

Palm Beach County Commission District 4



From the desk of
Commissioner Robert S. Weinroth



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County's campaign to help homeless Veterans



The Board of County Commissioners recently kicked off a campaign to help homeless veterans obtain housing. Various organizations and nonprofits are working together to help an estimated 100 homeless veterans in the county find the necessary services to get them off the streets.

Palm Beach County's Homeless Continuum of Care is working with the West Palm Beach Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Stand Down House and Faith, Hope, Love, Charity to accomplish this.

The campaign is utilizing county groups to identify the vets and their needs and prioritizing those needs. Teams will go into parks and other public areas where homeless are known to live. They will also work with veterans already known to the organization. If you or someone you know needs assistance, please have them contact our office at 561-276-1220.

Let's talk trash!



The Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County (SWA) is responsible for handling more than 2.1 million tons of residential and commercial garbage, recyclables and sludge annually and the process is impressive!

The Board of County Commissioners also serves as the SWA's Governing Board which generally meets every two months. As a new commissioner, my staff and I recently visited SWA's Renewable Energy Park and witnessed, first hand, the operation of these world-class facilities.

The county has two renewable energy facilities. The first has been operating for over 30 years, processing more than 23 million tons of garbage. The second facility was commissioned in July of 2015 and has processed over 3 million tons of garbage and is considered one of the most advanced and cleanest waste-to-energy power plants operating in the United States today.

In 2018, these facilities processed almost 2 million tons of garbage, producing enough electricity to power more than 74,000 homes (or all the homes in the cities of Boca Raton and Palm Beach Gardens). The electricity was sold to Florida Power & Light which resulted in more than \$36 million in revenue. In addition, over 54,000 tons of metal was recovered at these facilities producing almost \$3 million in revenue. Consequently, this revenue offsets the cost to county residents.

Moreover, these facilities will continue to produce clean, renewable energy for decades to come while creating a smaller impact on our environment. The Environmental Protection Agency considers waste-to-energy as one of the most clean, reliable and renewable energy sources with environmentally favorable technologies attributes such as:

- **Trash-to-energy technology makes it virtually impossible to detect any smell or visible smoke when the garbage is incinerated**
- **Ash generated by the burning consumes less capacity in the land fill, resulting in a 90 percent volume reduction**
- **A new separate sorting facility recovers more than 27,000 tons of recycled, marketable ferrous and nonferrous metals annually**
- **The facilities include a water conservation and recycling system that includes a unique 2-million gallon rainwater collection system that provides a substantial portion of the water necessary to operate the facility**

SWA also has an education/visitors center providing children and other visitors the opportunity to tour the facility and enjoy interactive programs. If you would like more information or would be interested in scheduling a tour, please contact our office at 561-355-2204, and we would be happy to make the arrangements.

Recycling: How it's changing

More than 9 billion pounds of materials (such as metals, plastic and paper products) have been recycled through the SWA since 2003,

generating more than \$136 million in revenue. Since SWA implemented its Recycling Revenue Share Program with cities in 2010, it has shared over \$9.5 million with partnering municipalities.

While incoming volume has not declined, the tonnage has. Newspapers, plastic bottles and aluminum cans are a smaller portion of the recyclable material processed

by the SWA. Bottles and cans are lighter, and newspapers have gotten smaller. The amount of plastic in a bottle has been reduced by 58 percent since 2005, and the amount of aluminum in a can has declined 35 percent since 1988.

Additionally, the selling prices for these items has declined. The SWA collects about 101 million pounds of paper and cardboard a year. In the past, they received up to \$100 per ton, but today the paper is selling for approximately \$20 to \$70 per ton and cardboard for approximately \$80 to \$90 per ton.

While it is important for our residents to continue to recycle, using their blue and yellow recycling bins correctly, anything disposed of in the regular garbage stream is recycled into energy or recovered as metals in the waste-to-energy facilities.



Local unemployment rate falls to 28-year low



A recent report from CareerSource Palm Beach County indicated the unemployment rate in the county has dropped to 3 percent, the lowest county unemployment rate since 1990.

