

BEACH COMBER



Welcome Our New Town Clerk...

Tracey Stevens, CMC, joins our team as the new Town Clerk and she has hit the ground running! She is already immersed in Town business including preparations for the upcoming Fall elections, TRIM compliance ("Truth in Millage" ad valorem tax process), records management, organization and archival duties of Town records, and Town Commission / Board & Committee support.



Tracey came to Melbourne Beach from Maine where she was Town Clerk for the Town of Freeport for 3 years, and Town Clerk for the Town of Fairfield for 8 years. Tracey also served as First Vice-President of the Maine Town & City Clerks' Association (MTCCA) and its Legislative Policy Committee Chairperson. She received the prestigious Maine Town Clerk of the Year Award in 2014, along with the MTCCA Presidents Award in 2015. Tracey holds an Associates Degree in Business Administration, is currently a Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) as recognized by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks, and a lifetime Certified Clerk of Maine. She is married and has two daughters and one granddaughter. If you see her around Town, please give her a warm Melbourne Beach welcome!

It's Budget Season!

Your Town Commission, staff and interested citizens will be participating in town-wide scheduled budget workshop sessions over the months of July and August. These discussions, driven by financial data of our revenues and expenses help create the annual budget, which becomes the "blueprint" for operations, priorities and policies in the coming fiscal year (FY16). We encourage you to follow and communicate with staff and elected officials on matters of importance to you and your neighbors so that we may create the best plans possible for the coming year, all the while paying attention to cost efficiencies and our fiduciary responsibility to well manage the town and its functions. We look forward to seeing you at our meetings and working with you in the coming year. All meetings are held at either Town Hall in the Masny Room or at the Community Center.

Budget Meeting	Date/Time
Workshop: Building & Code, Police Dept	July 13 @ 3:00 TH
Workshop: Legislative, Executive, Finance, Legal, Comp Plan, General Government	July 16 @ 3:00 TH
Workshop: Public Works, Fire Department	July 20 @ 3:00 TH
Workshop: Overview, Special Funds, HR, Capital Improvements, Revenues, Proposed Millage	July 23 @ 3:00 TH
Special Meeting to set Maximum Millage	July 23 @ 5:30 TH
Workshop: Overview and follow-up	Aug 10 @ 3:00 TH
First Public Budget Hearing/Stormwater Assessment Roll	Sept 10 @ 6:30 CC
Final Public Budget Hearing/Adopt Budget	Sept 21 @ 6:30 CC

Surfrider, Sea Turtle Conservancy, Certon & Town Partner to “Rise Above Plastics”

Last June, Mike Daniel, a prominent local surfboard shaper and chairman of the Sebastian Inlet chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, approached Mayor Jim Simmons with a question – Would the Town be willing to support a Surfrider and Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) initiative to promote and incentivize voluntary reductions in the use of single-use plastic merchant bags? The local chapter had been approached by Tim Stockton who was seeking to sponsor and proof-test a pilot program in a small town with a small merchant base and Mr. Daniel thought Melbourne Beach would provide the perfect opportunity. (Mr. Stockton is a local surfer and entrepreneur and the CEO of CERTON, Inc. CERTON, headquartered in Indialantic, is an engineering company founded in 2006 by Mr. Stockton to provide innovative tools, technology, and services for safety-critical systems, software, and electronic hardware in the Aerospace, Medical, Transportation, and Energy sectors.)



Surfrider Sebastian Inlet Chairman Mike Daniel presents the first bags to Mayor Jim Simmons and his wife Laurie

Mr. Daniel explained that, because of Melbourne Beach's seaside location and its proximity to the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, it is a prime location for efforts to reduce the use of plastics, in general, and of single-use plastic bags specifically. The Refuge is the most important site for loggerhead sea turtles in the Western Hemisphere and, possibly, the world and has the highest nesting densities in Florida. According to the Sea Turtle Conservancy, the impact of plastics on our marine environment cannot be overstated.

