



2019 Community Advocacy Agenda

Local Agenda Items

Municipality: **Tierra Verde, South Pasadena, St. Pete. Beach, Treasure Island, Madeira Beach, Redington Beach, North Redington Beach, Redington Shores, Indian Shores, Indian Rocks Beach, Belleair Beach, Belleair Shores & Belleair Bluffs**

Agenda Item: **Beach Renourishment**

*Local issue decided by state and federal government

Agenda Item Description: Over time our beaches suffer loss of beachfront as a natural result of storms and hurricanes. Renourishment projects in Pinellas County have been approved and secured proper permits, however, state and federal officials need to secure adequate funding. The county pays 20%, the state pays 20% and the Federal government pays 60%. The Army Corps of Engineers continuously assess the cost of renourishing the beaches after the damage is incurred. However, there is always a possibility that our beaches might not receive the necessary funding.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for state and federal funding towards beach renourishment including erosion mitigation projects. Beach renourishment and erosion mitigation projects are essential for protecting our award-winning beaches and maintaining a strong and prosperous local economy. The beaches are essential in our efforts to continue breaking tourism records year over year. Without our award-winning beaches, Pinellas County would not be the tourist destination it is today.

Useful Resources:

- More Information - www.VisitStPeteClearwater.com
- Pinellas County Coastal Management - www.pinellascounty.org
- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Urge state and federal elected officials to secure adequate funding for our beach renourishment projects.

Municipality: **Tierra Verde, South Pasadena, St. Pete. Beach, Treasure Island, Madeira Beach, Redington Beach, North Redington Beach, Redington Shores, Indian Shores, Indian Rocks Beach, Belleair Beach, Belleair Shores & Belleair Bluffs**

Agenda Item: **Business Development**

Agenda Item Description: A growing number of businesses have had difficulty doing business due to burdening regulations. Business owners also receive conflicting information from municipal staff, commissioners and city managers. This can delay work or add additional work drastically increasing the time-frame and cost for the business owner. Furthermore, some regulations already on the book have unintended consequences that actually prevent business owners from updating or improving their property.

Current Status: The TBBCoC advocates for a streamlined, consistent process to open a business allowing business owners to invest in our community. Burdensome regulations that prevent business owners from upgrading or improving their property need to be reduced or eliminated.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Work with all forms of government to reduce burdening regulations, provide new business orientation and provide consistent messaging for city staff. Work with municipalities to include business input when updating regulations.

Municipality: St. Pete. Beach, Treasure Island and Madeira Beach

Agenda Item: Economic Development

Agenda Item Description: A majority of our accommodations were built 50 years ago or more and are outdated (sewage, electrical, ADA, FEMA, room size, amenities, etc). Therefore, we need to redevelop properties to be competitive in the tourism market and remain a family friendly destination. Newer hotels offer larger rooms and other amenities that are only made possible by new construction.

Current Status: TBBCOC advocates for responsible redevelopment and is working with local municipalities to allow for redevelopment along the beaches. Current regulations may prevent hotel redevelopment due to height and density restrictions which prevent hotels from being profitable and competitive in the marketplace. If regulations are not updated to allow for adequate height and density, hotels will be replaced with condominiums and the area will lose the tourists that keep our taxes low.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Attend commission meetings and speak during the public comment period in favor of reducing restrictions on redevelopment to allow municipalities to be competitive in the marketplace. Also, be a part of the TBBCOC Economic Development Task Force.

Municipality: Tierra Verde, South Pasadena, St. Pete. Beach, Treasure Island, Madeira Beach, Redington Beach, North Redington Beach, Redington Shores, Indian Shores, Indian Rocks Beach, Belleair Beach, Belleair Shores & Belleair Bluffs

Agenda Item: Pedestrian Safety

Agenda Item Description: Pedestrian safety is a hot topic across the county. Florida is consistently recognized for the highest number of pedestrian fatalities per capita. Promotion and education of the crosswalk system along SR699 (Gulf Boulevard) is a major concern to businesses and leaders.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for the promotion and education of pedestrian safety including crosswalk & bicycle safety. The TBBCoC continues to work with Walk/Bike Tampa Bay on a campaign to educate the local community. The TBBCoC continues to offer educational material directed toward the people actually using the crosswalks along Gulf Boulevard; the visitors. The TBBCoC provides educational pieces to businesses along the beaches that direct residents and visitors on how to use the unique crosswalk systems.

