



# The Abrams Agenda

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Palm Beach County  
Commissioner  
Steven Abrams

## Balloon Ban on Our Beaches

The county's Parks and Recreation Department recently prohibited balloons at any of the 11 Palm Beach County beaches from Boca Raton to Jupiter. The focus is to protect sea turtles that nest on our beaches. The balloons that end up in the ocean resemble jellyfish, which the sea turtles eat. Recently, the Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach has found deflated balloons and other marine debris in the stomachs of hatched sea turtles that have died.



The new rule only applies to 11 county beaches. In South County they include South Inlet Park in Boca Raton, Gulfstream Park and Ocean Inlet Park in Ocean Ridge. Violating Palm Beach County Park rules can carry a fine of up to \$500. Please enjoy your visit to our beautiful beaches but leave the balloons at home!

## Look What's Coming Near PBI

It's no surprise that Palm Beach International Airport (PBI) was recently voted ninth best airport in the United States by the prestigious *Travel & Leisure* magazine and ranked fifth medium airport by J.D. Power 2017 North America Airport Satisfaction Study. These awards are not new to PBI! Over the past \_\_ years, the airport has been consistently recognized.

Palm Beach  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



These awards are not new to PBIA! The airport was the fourth Happiest Airport based on a Fox News Travel survey in 2015 and the sixth Best Airport by Best and Worst Airports in America with Conde Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards 2016 and Best Airport in the US - Trip Advisor 2016, just to name a few.

Coming soon is Drive Shack, a golf entertainment center, to be located at 1600 Belvedere Road (the airport's former cell phone waiting lot). The 12-acre site is being leased by the county to Drive Shack which plans to build a three-story, 61,000-square-foot building that will house 96 hitting bays with room for six players. In addition to physical and virtual targets, there will be technology that analyzes individual swings and trajectory for scoring purposes.

The center will also include a rooftop terrace for having refreshments and socializing and a meeting space for private events. In addition to the income generated by the lease, the project is expected to create 150 to 250 construction jobs and 300 to 250 permanent full- and part-time jobs.

Don't forget to check out the new cell phone waiting lot at the Travel Plaza (southwest corner of Belvedere Road and Florida Mango) where you can get your car washed, fill up the tank, visit Dunkin Donuts or the 7-11 store which features real-time flight information boards.

## Update on Hurricane Irma Response and Aftermath

In the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, seven county non-profits coordinated to provide more than \$700,000 to over 60 organizations - covering the cost of everything from roof repairs to mental health services. They continue to meet in anticipation of future disasters. To see who they are, click: <http://www.yourcommunityfoundation.org/index.cfm>.

The Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County completed its cleanup efforts from Hurricane Irma, which made landfall on September 10, 2017. The final cleanup efforts of nearly 3 million cubic yards of vegetation at an estimated cost of approximately \$33.3 million finished mid-November ahead of schedule as a result of increased collection sites. The 3 million cubic yards of debris collected is equivalent to filling up the Empire State Building! Most of the debris was turned into mulch for use on farmland in western Palm Beach County due to Irma.

Shortly after the hurricane hit, the Board of County Commissioners approved a \$35.5 million loan for the SWA to cover the cleanup expenses. The county expects to receive reimbursement from FEMA of approximately \$31.2 million sometime within the next 12 to 18 months. No increase in the solid waste fee were imposed on unincorporated county homeowners by the SWA.

## BCC Briefs

At the December 19, 2017, Board of County Commissioners meeting, the board took the following action:

Conversion therapy - adopted an ordinance banning the practice of conversion therapy on minors. The intent is to protect the physical and psychological well-being of minors, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or questioning (LGBTQ) youth, from exposure to the serious harms and risks caused by conversion therapy by licensed providers. The ordinance will be applicable in unincorporated areas of Palm Beach County

and in all municipalities that have not adopted an ordinance in conflict.