More impressive is the fact that there are more job openings in the county than unemployed people. There were over 31,000 job openings in November as opposed to 22,225 unemployed people. During 2018, the county gained over 19,000 jobs.

CareerSource, which is chartered by the state of Florida, has a dedicated team of career counselors, business coaches and training providers. They also help area businesses stay competitive through training grants and talent acquisition. Job seekers find new jobs through career assessments, training and resume and interview workshops. For more information, visit [CareerSource Palm Beach County](#).

BCC Briefs



At the January 15, 2019, Board of County Commissioners meeting, the board took the following action:

Impact Fees – continued to the April 16 BCC meeting adoption of an ordinance amending the Unified Land Development Code regarding impact fees for county parks, fire-rescue services, libraries, law enforcement, public buildings, roads and schools.

Census – approved establishment of the 2020 Census Complete Count Committee composed of governmental and community leaders and organizations to increase awareness and motivate residents to respond to the

Solar Together – authorized pre-registration in FPL’s Solar Together program, which enables large-scale energy users to share in the benefits of off-site solar energy production.

Workforce Housing – approved the creation of two temporary positions within the Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability to intake, process, underwrite and close homebuyer files through the Workforce Housing Program, and a budget transfer of \$100,000 from the general fund contingency reserves.

HOME – approved HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) program funding awards of \$802,121 for the Isles of Pahoee II and \$343,765 to Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. These are federal funds that require a 25 percent local match provided by state SHIP funds.

MobileHelp – approved a grant agreement in the amount of \$45,000 over six years with MobileHelp, LLC, previously known as Project Mercury. The medical emergency response service company is required to make a minimum capital investment of \$3.6 million to lease, renovate, and equip a 41,000-square-foot facility, create 150 new jobs over a three-year period, and retain 198 existing full-time jobs. The five-year economic impact is estimated at \$295 Million.

ASC – approved an interlocal agreement with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County for the period January 15, 2019 through January 14, 2020 and funding in the amount of \$1 million to establish the Addiction Stabilization Center (ASC). The facility will have an emergency room for lifesaving overdose intervention and behavioral health services to assist patients in addressing their addiction moving forward.

Home caregivers – approved on first reading and to advertise for public hearing on February 5 a series of amendments to the Home Caregiver Ordinance. They include prohibiting the advertisement of caregiver services without a valid home caregiver ID badge; requiring home care businesses to have each home caregiver provide proof of a valid ID badge; adding a verification option for level two background checks; and extending exemptions to court appointed guardians.

Victims of crime – adopted a resolution repealing and replacing Resolution No. R2014-1097, expanding the uses of Victims of Crime Emergency Support Fund. The fund provides emergency financial assistance to victims of crime, surviving family members and their families, staff training and development and awareness/recognition events.

Addison Reserve – approved the placement FPL and AT&T utility easements over a 4,500-foot right of way for Linton Boulevard and abandonment of any public interest in the abandonment site located north of Clint Moore Road and east of the turnpike in the Addison Reserve Country Club.

Parks – adopted an ordinance amending Chapter 21 of the Palm Beach County Code (Ordinance 2011-003) pertaining to Parks and Recreation to conform to state law and provide better management of park property.

Tennis – approved a concessionaire lease agreement with Rick Macci Tennis Academy for the operation of a tennis, racquetball and pro shop concession at Burt Aaronson South County Regional Park for \$18,000 per year (\$1,500 per month) for the period of January 15, 2019 through January 14, 2039.

Palm Tran – adopted a resolution approving a grant application in the amount of \$1,218,851 for capital assistance under grants for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities for the acquisition of 16 replacement paratransit vehicles. The local match requirement is available in Palm Tran’s approved budget for FY2019.

Tina’s Café – granted a 12-month lease extension to LJL Food Management, Inc., operator of Tina’s Café in the County Governmental Center parking garage.

United Way – announced that Palm Beach County employees raised a record \$643,000 for the 2018 United Way of Palm Beach County campaign. It was the most money raised by a public sector entity in the state.

