



Longboat Key News

August 28, 2026

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InsideLook



We need to
increase conflict
...page 5



Train yourself to
drink fine wine
...page 5



Longboat tops
the sales list
...page 9



Speeding and
Smirnoff mix-up
...page 10

Garage Gets a Defender as Island President Answers Sarasota's Parking Revolt

Chris Goglia says the structure sheltered flood victims during Helene and should never be sold. The consultant who justified it warned its financing numbers were "for informational purposes only." The commission gets both sides Monday, and the public gets no microphone until Sept. 7.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

The garage finally found a defender.

On Friday afternoon, Aug. 28, as the commission headed into

Monday's parking workshop, Chris Goglia — in his seventh year as president of the St. Armands Residents Association — sent the mayor, commissioners and city manager the first full-throated defense of the structure at the center of Sarasota's

parking war.

"I've grown quite fond of the St. Armands Parking Garage," Goglia wrote. And then he made the case no one at City Hall has made all summer: that the garage is a safety

See Parking, page 14

One Turtle's Night on Longboat, and the Battle That Never Ends

Nesting is nearly done and hatching is in full swing. The count is down from last year's record and up from the year before, and the bigger question is whether up is good.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

She has been swimming for weeks.

Somewhere out in the Gulf, off the Yucatán or the Keys, a loggerhead the size of a coffee table stopped eating crabs and turned north. She is perhaps 30 years old and 300 pounds. She has done this before, every two or three years, and she was born here, on this island, in a summer when the buildings along Gulf of Mexico Drive were fewer and darker. She carries a magnetic memory of this coastline that has never left her.



See Turtles, page 12

Sarasota Voters Fire the Culture Wars: School Board Flips, Island Seat Goes to a November Runoff

Sarasota County's voters were asked a simple question on Aug. 18: after four years, do you want more of this? By double digits, in a county that votes Republican two to one, they said no. The only thing they left unanswered is whether the last conservative seat survives

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Eleven days after the polls closed, the campaign signs are down along Osprey Avenue and around Southside Elementary, and the thing they were fighting over is settled. The conservative majority that governed Florida's most decorated school district for four years, the one that fired a superintendent, reaffirmed cooperation with ICE, penalized student walkouts and turned a school board chamber on Landings Boulevard into a national cable-news set, is finished.

On Tuesday, Aug. 18, Sarasota County voters handed two former teachers the District 4 and District 5 seats by double-digit margins. Megan Tennimon defeated Republican-endorsed insurance agency owner Frank DiCicco with roughly 55 percent of the vote. Beth Mayberry beat conservative activist Michelle Pozzie with roughly 57 percent. In District 1, the coastal seat that covers Longboat Key, Lido, St. Armands, Bird Key and downtown Sarasota, Jimmy Glover finished first with about 44 percent but fell short of the majority needed to win outright,

See Schools, page 15

Sloan's Hot-Pink Ice Cream Parlor Joins St. Armands' Dessert Counter

The West Palm Beach chain signs 1,450 square feet at a crosswalk two doors from Ben & Jerry's, as the post-hurricane lease shuffle keeps reshaping the Circle.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Perhaps ice cream is the most elevated of movable feasts. And next season that perfection of form will gain another famous scoop shop on St. Armands Circle.

Sloan's Ice Cream, the hot-pink Palm Beach County parlor that has been dripping across the country since 1999, has taken 1,450 square

See Ice Cream, page 12

Restaurateur Warns Sarasota Back-In Ban Could Get Someone Killed Sarasota's parking program has spent the summer invent- ing new ways to make people angry.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

On Monday a Main Street business owner walked into City Hall with National Safety Council statistics, two funerals and a liability warning, and told the commission the safest way to park in its garages is now a \$50 ticket.

At 9:08 a.m., before the Benderson tower, before the historic preservation report, before anyone on the dais had finished their coffee, Vice Mayor Kathy Kelley Ohlrich called the second citizen of the day to the podium. "Chip,

See Backing In, page 15

EditorLetters

Longboat Key News and Sarasota City News encourages Letters to the Editor on timely issues. Please email to: letters@lbknews.com or mail to PO Box 8001, Longboat Key, FL 34228. We also print letters sent to Town Hall that address Longboat Key issues. We reserve the right to edit.

General Harris Foreclosure: Take Two, September 4

To: Longboat Key Commission
As a follow up to last week's email, a new date has been set for the foreclosure sale of 501 General Harris Street. It is now September 4, 2026, at 11 a.m.
Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

General Harris Foreclosure: Auction Scuttled by the Clerk

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Board
Frustrating news on this one. The Clerk's office cancelled the public auction of 501 General Harris. The stated reason was that publication of the sale was not timely. From my quick review, it looked like the timeframes were met. However, the Clerk has the final say. Next step is for Plaintiff to reset the sale date. So, it will probably take another month to resolve this matter. I will watch for the new sale date and advise.
Daniel P. Lewis
Town Attorney
Town of Longboat Key

General Harris Foreclosure: \$61,200 in Fines and Counting

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman
As you know, the Town has been pursuing foreclosure on the 501 General Harris St. property due to the continued lack of compliance with property maintenance related code provisions and an ongoing daily fine & lien (\$50/day) associated with the failure to comply. The daily fine total, through today, is \$61,200. The Town Attorney's Office has provided a copy of the Final Judgement that was entered on 7/24/26 with a public sale date coming up on 8/19/26.
Allen Parsons

Director Planning, Zoning & Building Department
Town of Longboat Key

Sarasota Comp Plan: A Radical Traffic Jam

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Thank you very much, Howard! I know the Town Commission is and has been on summer recess but if you and/or Commissioner Bishop can add any comment to Donna Harris today, that would be very helpful. The Department has up to 30 days from the August 4 transmittal to respond, so time is short.
It should be kept in mind that this is not just about a second bridge and cooperative concurrency review, but is more so about a radical abandonment of controlling traffic which should have the Town very concerned. It even mandates compliance with the Sarasota Transportation Plan that the Town opposed and the Sarasota City Commission rejected 3 to 2.
Dan Lobeck
Law Offices of Lobeck & Rowe, P.A.
Sarasota

Sarasota Comp Plan: A Seven-Year Swing and a Miss

To: Dan Lobeck
Good morning, Dan. I just wanted to share my appreciation for your letter to the Dept. of Commerce advocating that the Dept. require the City of Sarasota to go through the full review process and not the expedited route. One point that you
Good morning, Dan. I just wanted to share my appreciation for your letter to the Dept. of Commerce advocating that the Dept. require the City of Sarasota to go through the full review process and not the expedited route. One point that you make in your letter that I felt should have been a stronger pillar for this argument is that the Plan is supposed to be reviewed every 7 years but hasn't been reviewed since 2017.

That's not a miss by a few days, or weeks, or months. That's a swing and a miss. The apparent disregard for review compliance should be enough by itself to trigger the more complete and thorough process. Anyway, appreciate all your efforts to ensure a full and complete review takes place.
Howard Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Seawall Stardom: Amazing Teams Do Amazing Things

To: Longboat Key Vice Mayor Penny Gold
See Letters, page 4

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 2

Thank you, Penny, for sharing how it was displayed at the conference and for your kind words as well. Amazing teams do amazing things!
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Seawall Stardom: Front and Center at the League of Cities

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Good afternoon! I just wanted to be sure you are aware of the great recognition Longboat Key received at the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference. Specifically, the Town’s Award for Environmental Stewardship was projected over the hotel registration area and presented during the Annual General Session. I was able to catch these slide photos about the Town’s Seawall project. Well done! You all make us proud every day.
Penny Gold
Vice Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Seawall Stardom: Preparing a Response

To: Dan Lobeck
We are preparing a response.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Gulfside’s Leaning Tower: Shored Up and Seeking Elevation

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Providing a status update on the property at Gulfside Rd. As you’re aware the structure was deemed unsafe and past actions, by the property owner, to address the unsafe conditions were proceeding too slowly. The Town then entered into a formal Compliance Agreement with the property owner to address having the structure made safe, with an emphasis on having that done by early in this hurricane season.
The property owner completed temporary shoring of the structure on June 30th (ex. of steel beam and cribbing underneath the structure below).
The Town had an independent structural engineer assess the temporary shoring and opine that it is providing sufficient support (provided it is maintained). This has resulted in addressing the immediate unsafe structural conditions (along with preventing occupancy of the structure and providing security fencing around the structure). Because forced demolition is a last resort option, the Town is continuing to work with the property owner and their attorney to amend the Compliance Agreement, as it is the owner’s intent to keep and elevate the existing structure.
This secondary aspect is the permanent stabilization of the structure via the installation of new pilings and elevating the existing structure approximately 6 ft. to meet current FEMA flood elevation requirements. The property owner initially indicated that this permanent stabi-

lization work would be completed by August 1st. The property owner has requested an extension, which will be considered in a revised timeline/Compliance Agreement, a draft of which is expected any day. At a minimum, an amended Compliance Agreement will address ongoing maintenance of the temporary shoring and an obligation to report weekly on the status of the temporary shoring. I will follow-up when that requested timeline is received.
A building permit has been issued for the permanent stabilization of the structure and FDEP (which has a permitting review role due to the structure’s location seaward of the CCCL) has issued an emergency permit. The work will involve the installation of new pilings, including new underground helical support piles (see front elevation cross section below). The structure will also be elevated from its current finished floor elevation height of 13 ft. above sea level to 19.4 ft. above sea level.
Allen Parsons
Director Planning, Zoning & Building Department
Town of Longboat Key
Application: Already Handled, Thanks for the Memories
To: Sarasota City Vice Mayor Katherine Kelley Ohlrich
It was already completed...thanks for sharing
Karie Friling
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Application: Is Anybody Out There?

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling
Karie - will someone be responding to the message below?
Kathy Kelley Ohlrich
Vice Mayor
City of Sarasota

Application: Seeing Red Over Teal Ribbons

To: Sarasota City Engineer Nik Patel
The above application number is pending a fee, which has been waived previous years for a nonprofit Ovarian Ca awareness campaign in Sarasota.
This event is a national campaign during the month of September that brings awareness to the community of Sarasota about Ovarian Cancer. Families, friends and healthcare professionals participate in this small awareness campaign annually by simply walking and tying, teal ribbons down the road of Bahia vista and around the perimeter of a Sarasota Memorial Hospital. At the end of the campaign, we take down the ribbons.
Over the past two weeks I’ve emailed and spoken to more than one person in the engineering department for special permits requesting that the fee be waived just as it has been previous years. No one is returning my call nor my emails after being told somebody would get back to me.
This needs immediate attention, or I will unable to purchase the materials to complete this event. I must show proof immediately that I have a permit in Sarasota to participate in this national campaign. I thank you in advance for your immediate attention.
Amy Kipila
Sarasota

See Letters, page 6

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OpinionEditorial

How America Medicated, Outsourced and Video-Gamed the Struggle Out of Being Human

Priya Parker says healthy relationships need a good fight. Fine. But between drone wars, respawn buttons, SSRIs and the weekly shot, we’ve engineered every fight out of existence, and the bill for avoidance is coming due with interest.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Last Saturday, The Daily aired an episode featuring Priya Parker, author of the new book “The Art of Fighting,” and her argument goes something like this: healthy human connection requires conflict. Not avoiding it. Not smiling through it. Actually having it. Groups that never fight don’t stay healthy, she says. They stay quiet, which is different, in the same way that a marriage where nobody has spoken since 2019 is technically “low-conflict.”

