

KCB discusses stormwater treatment rate change

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KEY COLONY BEACH — Stormwater treatment rates that need to go on the property owners' annual tax assessments were among the items discussed May 15 at the Key Colony Beach City Commission meeting, which was preceded by a brief meeting to discuss two structure variances requested by two parties. Both passed.

The city's utility board suggested the city raise stormwater assessments for commercial properties. Because stormwater rates go on the tax roll billed by the county tax assessor, the city needs to get the information to the tax assessor soon.

The current rates are \$80 per residence and \$165 for commercial units. Commissioner Tom Harding said the city does not collect enough stormwater fees to do projects so it relies on grants. The fees collect about \$130,000 a year.

Stormwater is rain or water that flows into drains to keep such liquids as motor oil out of the canals and ocean. Because the city cannot measure flow, it relies on a set fee for property frontage that abuts the road. Commercial property has more parking lots and consequently more property frontage, so it was assessed at a higher rate, the city noted.

The commission's discussion of parking lot area and frontage led to the decision to bill all commercial units a flat fee of

\$80, same as residences.

However, the commission recalculated how many units make up each commercial establishment, so that the Glunz property is to be billed for 46, the city 40, the shopping center six, the Cabana Club four and the rest from two to one. The plan takes effect Oct. 1.

The city also approved a resolution supporting the potential solution list of projects within the approved the countywide U.S. 1 Transportation Master Plan. Its goal is to improve traffic flow, alleviate congestion, improve safety and assist in improving the level of service on U.S. 1.



Commissioner Tom DiFrancisco requested the purchase of a "Ranger" be removed from consent for clarification.

The commission approved this purchase of a Polaris golf cart for the building department rather than another vehicle such as a \$60,000 truck.

"Any time after a storm, we're driving carts, not a vehicle," Mayor Freddie Foster said. "The city can put a front and back hitch on it for a city employee to help move trailers. Even for parking, it's convenient (due to its smaller parking space requirements)."

The fire chief shared the department had procured a safe boat with an aluminum hull to be deployed out of city marina. It was \$476,000 and the city had a \$150,000 grant to put toward the purchase.

Staff shared the city's golf course professional has signed a three-month contract that will be more formalized once the city moves forward with a long-term plan for the city's golf course. Also, a basket for basketball has been added to the northeast corner of the tennis court.

City Manager John Bartus reported the city is monitoring what is happening in Tallahassee. "Tourism funds are safe. They're looking at alternatives to property taxes and addressing tourist taxes. We need to have a line item in our budget that allows us to ask for more money. I'll also check when terms are up (on county boards) for information on next appointment opportunities."

Bartus served on the county's District 3 tourism advisory board representing the Middle Keys. He said the county commission appoints these members. "Some have to be tourism-related; others can be at-large so that would be (our) avenue. Your county commissioners are Michelle Lincoln and David Rice."

Foster wanted to pursue additional grants for the city.

"Marathon gets \$250,000 (from state grant funds) yearly to rake their beaches. They have a grant to clean their bathrooms, available to tourists," he said. "Once granted, (the allocation) can be repetitive in the yearly (grant) cycle."

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