



# POA Bulletin

POA4US.org

AUGUST 2021

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## UPCOMING GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 17 | 7 PM**

**EVERGLADES RECREATION CENTER**

Speakers: The Villages Fire Chief  
Edmund Cain and District Manager  
Richard Baier

“Fire Safety and EMS Services”



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## Inside this Issue

CDD 7 Leads the Way in Proposing Changes to Project Wide Agreement

Sumter County Administrator Discusses Budget, Taxes & Impact Fees

Are Villages Residents Being Overcharged?

Ad Hoc Fire, EMS, & Medical Transport Committee Upcoming Meetings:

August 4 & 18 at 7 PM  
September 1 & 15 at 7 PM

Wildwood Community Center  
Powell Road, Wildwood

## Villages District Government and Public Safety Propose Independent Special District

Villages Public Safety Department (VPSD) Fire Chief Edmund Cain offered another alternative to the Sumter County Ad Hoc Committee for Fire, EMS and Medical Transport that would create an Independent Special District for the governance of VPSD. He told the committee an Independent Special District would give VPSD the financial and operational autonomy it needs and would alleviate the financial burden for Sumter County that is now co-mingled between the fire assessment fees and the general fund.

The recommendation comes after a study conducted on behalf of the Villages Center Community Development District (VCCDD) to review the current VPSD governance and funding and provide options for the VCCDD to consider. The study considered The Villages' unique demographics as an urban space, the oldest age demographic county within the United States and the ever-expanding boundaries of The Villages proper.

The consulting firm, J. Angle Group, and the District analyzed several Independent Special District options and recommend that the option that provides the necessary autonomy is an Independent Special Fire Control District, as provided for in Florida Chapter 191. There are several steps that must be conducted prior to the formation, which can only be created through a special act of the Florida Legislature.

In a written memo, Chief Cain described several benefits of an Independent Special District, such as:

- Standards, direction, and procedures concerning operations and governance.
- Provides greater uniformity in operations and authority.
- Provides greater uniformity in financing authority without hampering efficiency and effectiveness.
- Provides improved communication and coordination between local governments in short and long-range planning to meet the service delivery demands while maintaining fiscal responsibility and stewardship.

The memo noted that The District in any form would still require a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity from the respective counties to provide EMS services.

*Independent Special District continued on page 2*

### Mission Statement

The Property Owners’ Association, Inc. (POA) is the original property owners’ group in The Villages. Established in 1975, the POA operates with complete independence from the Developer of The Villages. Membership is open to all property owners and residents of The Villages. The POA is committed to acting as a watchdog to ensure that the Developer and local government are responsive to the needs, interests, and rights of residents.

**Vision** The Property Owners’ Association, Inc. (POA) is a champion for the rights of residents of The Villages. Guided by member input, investigation and determination, the POA brings attention to and acts on issues that may impact property values and quality of life.

**Goals** The POA provides 1) a forum for discussion of issues; 2) research and analysis; 3) programs of interest; and, 4) is a conduit for objective and accurate information. Specific attention is given to resolving housing, community and local government issues.

### Values

Independence	Honesty	Fairness
Objectivity	Respect	

### The POA Declaration of Independence

The POA is free of any outside influence. This is the only way we can assure our members of absolute autonomy to act on their behalf. From the very beginning in 1975, we recognized this need for independence, and we’ve cherished and nurtured it ever since.

The *POA Bulletin* is published monthly by the Property Owners’ Association of The Villages, Inc. Articles represent the opinion of the POA or the writer, and Letters to the POA postings represent the opinions of the writers. Care is taken to ensure that facts reported herein are true and accurate to the best knowledge of the POA and are taken from reliable sources. The POA assumes no liability for any information published, opinions expressed, or delivery to any person or location. The POA does not endorse or recommend the products or services of any advertiser or discount partner. All publication rights are reserved. Publication or reprinting of any material contained herein is by written permission only. The POA reserves the right to remove and/or discontinue any advertisement or advertiser from its *POA Bulletin* at any time at its sole discretion.

*Independent Special District continued from page 1*

Committee members expressed that they were interested in learning more about the proposal and Chief Cain will make a more detailed presentation at their next meeting. The County Attorney will also provide a legal analysis.