Parker is right. She is so right that I got out of my car and applauded, which alarmed the people at the gas station.

But here is my problem. Parker, bless her, only took us to the tip of the conflict iceberg. And the iceberg is worth looking at, because as a society we are not merely avoiding it. We are down there with blow-torches, working three shifts, frantically trying to sink the whole thing.

Allow me to finish the job she started.



STEVE REID

War From the Couch

Start with the most extreme form of human conflict ever devised: war. Even war, the one arena where conflict is famously mandatory, has become an exercise in conflict avoidance. Modern warfare is drones. It is long-range missiles. It is a nineteen-year-old in a climate-controlled trailer moving a joystick, and somewhere over the horizon something very bad happens to someone he will never see, smell, or have to look in the eye.

It is, in other words, a video game. Which brings me to my next point, and I want you to know I have been waiting thirty years to make it.

Blame Halo. I Do.

It all started, really, with the video games. Halo. Call of Duty. An entire generation raised on shooting and killing people in virtual waves, and here is the genius part, the part that rewired everything: when you die, you don’t die. You respawn. You come right back to the battlefield, fully armed, mildly annoyed, ready to go again.

Think about what that teaches. Conflict has no cost. Struggle has no consequence. Death itself is a loading screen. You cannot lose, not really, and therefore nothing is truly at stake, and therefore nothing has to be felt.

Now, I am not saying video games caused everything wrong with society. I am saying they were the training wheels. The rest of us grew up and found the adult versions, which come in pill form and are covered, in many cases, by insurance.

The Ultimate Conflict Remover

Consider the SSRI. If you wanted to design the ultimate conflict remover, you could not do better. I’m feeling stressed. I’m feeling anxious. I’m feeling overwhelmed. And along comes a medication that smooths it all down, and let me be clear because this is important: they are very helpful and they work. Millions of people function today who could not function before, and if that’s you, God bless you and keep taking them, because this is a newspaper column and not a prescription pad.

But we should at least be honest about the bargain. Somewhere in that helpful smoothing, we become complicit in not developing the ability to have healthy conflict. Worse, we lose the ability to even know what is bothering us. Anxiety, for all its misery, used to be a messenger. It banged on the door at 3 a.m. and yelled, “Hey! Your job is wrong! Your marriage needs work! You hate your commute and you haven’t called your mother!” We didn’t like the messenger, so we medicated the messenger, and now the door is quiet and we have no idea what the message was.

Parker says we need to lean into conflict. How do you lean into a conflict you can no longer locate?

The Struggle Formerly Known as Dieting

And now, just when you thought the pharmaceutical industry had removed every available



struggle, comes the GLP wave, and it has taken weight-loss conflict out of the scenario entirely.

Understand what just vanished. What used to be an internal struggle, a genuine daily battle that manifested itself on the bathroom scale, is gone. The old fight required you to diet, to exercise, and, hardest of all, to actually look at what was emotionally needed in your life. Why am I eating this? What hole am I filling? What am I avoiding by standing in front of this refrigerator at midnight like it’s a shrine?

Those were the questions. That was the conflict. And the conflict, as Parker would tell you, was the point. It was where the growth lived.

Now? We simply take the shot. Another inner struggle where we would have had to face ourselves, dissolved. The entire epic human battle with appetite, temptation, and self-knowledge has been reduced to two remaining concerns: retaining our muscle mass, and hoping these drugs can be safely taken all the way up to the edge of the afterlife. That’s it. That’s the whole war now. Protein intake and actuarial optimism.

A Brief Word From the Iceberg

Add it up. We fight our wars by remote. We rehearsed our violence in games where nobody stays dead. We chemically mute the anxiety that was trying to tell us something. We deleted the oldest struggle in human history, the one between a person and a second helping. At every single level, from the geopolitical to the gastrointestinal, we have engineered the conflict out.

And here’s the thing we all quietly know, the thing Parker’s whole book is circling: we know the outcome of avoidance. We have always known it. The fight you refuse to have does not disappear. It compounds. It goes underground and collects interest. The couple that never argues divorces “out of nowhere.” The employee who never pushes back quits by email. The country that never talks to itself screams at itself. Avoidance is not peace. Avoidance is a balloon payment.

The Iceberg Always Wins

There is a famous ship that also believed the iceberg was mostly not there. It focused on the tip. It had a lovely band. Things went poorly.

Ninety percent of an iceberg sits below the waterline, and roughly one hundred percent of our conflicts sit below ours, unexamined, unmedicated in the one way that matters, waiting. Parker wants us to learn the art of fighting. I want that too. I want us to reclaim the glorious, sweaty, uncomfortable human birthright of struggling with things: with each other, with our appetites, with our 3 a.m. messengers, with the second helping.

So here is my modest proposal. Disagree with somebody this week. In person. Someone you love, ideally. Have it out. Say the true thing. Do not respawn, do not medicate the moment, do not order the shot. Just stand there, on the deck, and look directly at the iceberg.

You can start with me. Write a letter to the editor and tell me I’m wrong. I promise to fight back, and I promise it will be good for both of us.

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Meet the Makers: City Staff Gets Their 60 Seconds of Fame

To: Sarasota City Commission

The Communications Office in collaboration with the Office of the City Auditor and Clerk launched “Meet the Makers”, a video series highlighting City employees and what they do to help make the City of Sarasota a great place to live, work and play. Each video is bite-sized (60-75 seconds) with the staff member explaining their job and how they help make Sarasota a wonderful community.

The series rolled out yesterday on the City’s social media channels and the first episode is being received very well! A new reel should publish every Tuesday for the next 11 weeks. (Some weeks two may drop.)

Here’s a link to the first video: https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc6I_Cz909tw&si=RLb1gbQdbbXlx_Tw

Future episodes will be accessible through the same link.

Jan Thornburg
Communications General Manager
City of Sarasota

Meet the Makers: The Mayor is Tuning In (and Taking Requests)

To: City of Sarasota Communications General Manager Jan Thornburg

I saw the first video on Facebook this morning. I was thrilled to see it. Great for City residents to get to know the people who make Sarasota a wonderful place to live. And great to show City employees that we all appreciate the work they do. I’m looking forward to the next installments. Are you asking for suggestions on who to feature?

Debbie Trice
Mayor
City of Sarasota

Flock: Big Brother is Watching (and Probably Selling Your Data)

To: Sarasota City Commission

Recently, I made two FOIA requests to learn more about the City’s agreement with Flock Safety and SPD’s processes and procedures for managing Flock’s automated license plate reader (ALPR) system.

The attached PDF contains those requests and the City’s responses.

I have multiple concerns about Flock and ALPR and have summarized two of them below.

SPD’s processes are insufficient to protect citizens’ civil liberties. SPD’s response to my FOIA request included Standard Operating Procedure 414. ALPR procedures are documented in 414.110. Generally, 414.110 describes how a deputy may use the system but does not detail how the data is protected and audited.

414.113 allows for unfettered data collection reading, in part: “The system will be utilized as a pro-active measure...for obtaining intelligence information.”

414.121 describes fingerprinting of vehicles, including those of citizens who are not under any suspicion: “The system uses vehicle ‘fingerprints’ to identify the type of vehicle it has captured in the image. In short, the system has been taught to identify certain vehicle body characteristics when determining vehicle type, make and color. As the cameras capture more and more images, it better ‘learns’ the identifying characteristics” (emphasis mine).

414.110 does not specify how long ALPR data is retained and what internal processes are used to ensure that ALPR location data isn’t misused. Questions include, are hot lists downloadable to deputies’ devices? Are they encrypted in transmission and when they stored are on

See Letters, page 7



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 6

a mobile device? How do old “hits” get removed from the database?

In short, SPD’s documented procedures allow it to surveil anyone in the City of Sarasota at any time for any reason. It creates the conditions for pervasive surveillance with no effective public oversight. We have installed a dragnet that includes everyone with no visibility into what is being collected and how it’s being used.

The City’s contract with Flock does not contain explicit protections for data collected by Flock that is shared and stored in Flock’s nationwide database. Software contracts typically contain license clauses that specify who owns the data and how it can be used. The City’s agreement with Flock — which is confirmed as the only in-force agreement — does not contain language protecting citizens’ data from misuse by Flock.

Flock is not just a law enforcement-focused surveillance system. Flock is also a data broker. Their business model already monetizes location data of ordinary citizens’ information for Flock’s law enforcement clients. It’s a natural product line extension to market the data, even if anonymized, to commercial buyers of location data especially when it is as detailed as what the ALPR system can collect. That detail and accuracy of the ALPR data when combined with other public demographic databases position Flock as the ultimate nationwide data broker in addition to its law enforcement business. SPD should not be in the business of data gathering for such potential commercial interests. Without standard data ownership protections in our agreement with Flock, Flock has a logical business imperative to resell that data.

We need to immediately rework our agreement with Flock. An example of the kind of data ownership we need in our contract can be found in a (now expired) Sarasota County Sheriff’s Office contract. Section 9.2 on page 3 of that contract reads “Ownership of all data originating from SCSO and sent to, or hosted by, the Vendor remains SCSO’s exclusive property.” You can view SCSO’s contract here: <https://s.air11.com/SCSOFlockContract>.

I am not adamantly opposed to the use of Flock in our City. As a technologist, I understand the benefits. But I think we need to manage and control use of these surveillance systems to balance the costs to civil liberties with the benefit it provides our law enforcement agencies. I’m hoping concerns like mine add to the Commission’s thinking about how to achieve the correct balance.

Thank you very much.

Alex Neihaus
Sarasota

Arlington Park Parking: Lawns Are Not Driveways

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling
Arlington Park resident is seeking enforcement of problematic parking in neighborhood, e.g., parking on front lawns.
Debbie Trice
Mayor
City of Sarasota

Parking Update: Arlington Park’s Front-Yard RV Dealerships

To: Sarasota City Mayor Debbie Trice
On behalf of ourselves and all or our neighbors here in Sarasota (we live in Arlington Park) it is nice to see that you and our local government paying serious attention to the needs of Residents and businesses with respect to parking regulations in our beautiful city.

In a related matter, we and many others are concerned with the lack of enforcement of parking ordinances in Arlington Park. While most residents follow the rules, dozens of homes are in violation and do not fit in with the improving image of “East of Trail” as a similar version to “West of Trail” absent the waterfront mansions.

Specifically, dozens of residents park cars, trailers, commercial vehicles, unlicensed and damaged vehicles, RV’s and boats on front lawns (or poorly landscaped front yards) despite the many ordinances created to facilitate Traffic flow, avoid accidents and maintain the aesthetic appeal of Sarasota.

I would appreciate your assistance as to what can be done to enforce the rules that you and local leaders have put in place for good reason.

At your request I will send you, or whichever city representative(s) you suggest, a list of at least 10 or 15 homes that are currently not in compliance with local parking ordinances. I will include photos if you wish. At the present time someone may receive a “warning” to comply if a neighbor notifies the police, but after a second or third warning nothing happens unless someone initiates a formal complaint or taking legal action. We have brought this issue to the attention of the Arlington Park Neighborhood Association

But without an HOA their enforcement power does not exist.

