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**Comic strip by Bruce Norris**  
www.artbybrucenorris.com

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**South Beach Sun**  
P.O. Box 44  
Indian Rocks Beach, FL  
33785  
www.suntramedia.com

# The battle continues for waterfront condo owners

**Proposed increase in submerged land fees has Tierra Verde on the attack**

By Sharon Lee Schroeder  
SOUTH BEACH SUN

TIERRA VERDE - Florida Homeowners for Fair Treatment, Inc. (FHFT), a not-for-profit corporation based in Tierra Verde, was formed to prevent the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) from increasing submerged land lease fees statewide. Terri Pentek, the coalition leader and president of FHFT and president of the Anchor Cove Condominium Association

in Tierra Verde, has been instrumental in the effort to thwart the FDEP in their pursuit of higher taxes.

In 2008, the FDEP proposed changes to Chapter 18-21 of the Florida Administrative Code (FAC). These changes meant that Florida homeowners would end up paying more under the misnomer Fee Simplification, as high as four times the current rates. With a concerted effort that involved FHFT mass mailings, email blasts and phone calls, the



Anchor Cove Condominium dock and boat slips

**FHFT will continue its effort to ensure that Florida homeowners receive equitable treatment. Their goals for legislation include the following:**

Non-profit multi-family condominium association and single-family docks and boat slips should have their own set of rules and not be included with revenue-generating commercial marina docks and boat slips.

The rules for all residential (multi-family and single-family) docks and boat slips in 18-21 FAC need to be rewritten so as to provide homeowners living in multi-family homes with the equivalent fair rights of access as homeowners living in single-family homes.

All residential homeowners (multi-family and single-family) should be guaranteed their fair rights of access to navigable waters.

Eliminate the 6 percent tax levied on the value of any boat slip that is sold as part of a non-profit residential condominium as well as the 6 percent tax on condo maintenance fees.

measure was defeated last fall, and again in the 2009 Legislative session. However, a similar bill will likely be introduced in the 2010 session. If a similar bill passes, condo associations can expect huge increases in next year's lease fees.

Pentek said the proposed

bill for her condominium complex would have changed from its current fee of \$16,000 to approximately \$72,000. All condo owners, whether or not they own docks at Anchor Cove, would have to pay their part of that increased cost in their maintenance fees. Virtually all single-family

residences are exempt but private multi-family residences and commercial marinas are not.

FHFT plans to work on legislation to exempt all private residences, single-family and multi-family, from what they feel are unfair and discriminatory fees.

## St. Pete Beach to hold budget workshops and hearings

Preliminary budget findings to be discussed at upcoming meetings

By Sharon Lee Schroeder  
SOUTH BEACH SUN

ST. PETE BEACH - A preliminary budget for St. Pete Beach has been completed by

the finance and budget commission. The budget particulars were discussed at two separate meetings. Findings were presented to the St. Pete Beach City Commission, and

now will be discussed at public budget workshops. The public workshops are scheduled for Aug. 6 and 10 at 3 p.m., with the possibility of another date, if needed.

Upon completion of the workshop schedule, there will be public hearings on Sept. 3 and 21, at 6:30 p.m. Both workshops and hearings will be conducted in the

commission chambers on the first floor of city hall at 155 Corey Ave. Public comments are welcome at both the workshops and hearing meetings.

## Gulfport proposes annexation of area adjacent to South Pasadena

Residents voice their opposition at council meeting

By Greg Stemm  
SOUTH BEACH SUN

GULFPORT - At their July 21 meeting, Gulfport City Council voted to pass an ordinance that will help pave the way for the city's planned annexation of an unincorporated area south of Gulfport Boulevard, adjacent to the city limits of South Pasadena. The proposed annexation area is generally bordered on the north by Gulfport Boulevard, on the south by Boca Ciega Bay, on the west by Oleander Way

and on the east by Royal Palm Drive South, including portions of Pasadena Yacht and County Club, Pelican Creek Village Condominium, the Middle Kingdom Condominium, the Golfview Condominium and Sunketch Townhouses. The area comprises about 171 acres.

The crowded council chamber seemed to be full of people mostly opposed to the idea of annexation. Several people raised issues regarding differences in costs, services, regulations

and ordinances. "I've lived in the area which is being proposed as an annexation area for 41 years," said Bill Israel. "We've always been good neighbors and friends with Gulfport, but you've kind of surprised us with a marriage proposal. What works well in a friendship may or may not work in a marriage."

However, several people did speak in support of the ordinance, reminding people that this ordinance simply allowed for a referendum to take place where

residents could express their support or opposition.

On Jan. 9, 2009, city council had given direction to staff to begin preparations for this attempt at annexation. The ability to serve report was presented in accordance with Florida statutes and was accepted by council on May 5.

This annexation ordinance is subject to a referendum, which is scheduled for Nov. 3 with a proposed enactment date of Jan. 1, 2010. Should the referendum fail, the ordinance will not be effective.

## Three appointed to Senior Citizens' Advisory Committee

GULFPORT - Gulfport City Council approved the appointment of three new members to serve on the Senior Citizens' Advisory Committee. The committee consists of nine members, who each serve a three-year term.

Appointed are Babette Coppola, Mary Stull and Frances Haney. All are scheduled to serve through July 2012.