the May 27, 2018 "2018 Hurricane Guide" published by the *Pensacola News Journal*. John Dosh – the Emergency Management Manager of Escambia County – has provided additional comments on hurricane season issues. He suggested, for example, that people ordered to evacuate should stay as close to home as it is safe to do so to avoid highway congestion, but noted that Escambia County's emergency shelters were public schools that provide little in the way of comfort – serving as "lifeboats" not "love-boats." He also pointed out that storm surge was unique to each storm and can vary greatly with a storm's track.

Mr. Dosh pointed out that emergency management procedures for Escambia County do not use the terms voluntary or mandatory evacuation. When an evacuation order is issued, however, the expectation is that people will leave that zone. During the landfall of Hurricane Nate in 2017, Evacuation Zone A – which included Perdido Key – was placed under an evacuation order but many chose not to leave the Key. We were fortunate the storm did not have a greater impact on people and property.

Perdido Key Shared-Use Path Open House

Approximately 50 people attended the May 24, 2018 FDOT "open house" presentation at the Perdido Key Community Center on progress toward the Perdido Key Shared-Use

Path (known earlier as “Multi-Use Path”). The 8 foot wide path will run along the north side of Perdido Key Drive (S.R. 292), with design work divided between a western portion from the Alabama border to the west end of the Perdido Key State Park and an eastern portion from the west end of the Park to Gongora Drive. Models of the path were on display and FDOT personnel available to answer questions at the gathering. The western portion is fully funded by FDOT while the eastern portion should have RESTORE (BP restitution) funding available for at least a portion of the path. Construction is likely to begin in 2021.

Meet the Candidates for District 2 Commissioner

The Perdido Key Chamber of Commerce and the local League of Women Voters are planning a “meet the candidates” event for July 18, 2018, with the location to be determined. It will be an opportunity for Perdido Key area voters to hear what the candidates in the upcoming primary and general elections for the Escambia County District 2 Commissioner position have to say.

Changes in Sea Turtle Monitoring

The sea turtle monitoring process is changing on Perdido Key and elsewhere in Florida. Gulf Islands National Seashore announced earlier this year ago that its personnel would no longer conduct night turtle watches or remove turtles from danger. For the rest of the island, Escambia County is taking over the “Turtle Patrol” from the State. As forwarded by Commissioner Underhill, there will be many changes and “not all of them are good changes.” As soon as the County receives its permit, a town hall meeting will be held at the Perdido Bay Community Center to discuss the new procedures.

Rosamond Johnson Remembrance Ceremony

A large audience was privileged to attend the May 5, 2018 Remembrance Ceremony honoring Korean War hero Rosamond Johnson. The event was held under beautiful skies on Johnson Beach at the Perdido Key Area of the Gulf Island’s National Seashore, the wonderful location that bears his name. Featured speaker National Seashore Superintendent Dan Brown discussed Rosamond Johnson, the history of Johnson Beach, and a number of other relevant topics. Additional speakers, including members of the Johnson family, highlighted the ceremony.

Gulf Power Sold to NextEra

Southern Company, the firm that currently owns Gulf Power, plans to sell the Pensacola-based utility to NextEra, the firm that owns Florida Power & Light. According to the *Pensacola News Journal* May 21, 2018 article “Gulf Power to be sold to Florida Power & Light parent company” by Melissa Nelson Gabriel, Florida Power & Light currently serves about half the population of Florida and is the third largest utility in the United States. A spokesman for Florida Power & Light said Gulf Power, a major

employer in the Pensacola area, would keep its name and continue to operate as a separate company. The \$6.4 million purchase is subject to federal regulator approval and, because of Florida Power & Light's already large share of Florida power distribution, some opposition to the transaction is likely. To access the article, go to <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/05/21/gulf-power-company-sold-florida-power-light-parent-nextera/628231002/>.

Perdido Key Drive to Become a County Road?

Negotiations between Escambia County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) could result in the county assuming responsibility for Perdido Key Drive while FDOT would take over a section of Beulah Road. According to the *Pensacola News Journal* May 21, 2018 article "Escambia County in talks with state to swap control of Perdido Key Drive with Beulah Road" by Jim Little: "The purpose of the swap would be to allow for quicker construction of a new interchange with Beulah Road and Interstate 10, and allow the county to better implement the Perdido Key Master Plan." District 2 Commissioner Doug Underhill reportedly said he would support the idea as long as it "doesn't jeopardize state funding for the Perdido Key bike path or would slow down repairs to the road following hurricanes." To access the article, go to <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/politics/2018/05/21/escambia-county-talks-swap-perdido-key-drive-beulah-road/619764002/>.

June Calendar

June 1: Grand Fiesta Parade downtown Pensacola
June 1-2: Billy Bowlegs Pirate Festival Fort Walton Beach
June 1-3: Pirates Cove Autism Fund Raiser Elberta
June 1-3: Flora-Bama Fishing Rodeo
June 3-7, 13-17, 29-30: Blue Wahoos at Blue Wahoo Stadium in Pensacola
June 4-18: Innerarity Island Lot Auction by Escambia County
June 7-10: Pinta and Nina at the Oyster Bar, Perdido Key
June 7-10, 14-17: Elite Show Jumping Escambia County Equestrian Center
June 8: World Oceans Day Perdido Key State Park
June 9: Power Squadron Boating Course Lillian United Methodist Church
June 9: Dragon Boat Festival in Mobile
June 12, 14, 19, 21: America's Boating Class at Pensacola State College Warrington
June 14: Science Hour on Hurricane Resistant Landscaping at Escambia County Central Office Complex
June 14-17: Bill Hargreaves Fishing Rodeo, Grand Lagoon Yacht Club
June 15-17: Alabama Writers Conclave (AWC) Orange Beach
June 23-24: Northwest Florida Quarter Horse Association Horse Show Escambia County Equestrian Center
June 28-30: Pensacola International Billfish Tournament, Pensacola Yacht Club

Blue Angels practice on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, NAS Pensacola
Bands on the Beach Tuesdays at the Gulfside Pavilion, Pensacola Beach

The following websites provide additional information about events taking place in our great Gulf Coast region:

<https://www.visitpensacola.com/>
<http://mygulfcoastchamber.com/>
<http://www.visitperdido.com/>
<http://mulletwrapper.net/>
<https://myescambia.com/>
<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com//>
<http://alabama.travel/festivals-and-events>
<http://www.cityofmobile.org/calendar/>

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors