

Santa Rosa proposes landfill reforms

BY FRANKLIN HAYES
Gulf Breeze News
franklin@gulfbreezenews.com

County officials held a workshop Tuesday, Jan. 16 to discuss proposed ordinances to regulate debris disposal and excavation pits. Nearly 100 residents from Navarre and Milton gathered to voice their concerns about construction and demolition material disposal pits they believe are causing health problems and destroying their quality of life. Joiner Landfill in Milton and Coyote Landfill near Navarre were the topics of many residents' tongue lashing sessions as they discussed offensive odors and rumbling dump trucks as major points of contention.

Already aware of and quite familiar with many of the grievances, officials from the county's engineering, environmental and zoning departments sought input on the proposed regulations, but were instead subjugated to a stream of complaints that lead to few suggestions from the citizenry. County Staff had a list of proposed changes, and of the approximately 15 proposed regulation changes drafted, the most significant included:

- Local permitting of all pit types
- Specifying operational criteria as conditions of annual permit renewal
- Clarifying local permitting, monitoring, and inspection procedures
- Guidance for future land



Franklin Hayes/Gulf Breeze News

The Coyote Landfill is located north of Navarre Beach, just off Highway 87 South. Residents there complain of a foul stench and many joined a lawsuit against the facility.

uses

- Directing future pit locations away from residential areas

- Increasing public notification ranges from 150 feet to 500 feet

- Increasing setbacks from residential areas from 100 feet to 500 feet or 1,000 feet from potable water wells

- Installing fences, walls, gates, and buffers to screen visibility from nearest residential zoning, with cleared pathways to allow site inspections

- Installing on-site fire suppression systems

- Increasing weekly surface cover and a max operational lift height of 20 feet

- Installing liners with water runoff collection systems

Most residents in attendance agreed with a majority of the reforms but some, like former Five Forks Road resident Robert

Neil Grant, argued that the ranges should be extended. Grant said landfills and similar pits should not be allowed within one mile of residential areas and anyone living within one mile of a new landfill should be notified. Grant claimed fumes from the Coyote Landfill area threatened his health and forced him to move from his home located within a mile of the facility.

John Warren, general manager of Coyote Landfill, also agreed with many of the reforms presented but said distances should be kept within reasonable limitations.

"I obviously understand the concerns of the citizens, but there have to be sites that are economically feasible," he said. "There is a definite cost factor. For us, it's like having to buy your groceries from a store in Fort Walton."

Some residents from the

Navarre area are not waiting for the county to implement its reforms and are taking matters into their own hands. In late August of 2006, 83 people filed suit against the Coyote Landfill and persuaded county commissioners to conduct air quality sampling in the area.

"People know it's hydrogen sulfide coming from [the landfill]," said Navarre resident Bill Kolb. "Dry wall is one of the things going into the landfill. When it decomposes, it liberates hydrogen sulfide."

Warren remained skeptical of the hydrogen sulfide claims, noting that neither he, nor any of his 20 employees working directly on the site reported any illness. Although Coyote Landfill is the only area pit permitted to accept construction and demolition material, Warren said there are seven other various pits right next door that could be contributing factors.

"No one's tried to educate the public on all the sites in the area," Warren said. "We're not the ideal neighbor they want to have. But we want to be a good neighbor and address any issues they may have."

The air quality sampling will be facilitated by the county health department and should be complete in the coming months. No court date has been set for the lawsuit against the Coyote Landfill.

ATTACK: Escambia County Animal Control in charge of investigation

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include whether or not a victim was attacked on private property. In this case, according to Rova, the dogs were considered "loose." Once the investigation has commenced, witnesses are interviewed and written statements are taken. The process can take up to several weeks.

"It takes some time to get written statements. Sometimes they may open up another avenue to gather additional comments," said Rova. A pet owner has a couple of options if in the event an animal is designated a "Dangerous/Vicious Dog," which is a civil infraction. The first offense can carry

a \$150 fine; the second offense is \$300 and the third is \$500.

"Sometimes the responsible party is not willing to take the liability or cost or additional licensing," said Rova. "If the dog has a propensity to attack, that would be the next step making it a criminal offense or if there is something that indicates to people that the dog is dangerous." Rova said if the owner doesn't take financial responsibility, he or she can elect to surrender custody of the animal. Unfortunately, that is the end of the line for the pet.

"If they surrender custody, we would not adopt the pet out," he said. He added the most common alternative is euthanasia.

Calendar of Events

<p>Thursday, Jan. 25 School Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m., School District Administrative Offices, 5086 Canal Street, Milton</p> <p>Santa Rosa County Commission Regular Meeting, 9 a.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton</p> <p>Friday, Jan. 26 Artist's Night in Navarre, Presented by the Greater Navarre Beach Art Association. For more information, contact Connie Jones at 850-939-7694.</p> <p>Saturday, Jan. 27 No meetings scheduled as of press time</p> <p>Sunday, Jan. 28 No meetings scheduled as of press time</p> <p>Monday, Jan. 29 No meetings scheduled as of press time</p> <p>Tuesday, Jan. 30 The Republican Women's Club of Santa Rosa County Meeting, 11:30 a.m., Gulf Breeze Library, 1060 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze. Lunch will be catered at a cost of \$12. All Republican women are invited. For more information,</p>	<p>call Barbara at 850-932-4557.</p> <p>Wednesday, Jan. 31 Executive Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Gulf Breeze City Hall, 1070 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze</p> <p>Gulf Breeze Library Reading Group for Adults Monthly Meeting, 5:30 p.m. They will be discussing "Blue Shoes and Happiness" by Alexander McCall Smith. This month the group will convene at member Tom Williams' home. Please call Donna Jones, 932-8620, for directions or further book club information.</p> <p>Thursday, Feb. 1 Gulf Breeze Dog Lovers Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Gulf Breeze Library, 1060 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze. The meeting will feature Dr Natalie Dyson's presentation on "Saving Your Dog's Life" and will include information on what to do before going to the vet, animal first aid, dog cpr, preventative measures and dog first aid kit.</p>
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Midway Fire to approach SR School Board to discuss ambulance service

BY PAM BRANNON
Gulf Breeze News
news@gulfbreezenews.com

Midway Fire District has requested that the Santa Rosa County School Board add Midway's ambulance proposal to its special election ballot this Spring. Fire Chief Stephen Demeter was told the issue would be discussed at the tonight, Jan. 25 school board meeting.

Midway Fire wants to ask Midway voters only whether they would like Midway Fire District to have their own ambulance service, if it did not cost voters any more tax monies. That would be the issue Midway

would tack onto the school board's special election ballot asking voters to renew the half-cent sales tax to help fund schools. That election is scheduled for March 27.

"School Superintendent John Rogers said the only concern he might have to placing it on the ballot would be if it caused any conflict with their special election issue of renewing the sales tax for the schools. He didn't want any issue to detract from that, or to make the special election controversial in any way, where some voters might stay home," Chief Demeter said.

School Board member Diane Coleman of Navarre agreed. "Of

course, we never know how we are going to vote on any issue coming before the school board until we get to the meeting and hear all the facts. But my first inclination would be that we do not want anything else for the voters to focus on except renewing that sales tax request. That is so important to us -- without that sales tax money we would not have been able to add those classrooms to West Navarre Primary that we just added, so we don't have to use portables. And we would not have been able to do any of the new construction to improve the schools that we have been doing, since that sales tax brings in half of our money to

enable us to do those projects," Coleman said.

"I don't have any problem with Midway having their own ambulances. In fact, it would undoubtedly help us all here in the South end. Any additional ambulances in the South end are always going to be a help," Coleman said. "But I just do not know if we want to add anything at all to the ballot to detract in any way from the issue of the sales tax renewal for schools. But maybe we will, once we get to the meeting and see all the facts. It might not be a problem for us at all. We will just have to look at the whole picture and decide this week."

RAPE: Victim claims no one will take case

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for her medical bills or lost wages more than four months after the offending incident. She also said, after making close to 100 phone calls to local attorneys, that she was unable to find an attorney willing to take on a civil case against the accused for punitive damages.

"No one wants to take my case," she says. "It's a never ending cycle. They all tell me 'Our firm doesn't handle that kind of case.'"

The purported victim says that the accused rapist should be tested immediately for any sexually transmitted diseases.

"We are in the process of filing a petition to compel that he be tested for the presence of any sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV," Greg Marcille with the state attorney's office said. "Shelley" is frustrated that the process is so slow, and says she is already experiencing maladies related to the alleged attack. She says she has repeatedly requested the testing and cannot imagine that four months after the attack they are still "working on" a petition.

The avouched victim also claims that despite her best effort, she's been denied access to other

persons supposedly violated by the accused salon owner. "No one who has not experienced something as horrific as a rape could possibly understand what it is like to go through this," she asserts. "It would help so much if those of us willing to get together were brought together to talk through what we have been through. This man was a serial rapist."

"We don't do that," said Sgt. Scott Haines with the Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office. "Victim information is kept confidential, unless it may help us catch the suspect. It's extremely rare that someone who's been through something that traumatic would want to share their experiences."

Haines also said that victim financial assistance is available through both the state attorney's office and the sheriff's office. Although victims cannot receive double compensation, they may prefer one group to another, Haines said.