Useful Resources:

- More Information - www.walkwisetampabay.com
- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Word of mouth is the best way to educate. Also, distribute educational material available at the TBBCoC.

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Agenda Item: **Transient Boat Docks**

Agenda Item Description: There is a lack of transient boat docking along the beaches. Additional transient docks will enhance the business climate and create a unique, prosperous tourist destination. Additional transient boat docks will allow visitors and residents to patronize local businesses and attractions. Such dock space is nearly nonexistent along the beaches and would meet a longstanding need.

Current Status: TBBCOC advocates for additional transient boat docks along our beaches. The addition of transient boat docks will not only enhance our economy and business climate, but also enhance our quality of life. Additional transient boat docks will help to build and revitalize the gulf economy by providing a high-amenity destination for recreational boaters and benefit local businesses by generating new revenue brought in by the additional customer base. Parking spaces are limited along our beaches and the additional transient boat docks are a good alternative to allow more residents and visitors to patronize our local businesses.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Attend commission meetings and speak during the public comment period in favor of reducing restrictions on redevelopment to allow municipalities to be competitive in the marketplace.

County Agenda

Agenda Item: Sales Tax Recalculation

Agenda Item Description: Beach municipalities see millions of visitors every year. These visitors generate massive amounts of sales tax revenue when they shop, dine and patronize local attractions. However, the formula used to distribute sales tax revenue back to municipalities doesn't take into account visitors and is instead based on the number of full-time residents. Beach municipalities need a sales tax redistribution formula that is fair and takes into account visitors in an effort to maintain infrastructure - i.e. sewers, roads, bridges, transportation, etc.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for a fair distribution of sales tax revenue. The formula used to return sales tax revenue back to municipalities should be recalculated to take into account the millions of visitors that pay sales tax on every purchase they make.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Contact Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners.

Agenda Item: Tourist Development Tax: Enforcement

Agenda Item Description: Enforcing residents, who rent their properties to tourists, pay the Tourist Development Tax is essential to promote our destination, attract visitors and support the tourism Industry. Enforcing residential rental properties to pay the Tourist Development Tax will create fair and equitable funding opportunities for all rental properties and legitimate businesses.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for enforcing collection of the Tourist Development Tax and educating the community that there are vacation management companies who follow the rules and there are property owners who do not. It is important to treat them differently. Residential rental properties are required to pay their fair share of the Tourist Development Tax. However, some properties are being rented illegally and are not paying the tax. The tax of six cents per dollar needs to be levied not just on motel or hotel stays, but on all "transient accommodations" of six months or less.

Useful Resources:

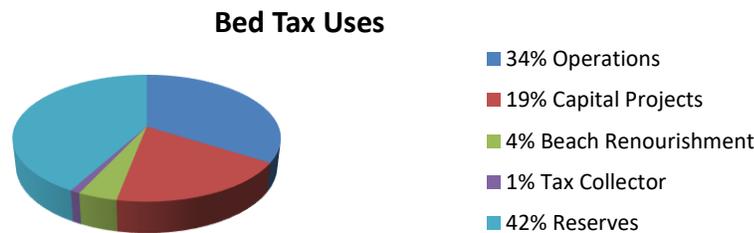
- More Information - www.pinellascvb.com
- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: TBBCoC is working with municipal, county and state officials towards a solution.

Agenda Item: Tourist Development Tax: Preservation

Agenda Item Description: Preserving the Bed Tax for its intended purpose is essential to promote our destination, attract visitors, and support the tourism Industry. Preserving the Bed Tax for its intended purpose will create fair and equitable funding opportunities for all.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for preserving the Tourist Development Tax for its intended purpose. The TBBCoC opposes any language in county or state legislation that would expand the use. Expanding the use of the Tourist Development Tax sets precedence for future changes and further expanded uses. This could result in funds being appropriated for things that don't meet the sufficient requirements which will take away from the intended purpose, attracting visitors to our area. The Tourist Development Tax is a six percent tax collected on accommodations rented for less than six months. The tax is used to strengthen the local economy and increase employment through the ongoing promotion and development of tourism; Pinellas County's major industry.