Your help is greatly appreciated. I am a permanent resident of Sarasota. We built a new house near the Arlington Park community center in 2022.

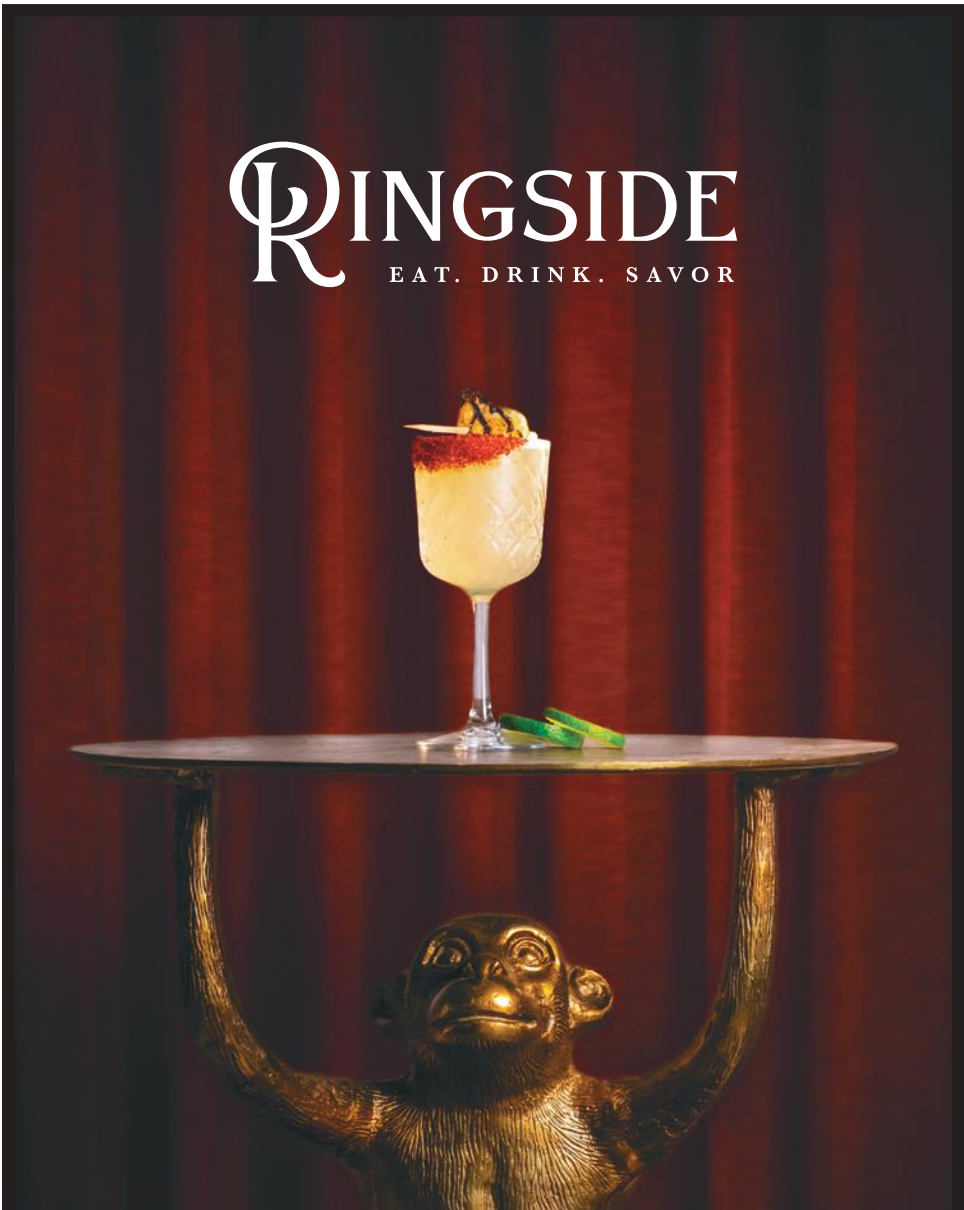
Les Fox
Sarasota

Parking: We Heard You Loud and Clear (So Never Mind)

To: Sarasota City Commission
During your City Commission’s last meeting, one topic, parking, generated significant community interest. After receiving extensive in-person and online public comment, it became clear that the changes to parking enforcement that went into effect on June 29 missed the mark for many of our residents and visitors. Hearing the community’s concerns, the Commission unanimously decided to temporarily suspend the recent changes to parking enforcement hours and Sunday paid parking. Increased parking citation fines remain in effect for both time and safety violations. Temporary parking enforcement hours are:

- On-street paid parking: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

See Letters, page 11



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WineTimes

All Aboard the Great Smoky Mountains

The evening before our steam train excursion we had the good fortune to dine at the Bistro in The Everett Boutique Hotel. We did not expect to find a venue like this in a small town in North Carolina.

S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
wine@lbknews.com

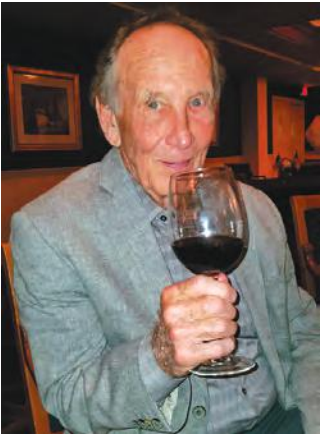
On the road again...
This time we were looking for relief from the unrelenting heat during August in Southwest Florida. We chose to spend a long weekend at high elevation (by East Coast standards) in the vicinity of Asheville NC. Allegiant Airlines has a convenient early Thursday morning flight from Sarasota SRQ to Asheville Regional Airport with a return flight Sunday afternoon. This schedule fit well with a steam train excursion into the Great Smoky Mountains through the Nantahala Gorge.

The scheduled two-hour flight took only an hour and a half. The plane cruised for the last twenty minutes alongside rivers and lakes in valleys where clouds had settled in as ground fog.

We drove directly from Asheville Airport to the vicinity of the train station in Bryson City. Downtown featured numerous choices of brewery tap rooms and fast food amid a few magnificent old municipal buildings. We spent about twenty minutes admiring the old buildings and another twenty minutes shopping in Calby's Antiques and Gifts in the old 1905 Bennett's Drug Store building.

The evening before our steam train excursion we had the good fortune to dine at the Bistro in The Everett Boutique Hotel. We did not expect to find a venue like this in a small town in North Carolina. The "Empress G&T" had Empress 1908 Gin mixed with Butterfly Pea Flowers Tonic and fresh limes. We ordered the Carolina Mountain Trout and the Field and Foul Étouffée (Wild Boar and Cranberry Sausage, roasted duck breast, Andouille Sausage, roasted tomatoes, and jasmine rice). Our accomplished server Wendy added on a tasty chocolate dessert. We washed down dinner and dessert with a simple sparkling wine.

Still full from our dinner the night before, we arrived at the train station mid-morning the next day. We do not think of ourselves as dedicated railfans, we have fond



memories of railway excursions: in Scotland, the Fort William to Mallaig line (Harry Potter fans call it the Hogwarts Express) that skirts heather-clad slopes with silver threads pouring downhill from springs into the deep blue lochs; in Australia, the long Perth to Adelaide trek through the Nullarbor Plain; and, in Canada, the Rocky Mountaineer from Banff to Vancouver. Recalling the pleasures of food and drink in dining cars, we had selected the Moonshine Experience option for this four-and-a-half-hour Nantahala Gorge excursion.

The steam locomotive itself cuts an impressive figure. We saluted the engineers Brent and Dale as they checked the boilers, and we chatted with the conductor, Bryan. A plume of white steam erupted from a smokestack when the engineers blew the whistle signaling "All Aboard".

We boarded the train and found our way to our table and barrel chairs in a restored rail car. The stamped metal ceiling, carpets, wooden panels and tables, and leather upholstery revived a setting of 19th century elegance. A plaque with the image of the King of the Moonshiners, Lewis "Major" Redmond, in prominent display, recounts the legacy of an outlaw moonshiner. We settled into the ambiance while watching the rapids of the Tuckasegee River surge alongside and underneath the railroad tracks. The tracks run uphill through hardwood forests.

As the train rolls along, the bartenders in charge of dispensing the moonshine, David and Lasada, pour shots into small plastic glasses. The first two shots contain classic clear corn mash whiskey, as smooth but no more so than premium vodka or tequila. The shots that followed had fruit flavors added: berry, apple, coconut, and others less distinct. The fruit flavors reminded us too much of the cloying flavors in cough syrup.

While tasting these shots, the passengers have a chance to order cocktails, wine, or beer from the bar. The moonshine shots overlap lunch options of pulled pork barbecue or vegies (a savory grilled portabella mushroom and a tough and almost raw slice of eggplant), both served with coleslaw.

The uphill trip concludes at a whitewater rafting and kayak training center. The downhill trip back to Bryson City gives passengers another chance to see the beautiful lakes with houseboats floating in the calm and clear waters of Lake Fontana and boat docks below houses built on the hillsides.

Though not a culinary event or a memorable whiskey tasting, the Nantahala Gorge excursion allows a visitor to the region to tour a diverse and somewhat isolated region in style and comfort. Highly recommended for that reason.



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Address	Sq. Ft.	List Price	Bed/Bath/Half Bath			Days On Market	Sale Price
530 CHIPPING LN	4,216	\$5,749,000	5	5	2	151	\$5,650,000
3598 FAIR OAKS LN	3,417	\$2,795,000	4	4	0	95	\$2,702,000
210 SANDS POINT RD Unit#2405	650	\$969,000	1	1	0	327	\$948,000
210 SANDS POINT RD Unit#2402	642	\$999,900	1	1	0	45	\$935,000
4500 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#3	1,325	\$739,000	2	2	0	117	\$685,000
225 SANDS POINT RD Unit#6201	642	\$675,000	1	1	0	383	\$625,000
225 SANDS POINT RD Unit#7205	642	\$675,000	1	1	0	383	\$625,000
450 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#B207	1,474	\$650,000	3	2	0	290	\$620,000
4310 FALMOUTH DR Unit#304	747	\$330,000	1	1	0	177	\$310,000
2800 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#F-06	N/A	\$339,000				131	\$295,000
530 GOLF LINKS LN	1,909	\$2,125,000	3	2	1	0	\$2,125,000
3271 BAYOU RD	3,059	\$1,995,000	4	4	0	32	\$1,925,000
3526 FAIR OAKS LANE	2,634	\$1,875,000	3	3	0	13	\$1,800,000
721 BINNACLE POINT DR	3,229	\$1,499,000	3	3	0	374	\$1,400,000
240 SANDS POINT RD Unit#4205	640	\$1,115,000	1	1	0	292	\$1,050,000
3030 GRAND BAY BLVD Unit#312	2,143	\$995,000	3	3	1	33	\$910,000
1045 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#301	1,172	\$950,000	2	2	0	11	\$880,000
3080 GRAND BAY BLVD Unit#515	1,276	\$625,000	2	2	0	164	\$615,000
534 SUTTON PL Unit#534	1,278	\$296,000	2	2	0	0	\$296,000
2600 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#H-05	N/A	\$200,000				88	\$137,500
221 COSMOPOLITAN CT	1,682	\$800,000	2	2	1	0	\$800,000
667 MOURNING DOVE DR	6,570	\$10,995,000	5	5	2	72	\$10,500,000
1800 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#A901	2,070	\$2,500,000	3	3	0	0	\$2,500,000
1336 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#1F	1,596	\$1,350,000	2	2	0	0	\$1,350,000
500 S WASHINGTON DR Unit#6A	1,034	\$700,000	2	2	0	10	\$750,000
707 S GULFSTREAM AVE Unit#505	1,240	\$695,000	2	2	0	165	\$700,000
800 S BLVD OF THE PRESIDENTS Unit#16	1,090	\$499,000	2	2	0	363	\$485,000
767 JOHN RINGLING BLVD Unit#25	816	\$395,000	2	1	0	349	\$353,000
850 S TAMiami TRL Unit#224	1,224	\$249,900	2	2	1	14	\$225,000



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OnPatrol

The following are actual police reports as written by Longboat Key Police Officers. They are edited for length, punctuation and to protect privacy.