"If she feels like she hasn't been helped, she hasn't extended herself to the proper agencies," Haines explained. "[The Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office has] an excellent victim's assistance division. They are very professional and very helpful. If there is funding available, they will help get

that funding to that person."

Marcille said his office has processed the alleged victim's paperwork and that the transaction can be time consuming.

"Our victim advocate has met with her," Marcille said, describing the process that reimburses rape victims' medical expenses. "All similar applications go through the [State] Attorney General's Office and it can take some time. We will continue to work with her to obtain reimbursement."

The owner of Nail Spa Company, Tanh Van "Victor" Ho, 39, was arrested on felony charges of sexual assault in November. Ho currently faces three felony sexual assault charges and one misdemeanor battery charge for unlawful touching.

At least three female victims came forward as a result of the media coverage stemming from the first incident. One female victim stated that she came to Ho's salon, located at 3088 Gulf Breeze Parkway, for a manicure and a pedicure. Ho recommended that the victim also have her eyebrows waxed. He then took the victim to a back room and had her lie on a table.

After waxing the victim's eyebrows, Ho told her that she would

MANNING: Former Division Chief having trouble selling Orlando home

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But Manning's wife and son were still in Orlando when he accepted the job in September. He told Gulf Breeze News at the time he was hired that they "unfortunately" had not been able to sell their home there yet, and when it was sold the family would move north to Gulf Breeze. He was living here alone at the time, so he could start his new job.

Fire Chief Stephen Demeter said this week Manning resigned, and headed back to Orlando because his home still had not sold and Manning said it

Woman not hurt after crashing car into parked car, Barnhill's

STAFF REPORTS
Gulf Breeze News
news@gulfbreezenews.com

On Saturday, Jan. 20 at approximately 8 p.m., a Gulf Breeze woman careened through the intersection of Hwy. 98 and Oriole Beach Road and into the Barnhill's Buffet parking lot colliding into a parked Ford Mustang, Florida Highway Patrol officials said. The impact of this collision caused the Mustang to rotate counter clockwise and come to final rest

facing south in adjacent parking spaces. The woman then continued in a southwesterly direction and collided into the front of the Barnhill's building causing damage.

The woman was transported to Gulf Breeze Hospital. Officials say alcohol was involved in the crash. She was traveling approximately 45 to 55 mph at the time of the crash and she was not wearing a seat-belt. Authorities reported only minor injuries and charges are pending.

Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office Report
Information provided by the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office.

<p>FELONIES</p> <p>1/11/07 Taylor, Robert Glen, 56, W/M, 2700 block of Villa Woods Circle, Gulf Breeze, aggravated assault</p> <p>1/12/07 Cotner, Barbara Jane, 41, W/F, 8400 block of Laredo Street, Navarre, failure to appear</p> <p>Smith Jr., Robert Lee, 41, B/M, 7500 block of Leisure Street, Navarre, aggravated assault</p> <p>1/14/07 Kuaile, Aaron Travie, 33, W/M, 3100 block of Birdseye Circle, Gulf Breeze, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, battery, property damage, resisting an officer with violence</p> <p>1/15/07 Haupt Jr., David Alan, 18, W/M, 7300 block of Mulberry Lane, Navarre, property damage</p> <p>Kelley, Eric Gregory, 21, W/M, 3100 block of Calle De Cervo, Navarre, property damage, violation of probation</p>	<p>1/16/07 Ethier, Sean Evan, 21, W/M, 200 block of Azalea Street, Gulf Breeze, resisting an officer with violence</p> <p>Townsend, Chales Henry, 54, W/M, 2300 block of Orion Lake Drive, Navarre, false imprisonment</p> <p>1/18/07 Kilpatrick, Sydney Rachel, 18, W/F, 3100 block of Oriole Drive, Gulf Breeze, distribution of contraband</p> <p>1/20/07 Lachenmyer, John Thomas, 19, W/M, 2000 block of Coral Street, Navarre, possession of a controlled substance without a prescription</p> <p>Smith, Daniel Jacob, 30, W/M, 1600 block of Green Briar Parkway, Gulf Breeze, fraud</p> <p>DUI</p> <p>1/18/07 Ponder, Michael Casey, 29, W/M, 7100 block of Jasper Street, Navarre, DUI</p>
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SHOOTING: Employee shot in thigh

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Auto Sales was driving by the business and noticed that a light was on inside and there was an unfamiliar vehicle present. The employee went to check on this

and found a man burglarizing the establishment. An argument ensued, at which time the suspect pulled out a handgun and shot the employee. Sheriff's officials are still trying to locate the suspect.

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