



Alliance of Brunswick County Property Owners Associations
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The 2014 short session was focused primarily of budgetary issues and as you know caused quite a bit of consternation among the Republican controlled House and Senate as well as with the Governor. One piece of legislation involved with the transfer of declarant rights passed that made the Planned Unit Development Act similar to the Condominium Act and was sponsored by the Lawyer's lobby as well as CAI.

We were fortunate this year to add four new members to the organization bringing our total membership to 20 representing about 15,000 residents in Brunswick County. My conversations with County leaders support our contention that we are a force to be recognized both in attempting to improve the overall quality of life as well as at the ballot box. The continued support of the member HOAs and POAs is a very important part of this effort as we try and exercise influence over the local legislative process.

As we have in the past we continue to monitor the County's budgeting process through attendance at the county staff budget presentations and requests. We are probably the only outside group that monitors the process, with the exception of the news media, and this is recognized by both the Commissioners and County staff.

This year we will be hosting our 6th biennial "Meet the Candidates Night" at Brunswick Community College on October 21, 2014. WE have had great success in obtaining commitments from candidates for County, State and the U.S. Congress. This year for the first time we will have the two candidates for the Chief Justice of the NC Supreme Court, may prove to be an interesting session. We have always had a strong show of support from our members and we hope that you will encourage your members to attend. Remember these people are spending our money and we might want to know where they stand on the issues. Our host for this event will be Jon Evans news anchor for WECT and if you have seen Jon at this and many other venues you know that he is able to use his interviewing skills to keep the candidates on track with their answers.

Arbor Creek, Bent Tree, Brick Landing, Brunswick Plantation, Devaun Park, Holden Beach West, Lakes of Lockwood, Lockwood Folly, Meadowlands, Ocean Ridge, Oyster Harbour, Palmetto Creek, River Run, River Sea, Rivers Edge, Sandpiper Bay, Seascape, Sea Trail, St James, Winding River

One activity that has our attention is the lack of water pressure in some areas of the county which can possibly result in low water pressure for our fire equipment. The Fire & Safety Committee has been investigating this issue and talking with county officials to see what improvements need to be made and within what timeframe. Our next step will be to talk with a number of the departments to see how we can best support their efforts in this area.

Our Insurance Committee has been diligently following the progress of requested raises in insurance rates and has provided an overview of the many steps that need to be taken as well as his view of what may happen. Unfortunately, things do not look good on this front for Brunswick County homeowners and we can expect some type of increase when policies renew in 2015. Trying to change the process in NC literally requires a change in the NC Constitution as the Insurance Commissioner is an elected position and draws his authority from the Constitution.

A part of the overall insurance conundrum is the common practice now employed by most carriers to issue a "Consent to Rate" letter to their policy holders. This letter gives the insurance companies the ability to charge rates above what is authorized assuming you agree, if not then the company can decline to renew your policy. Bit of a "Catch 22."

The request for a sales tax increase to fund school improvements as well as beach re-nourishment failed during the last election. The ABCPOPA did provide a venue for both the County Commissioners and the school administration to make their case. While they are prohibited from any kind of a "publicity" program they are allowed to make their case to various groups in the County.

We have followed the status of various transportation projects in our area, while we could use more help the funds continue to be limited. The State has started a new program of scoring projects trying to get away from the old way of doing things with those with the most political clout getting the majority of the funding. This cycle will be the first using the new systems and we will have to wait and see the results.

Our by-laws were revised so that we can have Condominium Associations as members assuming they meet the other criteria for membership. This will give us another opportunity to expand our influence both within the county as well as at the state level.

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We have started a project looking at reserve account bench marking. This is an area of prime importance to the financial side of the each of our communities. Assuming we are able to provide this benchmark we would make it available to all our members.

2015 will certainly see a large number of bills that will affect our Associations. Areas such as manager licensing or credentialing; “consumer” protection laws involving HOAs and POAs; rights of HOAs & POAs to use foreclosure as a last resort are some of the many issues that will be considered by our legislature. Our active involvement with the Communities Association Institute Legislative Action Committee in addition to contact with our County Commissioners and State legislators is a twofold approach to ensure that the needs of our Associations are considered.

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