Useful Resources:

- More Information - www.pinellascvb.com
- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: TBBCoC is attending all Tourist Development Council Meetings to stay informed and is speaking with Pinellas County Board of Commissioners and state elected officials to guarantee they fully understand the preservation of these funds.

Agenda Item: Transportation

*County issue decided by state government

Agenda Item Description: Navigating throughout Pinellas County is no easy task. Traveling to the beaches from our airports or attractions can be burdensome and may discourage tourists from returning. A direct public transportation connection between Pinellas County beaches and Tampa International Airport will support the thousands of tourists and residents who travel on our roads every day.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for additional transportation options such as bus rapid transit, waterborne transportation, road infrastructure, etc. to ease congestion and make it easier to navigate the county. One option includes obtaining funding from the state for the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority's (PSTA) proposed express service to and from Tampa International airport and the beaches. This service is designed to enhance public transportation for residents, businesses and visitors. Pinellas County is competing with all counties in Florida to be the best and brightest. We need to invest in our infrastructure to remain competitive. If we don't move forward, we will fall behind. Let's move forward.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: Urge your Federal Congressmen and Senators to support funding for PSTA's proposed BRT Lines.

Agenda Item: Workforce Development/Hospitality

Agenda Item Description: There is an influx in open positions along throughout Pinellas County. Many businesses are having difficulties finding individuals to fill open positions. Most individuals applying for jobs are unqualified. However, the bigger issue affecting businesses is that there are not enough people applying for the jobs to fill open positions.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for an enhanced pool of qualified workers. To remain competitive in a changing economy, Pinellas County needs to advance the economic well-being by developing and maintaining a quality workforce and by serving as the focal point for our workforce development initiatives. This is to be achieved through the co-location and integration of employment, training, education and economic development services for job seekers, workers and employers.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: The TBBCoC will work with St. Pete College and surrounding institutions to complete the following initiatives:

- Guidance Counselor Interaction
 - Career Fairs
 - Orientation Workshops
 - Continued Industry Cultivation
 - Partnerships
 - Promotion
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State Agenda

Agenda Item: E-Verify

Agenda Item Description: Florida businesses would have to use a federal database to verify the immigration status of new employees, under proposals filed in the House and Senate for the 2019 legislative session.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates against mandating businesses use E-Verify. This proposal violates federal immigration law. The federal government is granted the authority to handle immigration law, not the states. Imposing penalties upon a business through this proposal is a violation of the federal immigration law. E-Verify Would also place significant costs on business for little gain. E-Verify is far from perfect and consistently flags lawful employees. The compliance costs, and penalties associated with it, should not be based on this flawed system.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track House Legislation - www.myfloridahouse.gov
- Track Senate Legislation - www.flsenate.gov

Action: Urge state elected officials to oppose E-Verify mandate.

Agenda Item: Minimum Wage

Agenda Item Description: Florida will consider legislation that would arbitrary inflate minimum wage. Minimum wage should be set based on economic facts and increased based on inflation. A majority of Floridian's already voted and amended the Florida State Constitution for this reason. The amendment incorporated language requiring Florida's minimum wage to increase automatically annually. Any attempt to raise wages beyond that can have adverse consequences on businesses forcing them to raise prices or cut back on workforce.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for minimum wage to be set according facts and figures based on inflation, not an arbitrary number used as a political tool. Minimum wage is for entry level employees and is by no means meant to support a family. Policymakers should not force businesses to bear the burden of national socio-economic policies. Wage mandates ignore the principles of free market economics; they prevent businesses from making profits, growing, and hiring more workers; and they base wages on what the worker wants instead of on the value of work performed.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track House Legislation - www.myfloridahouse.gov
- Track Senate Legislation - www.flsenate.gov

Action: Urge state elected officials to oppose increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Agenda Item: Insurance Reform (Assignment of Benefits, Flood, Workers Compensation)

Agenda Item Description: Creating competitive and stable insurance markets will lower costs. Florida must continue initiatives like reforming flood insurance, property insurance and workers' compensation insurance by spreading risks, reducing fraudulent claims and allowing for creative solutions for the issue's homeowners and businesses face.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for insurance reform allowing alternatives for residents and business owners on the verge of bankruptcy. Fixing Florida's broken insurance system to reduce taxpayer risk in the event of a catastrophic storm and reduce inflated workers' compensation rates is a step in the right direction. Instead of short-term quick fixes, long-term solutions are the focus to grow the private-sector and help small businesses and families.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - <http://www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy.html>
- Track House Legislation - <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>
- Track Senate Legislation - <http://www.flsenate.gov>

Action: Urge state elected officials to support insurance reform.