Aug. 14 Dim Lights and Green Nuggets

9:44 p.m.
Officer Troyer while on patrol observed a white truck in the 6000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive with faulty license plate lights. Officer Troyer conducted a vehicle stop and spoke with the driver and noticed an odor of marijuana emitting from the vehicle. Officer Troyer asked the driver if there was any marijuana in the vehicle. The man admitted there was a little bit. Officer Troyer asked the driver to retrieve the marijuana and he reached to the center console of the vehicle and gave the Officer a small container. Officer Troyer opened the container and observed small amounts of loose green leafy substance inside the center portion. Officer Troyer asked the driver if that was it, to which he said there was more in the top. The driver opened the top of the container for the officer and there were two larger sized oval shapes of a green leafy substance suspected as marijuana. The green oval shapes were commonly referred to as “nuggets.” The driver also told the officer he did not possess a medical marijuana card. Officer Troyer had the driver exit the vehicle and stand in front of the patrol car. Officer Troyer informed the driver he was detained and read the driver his Miranda rights. The driver agreed to speak with the officer and admitted the marijuana was for personal use and it would test positive for marijuana. Officer Troyer conducted a field weight of the green leafy substance, which weighed in at approximately 2.3 grams. Officer Troyer conducted a field test kit for marijuana, it changed to a purple color indicating a positive test for marijuana. Based on the officer’s investigation, he found probable cause to charge the driver with possession of marijuana, less than 20 grams. Officer Troyer issued the driver a notice to appear citation. The driver wanted the officer to check the license plate lights before leaving the stop because he believed one of his lights was functional. The driver turned on his vehicle’s lights. Upon further inspection, the left license plate light was on, however, the light was so dim it was not projecting onto the license plate. The right license plate lamp was not functional at all. Officer Troyer weighed the marijuana once at the station and entered the blue container with marijuana into property and evidence. Picture of the incident were uploaded to the case files of the report. Case clear.



friend at the residence and the man allegedly made threatening statements concerning the complainant during the interaction. The alleged statements were not made directly to the complainant and he did not report receiving any threatening written or electronic communications directly from the friend. Based on the information at the time of this report, the alleged statements were reportedly made verbally to a third party at a location outside the jurisdiction of the Longboat Key Police Department. The complainant didn’t report any immediate actions by the man indicating an attempt to carry out the alleged threat. The complainant was advised to contact law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the location where the alleged statements occurred should he want to

pursue the matter further. The complainant was also advised to immediately contact 911 if the man makes contact with him, comes to his residence, or attempts to carry out any threat or if any other suspicious or threatening activity occurs. Case clear.

Aug. 18 Unidentified Landscaping Object (ULO)

12:42 p.m.
Officer Tillman responded to the 1600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a suspicious aircraft. The complainant requested a phone call to document the incident. Officer Tillman called the complainant who reported that a 12 x 12 inch drone was seen flying approximately 10 feet from their balcony. The complainant stated that they reported the incident with the front desk manager who said that the drone was being flown by the St. Regis sod company for landscaping purposes. Complainant was given a case number. Case clear.

Aug. 20 Unmoored and Unbothered

3:33 a.m.
Sgt. Montfort while on patrol in Bayside Drive in the Village, observed a sailboat which had pulled from its mooring and was now against a dock at Bayside Drive. Sgt. Montfort was familiar with the vessel which had broken free from its mooring in the past. Sgt. Montfort attempted to contact the registered owner at both the phone numbers listed on file with negative results. At the time, the vessel was not adrift and not in danger of causing additional damage to the dock. Sgt. Montfort observed damage to the portside rear transom area where the vessel has scraped against the dock. Sgt. Montfort authored an email to marine patrol Officer Barrett to conduct a follow up on this date as he is assigned to marine patrol. Case clear.

Eviction Notice at Sea

10:05 a.m.
Officer Barrett spoke with a man on his sailing vessel which is anchored south of a restaurant. He is living inside his vessel and working for a marine company. Officer Barrett reviewed the town ordinance with him and emailed him a copy. He said he had the long-term anchoring permit issued by the State of Florida with the Longboat Key location on it. After reviewing the state statute and Longboat Key ordinance he is still in violation of the ordinance. Officer Barrett gave him until Sunday to remove the vessel or stop living on it. Case clear.

Aug. 21 Slow-Motion Getaway

11:24 p.m.
Officer Castro while on patrol at Broadway Street when he observed a gray Toyota traveling westbound without operational license plate lights. Officer Castro initiated a traffic stop on the vehicle. As Officer Castro was about to exit his vehicle, the driver began to drive away at a low rate of speed. Believing he might be repositioning his car, Officer Castro continued to follow at 25 mph. However, the vehicle continued northbound over the Longboat Pass Bridge. Realizing the driver appeared to be refusing to stop, Officer Castro notified Sarasota Sheriff’s Office dispatch and immediately turned off his emergency lights, terminating the attempted second traffic stop. When the vehicle passed in front of the officer, he noticed a male in the driver’s seat. Officer Castro was unable to confirm if the driver was the registered owner. If it is confirmed that the man was the driver, an arrest warrant will be requested. Manatee County Sheriff’s Office was dispatched to the man’s home address in Bradenton. Case clear.

Aug. 22 Canine Confrontation

9:28 p.m.
Officer Castro was dispatched to the 3700 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a civil disturbance. The complainant contacted the police department to report a verbal argument initiated by a man. The complainant stated that while she was walking her dog with a friend on the sidewalk near the intersection of Buttonwood and Gulf of Mexico Drive, a man she knew began yelling and cursing at them, claiming that dogs were not allowed on the beach. The complainant reported that the man appeared intoxicated but no physical altercation occurred. The complainant advised she believed the man lives in a specific unit. Officer Castro went to the unit where he made contact with the man who was identified by his Florida Driver’s license. The man stated he was upset because the complainant was walking her dog on the beach which he believed was not allowed. Officer Castro advised the man to contact the police if he sees dogs on the beach in the future so that they can enforce the town ordinances. Officer Castro also informed him that service dogs were permitted on the beach and that police can verify this with the dog owner if needed. Case clear.

Aug. 15 Nothing Fishy Here

10:22 a.m.
Officer Van Dyke responded to the 2800 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a trespass. Upon further investigation, the case was updated to a suspicious person. The complainant identified herself as the property manager. She said that a gray Ford truck was parked her client’s driveway and three unknown men were using the beach behind the residence. Upon arrival, Officer Van Dyke met with one of the men. He appeared to be fishing, but in the process of gathering his possessions, he said he had permission from the homeowner to be parked in the driveway. The man and his sons were cooperative throughout the investigation. Officer Van Dyke then called the complainant with the results of the investigation. The complainant advised she merely wants to make sure that the garage was accessible. The man and his sons left the area. Case clear.

Aug. 16 Telephone Game Threats

4:21 p.m.
Officer Pescuma responded to Ketch Lane regarding a reported threat/harassment incident that occurred in the past. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma made contact with hte complainant who advised that he received information from his friend that another man had made threatening statements directly to the friend and that the friend later related the statements to the complainant. The complainant advised that the incident involving the two occurred in Sarasota which is outside the jurisdiction of the Longboat Key Police Department. The complainant said that he had sent the friend to the man’s residence to cut grass without knowing that the man would be present. According to the friend, the man became upset when discovering the

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OnPatrol

Aug. 23

Midnight Matinee

2:36 a.m.
Officer Maple while on patrol on Gulfside Drive saw a Jeep Wrangler parked at the beach access. Officer Maple canvassed the beach and located the driver and passenger asleep on the beach. After awakening the pair, both said they had arrived at the beach around 11 p.m. to watch a movie on their iPad, which was located next to them and had fallen asleep. Furthermore, they said they were unaware of town ordinance in regards to hours allowed on the beach. FCIC/NCIC checks conducted with negative results. Both subjects were issued a warning for the beach violation and departed the area without incident.



which he did. The bottle was identified as a Smirnoff Ice Screwdriver. The driver was only 18 years of age and informed Officer Troyer that his friends were drinking in the vehicle although the driver was the only occupant of the vehicle. Officer Troyer had the driver exit the vehicle due to the odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage emitting from the vehicle and observed a slight slurred speech coming from the defendant early on in the stop. The driver exited the vehicle normally, however Officer Troyer still noticed the alcohol emitting from his person. Officer Troyer asked the defendant if he would be willing to submit to voluntary standardized field sobriety exercises, however he refused. The driver also denied any alcohol consumption. Officer Troyer did not observe any other indicators of impairment where he believed the defendant was operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated, therefore he was unable to proceed with a DUI investigation. However, Officer Troyer developed probable cause to search the vehicle based on the alcohol container in plain view and the odor of an unknown alcohol beverage emitting from the vehicle and given the defendant's age. Officer Troyer observed a brown duffle bag located int he driver side back seat. The duffle bag was unzipped as well. Officer Troyer searched the bag and observed a sealed bottle of Smirnoff Ice Screwdriver. Based on his investigation, Officer Troyer developed probable cause to believe the driver was in violation of possession of alcoholic beverages by persons under age 21. Officer Troyer issued the driver a Notice to Appear citation. Case clear.

Aug. 25

Luxury Left Behind

1:11 p.m.
Officer Zunz responded to the police department lobby for a complainant who wanted to turn in a Louis Vuitton handbag that he advised he'd just found while walking his dog along Russell Street. The bag is a two-compartment brown leather handbag and inside is a set of ear pods, lighter, and chewing gum. The purse was placed into a locker for safe keeping. Case clear.

Speeding and Smirnoff

8:32 p.m.
Officer Troyer while on patrol at the south end of Longboat Key bridge observed a vehicle approaching at a high rate of speed. Officer Troyer utilized the speed laser which measured the vehicle's speed at 48 mph in a 35 mph zone. Officer Troyer conducted a traffic stop and spoke to the driver. Officer Troyer noticed the odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage emitting from the vehicle. He also observed in plain view, a clear glass bottle sticking out from under the passenger seat on the floorboard with a liquid substance which appeared to have spilled on the floorboard carpet. Officer Troyer asked the defendant to hand him the bottle,

Aug. 26

Hammering After Hours

5:52 p.m.
Officer Castro was dispatched to Buttonwood Drive for a noise complaint. Upon arrival, Officer Castro did not hear any noise coming from the construction site. However, several workers exited the site and indicated they had been working prior to his arrival. Officer Castro informed the construction worker of the town's noise ordinances and provided him with a noise ordinance packet. The man was issued a warning and advised that future violations after 5 p.m. would result in a citation. Case clear.