- It is estimated that there are 100 million tons of plastic in oceans around the world. It is expected that another 30 million tons will be produced this year alone, much of which will also end up in our oceans.
- Eighty percent of the plastic debris comes from land. It washes out to sea from our beaches, streets and highways. It flows out through storm drains into streams and rivers. It flies away from landfills and into the stomachs of sea turtles everywhere.
- Over 100 million marine animals are killed each year due to plastic debris in the ocean.
- Sea turtles are especially susceptible to the effects of consuming marine debris due to their bodies' own structure. They have downward facing spines in their throats which prevent the possibility of regurgitation. The plastics get trapped in their stomach, which prevents them from properly swallowing food.
- Sea turtles often mistakenly ingest floating single-use plastic bags due to their uncanny similarity to jellyfish (their primary food source).
- In a study conducted in Brevard and Volusia Counties in Florida, scientists, who examined the gut contents from both living and nonliving stranded loggerhead turtles in those counties, found that 100 percent of the 94 turtles examined had plastics in their gut contents. Another study conducted in the Gulf Stream Sargassum examined dead post-hatchlings which were left stranded following storms in the same area, and found that almost 100 percent of all the turtles examined had suffered from plastic ingestion.

While recycling plastics, including single-use plastic bags, is better than burning them in incinerators or burying them in landfills, even the plastics recycling process is not without harmful effects on human and environmental health. Plastic is melted during the recycling process which causes it to break down and release the chemicals used to make it, including dioxins, into the environment. The best option, according to the EPA is to reduce use. (“Recycle” is only the third best use, after “reuse.”)

At the end of this discussion, Mayor Simmons said he would proudly support such a project and, over the next few months, plans were developed.

The first step in this project was the development of Resolution 2014-10 by the Town's Environmental Advisory Board (chaired by Curtis Byrd), which calls on residents and merchants to “promote efforts to reduce the distribution and use of plastic bags” and to “voluntarily...reduce the use of plastic bags.” The Town Commission approved this resolution in September, 2014 and it was signed by Mayor Simmons on October 7, 2014.

~ Continued on Page 3 ~

~ "Rise Above Plastics" Continued from Page 2 ~

The second step was to develop a way to encourage this voluntary effort. As part of his proposal, Mr. Stockton had generously offered to fund and acquire 3,200 reusable merchant bags for distribution to Town residents. Mr. Stockton, Surfrider (Sebastian Inlet Chapter) and STC sought, and found, a manufacturer who was capable of manufacturing high-quality reusable bags with high-quality graphics. In June 2015, the Town Commission formally appointed Mayor Simmons as the Commission's liaison to this project. Also in June, the reusable bags were delivered and Mike Daniel, Eric Schwarze (Surfrider local "Rise Above Plastics" coordinator), Tim and Kim Stockton (CERTON), Donna Lee Crawford (STC representative) and Mayor Simmons met to determine the best way to distribute these bags. It was quickly decided that the best way to distribute them would be through the Town's merchants. It was also decided that this initiative would be formally kicked off at the Environmental Advisory Board's Popcorn Science session on July 11 (at noon in the Melbourne Beach Library). It is planned that the bags will be available through the Town's merchants shortly thereafter.

In order to ensure that these bags are distributed to Town residents (and that there are enough for all interested residents), the project has asked that the merchants try to ensure that the customer 1) is a resident of the Town, 2) has not already received a bag and 3) will use it in lieu of single-use plastic bags. We also ask that the residents take only one bag per household. The merchants have further committed to keep statistics to determine the total reduction in single-use plastic bags.

As of the writing of this article, 100% of the Town's retail merchants (listed below) have agreed to support this project and to distribute these bags to Town residents. (A limited number will also be available at Town Hall.)