Agenda Item: Reliable and Cost-Effective Energy Solutions

Agenda Item Description: Florida needs to achieve a stable, reliable and diverse supply of energy. Energy policy requires a stable, predictable regulatory and business climate while promoting energy resources that further fuel source diversification through the deployment of existing and alternative energy sources. Florida must renew its commitment to energy resources and technologies which result in the creation of new jobs within the state.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates against oil drilling in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and advocates for an energy policy that puts the long-term over the short-term and rests on reliable, cost effective energy sources to grow the economy. This type of policy will increase energy independence and promote the use of domestic energy sources. It would also include advanced technologies and pave the way for sustainable economic growth. We are working to make sure that Florida's needs are met with an energy policy that responds to new technology and changes in the market while bringing in new capital for investment and increasing energy security.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track House Legislation - www.myfloridahouse.gov
- Track Senate Legislation - www.flsenate.gov

Action: Urge state elected officials to support Reliable and Effective Energy Solutions.

Agenda Item: Short-Term Rentals

Agenda Item Description: All short-term rentals must be regulated the same as any property management company. Currently, property management companies and vacation rental platforms (i.e. Airbnb, homeaway, etc.) are on uneven playing fields. Both rent properties, however, only property management companies are regulated. This incentivizes people to bypass legitimate business practices and skirt the system.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for a fair and balanced playing field for all vacation rentals. Vacation rentals, either through property management companies or on website platforms, should be collecting and remitting taxes as well as regulated to ensure the health and safety of guests.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track House Legislation - www.myfloridahouse.gov
- Track Senate Legislation - www.flsenate.gov

Action: Urge state elected officials to create a level playing field for all vacation rentals.

Agenda Item: Tax Reform (Business Rent Tax, Online Sales Tax, Florida Corporate Income Tax)

Agenda Item Description: Florida, spurred on by a dedicated business community, has eliminated 4,500 outdated, duplicate regulations under the leadership of Governor Scott. While Florida already has one of the best tax climates in the nation, enacting smart and targeted tax reforms for job creators and consumers will produce greater economic growth.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for reducing business rent tax and corporate income tax. Driving a fair and equitable tax system is key to attracting and growing businesses in our state. Limiting burdensome taxes by enacting smart and targeted tax reforms helps place money back into the pockets of Florida's businesses and families. Florida must continue to push back against initiatives that make the state less competitive in comparison to other states and become the number one state for business. Additionally, supporting the collection and remittance of the online sales tax can make up the budget deficit cause but reducing other previously mentioned taxes.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track House Legislation - www.myfloridahouse.gov
- Track Senate Legislation - www.flsenate.gov

Action: Urge state elected officials to reduce Florida's business rent tax and corporate income tax while supporting the collection and remittance of the online sales tax.

Agenda Item: Tourism

Agenda Item Description: As the Sunshine State's No. 1 industry, tourism was responsible for welcoming 116+ million visitors in 2017 and employing more than 1.3 million Floridians. According to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, for every \$1 the state invests in VISIT FLORIDA – the official tourism marketing corporation for the state of Florida – \$3.20 in tax revenue is generated. VISIT FLORIDA promotes tourism to Florida through sales, advertising, promotions, public relations and visitor services programs. Each decision the agency has made has been based on financial research that led to record tourism and, more importantly, record spending by visitors. As a public/private partnership, VISIT FLORIDA serves more than 11,000 tourism industry businesses.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for a fully funded reauthorization of VISIT FLORIDA. Adequate funding and resources for the tourism industry essential to stay competitive. Florida is a worldwide top travel destination with every 85 visitors creating 1 job and the TBBCOC advocates supporting and growing the industry. After VISIT FLORIDA increased marketing by \$50 million, \$30 billion in visitor spending was collected and Sales Tax collections are up \$1.6 billion. Florida is aiming to bring in \$100 billion in total tourism related spending by 2020, however, attracting more tourists isn't the key strategy in driving up dollars. The influx will come from the experience rather than filling more hotel beds. The new strategy is less about bringing in more bodies and more about tapping into consumer markets that want to spend dollars in the state.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track House Legislation - www.myfloridahouse.gov
- Track Senate Legislation - www.flsenate.gov

