

# KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM  
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



## October 2023

### September 18 Commissioner Bergosh Town Hall

Escambia County District 1 Commissioner Jeff Bergosh held a Town Hall at the Perdido Bay United Methodist Church on September 18, 2023 with perhaps 100 people attending. A number of other local officials participated including Assistant County Administrator Debbie Bowers as well as Bruce Wood from ECUA. Among the issues covered by Traffic Engineer Chris Phillips were concerns about the roundabout at the Perdido Key Drive/Johnson Beach Road intersection and the traffic backups it may be causing. The roundabout is small because of land use restrictions and requires substantial caution in its use. The county has collected additional information on traffic flow at the intersection using remote cameras and continues to investigate what changes if any, such as bypasses, should be made to improve traffic flow while ensuring safety. Other traffic issues discussed were concerns about traffic increase from the Altura apartment complex at the north end of Theo Baars Bridge; plans and proposals for improvements to Sorrento Road; and, a new traffic light on Sorrento Road at the entrance to the Perdido Bay County Club area to be completed by about November 1, 2023. Because of audience questions, another issue discussed at considerable length was the “We Are Perdido” proposal for incorporation. While stating his neutrality on the issue, Commissioner Bergosh noted his belief that increased property owner fees would be necessary. Other information provided was the River Road closure for culvert replacement was postponed to mid-October 2023 with construction to be completed in February 2024; construction of the new Perdido Bay boat ramp off Lillian Highway was 25% complete and would be done by March 2024; construction of the Perdido Key Multi-Use Path was going well and would be completed by June 2024. Commissioner Bergosh signaled his support for a rewrite of the county’s land development code along with requiring public notification of large apartment complex construction as well as some form of developer infrastructure responsibility such as concurrency. He also supports underground utilities for Perdido Key and is investigating means to fund the conversion. Beach Access locations #2 and #3 will likely be getting new parking area surfaces but lose their restroom buildings – shifting to portable units like Beach Access #4 – and creating a few more parking areas. The Commissioner discussed his support for more beach access areas and parking, including the 75 ft public access easement apparent for some Perdido Key beachfront properties – an issue popular with the audience [note a

recent Commissioner Bergosh blog entry indicated possible legal action from some beachfront property owners regarding the easement]. To view the Town Hall on YouTube, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNPFoxLNh14&t=684s>.

### **Perdido Key Beach Cleanup**

The Perdido Key Association, Friends of Pensacola State Parks and Florida State Park rangers hosted International Coastal Cleanup Day on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at the Perdido Key State Park West Use Area. Over 50 volunteers helped cleanup our beaches including very active participation from 10 students from Pensacola Catholic High School. Trash removed included large debris remaining from Hurricane Sally. T-shirts unique to the event were distributed to all participants. It was a great community effort to improve beach environment!

### **Baptist Hospital Moves to New Facility**

Baptist Hospital moved from its E Street location on September 23-24 to an impressive new facility at the intersection of I-110 and Brent Lane. Patients were transferred in carefully orchestrated groups of three ambulances. Concerns remain about the fate of the old facility that had provided an anchor for its surrounding neighborhoods for many years, though it was recently revealed that "Pensacola is in active talks to secure an agreement with Baptist Health Care for the donation of the old Baptist Hospital campus to the city in exchange for paying for the demolition of the old hospital." For more on this issue, see the September 24, 2023 *Pensacola News Journal* article "It may take up to 15 years to redevelop old Baptist property. Leaders want to move much faster" by Jim Little at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/escambia-county/2023/09/22/baptist-hospital-moreno-campus-fin-pensacola-under-negotiation/70920769007/> and the September 28, 2023 *Pensacola News Journal* article "Baptist Hospital nears deal with Pensacola," also by Jim Little.

### **"Evening for the Estuaries" October 12**

The Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Programs is sponsoring its first fund raising gala to assist its initiatives to restore our waters by connecting communities, sustaining prosperity, and protecting biodiversity. The event will be held at the Coastal Arts Center in Orange Beach from 6:30 to 9:00 PM and will feature "live music, drinks, hors d-oeuvres (including oysters!), a silent auction and giving back to the waters we call home." Tickets are \$150 per person and \$250 per couple. For more information, go to <https://pensacolaandperdidobaysestuaryprogram-bloom.kindful.com/e/2023-evening-for-the-estuaries-gala>.