- Melbourne Beach Supermarket
- Saver's Drugs
- Melbourne Beach Exxon
- Nate's Shell Shop
- Catalyst Surf Shop
- Black Dog Bait & Tackle
- Pools R Us
- Oceanside Liquors



At the start of this project, it was hoped that it would lead to similar projects and support in other communities, which it has. Recently, Indialantic, Indian Harbour Beach and Satellite Beach have also expressed interest in developing similar campaigns for their communities. Also, the Environmental Preservation and Conservation committee of the Florida State Senate unanimously passed a bill (in the recently concluded session) which would allow towns of less than 100,000 residents to regulate the use of these bags. (State law currently prohibits local regulation.) Because it was not addressed by the full Senate or the House of Representatives, the bill will be resubmitted next year.

The Town wants to thank the Surfrider Foundation (Sebastian Inlet Chapter), the Sea Turtle Conservancy and CERTON for initiating and implementing this project.

Brevard Schools Foundation Supplies Drive



We all know someone - a friend, family member or neighbor - who has been affected by the economy, but you may not realize that more than 34,000 students, nearly 1 out of 2 of our students, come from families with incomes low enough to qualify for free or reduced lunch. Starting a new school year with a backpack filled with necessary school supplies enables a child to start school prepared and ready to learn. Every child should have the basics, like pencils, folders, and paper, and the goal of the Brevard Schools Foundation is to make that happen. If you would like to make a donation, please stop by the Town Hall collection site.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

See Page 1 for Budget Meeting Schedule



<u>Meeting / Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
History Center Board	July 2	5:30 p.m.	Old Town Hall
Town Hall Closed for Independence Day	July 3		
Firecracker 5K Race	July 4	7:00 a.m.	Honor America Liberty Bell Memorial Museum, Melbourne
Viera's 21st Great American Celebration	July 4	6:30 p.m.	Space Coast Stadium, Melbourne
Melbourne Fireworks Display	July 4	9:00 p.m.	Indian River Lagoon / Front St
South Beaches Coalition	July 6	4:30 p.m.	Town Hall
Planning & Zoning Board	July 7	7:00 p.m.	Community Center
Island Garden	July 8	11:30 a.m.	Community Center
DAR	July 11	9:00 a.m.	Town Hall
Historical Preservation & Awareness Board	July 14	4:00 p.m.	Town Hall
Sea Turtle Preservation Society	July 14	7:00 p.m.	Community Center
Town Commission Regular Meeting	July 15	6:30 p.m.	Community Center
Beach Gardeners	July 21	6:00 p.m.	Community Center
Environmental Advisory Board	July 22	7:00 p.m.	Town Hall
Melbourne Beach Volunteer Fire Dept.	Every Tues.	7:00 p.m.	Town Hall
AA	Every Wed.	7:30 p.m.	Old Town Hall

Town Manager's Report

Tennis

The resurfacing of the Town's Rykman Park Tennis Courts is nearing completion, including new fencing, an additional access gate and other amenities, along with retrofitted light poles. Be on the look out for a "grand reopening" of the courts soon. Thank you to all the effort and contributions from the court users, citizens and MBTA. All contributors will be recognized for the project in the near future.

Town Operations

I hope you notice constant improvement in areas of Town operations. Last month marked my first year here in Melbourne Beach. I welcome feedback to make Melbourne Beach the perfect place to live, work and play, while striving to provide professional and efficient administration. I have an open door policy to meet on any matter (schedule permitting of course); just contact, or visit Town Hall to set up a chat with me... or our great staff!

Financials

The Town is in its annual audit process, which assures we deploy best fiduciary practices and principles running the Town. Town Commission meetings and hearings begin in earnest July 13th and continue through September on a schedule and process of Budget workshops and hearings to craft and finalize the upcoming FY16 Budget, priorities and Capital Expenditure plans for the Town (our fiscal year begins October 1). See our website and postings for the meetings scheduled. We hope you attend to give your input for the coming year.

I always look forward to meeting and getting to know our residents and guests. Have a safe, fun and Happy Fourth of July holiday!

~*Jamie Titcomb*
Town Manager

