

ST. ARMANDS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

**March 6, 2007 Board Meeting
Lido Grille, St. Armands Circle
Private Meeting Room
4:30 – 6:30 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Rex - President, Manuel Chepote, Deb Cusano, David Day, Buck Fry, Jan Haynes, Marlene Lancaster, Michael Losey, Martin Wilhelm and Earl Scott.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Hytham Bakr, Jim Grace, Joanna Grace, Ron Hermann and Ed Pinto. (All excused)

GUESTS: Jesse Hannan, Michele Mician, Lt. Wade McVay, Thelma Pippin and Commissioner Ken Shelin.

1. CALL TO ORDER: President Bill Rex called the meeting to order at 4:30 P.M

2. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MINUTES – A motion to approve was made by Earl Scott and seconded by Michael Losey.

3. TREASURY REPORT – Buck Fry, Treasurer, presented the treasury report. He reported account balances in Checking, \$6,305.79, Savings, \$2,433.14 and CD \$6,063.04 equaling total assets of \$14,801.97. Expenditures were paid for Annual Dinner related items and a website development payment of \$613.45 to Computer Network.

4. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

A. SOS (Save our Statues) – Ed Pinto is away on a business trip to Taiwan and is planning to visit the statue works in Beijing while in Asia. He will observe the quarry and manufacturing process to verify the quality of the statues being considered. If purchased, he may revisit again in early fall to inspect the product prior to shipment. Bill Rex indicated that Ed will probably need reimbursement for some travel expenses he incurs and it may add up to \$5,000.00. This raises the question of the Association’s ability to grant money directly to the SOS Project under our tax structure. Ed is investigating the tax deductibility mechanism to comply with IRS regulations. Current pledges are now in the \$75,000.00 range with some donors willing to offer more if needed. Commissioner Ken Shelin raised the issue of City approval of the project based on Historic Preservation issues. Replacement or moving of the current statues could negate St. Armand’s Historic District status. He cautioned the Board to follow protocol before purchasing the statues. It is possible that the City and Ringling may have “bone yards” with authentic originals in storage and this option has not been explored. Michele Mician updated the Board regarding discussions with Clifford Smith from the City’s Historic Preservation Department. If purchased, he would recommend going to Italy, the original source for selected statues. However, the cost could be as much

as four times that of the Chinese product. Mike Losey commented that the Chinese statues were purported to be of equal quality. Martin Wilhelm suggested that the cost was secondary to quality when dealing with art and the Italian product should be considered. Martin also raised the question of where SOS ranked in our project priority list.

B. Neighborhood Coordinator, Michele Mician, asked for feedback on the Sarasota Marathon and received positive comments from the Board. She urged participation in City Hall at the Farmers' Market on March 10th and the Florida Neighborhood Conference June 14-16, 2007.

C. Lt. Wade McVay reported three recent burglaries on St. Armands. Two were vehicular and one was from a garage in the SW Quadrant. He reminded us to keep garage doors closed and circulated suspects' photos and alerts related to recent crime in the area. He urged calling him for anything on his cell (915-1697).

D. A sign-up sheet was circulated to the Board to choose their committee preferences for 2007. Due to low attendance at the meeting the list has not been completed. Absent members should indicate their preference to Bill Rex so that committees can convene.

E. Earl Scott reported on the status of the traffic calming project. The City postponed approval late on Feb. 20th due to a question of which residents are entitled to comment on the plan. The City Engineering Dept. has scheduled another Traffic Calming Task Group meeting on March 20th at St. Armands Lutheran Church. Interested residents are welcome.

F. Web Site – Jim Grace reported that our web site is refreshed and up and running again. Please send news of upcoming meetings, events and dates of importance to him for inclusion in the calendar. A new feature “Focus on St. Armands” will highlight interesting people, issues and events. Send related items and photos to Jim (by email).

G. Jim Grace reported that he presented the case for sinking power lines to about 60 residents of Plymouth Harbor and received support from them. A well prepared presentation was made to the Citizen's Penny Tax Review Board requesting funds for the project but the request has been denied by the County Commission. At this point, support has also been garnered from the LMR, Lido, Mote and the John Ringling Causeway Committee. The project will be considered further at upcoming meetings.

H. Joanna Grace is awaiting approval on a list of trees requested for the Tree Canopy Program. The request includes Royal, Foxtail, Adonidia and Coconut Palms and Royal Poinciana, Mahogany and Weeping Podocarpus Trees.

I. Deb Cusano is working on the Annual Breakfast tentatively planned for April 14th. A new location is being considered.

J. Michael Losey reported on two grants. The \$5,000.00 SWFWMD grant for irrigation shut-off devices has only drawn 3 requests and the \$2,500.00 City Grant for SOS has been tabled pending approval by the Arts Committee.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

A. A letter has been sent to Dale Rohde, Manager of the Lido Grille, thanking him for his kind reception and granting us the meeting room.

B. Other Correspondence – Letter received from Mr. and Mrs. DeMichael regarding water in the street. Bill Rex responded.

6. REPORTS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED

A. CCNA – Manuel Chepote attended the last CCNA meeting on March 3rd and distributed the City Neighborhood Partnership Office Brochure. This information describing the services they provide will be on our website. There will be a public hearing on March 19th on the School Ave. development and on April 2nd on maintaining the integrity of the comprehensive plan. Scholarships are available to attend the Neighborhood USA Conference, May 23-26 in Baton Rouge, LA.

B. BID- Bill Rex reported the proposed two neck-outs: North median (leading to LBK) and east median (leading to downtown) bid came in high. Chairman Rappaport is researching their budget for extra funding to accompany the City contribution.

C. LMR-Major meeting including LBK City Mgr. and Lido Shores residents to discuss traffic on the Circle. Ed Pinto received support for the SOS project.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN – 6:30 P.M. made by Michael Losey and seconded by Jan Haynes

Respectfully submitted by Jan Haynes, Secretary

