

MAYOR: Lawsuit may delay January vote

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including the school board and county departments, as well as many fire departments.

"The Super Homestead proposal is a disaster," Hersh said in a telephone interview. "I am the first one to support real property tax relief. But this isn't it and taxpayers don't realize it. This legislation was rushed and is flawed terribly. So many politicians are afraid of this issue they don't want to come out against tax reform. People do not realize that they will be disadvantaged by the ending of the Save Our Homes homestead exemptions now being used. This proposed Super Homestead will get rid of Save Our Homes."

So far, he said, some fire departments in south Florida and a couple of police unions have joined the suit.

Hersh's lawsuit claims that the state is treading on unconstitutional ground in more than one area with the Super Homestead. First, he says that having the referendum vote in January goes against the state constitution because a vote such as this — which would amend the state constitution — is supposed to take place on a general elec-

tion ballot, according to current constitutional provisions. The lawsuit also says the state is out of line by not allowing county governments to levy their own millage rate, since this new legislation would set the rate formula for taxing agencies.

"The state constitution allows agencies to levy up to 10 mills," Hersh said. "There is nothing in the constitution allowing the state to say counties cannot do that. They would have to change the constitution before they could pass this kind of law. They are trying to accomplish this by going at it all backwards."

Additionally, Hersh said the language in the referendum proposal to be placed on the ballot is misleading.

"The language needs to spell out exactly what people are voting for, and that the Save Our Homes exemption will end with this new proposal," Hersh said. "I don't think the legislators want the language to be clearer because it won't pass. They also do not want it on the November General election ballot, when more people are voting, because they are afraid it won't pass then. The proposal has to pass with 60 percent of those voting. I know just here in Weston at least 85 percent of our taxpayers

could be disadvantaged by the Super Homestead. It just is not a good plan."

Hersh first filed his lawsuit with Florida's Supreme Court.

"We wanted to avoid the Circuit Court, but the Supreme Court ruled that it had to go back to Circuit Court before it comes to them," Hersh said. "So right now we have written briefs from both sides filed with Leon County's Second Judicial Circuit Court and are waiting for an actual live hearing date. We are anxious for a hearing."

Sterling Ivey, spokesman for the Florida Department of State, said at any point a judge can pull the issue off the referendum ballot, even by placing a restraining order not to hold the vote until after the case has run all appeals.

"I am sure no matter who wins in this case, there will be appeals by either or both sides," Ivey said.

Ivey said the referendum ballots are to be printed in late November statewide. "We will move ahead as planned until told to do something different by a judge. But even after the ballots are printed, a judge can stop the vote," Ivey said. "If a ruling comes down to stop the January vote after ballots are printed, then we would need to

find a way to handle it on the local ballots. We may black out language, or place something over the proposal. We will have to wait and see what happens and be prepared at any time to change course."

Hersh said this is a totally unconstitutional proposal, and people should email or call their state representatives and the governor to try to encourage them to go back and find some real, honest tax relief.

He said anyone wanting to contact him for more information or to find out how they can enter support for the lawsuit without cost can email him at: ehersh@westonfl.org

Santa Rosa County Property Appraiser Greg Brown told Navarre Area Board of Realtors at a seminar three weeks ago that he would be placing a graph on his county website showing the differences between the current Save Our Homes exemption and the Super Homestead proposal on individual properties.

"People do not realize Super Homestead just may not be the best proposal for them. It looks great on the surface, but when you look at the second year and beyond, it might not be a very good plan for real tax relief for many people," Brown said.

Calendar of Events

Thursday, Aug. 30 No meetings scheduled as of press time	Tuesday, Sept. 4 Republican Club of Santa Rosa County Monthly Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Cocodrie's, 8649 Gulf Boulevard, Navarre Beach. For additional information please contact club president Morgan Lamb at 850-939 2409
Friday, Aug. 31 The Northwest Florida Blood Center and WEAR TV ABC Channel 3 will host a Blood Drive from 7am to 6pm. The blood drive will be held at WEAR TV ABC studios located at 4990 Mobile Highway, Pensacola. Each blood donor will receive a t-shirt. For additional information call Betty Roberts at 850-473-3853.	Wednesday, Sept. 5 Gulf Breeze City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Gulf Breeze City Hall, 1070 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze
Saturday, Sept. 1 No meetings scheduled as of press time	Thursday, Sept. 6 Zoning Board of Adjustments, 5:30 p.m., Commissioner's Board Room, 6495 Caroline Street, Milton
Sunday, Sept. 2 No meetings scheduled as of press time	
Monday, Sept. 3 Labor Day, Gulf Breeze City Hall will be closed	

Correction:

An incorrect zip code appeared with an address in an article titled "GBHS grad nets film debut" that was published in

the Aug. 9 edition of Gulf Breeze News. The correct zip code is 27705.

Gulf Breeze News strives for 100 percent accuracy. We regret any errors in our publication.

TRAFFIC: SR County expresses outrage

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probably true."

Unhappy with the decision made by the TPO, Santa Rosa County Commissioners voted last Thursday to file formal complaints with the U.S. Attorney's Office, the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Commission immediately. A copy of those complaints and letters will also be sent to Florida Governor Charlie Crist's office.

Santa Rosa County Commissioner Gordon Goodin expressed concerns that the TPO would be sending the wrong message by removing the Highway 98 project.

"It is clearly a regional road,"

Goodin said. "My concern is what message is this TPO going to send by saying, 'You know what? 98 is not important enough for us to even leave it on the cost feasible plan.' We are washing our hands of it and walking away. It simply cannot be ignored... I'm afraid that message we're sending there could not be worse."

The TPO's proposed cost feasible plan encompassed 22 projects that would cost an estimated \$197 million to complete by 2025. Out of those projects, the U.S. 98 improvements were estimated to cost more than \$65 million. Projects to six lane Highway 90 from Avalon Boulevard to Dogwood Drive and Nine Mile Road from Highway 29 to Chemstrand Road

were also removed. Those projects were expected to cost more than \$64 million combined. A completed project on Pine Forest Road was also removed.

The Florida Alabama TPO consists of elected officials from municipal and county governments in Santa Rosa and Escambia counties. The TPO also includes County Commissioner Charles Gruber of Baldwin County, Ala.

The motion to remove U.S. 98 from the plan required all members present to vote. The issue seemed to polarize TPO members and was even dubbed "divisive" by Escambia County Commissioner Marie Young. Most TPO members voted according to the geographic region they represented: officials from Escambia County govern-

ments voted in favor of the motion to remove the U.S. 98 project and those representing governments in Santa Rosa County voted against the measure. Gruber was not present. Pensacola City Council Member P.C. Wu was the only official representing a government in Escambia County to vote against the motion.

Santa Rosa County Commissioners have expressed their desire to secede from the Florida/Alabama TPO.

"Frankly, I'm not going to any more TPO meetings," Goodin said. "Tuesday's action showed us decisions are already being made before the meeting starts."

Gulf Breeze News writer Pam Brannon contributed to this report.

Get info on killer bees

Africanized honey bees have made their way into the state of Florida. Do you know where they nest? Do you know what to do in case of a stinging incident? If not, then attend a free seminar offered by the UF/IFAS Santa Rosa County Extension Service.

Dr. Jamie Ellis, an apiculturist and bee expert from the University of Florida will be presenting a program on Africanized bees Wednesday, Sept. 5. The program is scheduled from 10 am to 12 p.m. and will be held at the Santa Rosa County Extension Office located at 6263 Dogwood Drive, in Milton.

Dr. Ellis will cover African bee biology, behavior and other interesting facts. He will also cover what to do if attacked and how to bee proof your home.

The presentation is open to the public and will be beneficial and pertinent to all citizens including homeowners, city workers, pest control operators and school personnel.

Space is limited, so please call 850-623-3868 to register for

this free program.

All programs and related activities sponsored for, or assisted by, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences are open to all persons with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions, or affiliations. For persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations, please contact the Santa Rosa County Extension Service at least five (5) working days prior to the program so that proper consideration may be given to the request. For more information, call 850-623-3868.

The Cooperative Extension Service is nationwide and was established by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. It is a partnership between state land grant universities, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the county governments throughout the nation. All of these groups share in the planning, financing, and operation of extension programs.