Chief Cain’s proposal came after a presentation by Sumter County’s Medical Director, Dr. Desmond Fitzpatrick, who discussed EMS in general, specifically as it is delivered today and changes that are slowly being rolled out, and where EMS could go in the future. The full PowerPoint presentation can be found at <https://www.sumtercountyfl.gov/agendacenter/ad-hoc-fire-ems-and-medical-transport-committee-25/?#07212021-647>.

### Committee Honing in on Options

Committee members began what is likely to be an intense discussion about what recommendations it will make to the Commissioners. Should the contract with AMR be terminated at its conclusion next year? Should there be one or two fire departments in Sumter County? Who should provide medical transport services? How will the public be educated about changes that are being proposed and implemented?

One area on which the committee members seemed to have consensus on was that none want to see any jobs lost as a result of any changes.

***The POA expects the meetings to be held in August to be significant and the discussion that will occur to shape whatever final recommendations will be made. Residents are encouraged to continue to be engaged in this important process that will determine the future of the most important public service you will be provided.***



**Pam Powell**

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The September issue of the *POA Bulletin* will review all of the presentations that have been made, compare the pros and cons of the options, and weigh in on any recommendations that may be made.

### POA Position:

**The POA supports Option 9 that Bradley Arnold presented on May 17, which keeps the County and The Villages Public Safety Departments doing what they are doing and adding Quick Response Vehicles (QRV’s) and ambulances to each department. The County would continue to manage EMS Services and there would be no other company involved in transporting patients.**

**Residents must band together and support our Firefighters and the investment that has been made in our Public Safety personnel, training, equipment, and states. The POA strongly encourages residents to send email communications to the members of the Ad Hoc Committee to keep The Villages Public Safety responding to medical emergencies and to add transport ambulances to their fleets. You can send an email to [Leslie.smith@sumtercountyfl.gov](mailto:Leslie.smith@sumtercountyfl.gov). Be sure to put “Forward to Ad Hoc Fire, EMS and Medical Transport Committee” in the subject line. ■**

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## CDD 7 Leads the Way in Proposing Changes to Project Wide Agreement; Other CDDs Asking Questions as Well

While Community Development District (CDD) 7 has been most notoriously critical and vocal about the Project Wide agreement and associated funding, other CDD supervisors have been asking questions about what is covered in the Project Wide Fund and why. For example, CDD 5 Supervisor Reed Panos questioned why the Lighthouse at Lake Sumter Landing is on the Project Wide list, a question CDD 8 Supervisor Sal Torname has asked repeatedly. (See the accompanying article by Mr. Torname on page 6.)

But it is CDD 7 that has taken firm action to potentially separate itself from the Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC) and the Project Wide agreement if sweeping changes are not considered. This comes at a time when there is a proposal on the table to spin off a "PWAC" 2 for the districts south of CR 44, starting with CDDs 12 and 13.

At its July meeting, the CDD 7 Board of Supervisors directed its attorney – now independent of the District's counsel Mark Brionez – to send written communication to the Sumter Landing Community Development District (SLCDD), the "parent" District Board to

whom PWAC advises, asking for multiple changes to the "Fourth Amended and Restated Interlocal Governmental Agreement for Maintenance of Project Wide Improvements." This latest amendment was drafted by the SLCDD providing for the spin-off of CDDs 12 and 13.

Among the key changes CDD 7 is proposing are:

- Project Wide Improvements shall only include those improvements specifically described and depicted on the maps and graphics attached in **Exhibit "A"**. As additional Project Wide Improvements are developed within the Project and north of SR 44, Exhibit "A" may be modified only by approval of each of the Remaining Parties' respective Boards of Supervisors, provided that the same has been considered for recommendation by the PWAC.

*The current agreement allows the SLCDD to add improvements without discussion with or recommendation by PWAC. This significant change would put the decision-making on adding to "Exhibit A" back in the hands of officials elected by residents.*

- Change the methodology by which each CDD's allocation to the Project Wide Fund is determined. CDD 7 Attorney Michael Eckert said, "Assessable acreage may not be fair when comparing a residential CDD to

1) a commercial CDD with multi-story buildings and significant areas dedicated to parking that are presumably not being assessed, or to 2) a CDD with a substantial number of apartments. It is suggested to analyze the allocation methodology to determine whether an "equivalent residential unit" allocation methodology is more fair and appropriate, especially considering the differences between a commercial CDD, a CDD with a large number of apartments, and a typical single-family home CDD."

- The SLCDD created PWAC by resolution to provide input, explore issues and provide advice and direction on issues related to the operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of Project Wide Improvements. PWAC has no authority to make decisions under the current agreement.