Letters, from page 7

• City garages: 7 a.m. to midnight, Monday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. (The first hour remains free when a parking session is started.)
• Free time-restricted: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday.
These temporary parking enforcement hours will remain in effect while we gather additional community input and consider the best path forward for the City's parking operations. Have a nice weekend...and remember to pace yourself and stay hydrated in this summer heat.
Debbie Trice
Mayor
City of Sarasota

Parking Program: Running the Millage Math

To: Sarasota City Planning Director Steve Cover
Thank you. I am going through the PowerPoint now and will share additional feedback with Karie this afternoon.
Debbie Trice
Mayor
City of Sarasota

Parking Program: Millage Slides Incoming

To: Sarasota City Mayor Debbie Trice
Yes, in our presentation we will include a slide that presents what increase in the millage rate would be required to fully cover parking.
Steve Cover
Planning Director
City of Sarasota

Parking Program: The Mayor's Math Homework

To: Sarasota City Planning Director
Please see below the question from the Mayor. Can you please calculate this and add it to the slide presentation for Monday's workshop?
Karie Friling
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Parking Program: General Funds & General Frustrations

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling
Karie, thank you for this information. I do have a question for Monday. We have heard many members of the public calling for parking to be paid for out of the General Find, rather than being an Enterprise Fund program. I suspect that there's a need to clarify that the General Fund is primarily Property Tax monies. A useful piece of data for Monday (if it isn't already provided in yesterday's PowerPoint) is what would we need to increase the millage by to fully cover parking. (I realize that the terms of the St. Armands bond adds a wrinkle, but the "what if" should include St. Armands expenses too.) I'll look forward to discussing Monday's Workshop further when we meet on Thursday.
Debbie Trice
Mayor
City of Sarasota

Parking Program: Open House Aftermath & Damage Control

To: Sarasota City Commission
As a follow-up to our first open house held last night, I wanted to share with you what staff's next steps will be. There were approximately 100+ attendees at the open house last night. While I understand some were upset about how the meeting was facilitated, the format was intentionally selected to maintain decorum, order, and respect among everyone. When the open house was originally posted, it was shared there would be an overview of the City's parking program and then questions and comments would be received in writing that would be shared and answered by staff. Additionally, with significant misinformation swirling throughout the community and on-line, it was important to begin the evening with providing factual data and information about the City's overall program. I have attached the presentation to this email, so that you all have the same information shared last night.
All the written comments and questions will be reviewed and answered by end of day Thursday and will be posted on the city's website, along with the presentation. Those that provided emails, will be sent the link to our website. This will also be shared with the City Commission, in preparation of your workshop on Monday, August 31st. The presentation by staff at the workshop will be condensed and the feedback from the open house will be added for Commission review and discussion. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.
Karie Friling
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Bellevue Terrace: Jurisdiction and Park Pharmacists

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling
Locklear Park is in the county and we confirmed via dispatch it is under the purview of the Sheriff's Office. The park sits just east of our jurisdiction so it would be normal for those living on the west side of the jurisdictional line to assume it's SPDs.
Scott- please contact the sheriffs office and advise them of the concerns. Also, in the body of the email below, there is contact info for the concerned citizens, please inform them as well regarding jurisdiction and see if there are other ways we can assist.
Rex Troche
Chief of Police
City of Sarasota

Bellevue Terrace: Evicting the Locklear Park Drug Trade

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling
I just met with a couple who are going to establish a neighborhood association in Bellevue Terrace, in District 3. They'll be working with Nancy Kelly on that. They mentioned many of their neighbors don't go to Locklear Park any more because there's a lot of drug activity going on in the park. Wondering if we could have more police presence there to encourage the drug sellers to move along. If the police would like to contact them, I have the husband's name and email address. He is Clint Weldon at clintweldon@gmail.com. Wife's name is Delia.
Kathy Kelley Ohlrich
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Ice Cream, from page 1

feet at 380B St. Armands Circle and plans to open in the first quarter of 2027. It will be the chain’s first store on Florida’s West Coast, and it lands in what may already be the most densely sugared 360 degrees in Sarasota.

The Scoop on the Space

The storefront, near South Boulevard of the Presidents, came open the way much of the Circle’s inventory did. Hurricanes Helene and Milton emptied a string of spaces in the fall of 2024, and Sloan’s, which says it had been hunting for a Circle site for a decade, moved in through broker Chris Bauman of American Property Group. Bauman’s pitch is location math: a crosswalk corner with heavy foot traffic, just a couple of doors from Ben & Jerry’s, which means either poaching a competitor’s line or feeding off it.

The franchisee is a Sarasota resident, Sohrab Khadivian, who spent about two years shopping for a franchise, in part to give his teenage children a place to work. The Sarasota franchise sale was announced in May 2025; the address only surfaced this month.

Not Your Vanilla Franchise

Founder Sloan Kamenstein trained at Le Cordon Bleu in London and in French kitchens before opening the first Sloan’s in West Palm Beach, built around childhood summers on Martha’s Vineyard. The stores are the anti-minimalist parlor: hot-pink walls in his mother’s favorite color, crystal chandeliers, toy trains circling overhead, bulk candy walls and a restroom whose glass door turns opaque only when the lock clicks, a gimmick that made a national best-restroom shortlist in 2013.

The menu matches the decor. The signature Tracy’s Kitchen Sink stacks 18 scoops with baked goods and toppings, and the brand has traded on cameos with the Kardashians and Jeff Goldblum. Franchising began in 2012, and the system reported average unit sales topping \$1.15 million in 2023, which is pint-sized real estate throwing off serious revenue per square foot. Sloan’s now counts eight South Florida shops plus outposts in Ohio, Texas, Las Vegas and Los Angeles, a store in Kuwait and development deals in Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. A Babcock Ranch location in Charlotte County is queued alongside the Circle.

The Cold Math of the Circle

Here is the freezer burn. The Circle already has Kilwins, Ben & Jerry’s, Settimi’s Gelato, Big

Olaf and River Street Sweets pulling from the same tourist stream. Kilwins alone has been there since 1985 as the company’s first Florida store, and it just gutted and rebuilt after nearly a year dark following the storms, reopening a year ago this week.

David Wild, Sloan’s director of franchising, told the Sarasota Herald-Tribune the Circle is “one of the highest trafficked tourist areas in the entire state,” and he conceded the competition is real, with every shop chasing the same customers. His counter is the dessert-district theory: pile enough sweets into one ring and the ring itself becomes the reason people come. That is the proposition Kilwins, Big Olaf and the rest will be testing from the other side of the crosswalk.

Meanwhile, a Chocolatier Melts In

Sloan’s is not even the newest scoop on the block. In late June, the Chocolate Emporium, the Pine Avenue chocolatier from Anna Maria Island, soft-opened its second location at 28A S. Boulevard of the Presidents with hours running 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. The Schreiner family’s shop is calibrated for the Circle’s on-the-go traffic rather than the sit-down pace of Anna Maria, but it still hand-scoops ice cream alongside truffles, Key lime confections, pickle fudge and a bacon-and-caramel bark exclusive to St. Armands. Count it, and Sloan’s would make seven sweets vendors in a ring you can walk in 10 minutes.

Sprinkles on the Turnover

The churn runs well beyond dessert. Speaks Clam Bar exited after nearly eight years. Le Colonne came back in January reborn as Nönnö Umberto after the Salustri family bridged the storm gap with a food truck. Jewelry by Cole, a fixture since 1974, has become St. Armands Jewelers under new ownership with a grand opening planned for November. The hurricanes did not just damage the Circle; they reshuffled the lease roll, and national brands with deep pockets are buying in at the same moment merchants are fighting City Hall over paid parking, with a commission workshop set for Monday.

The Cherry on Top

Construction and permitting details for 380B have not been released, and the opening remains a loose “first quarter.” Whether the Circle can absorb another premium scoop or has finally hit brain freeze is a question its landlords will answer at renewal time. For now, the winner is obvious: anyone holding a waffle cone.

Turtles, from page 1

A few hundred yards off Longboat Key she surfaces and lifts her head. What she is looking for is the oldest map in the world: a low dark shore in front of her, a bright sky mirrored on the water behind. If the dunes are dark, she comes in. If a balcony glows or a pool light burns, she may circle for an hour and give up. Turtle patrols call that a false crawl. On Longboat Key this year, turtles have turned back without nesting 1,889 times.

Tonight the beach is dark enough. She rides the last of the tide onto the sand and drags herself, all of her, one flipper-length at a time, above the wrack line. A lounge chair someone forgot. A hole a child dug that afternoon. A scarp cut by last week’s tide. Any of them can end it. She clears them, finds sand that holds, and with her rear flippers digs a chamber the shape of a flask. She lays about 100 eggs the size of ping-pong balls, weeping salt from the glands beside her eyes. She fills the hole, scatters sand over it with a violence that looks like grief, and turns for the water. By the time the sky grays, only her tracks remain.

At first light a volunteer finds them, and a yellow stake goes in.

That is the battle. It is only the first one.

Sixty days in the sand

The eggs incubate for roughly two months, and the sand decides their fate. Too close to the water and a king tide or a passing storm rolls over the nest. Tropical Storm Bertha never came near Florida in July, but its precursor took out nest markers on Longboat, said Longboat Key Turtle Watch President Jeff Driver. An overwashed nest can still hatch. A washed-out nest, eggs scattered on the beach, cannot.

Temperature decides something else. Sea turtles have no sex chromosomes. Warm sand makes females, cool sand makes males, and sand that gets hot enough makes nothing at all. Raccoons and ghost crabs dig for the rest.

Nests have grown so dense that volunteers now closely monitor only about every fourth one, Driver said. Those get two extra “biangulation” stakes at the vegetation line, measured off the clutch, so the nest can be found again after a storm rearranges the beach. The others get a single stake and a prayer.

The night they come out

Hatchlings emerge at night, usually all at once, and they navigate the way their mother did: toward the brightest, lowest horizon. For 100 million years that was the sea.

On the morning of Aug. 12, Longboat Key Turtle Watch reported about a dozen dead hatchlings near Gulf of Mexico Drive, drawn inland by lights. Survivors went to rehab. The same morning, Anna Maria Island Turtle Watch picked 55 dead hatchlings off a roadway. Through Aug. 13 that group had logged more than 3,000 disoriented hatchlings this season, 141 of them dead, and a 36 percent disorientation rate that already tops last year’s 31 percent. Twenty nesting adults had been turned around, too.

Longboat’s ordinance calls for Gulf-side lights out between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m., and turtle watch volunteers patrol those hours looking for glare and for crawls veering the wrong way.

After the Aug. 12 deaths they went to the town, and shields and amber bulbs went up on nearby fixtures.

The moon did not help. The heaviest hatching this summer fell near the new moon, said Melissa Macksey, data manager for Mote Marine Laboratory’s Sea Turtle Conservation and Research Program, leaving almost no natural light on the water to compete with the porch lights. “Just trying our best to continue to work with these municipalities to reduce impacts, from the human side of things,” she said.