PARKS: Commissioner Broxson urges public input

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Oriole Beach Elementary cafeteria located at 1260 Oriole Beach Road, Gulf Breeze. Additionally, a survey can be completed online through September 21 at <http://santarosaparksurvey.org>. Residents without internet access can receive a copy of the survey by visiting either the south-end

service center located at 5819 Gulf Breeze Pkwy, Gulf Breeze or the Gulf Breeze Library located at 1060 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze. A survey can also be obtained by calling 850-981-7075.

Commissioner Broxson urges public participation in the planning process, stating: "By focusing on capacity, quality and

affordability, we are working towards creating a plan that will serve the current community needs and its needs over the next 20 years. In order to create a plan that will serve all our residents, we need everyone's input— not just those who use the ballparks. I encourage all to complete the online survey and attend the meeting on Sept. 18."

After the survey closing date of Sept. 21, the community needs will be compared to facilities currently available, and a plan for the community for the next 20 years will be designed. Once the recreation plan is completed, Santa Rosa County officials will work towards funding the proposed improvements through public-private partnerships.

Commissioners tell Sheriff Hall to wait on jail tents

BY PAM BRANNON
Gulf Breeze News
news@gulfbreezenews.com

Santa Rosa County Sheriff Wendell Hall didn't exactly get the approval to move ahead with his idea for easing overcrowding in his jail. Hall wanted to lease temporary tents to solve the problem. However, county commissioners didn't say 'no', either. Commissioners voted to have the sheriff and county staff move ahead with investigating what the best options would be for a quick solution to the jail overcrowding. They said it might be the tents — and it might not.

Commissioners also instructed the staff to start investigating

immediately what options were the most affordable for a permanent solution, as in a permanent building addition.

Commissioner John Broxson said, "I certainly do not want to hold up the sheriff on getting these problems of overcrowding and also his budget solved. I was hoping today we would go ahead and support the sheriff in the idea of these temporary tents, but then also have a proposal on the table to start right away on building a more permanent structure."

Commissioner Gordon Goodin of Navarre said, "Even though we would be making some revenue off these tents, I figured up that over a 10-year period the cost would come to about \$700 a

square foot and then we won't even own the tents. That is not the most efficient use of tax dollars. I definitely think there is a more permanent better solution."

County attorney Tom Dannheisser said the sheriff's request was not ready for approval by the commission anyway, since there were questions about who would be holding and signing the lease, and other questions his legal staff had.

The sheriff had addressed the commissioners at their committee of the whole meeting last week, showing them photos of the metal-sided tents he was suggesting. The tents have a hard Styrofoam material inside the walls and are metal on the outside.

They are now being used in Walton County, and have withstood hurricane-strength winds. And since it is a lease, if there is any damage the owners of the tents would replace them.

The sheriff is requesting permission to lease two tents that would hold 64 beds each. The county would need to pay \$152,844 up front, and when they get the keys pay another \$72,176. The three year lease would bring a revenue profit to the sheriff department of \$386,905 per year. The tents would house non-violent inmates, and those on work release. One deputy would be placed in the center of each tent 24 hours a day. The tents would be air conditioned.

