

## **GULF COAST** **Business Review**

The Daily News Source for Gulf Coast Business Leaders

### **Government Digest: Nov. 19 - Nov. 25**

**By Jay Brady | Government Editor - Friday, November 19, 2010**

#### **Legislature approves previously vetoed bills**

TALLAHASSEE — Taking advantage of veto-proof majorities in the House and Senate, Republican legislators approves a package of bills Nov. 16 to override vetoes of lame duck independent Gov. Charlie Crist.

House Bill 545, prevents a law from going into effect Jan. 1 that would have required sellers of Florida homes in coastal areas, including much of the Gulf Coast, to disclose the wind mitigation rating to homebuyers causing home sales to be delayed, discouraged or prevented.

HB 981 protects owners of agricultural land from losing their agricultural classification when offering their property for sale when the land continues to be used for agricultural purposes. HB 1565 calls for legislative approval of certain agency rules having a negative economic impact. Senate Bill 1842 provides an opportunity for additional public input on state road design changes that could impact access to businesses. The Legislature also extended the implementation date of the septic tank evaluation program from Jan. 1 to July 1, 2011 to allow sufficient time to ensure cost estimates for implementing the program are accurate, and allow the Legislature to revisit the issue during the regular 2011 session.

#### **Scott appoints economic advisors**

TALLAHASSEE — Donna Arduin, a former director for the Florida office of policy and budget under Jeb Bush, heads a six-member Economic Advisory Council appointed by Gov.-elect Rick Scott. The economics and budget experts will advise Scott throughout the budget process on implementing his “7-7-7” plan — a seven-step plan to create 700,000 jobs in seven years. Arduin is president of Arduin, Laffer & Moore Econometrics.

Council members also include Tad DeHaven, a state and federal budget analyst with the Cato Institute; former Texas State Rep. Talmadge Heflin, director of the Texas Public Policy Foundation; Randall Holcombe, professor of economics at Florida State University and a senior fellow at The James Madison Institute, a Tallahassee-based think tank; Arthur Laffer, founder and chairman of economic research firm Laffer Associates; and Robert McClure, president and CEO of The James Madison Institute. The council will be based in Fort Lauderdale.

#### **Development districts approved near Venice**

SARASOTA COUNTY — County commissioners approved two community development districts Nov. 9 for the Blackburn Creek development of critical concern planned by Neal Communities at River Road and Center Road.

The two community development districts are the 719-acre Blackburn Creek CDD, and the 67-acre River Road at Center Road CDD. The districts can issue bonds to finance the infrastructure for the

mixed-use project that includes 1,568 housing units and 150,000 square feet of commercial and office uses.

County commissioners decided Nov. 10 to hold a public hearing as soon as possible to consider a request from the Sarasota County School Board to temporarily suspend the collection of educational system impact fees from Dec. 1, 2010 through Nov. 30, 2012. The fee is \$2,032 for a single-family home. According to a county agenda report, "The School Board believes that collecting the fee in the current economy is unnecessary and that a suspension could spur growth in the construction section." Commissioners adopted the educational system impact fee in April 2004.

### **Chairmen flex Gulf Coast muscle**

TALLAHASSEE — State representatives of the Gulf Coast will lead several state House committees.

Rep. Gary Aubuchon, R-Cape Coral, will be chairman of the House rules committee, and Rep. Denise Grimsley, R-Sebring, will lead the appropriations committee.

On Nov. 15, Cannon appointed Rep. Rob Schenk, R-Spring Hill, to lead health and human services; Rep. Will Weatherford, R-Wesley Chapel, redistricting; and Rep. Seth McKeel, R-Lakeland, state affairs, which will oversee agriculture, environment, energy, utilities, telecommunications and state agency governance. Also, Rep. John Legg, Port Richey, was elected Speaker pro-tempore.

In the Senate, Sen. President pro tempore Mike Bennett, R-Bradenton, will again be chairman of the community affairs committee, Sen. Lizbeth Benacquisto, R-Wellington, will be chairwoman of communications, energy and public utilities; and Sen. Jack Latvala, R-Clearwater, will lead the transportation committee.

Sen. Jim Norman, R-Tampa, will lead the joint administrative procedures committee; Sen. Mike Fasano, R-New Port Richey, criminal and civil justice appropriations; Sen. Ronda Storms, R-Valrico, children, family and elder affairs; Sen. Dennis Jones, R-Seminole, regulated industries committee; Sen. Nancy Detert, R-Venice, commerce and tourism; and Sen. Garrett Richter, R-Naples, banking and insurance. Benacquisto, Latvala and Norman are newly elected, though Latvala served in the Senate from 1994-2002.

Sen. Arthenia Joyner, D-Tampa, was elected minority leader pro tempore.

## **MEETINGS**

### **HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY**

The policy committee of the Metropolitan Planning Organization meets at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 23, in the Planning Commission boardroom, at County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 18th floor. For more information, contact Linda Ferraro at (813) 272-5940.

### **TAMPA**

The Enterprise Zone Board meets at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 23, on the second floor (Mark Huey's conference room), at the Tampa Municipal Office Building, 306 E. Jackson St., Tampa. For more information, contact Ed Johnson at (813) 242-3807.