**Disparity study** – received the Palm Beach County Disparity Study revised final draft report and recommendations of Mason Tillman Associates, Ltd. (MTA), and agreed to defer taking any further action until the January 23, 2018, BCC meeting to allow for adequate review of the summary memorandum/review of the Palm Beach County Disparity Study by Franklin M. Lee of Tydings & Rosenberg, LLP. Staff was directed to extend the MTA contract period for an additional 90 days from the expiration date of the existing contract with potential travel-related expenses required by the county.

**Urgent care** – adopted a resolution approving the issuance of up to \$10 million in revenue bonds by the Michigan Finance Authority for acquisition, construction, improvement and equipping of two Trinity Health Corp. facilities in Boca Raton: Holy Cross West Boca Urgent Care and Imaging Center on State Road 7 and Holy Cross East Boca Urgent Care and Imaging Center on South Federal Highway. No county funds, its taxing power, faith or credit are involved.

**Jupiter Medical Center** – adopted a resolution approving the issuance of up to \$75 million in Palm Beach County Health Facilities Authority revenue bonds to finance the acquisition of land and the acquisition, construction and installation of improvements, facilities and equipment for healthcare facilities on the main campus of Jupiter Medical Center. No county funds, its taxing power, faith or credit are involved.

**Village of Valor** – adopted a resolution approving the issuance of up to \$17 million by the Palm Beach County Health Facilities Authority to finance the costs associated with acquiring, constructing and equipping Village of Valor, a 157-unit multifamily rental housing facility to be located at 2431, 2441, 2559 and 2650 2nd Avenue North in Lake Worth and Palm Springs. No county funds, its taxing power, faith or credit are involved.

**McMurrain Farms** – approved a third amendment to an interlocal agreement with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) for the county's purchase of the district's 60.6 percent interest in the McMurrain Farms property in the Ag Reserve. The county and the district jointly own the 571-acre property. The county will pay a total of \$8,926,380 in three installments of \$2,975,460, each time acquiring one-third of the district's holding. The first installment is due March 31, 2018. SFWMD will continue to manage property until all installments have been paid.

**SHIP** – approved an award of \$567,500 in State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) funds to the Richmond Group of Florida Inc. following an RFP process. The county's Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability (HES) issued the RFP, making \$700,000 in SHIP funds available for a Local Government Areas of Opportunity Funding (LGAOF) grant contribution to multifamily housing developers seeking tax credits from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation 9 Percent Housing Credits Program. These are state funds that require no local match.

**Conservation easement** – approved an assignment of conservation easement to the village of Palm Springs over a 1.28-acre preserve area within a parcel known as the New Light Fellowship Church. The parcel was annexed into the village in 2014, but was never developed. As the county no longer has regulatory authority, it is appropriate to transfer the conservation easement to the village.

**Fire prevention codes** – approved updated Palm Beach County local amendments to the statewide minimum fire safety code, known as the Florida Fire Prevention Code. Some of the recommended changes to the local amendments include increasing fees for plan review and inspections.

**Building codes** – approved an ordinance adopting county amendments to the Florida Building Code for turf and landscape irrigation systems, and repealing and re-adopting an updated FBC 6th Edition (2017) Appendix F of the FBC-Plumbing volume regulating new

irrigation systems, which will help to conserve water and protect the public water supply.

Roads - approved a joint participation agreement and with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in the amount of \$5.385 million to reimburse for staff time and land acquisition and management costs associated with maintaining mitigation areas in the Loxahatchee Slough, Pond Cypress, and Pine Glades natural areas consistent with the management practices of the Natural Areas Program and in accordance with the state and federal permits for the SR-7 Extension. The board also approved the annual update to the county's five-year road program.

Water main - confirmed a special assessment for installation of a potable water main to serve 12 residential properties on 52<sup>nd</sup> Court North in The Acreage and authorized a work order with Johnson-Davis Inc. in the amount of \$116,480.



**If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact my office at 561-355-2204 or email at [sabrasm@pbcgov.org](mailto:sabrasm@pbcgov.org).**

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