*The changes proposed by CDD 7 would give PWAC actual authority and decision-making capability.* The CDD 7 proposal reads "Unless the directive given by the PWAC results in a violation of law, SLCDD shall follow the PWAC's directive. The SLCDD shall timely revise all its resolutions that are inconsistent with, or conflict with, the provisions of this Agreement."

- Change the term of the Agreement from ten (10) years to three (3) years from the date hereof and provide for automatic renewal for successive three (3) year periods.

*Changes continued on page 5*

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*Changes continued from page 4*

- In the event of legal action taken by any of the parties to the Agreement, CDD 7’s proposal states that “If a court of competent jurisdiction determines that this Agreement is not legal, or determines that any Party cannot perform under this Agreement for any reason, this Agreement shall be canceled and SLCCDD shall refund all monies on hand to the Remaining Parties in proportion to the Remaining Parties’ prior percentages of contribution.

Additional provisions in the CDD 7 proposal provide for the SLCCDD to arrange for the inspection of any infrastructure, facilities, land, or any other item proposed to be added as a Project Wide Improvement to Exhibit A as a cost of the PWAC and that the engineer be completely independent of the Developer and other associations. Further, the proposal asks for a 2-year warranty and provides for the protection of PWAC’s appointed members and alternates from any personal liability.

It is not known whether the SLCCDD has or will review in public the communication from CDD 7, or whether it will respond to the proposals that have been made. The POA has always advocated for PWAC to have the same authority that the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) has north of CR 466. The POA has also advocated for a different assessment methodology so that the commercial districts pay a more equitable portion of the funding for the Project Wide improvements. The POA also agrees that additions to “Exhibit A” should be handled differently and that the terms of the agreements should not be 10 years.

CDD 7 has made a significant financial expenditure to hire an independent law firm to advise them on issues that relate to PWAC. Their proposal deserves a hearing and serious consideration by the SLCCDD. ■



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Unit # (see Villages ID/UL) \_\_\_\_\_ Villa Name (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

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2nd Resident First & Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

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## Are Villages Residents Being Overcharged?

By Sal Torname

Most of us Villagers will concur that living here in Florida's Friendliest Home Town has been a good experience with a temperate climate and plenty activities to keep us occupied. There are a variety of costs that are assessed to maintain the quality of life, infrastructure, and services in The Villages. Some of these costs are for common areas that we all share and the aggregating of these costs among districts utilize the principle of economy of scale achieving lower unit pricing. Other expenses can directly be attributable to a more specific user that should shoulder all or part of costs. All would likely agree that whatever the costs it should be as reasonable, pragmatic, and equitable as possible. In The Villages two entities are categorized as common area users, they are the commercial user and the residential counterpart (the numbered CDDs.)

The question that should be asked is who or what is receiving the benefit of a specific asset and/or value of the expenditure? Both groups mentioned above must come together and be free to express their rationale about the asset and reach a successful conclusion. Some cost sharing examples are obvious, such as landscaping along Buena Vista or Morse Boulevards where residents, visitors and commercial vehicles utilize these thoroughfares and costs should be shared. Multimodal paths along the same roadways are attributed to residential users mostly which do receive the totality of maintenance

expenses, although they serve an important function in transporting patrons to commercial establishments.

A multi-party Interlocal Government Agreement was created in August 2003 establishing the Project Wide Fund for maintenance of project wide improvements between the Sumter Landing Community Development District (SLCDD), and the Community Development District 5 (the only residential district south of CR 466 at that time.) A list of common areas has been created and added to as The Villages has expanded. During

this time frame it was agreed that the SLCDD would select these common areas and CDD 5 would only be advisory. With the expansion of The Villages, Districts 6 – 13 were incorporated into this agreement with the same direction and mandates and what is now known as the Project Wide Advisory Committee was created. Districts 1 – 4 are autonomous and pay directly only for what they utilize.

Today a document entitled Exhibit "A", as amended over the years, includes Landscaping Right-Of-Ways, street lighting, associated walls and fences, tunnels, lakes, shorelines, conservation, stormwater management systems, parts of Sumter Landing and Paddock Squares.

Some assets on Exhibit "A" should be challenged as to whether they benefit both commercial and residential property owners. For example, who is the benefactor of the "Sumter Landing Lighthouse"? One would have to say the Lighthouse Restaurant and/or the Sumter Landing Commercial Development District. Other items are "The Villages" Welcome signs on County Road 466, County Road 466A and State Roads. Are these signs promoting the exemplary character of residents living here or hoping to initiate more home sales?

*Overcharged continued on page 8*



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*Overcharged continued from page 6*

This begs the question as to what Districts and what amounts each commercial district (SLCDD and Brownwood) and each residential district are contributing to the operation and maintenance of these common properties on Exhibit ‘A’? This list runs for several pages with heading categories of landscaping, entry features, conservation, transportation trails, tunnels and miscellaneous. Dozens of items are on and added to the list as the Sumter Landing Community Development District select autonomously by purchasing completed assets from the developer that will include property south of CR 44 and the bridges that double as bill boards for the Friendliest Hometown. Again, who are these billboards benefiting and should they offset residential expenses for their use as advertisements?

All nine residential and two commercial districts are contributing to the upkeep of Exhibit ‘A’ allocated by the percentage of assessable taxable property acreage in each district. The contribution is paid directly to the Project Wide Advisory Committee (PWAC), who’s 20/21 budget amounted to about \$14 million. The methodology used in this allocation was conceived by the developer’s consultant and of course adopted by the commercial board at that time. It is hard to justify this methodology with the two commercial districts paying just 2.37% (see chart below).

District	Contribution	Percentage
Sumter Landing	\$ 104,340	0.75%
Brownwood	\$ 226,762	1.62%
5	\$ 1,828,008	13.10%
6	\$ 2,028,337	14.53%
7	\$ 1,292,403	9.26%
8	\$ 1,450,999	10.40%
9	\$ 1,663,848	11.92%
10	\$ 2,097,885	15.03%
11	\$ 702,549	5.03%
12	\$ 1,693,065	12.13%
13	\$ 823,579	5.90%
Other	\$ 45,564	.33%
Total	\$13,957,338	100.00%

As the costs have continued to escalate over the years, some residential Districts have said they were intimidated by these arrangements and acquiesced to the District Government and the SLCDD. It is time to act upon equitable changes to a methodology that subjugate the residential Districts and establish some concessions overdue.

I am recommending the following actions to address these concerns that Villages Residents are in fact being overcharged.”

1. District Government, including the residential boards and the SLCDD should conduct a thorough evaluation of Exhibit “A” properties to identify the major benefactors of the assets and apportion the costs correctly to the entities commercial, government or residential receiving the most value.

2. Make the residential Districts equal partners by changing the status of PWAC from advisory to decision maker.
3. Identify by elaborating in detail a description of all Exhibit “A” properties specifically marked as “Other”.
4. Change the allocation methodology of expenses from assessable taxable acreage to total acreage including parking and undeveloped land.

*Sal Torname is a member of the CDD 8 Board of Supervisors. ■*

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4. Lady Lake Library  
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Also, "Understanding Medicare," a group presentation geared toward those turning 65, will be made at 1 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month, at the Manatee Recreation Center.

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## Sumter County Administrator Discusses Budget, Taxes & Impact Fees

Sumter County Administrator Bradley Arnold told POA members at the July Membership Meeting that he learned from the outcry after the 25% tax increase in 2019 that it is a good idea to present and explain the budget to taxpayers prior to public hearings. Currently they are in the “tentative” budget stage, having received guidance from the Commissioners.

After the second public hearing which will be held at the end of September, the Commissioners will approve the budget which will then be filed with the State and the millage rate will be set. Taxpayers will then receive their annual tax bills and given the opportunity to receive discounts for paying early, which Mr. Arnold said many take advantage of.

The fund that has the greatest discretion is the General Fund and is funded mainly through property taxes. Other sources are Assessments, Communications Services Tax, Intergovernmental Revenue, Local Option Taxes and Other. The two largest categories of expenditures are Public Safety (62%) and General Government (17%). The proposed FY 22 General Fund Revenue budget is \$122,986,038.

The budget that was presented to Commissioners proposed a millage rate of 6.2434, which represents a rollback rate from last year. Commissioners asked for a further reduction by rounding the rate to 6.24. The roll-back rate calculates taxable property values in relation to the total revenue they generate for a government. If the tax rate generates the same total revenue one year as it did in the previous year, then the rolled-back rate

has been applied. Mr. Arnold said that \$4 Million in new property tax revenue has been generated from new construction that is not included in the roll back rate.

Mr. Arnold described changes from the current year budget:

- Since the AMR ambulance transport contract expires September 30, 2022, Mr. Arnold said planning needs to occur now in the event the contract is not renewed. The County owns the E-911 center while AMR has employed the staff in the center. The County will bring those employees under the County’s umbrella.
- Continued changes and investment in the Animal Services department.
- \$12 Million added to the budget to replace and upgrade radios for the Public Safety Division that will include on-board GPS services. Motorola is financing the purchase at 0% interest over 5 years.
- Hazardous Waste Amnesty days will be doubled. There will be three held at Okahumpka and one at the Sumter County Fairgrounds.

Sumter County continued on page 15

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*Sumter County continued from page 14*

Reserves have been an issue for the County. Mr. Arnold said that there needs to be enough money in reserve but not an excessive amount. Part of the reason for the big tax increase in 2019 was that the Board of Commissioners at that time had spent the reserves and the cash balance forward was not enough to fund the budget.

Mr. Arnold also addressed the impact of the 2018 Regional Road Agreement between Sumter County and The Villages. The agreement provides \$40 Million in taxpayer dollars to fund roads in the new development south of CR 44. He explained that impact fees can only be used for new construction while the gas tax can be used for both new construction and maintenance of existing roads. At the same time new roads were scheduled to be constructed south of CR 44, the then seated Board of Commissioners decided it was time to take care of the maintenance issues on Morse and Buena Vista Boulevards. That, coupled with a lack of reserves, led to a shortfall in the budget and the 25% property tax increase was passed.

Mr. Arnold is projecting a whopping \$277 Million in road improvements in The Villages over the next 15 years. Most of that will be for new development south of CR 44. Because the current Commissioners (at least the three new commissioners) could see that impact fees will not cover those costs they voted to increase the impact fees on new construction. But, Mr. Arnold said, their efforts were “thwarted” by state government and new legislation was passed (co-sponsored by The Villages 6-figure employee State Representative Brett Hage) significantly limiting home rule for local governments to manage their own funding needs.

According to Mr. Arnold, new construction is paid for first by the impact fees (which we know do not generate enough to cover the costs) and then the gas tax. If gas tax funds are used to fund new growth and are not available to cover existing needs, where does the funding come from for other needs? Increases to property taxpayers. NOTE: Mr. Arnold described the State of Florida as having a “Boom” economy. A question property taxpayers might ask is, why then do state elected officials (and some current county

commissioners) place the burden of paying for growth on them instead of the Developers who are reaping the financial rewards?

One benefit that Sumter County received when the impact fees were raised by the three new Commissioners and before the State officials negated the increase is that some developers and businesses rushed to get their building permits for new projects prior to the June 28 implementation of the new rate. The impact fee is assessed at the time permits are given. As a result, Mr. Arnold said the county received \$3.6 Million in new revenue just in the month of June.

**Question and Answer Session**

**For Commissioner Craig Estep: Please explain why you cannot roll back the full 25% increase enacted by the previous commissioners all at one time.**

A. There are financial obligations that must be fulfilled (roads and others), and service levels for residents must be maintained and improved. We had a bump in the road with the impact fees and we could have used other funds to help the underserved in the County. We must make incremental reductions to make sure we have the services people want and need.

**Mr. Arnold, please explain the difference between a tax and an impact fee.**

A. Impact fees are charged at the time building permits are issued and are based on the consumption of road impact. A tax has a broader net and is charged based on the value of property. A sales tax is charged based on the value of the good or service.

**Please comment on the current work of the Ad Hoc EMS committee and from your perspective, why any option other than utilizing the infrastructure and trained personnel of the Villages Public Safety Department should even be considered.**

A. Mr. Arnold stated that since the AMR contract is ending in 2022, now is the time to give direction for what the structure should be, including medical response and transport. Quality of service is very important and questions to consider are whether you keep two fire departments and do you keep separate transport services. The question to the Board is where they want to go long-term.

The Board wanted input from an independent group to gather input and they will provide their recommendations in October. Mr. Arnold has not given any recommendations yet but presented 10 options for consideration. He will give his recommendation in October as well.

**Please explain why the financial penalty for wait times provided for in the contract has never been assessed to AMR. Also please explain why the conflict of interest between the Assistant County Administrator and his wife as the manager of the local AMR operation has been allowed.**

A. It is sad that people jump to unprofessional conclusions and Mr. Arnold said he is responsible for any conflict with AMR, not Mr. Kennedy.