### **October means Halloweed!!**

Halloweed is a national program where volunteers help remove invasive species from public spaces such as local, state and national parks. Beach vitex is a very persistent invasive species that continues to threaten local areas, so this year Escambia County is targeting vitex removal from Pensacola Beach. Here are several Halloweed volunteer opportunities: Oct 4 meet at Quietwater Boardwalk near the seashell; Oct 12 meet on bike path near the Sugar Bowl at Parking Lot 27A; Oct 18 meet at sewer lift station on Via DeLuna just west of the west entrance to Sugar Bowl; and, Oct 25 meet on bike path near Portofino at parking Lot 27B. All

efforts will begin at 12 PM; bring gloves, loppers or clippers and a 5-gallon bucket. For more information, see Rick O'Connor's September 28, 2023 *UF/UFAS* note "It's October so That Means it's Time for Halloweed" at <https://nwdistrict.ifas.ufl.edu/nat/2023/09/28/its-october-and-that-means-its-time-for-halloweed/>.

### **Delta Nonstop to New York**

Delta Airlines has announced it will begin direct flights from Pensacola to New York City beginning November 2023. For more on the issue, see the September 20, 2023 *Pensacola News Journal* article "Just in time for the holidays, Delta to offer nonstop flights between New York and Pensacola" by Jim Little at [https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/2023/09/20/delta-to-offer-nonstop-flights-to-new-york-from-pensacola-in-november/70913977007/?utm\\_source=ppen-newsletter\\_dailybriefing&utm\\_content=1063nj-e-daily%20briefing&utm\\_campaign=newsletter\\_dailybriefing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=adhoc](https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/2023/09/20/delta-to-offer-nonstop-flights-to-new-york-from-pensacola-in-november/70913977007/?utm_source=ppen-newsletter_dailybriefing&utm_content=1063nj-e-daily%20briefing&utm_campaign=newsletter_dailybriefing&utm_medium=email&utm_term=adhoc).

### **Florida Legislative Wrapup**

1000 Friends of Florida closely follows Florida legislation. It is vigilant about environmental issues and this year has been particularly concerned about state efforts to weaken local authority. For a summary of the Florida 2023 legislative session by 1000 Friends, go to <https://1000fof.org/legis/2023-legislative-session/>.

### **October Calendar**

Oct 01 – Pensacola Seafood Festival at Seville Square  
Oct 04-07 – Alabama Coastal BirdFest in Spanish Fort  
Oct 4-8 – Pensacola Beach Songwriters Festival  
Oct 06-07 – Orange Beach Freedom Fest & Bama Cruisin' Car Show at The Wharf  
Oct 06-08 – Destin Seafood Festival  
Oct 07 – Zarzaur Law Santa Rosa Island Triathlon on Pensacola Beach  
Oct 07 – Oktoberfest at OWA  
Oct 07-08 – Gulf Coast Summer Fest-Jazz Edition at Pensacola Community Maritime Park  
Oct 08 – Willie Nelson Outlaw Music Fest at The Wharf Amphitheater  
Oct 12-15 – National Shrimp Festival in Gulf Shores  
Oct 13 – Taste of the Beach at Pensacola Beach  
Oct 19-29 – Pensacola Interstate Fair at Pensacola Interstate Fairgrounds  
Oct 20-22&27-29 – Escape to Margaritaville at Ashmore Auditorium, Pensacola State College  
Oct 20 – Beach-O-Ween at Pensacola Beach Boardwalk  
Oct 21 – Big Lagoon Trail Meetup at Big Lagoon State Park  
Oct 21,28 – Pensacola Ice Flyers at Pensacola Bay Center  
Oct 22 – Latino Festival Pensacola at Museum Plaza downtown Pensacola

Blue Angels practice at NAS Pensacola October 18,24,25

Bands on the Beach at Pensacola Beach every Tuesday, 7-9 PM April to October

The following websites provide additional information about events 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>

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors