



The Abrams Agenda

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Palm Beach County
Commissioner
Steven Abrams

Turtle nesting season What you need to know

March 1 was the official start of the sea turtle nesting season in Palm Beach County, and the experts are predicting another good year ahead. After epic migrations at sea around the world, loggerhead sea turtles return to almost the exact spot



where they were born to mate and lay their own eggs. Reportedly, this is based on the coastline's magnetic signature, which the turtle remembers and uses as an internal compass.

Our county is one of Florida's most important loggerhead nursery areas in the Western Hemisphere. Every year, thousands of loggerhead, leatherback and green sea turtles come ashore to nest on our beaches resulting in over 2 million hatchlings!

The process starts when the female sea turtle crawls ashore at night to dig a nest, deposit her eggs, cover the nest and return to the water. While on the beach, sea turtles are timid and vulnerable and can be easily frightened away, if disturbed. It takes from one to three hours for the female turtle to lay between 80 to 120 eggs (shaped like a ping pong ball).

The nests are located approximately 18 inches below the surface, and are generally found above the high-tide line on the dry beach. Eggs and nest must remain undisturbed in the

warm sand for 47 to 60 days before they hatch. The majority of the hatching occurs from July through September and hatchlings usually emerge from their nests as a group at night. In a natural situation, they crawl down the beach to the water where they must swim for many hours to reach the open sea.

Unfortunately, thousands of hatchlings die every year in their attempt to reach the water. Instinctively, newly hatched sea turtles follow the natural light reflected on the water by the moon and waves. However, they become disoriented by artificial light from homes, businesses, street lights and cars, and crawl in the wrong direction. Consequently, they die from exhaustion, dehydration, predators and debris.

Here are some simple tips to help protect sea turtles:

- Beaches must be free of debris and potential obstacles. Sea turtles have poor vision on land and cannot go backwards. Many times, they return to sea without nesting if an obstacle is encountered.
- Do not disturb sea turtles, nests or eggs; it's against the law.
- If you encounter a nesting turtle, keep lights off, remain still and keep your distance.
- Turn off coastal lights and keep flashlights and phones off while on the beach at night.
- Keep pets away from nesting females, nests and hatchlings.
- Do not disturb nest markers. Numerous organizations including the county's Environmental Resource Department monitors sea turtles.
- Operate your boat with caution. Sea turtles are found offshore, nearshore and inshore and have to surface to breathe.

Sea turtle facts:

- Sea turtles are among the oldest creatures on earth, unchanged for over a million years.
- Sand temperature can determine gender. For example, cooler sand tends to produce male hatchlings.

Source: National Geographic

Supervised sea turtle walks are available at locations throughout Palm Beach County such as Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton. For more information on sea turtles and walks, visit <http://discover.pbcgov.org/erm/Publications/SeaTurtleWalks>.

How you can help save lives

PulsePoint Respond is an app that works on Apple and Android smart phones designed to improve survival rates through improved bystander participation in administering CPR to victims of sudden cardiac arrest.



App users who have indicated they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and are willing to assist in case of an emergency can now be notified if someone nearby is having a cardiac arrest emergency and may require CPR. If the cardiac arrest emergency is in a public place, the location-aware application will alert trained citizens in the vicinity of the need for bystander CPR, simultaneous with the dispatch of Fire Rescue. The application also directs these citizen rescuers to the exact location of the closest publicly accessible Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

- PulsePoint Respond is a mobile app that alerts CPR-trained citizens to someone nearby having a sudden cardiac arrest.
- The app is activated when our communications center dispatches Fire Rescue resources.
- The purpose of the app is to increase the survival rates of cardiac arrest victims by reducing collapse-to-CPR times by increasing citizen awareness of cardiac arrest events.
- Reducing collapse-to-defibrillation times by increasing awareness of public access defibrillator (AED) locations through real-time mapping of nearby devices.

- The PulsePoint app is only activated if the event is occurring in a public place.
- In addition to the life-saving CPR/AED functionality, the app provides a live scanner to view fire rescue activity in the county, offering a unique opportunity for civic engagement.

For information on signing up: <http://www.pulsepoint.org/download/>

Free spring "Adventure Awaits" events

Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Resources Management (ERM) invites the public to experience the wild beauty of the county's natural areas through its 11th season of the free event series, Adventure Awaits. With 12 events scheduled in April and May, there are many opportunities to interact with ERM



naturalists as they lead hiking and paddling tours, and host nature photography workshops.