He also said that AMR has paid penalties in the past, but that during the last year during the COVID pandemic State of Emergency, penalties for wait times were waived.

*Sumter County continued on page 17*

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## Using Vertical Space

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by Anne Lambrecht Fanatical Gardener

Why not use the air for growing space? Let’s talk about vines.

There are all kinds of vines to choose from: flowering vines, native vines, vegetable vines, even bad vines. Vines in the landscape have many uses. When grown on a trellis or arbor, they can provide shade in the summer and cover and nesting areas for birds and other creatures. On an arbor they can provide a “doorway” to an outside room, hide or mask unsightly posts and poles (and dead trees). Vines add interest to walls, fences, and other hard spaces. And they can be used as living walls to provide privacy or to screen unsightly views (maybe nosy neighbors).

There are 3 types of vines: clinging, twining, and sprawling. Clinging vines attach themselves using adhesive roots or tendrils. They can be difficult to remove, and their roots can loosen mortar between bricks and concrete blocks in masonry walls so be careful of what you choose. Examples of clinging vines are English ivy, trumpet creeper, creeping fig. Twining vines actually encircle the support they’re on. These vines will spiral in only one direction. If you force them to spiral in the opposite direction, most will not cooperate, and the vine may be damaged. Twining vines include mandevilla, Confederate jasmine and allamanda. Passion vine and cross vine climb by means of tendrils that curl around supports when provided. Sprawling or clambering vines are basically shrubs that produce long runners but need you to attach them to a support. Examples of sprawling vines are bougainvillea and clematis.

Let’s take vines in a different direction with some variety: vegetables. Vining veggies can produce huge quantities in a surprisingly small area. Getting vines off the ground has health benefits for the plants, too. Fruits that don’t lie on the ground are less likely to get soil borne diseases. And because there’s better air circulation around plants on a support, there’s less chance of fungal disease. Vertical gardens are easier to prune, maintain and harvest than a large garden. The fruits are easier to find, and harvesting is not a pain in the back.

Some veggies are better suited to train as vines than others. Consider these favorites: pole beans, cucumbers-natural climbers, melons-select small or medium size fruits and keep in mind that they get heavy, peas-too hot here right now for peas but when cool, select taller varieties to 6’ tall, pumpkins and squash-select small or medium sizes as they require lots of room, sweet potatoes-tubers are underground and vines are natural climbers, tomatoes-choose indeterminate varieties, so you will need to attach a support.

Native vines can benefit your landscape: they look really cool, they grow fast, have showy blooms, colorful fruits, interesting leaves, bark, and seedpods. Most are disease resistant and can be trained vertically. They are a little tricky, but not impossible, to find (think mail order). Examples are coral honeysuckle, Dutchman’s pipe, cross vine, passion flower vine, yellow Jessamine, trumpet honeysuckle, American wisteria.

Some wonderful flowering vines are bougainvillea, red or white bleeding heart (not your “northern” bleeding heart), butterfly pea, hyacinth bean, gloriosa lily, mandevilla, scarlet runner bean, Mexican flame vine, morning glories, clematis, Rangoon creeper, climbing roses, thunbergia (blue sky vine), confederate jasmine, cardinal climber, black eyed Susan vine.

Bad vines are ecological invaders. Yes, they are beautiful, the flowers and foliage are lovely and that’s why they’re here. Some have been planted on purpose for animal fodder. There have been instances whereby over-zealous gardeners who take clippings or seeds sneak them in their pockets over the border past the noses of those cute agriculture beagles. They don’t realize the dire consequences of these plants becoming invasive. Because they are non-native, they don’t have many natural predators or diseases and can take over, many aggressively, predisposing native habitats and communities. Some examples of these vines that are already here and on whom we are waging war: Chinese and Japanese honeysuckle and wisteria, English ivy, air potato, creeping fig, and the infamous Kudzu. There are many more invaders in south Florida.

*Cited: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/mg097> Flowering Vines for Florida* ■



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Sumter County continued from page 15

**Has a moratorium on new construction been considered?**

A. In the State of Florida, a moratorium cannot be considered unless it can be demonstrated that is a public safety issue. Florida is a strong private property state and state laws pre-empt local ordinances.

**Will radio upgrades include body cameras?**

A. Public safety officers already use body cams, but the cost for GPS function is significantly higher so they are using radios with GPS separate from the body cams.