The numbers

Mote’s patrols cover 35 miles of beach from Longboat Key to Venice. Through Aug. 22 they had counted 4,923 nests: 4,731 loggerhead and 192 green. At the same point last year the count was 5,723. In 2024 it was 4,374.

Longboat Key stands at 1,302 nests, against 1,471 a year ago and 1,258 in 2024. Casey Key, the eight-mile ribbon south of Siesta, leads the region as always with 2,269. Siesta has 557, Venice 645, Lido 150.

Nesting is essentially finished. Mote logged nine new nests across its entire territory in the week ending Aug. 22, two of them on Longboat. From here to Halloween, the story is the hatch.

Last year finished at 5,735 nests, the most in Mote’s 43 years of counting, along with a record 716 disorientation events. In 2007, the same beaches produced 735.

Why 2025 was a freak

Macksey is blunt about the comparison. Debris from the 2024 hurricanes happened to shield nests from inland lighting, and hatchlings did unusually well. “We had an insane season last year, so comparing to 2025 is kind of silly,” she said. “Every year is record breaking or second place or third place or top five, so we’re just increasing that baseline. Ten years ago if we had these numbers we’d be thrilled.”

Jake Lasala, who runs Mote’s program, predicted in the spring that 2026 would fall short of the record but stay strong. So far he is right on both counts. The rising baseline is the real story, and it raises a question nobody on the beach wants to ask.

Is more turtles actually good news?

There are two answers, and both are true.

The first is conservation. A loggerhead takes roughly 30 years to mature, so the females nesting on Longboat tonight hatched in the 1990s, when turtle excluder devices became mandatory on shrimp trawls, when Florida beach towns passed lighting ordinances, when nest marking and predator screens became routine. Lasala credits community-wide conservation and calls the trend heading into this season “incredibly encouraging.”

The second answer is warmer. Florida sand has been producing overwhelmingly female hatchlings for years, and more females means more nests a generation later whether or not the population is healthier. A study posted in January by researchers on Cabo Verde, off West Africa, put numbers to that worry. Nest counts there rose roughly 100-fold since 2008; drone surveys found the breeding population about

90 percent female; and the best predictor of any year’s nest count was air temperature 31 years earlier. The authors call it a “demographic illusion,” a boom that looks like recovery until there are too few males to fertilize the eggs. They ran the same test on 27 other loggerhead populations, Florida’s included, and found the effect strongest on warm, low-latitude beaches with steady temperatures. The paper has not yet been peer reviewed, but the mechanism is not in dispute.

So are stressed females laying more? Not exactly. A turtle in poor condition skips years rather than nesting harder. What stress is doing is quieter: tilting every nest toward daughters. And the daughters are coming home.

The water she goes back to

When she slips off Longboat before dawn she returns to a Gulf warmer than the one she was born into. Warm water lets females lay more clutches in a season and is nudging the season earlier, part of why the counts keep climbing. Ocean acidification, the same chemistry stripping the reefs Mote is racing to save in the Keys, works on her from the bottom of the food chain: loggerheads live on crabs, whelks and conchs, exactly the shell-builders that struggle in more acidic water. Red tide killed hundreds of sea turtles off Southwest Florida in 2018 alone. Add boat strikes, longlines, ghost nets and plastic, and state wildlife officials estimate one hatchling in a thousand survives to adulthood.

Do the arithmetic on Longboat’s 1,302 nests. Call it 130,000 eggs. Even if every one hatched, that is about 130 adults, three decades from now.

Ten more weeks

Hatching runs through Oct. 31, and hundreds of Longboat nests have yet to open. The asks are small. Gulf-side lights off or shielded after 11 p.m. Blinds closed. Furniture, tents and toys off the beach at night. Holes filled, castles flattened. No flashlights, phone screens or flash photography on the sand. If hatchlings are heading for the road, don’t carry them to the water; call Longboat Key Turtle Watch or Mote, whose contacts are at LBKTurtleWatch.com, and let trained people handle it.

Macksey, who has watched turtles confound every prediction her team makes, likes to say they are jerks. She also says not to be discouraged. Turtles lay too many eggs to mourn each one, and the trend line, whatever it finally means, still points up.

The female will be back in two or three years. Whether she can find the dark is up to us.

Letters, from page 11

Jungle Gardens: Taming the Legal Jungle

To: Sarasota City Manager Karie Friling
Yes, will do. We are also meeting with the Jungle Gardens attorney on Monday to discuss compliance.
Lucia Panica
City Clerk
City of Sarasota

Jungle Gardens: Barbed Wire, Buffers, and the Law

To: Sarasota City Clerk Lucia Panica
We need to update it for where we are at, and what we have uncovered and how we intend to move forward with the outstanding code issues that remain. Particularly, the fencing approvals for the chain link and barb wire, buffering requirements, and the historic sign. Also, any determination that there is not enough room to add plantings in the row.
What legal options are there for enforcement and what mechanism would it be?
I continue to receive questions about this from the Commission.
Karie Friling
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Parking Department Woes: Stop Signs, Speedy Tickets, and Spite

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
Today I am sharing 3 errors committed by the parking department that will need to be addressed by business owners, me, instead of running my business
1.My employee for whom I pay the parking received a ticket - which also happened last month. It causes my employee to mistrust me.
2.Nick from Cafe Amici was behind the parking division car and recorded her blowing through the stop sign the 2nd time! After she blew through the first sign he picked up his phone to see if she did it again, and she did. (See the attached video.)
3.My client returned to her car and found that at 2:31, which is the time she said she got there, there was already a ticket on her car that said 231. Braxton Harvey had said there was a 10 minute grace period. That could be offered. Certainly 232 would have been a reasonable time to offer a ticket but 231? So now I am taking my clients ticket to parking and seeing if I can get this fixed for her. She was with me and now she is mad... Not with me but at the situation, which makes it harder for me to do my job.
There are only 3.000 parking spaces in Sarasota, these people have to generate millions of dollars in parking fines... I wonder if they're just giving tickets in order that some percent will not fight them and will pay the ticket?
Katherine Hermes
Sarasota

Click-2-Fix: Reading Between the (Faded) Lines

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jean Ahearn-Koch
As you know, parking is a hot topic in our city.
I requested that parking lines be repainted on 2nd Street outside Selby Library.
It is difficult for drivers to see the lines to park properly. The response for Parking Enforcement to monitor is not satisfactory. I would hope that painting lines would already be on a maintenance schedule. If it is not on a schedule yet, it should be added. I appreciate your hard work to make our City better in all ways.
Colleen Forristall
Sarasota

Workshop Fallout: The Natives are Restless (and Rightfully So)

To: Sarasota City Commission
The voices of residents have been silenced for many years, workshops like this one have been commonplace. Quite honestly, I was delighted to see the response by people attending the meeting. It is time for a reassessment of the relationship between the City administration and residents. Fostering open communication and community engagement builds trust, which has been sorely lacking over the past several years.
I hope this meeting opens the eyes of those that can bring about changes Sarasota needs.
Joyce Cloutier
Harbor Acres

Parking Workshop: A Masterclass in Missing the Mark

To: Sarasota City Commission
I attended the parking workshop last night. It was a debacle but there was some useful information provided by City staff.
Communication between the City staff and residents/business owners as to the nature of the meeting was poor. Many residents and business owners attended the meeting expecting to be able to speak to the parking department but were precluded from doing so. About 25-30 of those people, some of whom had clearly been drinking before the meeting, left in protest before the meeting. The structure of the meeting, in which the City staff provided a lecture on current parking operations, with questions submitted on cards to be answered after, served to anger people who were already quite angry. In my view, the Commission should have provided the typical 3-minute public input directly to the Commission as many people are quite angry...
I elected to stay. The meeting, in my view, followed a consistent pattern, where the City staff told the attendees how the parking department operated and then answered questions. From the staff view, they already had decided what they wanted to do. Attendee input was needed to be able to tell the Commission that staff received public input without staff acting on public input. I have often seen City staff tell the Commission they received public input, but have never seen the Commission ask what that input was. The recent transportation discussion is a good example.
The meeting did have some useful substance. The Staff discussed the treatment of Enterprise Funds and the need for Enterprise Funds to be self funding. The purpose of a parking Enterprise Fund to is to have the people using the parking to pay for the parking expenses, rather than having all citizens pay for parking expenses through the general fund. The decision to make parking an Enterprise Fund was apparently made in 2018. The Commission implicitly ratified the Enterprise Fund decision when it increased parking hours in an attempt to balance the budget. It might be useful for the Commission to reconsider whether parking should be

an Enterprise Fund. However, that would require the reallocation of City funds away from other uses..
The staff presented comparisons that show that parking charges are reasonable, or even low, in comparison to other neighboring cities. It appears that parking department communication with businesses has been lacking, particularly regarding the availability and use of discounted employee parking permits.
Interestingly, there was no discussion in the staff presentation of how parking department expenses might be reduced. A review of the department budget indicates that it might be over staffed. One submitted question asked why there were so many parking attendants in the garages when technology should have eliminated their positions. The short answer was the technology doesn't yet work. The Commission should demand answers on that one. Also, there was no discussion of why elevators that are not that old need replacing. Similarly, there was no discussion of the need for the fancy new cars that are suddenly appearing on downtown streets. I would say the parking department expenses are higher than they should be.
Many residents and business owners are angry with the parking situation in the City. There are many different reasons for this. The staff's direction from the Commission appears to be for the staff to find enough revenue to balance the budget. The staff has not been directed by the Commission to balance the needs of residents and businesses with the need to get revenue. The staff has also not been directed to try to lower expenses in order to find that balance. These are the changes that are needed.
John Simon
Sarasota

Media Pitch: The HOT Team Takes the Spotlight

To: Sarasota City Homeless Response Coordinator Shellie Legarsky
Query: The Homeless Response Coordinator was invited to appear on ABC7's News at Noon after Communications offered availability to discuss the City's homeless response efforts. What is the big picture of Sarasota's homeless population? What does outreach look like? What are the biggest issues the City helps homeless individuals tackle? What should the community do when they see an individual panhandling?
Response: Communications coordinated for an in-studio appearance on ABC7's News at Noon, where the Homeless Response Coordinator explained that there has been a decline in homelessness in Sarasota over the past 10 years, largely due to the efforts of the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). The team is made up of the Homeless Response Coordinator, 2 civilian caseworkers, 5 SPD officers and one sergeant. The HOT works with unsheltered individuals on the street to connect them with services, temporary housing, rehabilitation, court services, and more. Some of the biggest issues the City helps unsheltered individuals tackle are getting replacement ID cards, birth certificates, food stamps, and government assistance.
While some members of the community may feel drawn to give money or food to unsheltered individuals, the kindest way to help the City's unsheltered population is to contact the HOT, who can begin providing assistance. Many times, unsheltered individuals are already known and are being helped by the HOT. It is important that the community understands that it is impossible to know what an individual's situation, mental state, or mood is, and that outreach is most effective when done by professionals who are equipped to handle the needs of individuals in all situations. Those who wish to help unsheltered individuals should do so by donating their time or money to one of many local agencies, like Resurrection House, that provide services professionally in coordination with the City. Communications shared the attached images with the anchor to be included in the newscast.
Luke Mocherman
Communications Specialist
City of Sarasota