Action: Urge state elected officials to adequately fund VISIT FLORIDA and support the tourism industry as it is Florida's number one industry.

Federal Agenda

Agenda Item: Infrastructure Funding (Airports, Bridges and Roads)

Agenda Item Description: Federal funding for airports, roads and bridges have been lacking in recent years. Rebuilding America's infrastructure is critical to promote job creation and our destination. America has fallen to 12th in the world in terms of infrastructure ratings. Increased infrastructure funding includes increasing the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) for airports. The PFC is a \$4.50 fee on every plane ticket and goes back to the airport for capital improvement. The PFC has not been raised since 2000 and should be between \$6 and \$8 due to inflation. The fee is currently set by congress and needs to be changed so individual airports can set their own rates.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for an increase in infrastructure funding in an effort to remain competitive as a top travel destination. TBBCoC supports an increase in federal funding as well as congressional approval for individual airports to have authority to increase their PFC. People travel from all over the world to visit our country. Many other countries have world class infrastructure while airports, road and bridges in the United States are decades old and dilapidating. The United States must not fall behind other countries and must remain competitive in an effort to support tourism and our economy.

Useful Resources: TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy

Action: There is record funding for infrastructure. Work with federal elected officials to make sure funding comes to our area. Also, work with our federal elected officials to allow individual airports to have authority to set their Passenger Facility Charge (PFC).

Agenda Item: Regulation Reform

Agenda Item Description: Over regulation can stifle job creation and innovation. The Small Business Administration recognizes that small businesses bear the brunt of dealing with approximately \$2 trillion of red tape emanating from Washington, D.C. Regulations have become way too complex, burdensome, duplicative, and sometimes pointless that make it hard for small businesses to compete with larger companies that have multiple floors of lawyers and lobbyists.

Current Status: TBBCoC advocates for regulation reform to ensure the success of small businesses. The \$2 trillion in costs for compliance and increased number of complex rules is only hurting our business community. Businesses deserve a working regulatory system that is fair for everyone, takes into account the views of communities and businesses, evaluates the impact rules will have on jobs and small business and protects our economic and personal freedoms.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track Legislation - www.govtrack.us
- Download iCitizen App - www.icitizen.com

Action: Urge federal elected officials to support regulation reform.

Agenda Item: Overtime Regulations

Agenda Item Description: In 2016 The Labor Department expanded the number of workers covered by overtime rules in the Fair Labor Standards Act. The salary threshold under which workers are eligible to receive overtime pay more than doubled from \$23,660 to \$50,440. That threshold would have continued to increase every year. However, the courts overturned this ruling and now the process has started all over again.

Current Status: The TBBCOC opposes the Labor Department's 2016 rule change and is committed to working with the Labor Department to develop overtime regulations that are fair and equitable for the business community. The reality is changing overtime regulations will not guarantee more income, but instead will negatively impact small businesses and drastically limit employment opportunities. The rule as past in 2016, would have forced some smaller businesses to close, increase litigation, and is not in line with the historical practices of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Additionally, businesses were forced to make decisions that negatively impacted the very people the proposed rule is drafted to assist. The unintended consequences of this rule change are numerous, and it is in the best interest of Florida, our nation, our job creators, and those that work hard day in and day out that this rule be reconsidered.

Useful Resources:

- TBBCoC Advocacy Website - www.tampabaybeaches.com/advocacy
- Track Legislation - www.govtrack.us
- Download iCitizen App - www.icitizen.com

Action:

- Provide the Department of Labor with feedback from our members to help them redraft the overtime rule.
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