**Where would the money come from to fund the fire departments for transport if AMR contract is not renewed?**

A. This is why planning needs to occur now. As stated previously, dispatchers will come in as County employees in the new budget. Mr. Arnold has already had some discussions with AMR regarding their transport personnel and transport equipment.

**Were the other two commissioners invited to the POA meeting? (Commissioners Craig Estep, Gary Search and Oren Miller were in attendance.)**

A. POA President Cliff Wiener said the only people he “invited” to the meeting were Mr. Arnold and Mr. Estep. The other two came on their own, as they have many times. He said the POA membership meetings are open to everyone in The Villages and Commissioners Doug Gilpen and Gary Breeden are welcome to attend any time. Mr. Wiener said that in the six years he has been POA president, they have never attended a POA meeting. Mr. Search stated that he has attended POA meetings for years before he ran for commissioner and is a POA member.

**Why are all roads in the County not improved with the same materials?**

A. Mr. Arnold said that different materials must be used in major arterial roads such as Buena Vista and Morse Boulevards and they have been challenged to find a material for interior roads that holds up as well. He acknowledged that the material used in 2018/19 did not hold up well and they are trying new materials and using press releases to educate residents on how long it takes for road surfaces to cure and how long residents should stay off them.

**What assurances are there that the amount being asked for reimbursement of the \$40 Million road agreement is the best rate, are there full-time inspectors, and is the 4th town square required in the agreement being developed?**

A. The 4th town square is not yet in development, however, there are three “downtowns” that have been announced, including a medical village, a recreation/sports village, and a non-age-restricted village. NOTE: It is the POA’s opinion that these do NOT satisfy the commitment for a 4th town square.

There are two full time inspectors and a testing lab to ensure quality of the road construction and materials, and a one-year warranty after the roads are taken over by the County. The county has videos of the underground stormwater pipes because this is where deficiencies have occurred in the past. The videos are re-done at 10 months into the warranty period to ensure there are no deficiencies.

Recent bid numbers show that The Villages is able to use their bulk buying and contracts to build roads for far less than the county could.

**Why didn’t the Commissioners raise the impact fee by the 12.5% allowed by the new state law?**

A. Mr. Estep said that he did not pursue that increase because it would require 4 votes and he simply did not think there were 4 votes to support that increase. ■

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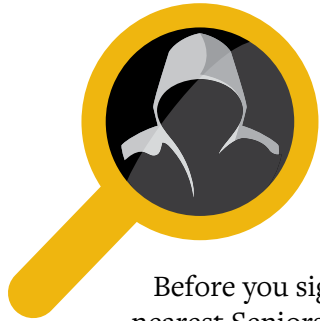
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2011 Pete Cacioppo  
 Betty Cunningham

2009 Dorothy Morehouse-Beeney  
 Vinnie Palmisano

2008 Ray and Lori Micucci  
 Win Shook

2007 Rose Harvey  
 Dorothy Hokr

2006 Charlie Harvey  
 Carol Kope  
 Frank Renner

2005 Sadie Woollard

2004 Russ Day  
 Eva Hawkins  
 William Rich, Jr.  
 Glen Swindler  
 Jean Tuttle

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# Shadow

He entered our lives...with a limp. There was no collar or identification chip. Rather, recognition came from a cancer impairing movement in a dog full of life and love. Something needed to change. With appropriate medical treatment and personal devotion, our new canine friend was cured.

What a thrill to watch this golden retriever bound across the field, gracefully leap into the air, and spastically splash into a pond. His face was all smile as he paddled to the edge. No sooner had his beautiful coat dried in the sun than the ritual was repeated again.

Humans sometimes learn slowly. Such was the case when a Subway sandwich lay unattended more than once on our kitchen counter. Turning one’s back for a moment was all the time necessary for lunch to magically disappear... wrapper and all. I doubt the number of grams of fat was ever an issue. Shadow would dawn a sincere look as if to say, “How could you possibly suspect that I would do...what I just did.”

Our pets create memorable emotional experiences. Humans, likewise, create for each other memories that serve as a basis for the warmth we feel, instilling love and affection. Hearts are valuable, deserving respect and protection.

At the Robert Boissonneault Oncology Institute, similar to leading academic institutions, we are nationally recognized and selectively accredited in cancer care. In addition, we treat patients through their hearts...just like those we love.



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