Beau Ciel Red Tag: The JustFOIA Waiting Game

To: Sarasota City Commission
This will acknowledge receipt of your public records request. My office will move forward with processing your request and notify you when the search for responsive records has been completed. You will receive a response through our public records system JustFOIA. In the meantime, please note that we may contact you if we need clarification regarding your request. We will further advise you if there are any charges associated with the retrieval of the records responsive to your request.
Please note: FL Statute 119, regarding Public Records, does not require a governmental body to create new information (only to produce existing records), perform legal research, or to answer questions about the public records (other than how to obtain them and the possible cost).
Shayla Griggs
City Clerk
City of Sarasota

Beau Ciel Red Tag: Anonymous Owners Seek the Stop-Work Scoop

To: City Auditor & Clerk, Ms. Shayla Griggs, Deputy City Auditor & Clerk, Ms. Lori Rivers, Chief Building Official, Mr. Larry Murphy, and Inspector Brandon Soriano.
We are a group of concerned residents, families, and deeded owners living at Beau Ciel (990 Boulevard of the Arts).
We are writing to you anonymously because we are worried about retaliation from our board and their bullying tactics, but we care deeply about the safety of our homes, our staff, and our pets. We heard the board talk about a City Red Tag / Stop Work Order during the Thursday morning meeting on August 20th under Case File 2026-CC-047292.
Under Florida's Chapter 119 Public Records Law, we request immediate access to copies of all the public records and inspection reports for this case. Please include the raw field inspection notes, the written mandates, code citations, corrective orders, and any photos taken by the inspector or Mr. Larry Murphy's team. Since Florida law says public records requests can be totally anonymous, please just reply directly to this email address with the files or a link where we can see them.
We are so grateful to Mayor Debbie, her office, and the building officials, Mr. Larry Murphy, Inspector Soriano, and their team for looking out for our health, safety, and well-being. You are all doing an amazing job protecting us and our building.
Beau Ciel Deeded Owners
Saraosta

Parking, from page 1

asset. During the 2024 hurricanes it was a place to move vehicles above the flood — used, he notes, by many Longboat Key residents at no charge, “but that’s another story.” It could stage emergency equipment for the barrier islands. And during Helene, he wrote, “It may have saved lives” — people who stayed and got flooded “walked across the street through 4-5 feet of flood water in the pitch dark to spend the night there.”

Goglia remembers what came before it: cars blocking mailboxes and driveways on the residential streets, litter, emergency vehicles struggling to get through, festival parking lining the grass medians of John Ringling — “extremely dangerous,” he writes, on a divided state highway that doubles as an evacuation route. “Despite the financial situation, the St. Armands Parking Garage is still needed,” his letter argues; in season, the merchants “desperately need this parking for their customers and employees.” He calls it “an award-winning, generational asset that provides clear public benefit, which should be protected and preserved” — and warns that if the city sells it, “the concern is that it would someday be knocked down and become something else,” while a paid-off bond frees the city to sell the Fillmore lot, “a site where we already know developers want to put a hotel.” The result, he writes: “We’d lose much-needed public parking spaces and instead get increased, lasting congestion. Nobody wants that.”

He likens the debate to the city’s proposed performing arts center: “Does the city need it? Is it worth the cost? Some would say yes, and some would say no.”

Even his practical complaint lands on a sore spot: visitors approaching St. Armands “may not even realize the garage is there.” One small sign. He proposes a series of bigger ones along the causeway.

Hold that thought — because better signage is precisely what the city’s own consultant recommended in 2014, on a list of fixes costing a fraction of one percent of what the garage did. Goglia’s letter arrives at the end of a week in which the city refused to let the public say any of this out loud, and it lands on top of a 90-page document that almost nobody has read. LBK News read every page. What emerges is not a single villain. It is a chain of custody in which each link took the previous link’s caveat and passed it along as a certainty — and the people who never asked for any of it ended up holding the bill.

“Decorum,” They Said

Monday evening, the Parking Division held the open house it had promised since the Aug. 3 vote — and the people who showed up to help fix the system discovered they would not be allowed to speak. A staff presentation, then written questions. No podium. No three minutes. Many filled out cards and walked out.

City Manager Karie Friling told commissioners the format was “intentionally selected to maintain decorum, order, and respect,” citing “significant misinformation swirling throughout the community and on-line.” The residents’ letters read differently. John Simon, who stayed to the end, wrote that attendees “expecting to be able to speak” were “precluded from doing so,” that 25 to 30 left in protest, and that the format “served to anger people who were already quite angry.” His sharper point was structural: “From the staff view, they already had decided what they wanted to do.” He noted what the presentation never discussed — cutting the division’s own costs: garage attendants kept on because the replacement technology “doesn’t yet work,” elevator replacements, the “fancy new cars” appearing downtown. Joyce Cloutier of Harbor Acres was blunter: “The voices of residents have been silenced for many years... It is time for a reassessment of the relationship between the City administration and residents.”

Katherine Hermes — whose empty-Main-Street video became the emblem of the revolt, and who called the open house “a sham” — followed with a letter cataloguing three department errors in one stretch: an employee whose parking she pays, ticketed for the second month running; a client ticketed at 2:31, the minute she says she arrived, despite a promised 10-minute grace period; and a parking division car recorded on video by Café Amici’s Nicholas Dilelsi rolling through a stop sign. Twice. “I wonder,” she wrote, “if they’re just giving tickets in order that some percent will not fight them and will pay the ticket?”

The Mayor’s Millage Question

Something else was moving in the correspondence: math. Mayor Debbie Trice asked staff to calculate, for Monday’s workshop, what the city “would need to increase the millage by to fully cover parking” — St. Armands expenses included — noting that residents calling for parking to come out of the General Fund should understand that fund is primarily property-tax money. Planning Director Steve Cover confirmed the slide is coming. For the first time since the meters went in, the city is at least modeling the alternative.

The Number That Built a Garage

Every public account of the garage begins with the same figure: the Kimley-Horn feasibility study “indicated a deficiency of 320 parking spaces.” It justified a structure of roughly 500 spaces, and everything since has rested on it.

Here is where 320 came from. Kimley-Horn did not count 320 missing spaces. It borrowed the figure from a 2013 Walker Parking Consultants study — and the borrowed figure was not a measurement. It was the far end of a projection. Walker’s actual peak-season count found 1,121 cars in a district of 1,135 spaces — 99 percent occupancy, the closest thing to a hard number in the entire file. Walker then discounted the supply to an “effective” 990, converting a 14-space surplus into a 131-space deficit, and projected demand forward as much as seven years at growth rates up to 2.25 percent, producing future deficits of 165 to 320 spaces.

The city took the top of the range: seven years out, at the fastest growth the consultant could defend, against a discounted supply. Nobody built the garage for 2013. They built it for a 2020 assumed to grow without interruption. The pandemic arrived in 2020. The garage’s revenue has never reached a third of its projection.

The consultant’s site visits came on two November days in 2013 — both shaped by the St. Armands Art Festival, the very event the study said it would not size the garage for. The photographs of circling cars did more to sell the garage than any table in the report.

The Study’s Own Warnings

Buried in the same report was a menu of fixes requiring no concrete: restripe the on-street spaces (about 30 spaces gained, cost \$9,765), name the lots, untangle the valet — and fix the signage. The full menu totaled about \$208,000. The signage Goglia is asking for in 2026 was on the consultant’s list in 2014. The city’s takeaway was 320 spaces and a four-story structure.

The financing section opened by warning it was “for informational purposes only, and should not be considered as a financial feasibility analysis.” The sample spreadsheet behind the garage’s famous \$751,000-a-year revenue projection said its use was “at the Client’s own risk.” And the spreadsheet’s bottom line never made it to the podium: against that revenue, Kimley-Horn modeled a loss of \$859,260 in year one and \$9.09 million over ten years. When a commissioner later asked whether anyone on staff knew what the garage needed to collect to break even, the parking manager answered no. The answer was in the appendix.

The Precondition

One sentence explains how a garage on a barrier island became a meter on Main Street: “The concept of implementing paid parking at the proposed parking garage assumes paid parking will also be implemented at on-street parking spaces.” A garage that charges money cannot compete with free curb space fifty feet away. Paid parking on St. Armands was never a policy the city arrived at. It was a structural requirement of the bond. When the garage opened Feb. 12, 2019, the meters went live the same morning — and the city’s own 2021 rate notice called later adjustments “necessary to meet requirements tied to the revenue bonds.”

The Garage the City Made Free

Then the city undercut its own model. The projection assumed charging from the first hour. The city opened at 50 cents, made the first two hours free in 2021, then the first hour free in 2025 — giving away, for nearly four years, the precise two-hour transaction the revenue depended on, while metering the curb at \$1.50 to push drivers into a garage that wasn’t charging them. The results: roughly \$212,000 a year in average revenue from 2019 through 2025, about half the projection in the best years. For fiscal 2024-25, after the hurricanes shut collections for three months, the city projected \$142,284 from a garage bonded on \$751,000.

From \$11.5 Million to \$17.5 Million

Goglia writes that the garage “didn’t cost any more than a parking garage should cost.” The file is less generous. The study priced the larger option at roughly \$11.45 million all-in — about \$22,000 a space. Staff carried it to the commission at “approximately 11.5 million dollars.” By the 3-2 bond vote in 2017, the number was \$17.5 million, sweetened with median undergrounding, signage and end caps. The garage that opened had 484 spaces, at about \$29,000 apiece — roughly a third more per space than the consultant’s estimate — on a lot that already held nearly 200 surface spaces. Net gain: about 320 spaces. The garage did not add 484 spaces to St. Armands. It added the deficit.

Sell the Garage?

Hermes’ Aug. 21 memo proposes moving enforcement into the Police Department, bidding out the downtown garages, and — when the St. Armands bonds become callable on Oct. 1, 2027 — selling the garage to retire the debt. Her arithmetic: a \$12 million sale “would likely retire the debt.”

Here is where Goglia and the file, coming from opposite directions, meet. The bond covenant is the only mechanism that has ever protected the public parking: it killed the Fillmore lot sale and blocked a developer from buying spaces inside the garage. Once the bonds are retired — by sale or by payoff — the covenant is gone, and the future Goglia warns about has nothing left to bump against. The commission should notice the shape of the thing. The garage was sold to the public on a shortage. It would be sold to a buyer on a surplus. Both propositions cannot be true, and the space between them is where \$1.64 million in general fund money went.

The Residents’ Ledger

Tally who has paid. St. Armands and Lido residents got the traffic, the meters and eleven years of construction on their only road off the island. The Circle’s merchants pay roughly \$275,000 a year for a garage many customers do not use. Downtown’s shopkeepers, three miles away, inherited the metered-street regime the garage required — and, this summer, the extended hours and higher fines proposed to close a deficit that is 91 percent St. Armands. The general fund is owed \$1.64 million. And the division’s proposed budget leans on \$2.2 million in tickets — 33 percent of its revenue, against roughly 8 percent in comparable cities.

Monday, and September 7

Whatever staff gleaned from the comment cards now goes into the package for Monday’s commission workshop, Aug. 31 — where public comment will not be taken either. The first meeting at which the commission can act, and the public can speak on the record, is Sept. 7.

