

**2020 SBA Annual Meeting
February 13, 2020
OVERVIEW OF 2019**

Every year, I attempt to summarize what has happened over the past year of interest to those of us who live, work and play on South Beach. I began by reviewing predictions I made at last year's meeting for the 2019 year.

First, I made no prediction regarding the Wastewater Treatment plant saying I would not mention it again. Sure enough that was exactly correct!

Then I predicted that we would begin to see some activity at the Mega Yacht Port. That was hardly a stretch on my part as the final contract was due to be signed just a week after our meeting! We have seen some tear down – no movement on a dry dock and few ships in port. But I am told that it is on track and when it happens we will all see the results as we travel over the bridge.

I projected that we would finally see real progress for the development of the downtown old King plant property. There had been a number of starts and stops in the past. There were 2 final bids and final agreement with Audubon Developers in November. You will have the opportunity to hear the inside story on this massive project later tonight.

I had hoped that a resolution of the jet ski vs. swimmers situation at Jaycee Park would be addressed and it was. The City Parks Committee, after much research, and I want to emphasize the homework that they did, presented an Ordinance to the Commission that would create a 500 foot no wake zone in the area. Despite some claiming it would “inconvenience” some boaters. I believed it was a reasonable compromise and solution – the Commission passed the new Ordinance 4-1. Now, just this past Monday morning at the

Commission Conference Agenda meeting, there was a discussion regarding revising or amending the Ordinance to reduce the 500 foot no wake zone to something less. This is all before the final signing by the City of the State approved permit and the placing of markers in the water indicating the 500 foot area. I listened very carefully to the discussion and believe some did not understand that the Ordinance did not ban boats or motorized watercraft within the 500 no wake area, still just within the swim & bathing areas – just that they could not leave a wake – meaning slow speed. But this will now come before the Commission for a vote to see if they want to consider an amendment because 3 Commissioners wanted to consider an amendment creating a consensus, and if yes, an amendment would have to be drafted and then voted on twice by the Commission – all of this before giving the recently passed Ordinance an opportunity to see if it works. Recognize that securing all the approvals from the State was not an easy task. I have a great deal of respect for the work of the City Parks Committee. They did not recommend the 500 feet easily. Perhaps you can tell that I side with the two Commissioners who wished to stick with the original Ordinance as written to see how it worked in the family park. We will keep you informed as to the progress by the Commission on this issue. See Mike Reals, Charlene Adair or a City Commissioner at the end of the meeting if you wish to comment.

I had hoped that there might be some movement toward long term solutions to the Parking problems we experience in the Jetty entertainment area but there were none.

Now to other happenings –

Changes in the configuration of our bridge appear off the table. At last year's meeting the overwhelming majority of you were opposed to the proposed change to create a two lane bridge.

The City launched a community input survey to get feedback on the future development of Fisherman's Wharf. Results showed a preference for docks, ramps and restaurants – basically what is there now plus provide ferry service, water taxi, possible small cruise ship and outdoor event space. An RFP for a developer will be issued early this year. Personally I would like to see local commercial fishing coming in with fish to sell.

Over the past year, a number of roads on the Beach were given curbs, gutters and resurfacing. The major reason to selecting the particular roads was drainage problems that created rivers on the road after every rain. The projects took much longer than expected and were more disruptive than expected but the final product was worth it. If you want more information see Jack Andrews at the end of the meeting.

The scooter invasion caught most of us off guard and we devoted much of a newsletter to the issue. Please be aware that this is a one year pilot program. We urge you to submit any comments – pro and con – to the City Mnnager's office. I'll ask for your opinion later in the meeting.

Some of you followed the discussions by the City Commission regarding the proposals for Harbour Shoppes and relocation of Cumberland Farms on the commercial out parcels on Seaway Drive in front of Harbour Isle. Suffice to say, the plans for Cumberland Farms relocation were denied by the City Commission on the Second Reading. The largest obstacle in the end was the traffic patterns that would require redesigning Seaway Drive to allow for safe turn lanes. There is no doubt that plans for Cumberland Farms will be resubmitted in the near future. Commissioner Tom Perona is asking the residents of South Beach to share their thoughts with City elected officials about how to proceed – redesign Seaway Drive or leave it as is. See the Mayor and Commissioners at the end of the meeting. I suspect that they are interested in the

opinions of those residents who do not reside in Harbour Isle as they have received much feedback from those residents.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the issues of short term and vacation rentals on the Beach. While neighbors within 500 feet are notified when an application for Conditional Use will come before the City Commission, we notify our members prior to such proposals coming before the Planning Board so you can be involved in the process from the beginning. Virtually every monthly email SBA Newsletter contains information on short term/vacation rentals. It is important to know that a short term rental of less than 6 months but longer than 30 days is very different than a vacation rental of less than 31 days – the latter meaning it can be rented like a hotel/motel one day at a time. Vacation rentals have different requirements as they are true commercial enterprises. Also, from the SBA's perspective, the zone in which the property exists makes a difference as well. Zone R4A contains some single family homes but a large number of multifamily residences, some of which have been rental properties for years and the possibility of other semi commercial enterprises as well. Zones 1 and 2 are all single family usually owner occupied dwellings. For that reason the SBA considers Conditional Use application for short term rental to be Neighborhood issues and, as an Association, does not speak for or against. Conditional Use applications in a R1 or 2 zone have the ability to disrupt and are incompatible with the neighborhood and we typically speak in opposition. It is not apparent how anyone would support a hotel/motel in any zone other than Commercial.

There were attempts during last year by the State legislature to further diminish the home rule of Cities and Counties in controlling short term/vacation rentals. None passed. I will speak more about this when I speak about what is projected for 2020 later in the program.

Finally, and on a lighter note, I hoped that you have noticed the colorful wraps that the SBA sponsored on a number of the electrical boxes in selected parks. Last year we did 1 in Surfside, 2 in Fort Pierce Park and one at South Causeway Park. Just recently we have added 2 in the front of Jaycee Park and one at the southern end of Surfside Park. These projects are in keeping with our intent to support public infrastructure and beautifying the Island. If you are a business or a resident with a box in your front yard/property see Charlene Adair at the end of the meeting.