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'Aggressive' Hurricane Season Forecast For Gulf Coast
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Four meetings over three days & PUD postponed

BY RYAN WEST
Palacios Beacon-Publisher

Oh what a wild week it was for the City of Palacios after not one, not two, not three, but a total of four meetings in three days with all gazes affixed the proposed Pearl of Palacios PUD (Planned Unit Development).

Over the course of just short of four hours of combined meeting time, a total of 29 citizens voiced their opinions for, against and for a slowdown in the process of creating the proposed PUD, which would consist of 36 acres for the mixed use development, along and near the South Bay waterfront.

However in the end - after a public hearing, a meeting of the Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Commission and two City Council meetings

- the Council returned from a heated executive session, where two members walked out of private talks, and one stormed out of Council's Chambers altogether, during last Thursday's Special called meeting before ultimately postponing the second and final reading of the PUD creation ordinance until its next regular meeting next Thurs. (April 25).

For the what, how and why we got here - let us start at the beginning.

Tuesday Meeting Trifecta

The fun began on April 9 at the City's triple-header meeting with a joint City Council & P&Z public hearing on the proposed Pearl of Palacios PUD.

A trio of presentations were held prior to citizens making their opinions known.

DC Dunham, president of the Palacios Eco-

nomic Development Corp. explained the PUD would be a tool to help recruit development to the community.

"The investment will demonstrate not only that the City is interested, but other investors are interested in our downtown. That'll stimulate other developers too," Dunham noted. "the PUD will help us to recruit housing as well."

"It'll bring attention to Palacios not just from the state of Texas, but global."

Dunham detailed the PUD lay with its western portion a 'working waterfront' industrial area, with the east the boardwalk and residential area, and the 2.2 acres of the PEDC in the middle.

"Historically, (the PEDC land) has always been known as the hotel property," she said.

"The PEDC bought it from the City in 2018 with the idea of recruiting a hotel. We are still trying to do that."

She acknowledged that while the PEDC holds clear title on the property, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. has claim to the property as a dedicated park.

It will take several years before the PEDC will obtain release from TPWD on any obligations required of the City before the contract to sale the property to the Ed Rachal Foundation (ERF) may be executed.

On behalf of the ERF, Richard Weber addressed the audience.

"This is a big deal for us, a huge investment," he said.

Providing background on the ERF, Weber

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Palacios, TX 77465
(361) 972-3009
palaciosbeacon@gmail.com
Website: palaciosbeacon.com

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Seawall joins TIRZ, awards bid on covered shelter project

BY RYAN WEST
Palacios Beacon-Publisher

After months of deliberations and gathering of data the commissioners of the Matagorda Co. - Palacios Seawall Commission agreed to participate in the Palacios area's newest economic tool in the box to attract future development at last week's regular monthly meeting.

With all commissioners present, the Seawall Commission agreed to participate in the City of Palacios TIRZ #1 at the same 80% of future property tax increases within the boundaries as fellow taxing entities - City of Palacios, Matagorda Co., MCND#1, Matagorda Co. Hospital District.

Commissioner Joe Kana was named to be the Commission's representative to the nine-member TIRZ Board. The Commissioners also approved the addition of the ability to opt-out of the TIRZ participation, if after five years no development has either been completed or is in the works.

Covered Shelter Bids

The commissioners opened the three bids received for the covered shelter project to construct two new structures on South Bay.

Commissioners awarded the project to the low bid of *Modern Build* for the amount of \$41,470.

Audit Report

Wade Whitlow, of KM&L, presented the commissioners with the annual audit.

(See SEAWALL, Page 3)



Birdfest flocks into town...

THE annual Matagorda Bay Birdfest had tourists flocking to town for a weekend full educational events, bird tours and the Parade of Birds (and more). (Beacon Photo by Ryan West)

Shrimpers seek rent relief from Port

BY RYAN WEST
Palacios Beacon-Publisher

As the war rages between domestic and foreign shrimp and prices continue to decline, a host of Palacios shrimping operators went fishing for some relief from the commissioners of the Matagorda Co. Navigation District #1 at last week's regular monthly meeting.

Craig Wallis of W&W Dock and David Aparicio of

Anchor Seafood spoke on behalf of fellow shrimping tenants that call the Port of Palacios harbor home.

Wallis urged the commissioners to consider a mulligan on the raise in dock rent rates.

"Consider the regular rent and see if we pull out of this," Wallis said. "Our boats have been docked six months out of the year. Inventory is full and there is no price increases in shrimp."

Aparicio took off his commissioner hat and spoke as a shrimper operator and Port tenant.

"We're spinning our wheels," he said of the domestic shrimping industry. "It's in a bad way right now."

He urged the commissioners to take action to help Palacios' prized shrimping fleet.

"(The Port's) got the money. We're struggling to pay rent like everyone else,"

Aparicio added.

"The US is subsidizing foreign (shrimp) farms. They help a foreign country but not those in the US," he noted. "We can't compete against it."

Port Maintenance contractor Jose Ortiz weighed in on the issue and said, "In my 18 years at the docks, I've never seen this number of boats parked right now."

"It's real," he said of the

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Bi-Partisan Save Our Shrimpers act of 2024 introduced

Press Release Courtesy
Office of Rep. Troy Nehls (TX-22)

Congressman Troy E. Nehls (R-TX-22), along with Congressman Clay Higgins (R-LA-03), Congressman Vicente Gonzalez (D-TX-34), Congressman Garret Graves (R-LA-06), Congressman Mike Ezell (R-MS-04), Congresswoman Nancy Mace (R-SC-01), and Congressman Barry Moore (R-AL-02), recently introduced the bipartisan Save Our Shrimpers Act of 2024.

Our nation's domestic shrimpers are struggling to stay in business primarily because of foreign shrimp being dumped into U.S. markets, making it extremely difficult for shrimpers to continue operating. Sadly, it has been uncovered that U.S. taxpayer dollars are being used to

finance foreign shrimp farm operations through International Financial Institutions (IFIs), such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is contributing to the demise of our nation's shrimping industry.

Federal law USC 262(h) stipulates that the U.S. Department of the Treasury shall instruct United States Executive Directors at International Monetary Institutions to vote against any assistance by such institutions that facilitates an export commodity surplus that causes injury or harm to United States producers. Unfortunately, there have been limited circumstances where the Treasury has been in compliance with this law, and it is difficult to trace how U.S. Executive Directors at IFIs have complied or not complied with this no-vote mandate.

The bipartisan Save Our Shrimpers Act of 2024 would prohibit federal funds from being made available to IFIs to finance any activity relating to shrimp farming, shrimp processing, or the export of shrimp in any foreign country to the United States. Additionally, this legislation would trigger an investigation within the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) and require annual reports to Congress to track how U.S. Executive Directors at IFIs are complying with USC 262(h).

"Due to the global excess capacity and production of farm-raised shrimp and imports, the U.S. market is being overwhelmed and driving shrimp prices down to levels that many shrimpers can-

(See SHRIMP, Page 7)

Bingo fundraiser Thurs. with PISD Educational Foundation

You don't want to miss out on the Palacios ISD Educational Foundation "Bingo Night" on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at the Palacios Recreation Center. Admission to this family friendly event is \$20 per person which includes 10 games of bingo for cash prizes. For \$30, you can add a delicious gourmet hamburger basket meal. Additional sets of Bingo cards can be purchased for \$20 per set or 3 sets for \$50. The doors open at 5:30 PM with the Bingo games starting at 6:30 PM. You will also have the chance to bid on awe-

(See BINGO, Page 3)

• Deadline for Articles, Classified & Display Ads 4:30 p.m. Friday •

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