Other events this season include two swamp tromps, a butterfly hike, Growing Up Wild – A Bug's Life where kids learn about bugs on the trail, and a native plant identification hike.

The Adventure Awaits series encourages residents to explore their own backyard. Adventures vary in level from beginner to more advanced, and each is a different experience. Space is limited, and advanced registration is required for all events.

The schedule for Adventure Awaits and other activities is on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PBCERM/events. To reserve your spot for an event, please visit pbcerm.eventbrite.com.

For more information on Palm Beach County's natural areas, please call (561) 233-2400 or visit www.pbcgov.com/erm, or follow ERM on Facebook and Instagram @PBCERM.

BCC Briefs

At the April 10, 2018, Board of County Commissioners meeting, the board took the following action:

Palm Tran – approved a contract amendment with Fisher & Phillips, LLP, increasing the not-to-exceed amount from \$75,000 to \$125,000 for specialized professional services in the area of collective bargaining agreement negotiations and related labor and employment matters for Palm Tran. The board also approved an FTA grant application of \$1.616 million to fund a portion of the construction for the expansion of Palm Tran's South County administrative and maintenance facility, which is currently at full capacity.

Transportation – approved an amendment to the interlocal agreement with the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) extending the term of the agreement one year to September 30, 2019, and providing for the termination of county legal services upon execution of a contract with outside counsel.

Hurricane preparedness – directed staff to research regulations pertaining to tree and vegetation placement standards and trimming intended to mitigate damage to electrical utility lines and facilities during severe storms.

Housing – adopted an updated resolution and guidelines for the Impact Fee Affordable Housing Assistance Program.

SHIP – adopted a resolution approving the amended Local Housing Assistance Plans (LHAP) for Fiscal Years 2013-2016 and 2016-2019 as required by the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program Act.

Brooks Subdivision – approved acquisition of four residential lots and the adjacent drainage easement in the Brooks Subdivision site located in Riviera Beach and authorized an expenditure of up to \$120,000. Brooks Subdivision is a single-family affordable housing development that was never completed and remains vacant. It is comprised of 22 lots, including 18 lots already owned by the county.

Tuscan Gardens – approved the issuance of up to \$69 million in revenue bonds, inclusive of \$36.245 million from an application approved by the BCC pursuant to a TEFRA public hearing on December 20, 2016, and \$32,755,000 from the 2018 application. Bond proceeds will be used to finance, refinance or reimburse all or part of the costs of the acquisition, construction, pre-development, installation and equipping of a senior living facility in unincorporated Delray Beach. No county funds, its taxing power, faith or credit are involved.

Small business – approved an interlocal agreement among Palm Beach County, the city of West Palm Beach, and the School Board of Palm Beach County for certification of small and/or minority/women-owned business enterprises to simplify the certification process and reduce the volume of paperwork required for certification.

Project Zeus 2 – conceptually approved a cash incentive not to exceed \$301,000 and an ad valorem tax exemption not to exceed \$1.548 million over an eight-year period for Project Zeus 2. The company is considering expanding operations in Palm Beach County or Georgia. The project will invest \$100.4 million to build a new facility, renovate an existing facility, and equip both. It will create 215 new jobs over a five-year period at an annualized average wage of \$91,124; estimated five-year local economic impact is \$551 million.

Pioneer Park – approved a project cooperation agreement with O.B. Pioneer Park, LLC for the design, permitting and construction of Orange Bowl Field at Glades Pioneer Park in Belle Glade and approved a budget transfer of \$1.5 million from general fund contingency reserves to match a legacy gift from the orange Bowl Committee.

Fire Rescue – approved atypical development costs associated with the proposed acquisition of a 5.09-acre vacant parcel of land in unincorporated western Delray Beach for the development of a Fire Rescue station. The proposed site lies just east of the Lyons Road/Linton Boulevard intersection and is currently being used as a plant nursery.

Contractors Certification – approved four positions for the Building Division to be utilized in the Contractors Certification Division. The three senior clerk typists and one field investigator will focus on state contractors registration and unlicensed contractors. The positions will be funded by the Building Division.

Resilience – ratified the appointment of Megan Houston as the Office of Resilience director.



If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact my office at 561-355-2204 or email at sabrams@pbcgov.org.