Somewhere between now and then, the city has to answer the question Mayor Trice put on the record before voting to suspend her own ordinance: somebody is going to pay for the parking. The deeper question has hung over this file since 2014, written by city staff and never answered — whether parking revenue on St. Armands is “a reliable and stable revenue stream” to pledge against the debt. Eleven years and \$1.64 million later, the answer appears to be no. The public came ready to say as much, and was handed comment cards. On Friday, the island’s association president mailed in the other half of the argument. Monday, the commission gets both.

Read the complete investigation — including the full 90-page feasibility study, the sample revenue spreadsheet and the city documents — at lbknews.com.

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Schools, from page 1

sending him into a Nov. 3 runoff against Heidi Brandt, who took about 32 percent. Teresa DeWitt, the Moms for Liberty-aligned candidate, was eliminated with roughly 25 percent.

The math is brutal for the departing majority. When the new members are seated in mid-November, the five-member board flips from 3-2 conservative to at least 4-1 in favor of the moderate-to-progressive bloc anchored by sitting members Tom Edwards and Liz Barker. If Glover wins in November, the board will be 5-0. Conservatives will hold one seat at most, and that seat is now the only thing left to fight about.

The Scoreboard: Two Blowouts and a Runoff

Roughly 107,000 ballots were cast countywide, a turnout of about 33 percent. A primary electorate, older and more engaged than November’s, still produced a rout.

Tennimon, a former elementary teacher and mother of three district students who is registered with no party, won District 4 by about 10 points. Mayberry, who retired in 2025 after more than 13 years teaching math and science in the district, beat Pozzie, a Turning Point USA chapter director, by more than 13 points. In District 1, Glover, a 30-year United Airlines flight attendant from Newtown who chairs the board of the Star Lab school, led the three-way field from the first returns and never trailed. Brandt, the Southside Elementary PTO president endorsed by the Republican Party of Sarasota County, held second.

How a Two-to-One Republican County Did This

Sarasota County is not a swing county: nearly 163,000 registered Republicans, fewer than 81,000 Democrats and more than 85,000 with no major party at the July book closing. School board races are nonpartisan and open to all of them, and the winning coalition was plainly built on Republicans and independents who crossed over.

In 2022, Gov. Ron DeSantis personally endorsed Bridget Ziegler and Tim Enos, and voters installed a 4-1 conservative supermajority that ousted Superintendent Brennan Asplen within weeks. In 2024, Barker unseated Karen Rose and Edwards survived a challenge, narrowing the majority to 3-2. Tennimon and Mayberry have now made it four consecutive contested school board races won by the side running against the board’s record, and DeSantis, who built the majority, will watch it dissolve on his way out of office.

District 1: The Island Seat Goes to Overtime

For our readers, the race that matters most is the one that isn’t over.

District 1 has been Ziegler’s since Gov. Rick Scott appointed her in 2014, and the arithmetic of the runoff is closer than the primary margins suggest. Brandt and DeWitt together drew about 56 percent. If DeWitt’s voters simply migrate to Brandt, she wins.

But three things complicate that assumption.

First, the Republican vote in District 1 was a family fight. DeWitt, a former vice chair of the Sarasota Moms for Liberty chapter, carried the endorsements of U.S. Rep. Greg Steube and Sheriff Kurt Hoffman. Brandt carried the county party and campaigned as the candidate who would have voted no on the ICE resolution and the student protest penalties. DeWitt’s most motivated supporters were voting for the parental-rights movement that Brandt kept at arm’s length. Whether they show up for her in November, or stay home, is the whole ballgame.

Second, the electorate roughly doubles. The last midterm general election drew about 62 percent turnout in Sarasota County, nearly twice this month’s primary, and a November electorate is younger, less partisan and less predictable.

Third, Glover has the money and the machinery. He raised nearly \$136,000, more than twice Brandt’s \$66,000, and he has the county Democratic Party’s organization, the endorsements of Edwards and Barker, and a historic argument: he would be the first Black member ever elected to the Sarasota County School Board.

The majority is set no matter who wins. What the runoff decides is whether conservatives keep a voice on the board at all, and whether the member representing Longboat Key, Lido and downtown is a Southside PTO president or a Newtown flight attendant who has spent a

year telling voters the board forgot who it works for.

What the Winners Say Comes First

Tennimon, who told supporters at Tamiami Tap that “we made history today,” is running on academic achievement, teacher support and restoring income caps on the state voucher program. Mayberry has warned repeatedly against cutting the arts programs that keep families in district schools. Tennimon said the community, regardless of party, was “tired of the culture wars, the political theater.”

What Could Be Undone

Fully reversible by board vote: the resolution reaffirming cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement; the penalties for students who walk out of class in protest; the code-of-conduct rewrite that stripped certain anti-discrimination language; and the decision to leave the statewide school boards association. Expect the new majority to move on at least some of these early.

Not reversible by board vote: the state voucher program that district officials say pulled roughly \$45 million out of Sarasota’s revenue this year, the parental-rights and library-review laws, and the state funding formula. A new majority changes the district’s tone and priorities. It does not override Tallahassee.

The Money Doesn’t Care Who Won

The budget the new board inherits was written by the board it replaces. Final adoption of the roughly \$1.3 billion 2026-27 budget comes at a September hearing before the outgoing majority, whose members stay in office until mid-November. The 136 teaching positions cut in April are already gone, along with \$115 million in expired federal pandemic money. The new majority has no more money than the old one.

What it does have is the voter-approved one-mill property tax, renewed in November 2024 with 84 percent of the vote and good through 2030. That number is the tell. Sarasota voters were never divided about funding education. They were divided about what the board spent its meetings on.

What It Means on the Islands

For Longboat Key, Lido and St. Armands families, the practical picture is this.

The schools their children attend, Southside, Bay Haven, Booker and Sarasota High, opened this month as they always have: A-rated. The 23-year A streak was built by teachers and principals, not by board resolutions, and it does not change hands in November.

What changes is who governs, and what the board is known for. For four years Sarasota’s school board was famous for reasons that had nothing to do with reading scores, and Realtors walking prospects through St. Armands listings learned to change the subject. A board that spends its meetings on literacy, budgets and bus routes is a quieter institution and, for a community whose property values lean on its schools, a more valuable one.

The island seat is the last one in play. Every Longboat, Lido and Bird Key voter casts a ballot in the Glover-Brandt runoff, and in a race that could be decided by a few thousand votes countywide, the islands’ famously high turnout is not a footnote.

Mark the Calendar

Oct. 5: voter registration deadline for the Nov. 3 general election.

Nov. 3: Glover vs. Brandt for District 1, the last seat, and the last word.

Mid-November: Tennimon and Mayberry are seated, the board elects a new chair, and Ziegler’s chairmanship ends.

Sarasota County’s voters were asked a simple question on Aug. 18: after four years, do you want more of this? By double digits, in a county that votes Republican two to one, they said no. The only thing they left unanswered is whether the last conservative seat survives. That answer is due in 66 days.

Backing In, from page 1

I’ll give it a shot, Beeman,” she said, and after something inaudible from the floor, “No, I’m not.” The room laughed. It would not laugh again for a while.

“Chip Beeman, business owner on Main Street,” he said. “Talk to you about parking, kind of.”

The Arroyo Fix, Undone

Beeman’s complaint was specific and, by his account, old. Years ago he sat down with then-Commissioner Erik Arroyo and “explained to him the dangers of head-in parking and making you back out.” Arroyo, he said, “was able to get the council or the commission together and change that,” and the city’s garages allowed drivers to back into spaces.

Not anymore. “The city changed the back-in parking in the garages back to no backing in,” Beeman said. And the reversal came with an invoice. “Not only is back-in parking changed now, but it’s also gone to \$50 as a safety thing.”

He let the phrase hang there. “Let me tell you what, the safest thing to do is to back into a parking spot.”

The Numbers

Beeman came with paper. Citing the National Safety Council, he told the commission roughly 20 percent of all vehicle accidents happen in parking garages, and that about 500 people die in them every year. Those are the kinds of figures a city usually cites to justify a rule. Beeman was citing them to explain why the rule is backwards: a driver who backs in pulls out facing forward, with a full windshield of pedestrians in view. A driver who pulls in nose-first leaves blind, backing into a lane, with a rear window and a prayer.

The Funeral Math

Then he stopped citing and started remembering.

Around 2010, he said, a regular at one of his old restaurants, a woman in her 70s, went to church with her husband. After the service they got in the car. “They backed over seven

ladies, killed three of them, because she pulled in instead of backing into the spot.” Had she backed in, Beeman said, she would have seen all of them, “after she got done playing with her phone, adjusting her mirror,” and pulled out safely. “The lady I described to you, she died a year later. She was heartbroken.”

The second story was his own. “On the personal side, I lost a nephew to the very same thing,” Beeman said. The boy was backed over by his own father. Both parents, Beeman’s brother-in-law and sister-in-law, are gone now, and he told the commission plainly that the loss of their son is what killed them.

“You got to rethink what you’re doing here.”

“You Can Read the Plates”

Beeman anticipated the city’s defense before anyone offered it. Garages that require nose-in parking usually do so because Florida cars carry only a rear plate and enforcement cameras want a clear look at it. His answer was that Sarasota’s garages already know exactly who you are. “We have all the telemetry that you can read the plates when they go in and out.”

If the gate reads your plate on the way in and on the way out, he argued, the direction your bumper faces in space 214 is not a safety policy. It is a revenue policy with a safety label on it. “I don’t think 50 bucks is worth putting money above safety.”

The L-Word

He saved the sharpest line for the lawyers on the dais, and made sure the court reporter got it.

“For those of you who are lawyers, I ask you to consider the severity of this now that you all have been presented with these exact facts and statistics,” Beeman said. “Knowing the danger, should someone back over somebody in a city-controlled parking garage, there may be liability for us as a city, because we’ve changed it so it is mandated that you can’t back in and safely pull out.”

Translation: you have now been told, and there is a transcript.

“Thanks for your time,” he said. “Thank you,” said the vice mayor. Citizens’ input allows no response from the dais, and none came.

Three Hours Later

The item surfaced again at 12:10 p.m., in the round of commissioner remarks, when Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch asked staff to bring back information on “the back-in parking item that was brought up to us by Mr. Beeman,” bundling it with Henry Kahwaty’s request for a home-elevation zoning amendment. City Manager Karie Friling followed with a reminder that the city’s parking open house is Monday, Aug. 24, at 5:30 p.m. in the commission chambers, where the parking and planning staff will be “engaging with our businesses and the public.”

Beeman, a fixture at the podium through this summer’s parking revolt, presumably knows the way.

What Nobody Explained

No one from the city said Monday why the back-in rule was reversed, what safety analysis produced the \$50 figure, or how many citations have been written under it. Those questions now sit with staff, alongside the extended hours the commission suspended on Aug. 3 and the fine increases that survived that vote 3-2.

Strip away the statistics and Beeman’s argument is the one downtown merchants have been making since June: the city keeps labeling things safety, or mobility, or management, and the bill keeps arriving at the same doors. The difference Monday was that the man delivering it had already paid, in a currency the parking division does not accept.

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