Elected Officials CONTACT

GULF BREEZE ELECTED OFFICIALS 1070 Shoreline Dr., Gulf Breeze, FL 32561; (850) 934-5100	DIANE COLEMAN, Dist. 3 (850) 939-5538
Mayor LANE GILCHRIST (850) 932-5565 mayor@ci.gulf-breeze.fl.us	HUGH WINKLES, Dist. 2 (850) 623-6299
BEVERLY ZIMMERN (850) 932-4717 bzimmern@ci.gulf-breeze.fl.us	DIANE SCOTT, Dist. 1 (850) 623-0413
CARL HOFFMAN (850) 932-4948 choffman@ci.gulf-breeze.fl.us	FLORIDA STATE REPRESENTATIVES
J.B. SCHLUTER (850) 232-0939 jschluter@ci.gulf-breeze.fl.us	GREG EVERS (R) District Office: 5424 Willing St., Milton, FL 32570 (850) 983-5550 greg.evers@myfloridahouse.gov
RICHARD FULFORD (850) 932-5135 rfulford@co.gulf-breeze.fl.us	DAVE MURZIN (R) District Office: Suite 22B, 7100 Plantation Rd., Ste. 3, Pensacola, FL 32504 (850) 494-7330
SANTA ROSA COUNTY COMMISSION 6495 Caroline Street, Milton, FL 32570; (850) 932-1340 or 983-1877	C.V. "CLAY" FORD (R) District Office: 1804 W. Garden St., Pensacola, FL 32501-4418 (850) 595-5550
JOHN BROXSON, Dist. 5 (850) 932-2617 comm-broxson@co.santa-rosa.fl.us	RAY SANSOM (R) District Office: 348 SW Miracle Strip Pkwy., Bldg. C, Ste. 12, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548-5257 (850) 833-9328
GORDON GOODIN, Dist. 4 (850) 939-1274 comm-goodin@co.santa-rosa.fl.us	FLORIDA STATE SENATOR
DON SALTER, Dist. 3 (850) 983-1877 comm-salter@co.santa-rosa.fl.us	DON GAETZ (R) District Office: 217 Miracle Strip Pkwy., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548 (850) 897-5747 SunCom 277-5009 don.gaetz.web@flsenate.gov
BOB COLE, Dist. 2 (850) 983-1877 comm-cole@co.santa-rosa.fl.us	U.S. REPRESENTATIVE
TOM STEWART, Dist. 1 (850) 932-1877 comm-stewart@co.santa-rosa.fl.us	JEFF MILLER (R) Pensacola Office: 4300 Bayou Blvd., Ste. 17C, Pensacola, FL 32503 (850) 479-1183 Toll Free: (866) 367-1614
SANTA ROSA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 5086 Canal St., Milton, FL 32570; (850) 983-5000	U.S. SENATORS
ED GRAY III, Dist. 5 (850) 932-6287	Senator MEL MARTINEZ (R) 315 E. Robinson St., Landmark Center 1, Ste. 475, Orlando, FL 32801 (407) 254-2573
JOANN J. SIMPSON, Dist. 4 (850) 994-5446	Senator NELSON, BILL (D) US Court House Annex, 111 N. Adams St., Tallahassee, FL 32301 (850) 942-8415

Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office Report

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

Felonies	Breeze, property damage, \$1,000 or more
8/20/07 Rabren, Lindsey Renee, 26, W/F, 1600 block of Steven Drive, Gulf Breeze, larceny of firearm	Sylvester, Angela Jean, 36, W/F, 8200 block of Hazelgrove Court, Navarre, grand theft, less than \$10,000
8/22/07 Barbeau Jr., Robert Allen, 26, W/M, 2200 block of Nina Street, Navarre, battery	Papajohn, Todd Andrew, 35, W/M, 200 block of Pensacola Beach Road, Gulf Breeze, larceny, less than \$5,000
Himes, William Earnest, 44, W/M, 1200 block of Redwood Lane, Gulf	Magers, Alisa Marie, 24, W/F,

8900 block of Timber Lane, Navarre, violation of probation	8/24/07 Deese, Jeanette Brown, 49, W/F, 3200 block of Bob Tolbert Road, Navarre, violation of probation
Thomas, Samuel Edward III, 19, W/M, 6500 block of Calle De Lago, Navarre, dealing in stolen property, grand theft less than \$20,000	8/26/07 Preston, Daniel R., 36, W/M, 8700 block of Laredo Street, Navarre, cruelty toward a child
Toney, Patrick Sherman, 20, W/M, 2500 block of Hidden Estates, Navarre, violation of probation	DUI
8/23/07 Purdum, Kenneth Michael M., 18, W/M, 1800 block of Thresher Drive, Navarre, larceny, less than \$5,000, destroying evidence, burglary	8/25/07 Short, David Timothy, 23, W/M, 2200 block of Frontera Street, Navarre, DUI
Didaleusky, Robert Edward, 19, W/M, 2200 block of Calle De Cantabria, Navarre, violation of probation	Sutton, Crystal Janel, 20, W/F, 8600 block of Turkey Bluff Road, Navarre, DUI