



Town of Shalimar

Tidbits

Fall 2017

NOTES FROM THE MAYOR

The Florida Legislature is currently considering increasing the homestead exemption (HJR 7105) in 2019 which would lower property taxes other than the school board. That is great news for homeowners eligible for this tax exclusion, and who would not vote for this tax reduction, right? I am in favor of this increased exemption but, as an elected official who already runs an efficient government with a very low millage rate, I worry about property millage rate increases to offset this exemption – and trust me, they will occur. Accordingly, I am in favor of a proposed ½ cents sales tax in Okaloosa County. A significant portion of this tax will be paid by tourists and it's a more equitable tax since even non-property owners help defray the cost of the government services they enjoy and need. This sales tax is distributed based on population and, since our Town is small, our portion is small, but this small amount will offset the Town's loss of revenue due to the proposed decrease in property tax collection. You personally can decide if you would rather help pay for government with a sales tax increase or a property tax increase. When the sales tax increase comes to a vote, please consider all factors when you are marking your ballot.

The most difficult task for me as an elected official is determining how "You want to spend your tax money." I tend to think about the Town's budget like my own personal finances. For myself, I have always lived way below my means and I still do. I try not to waste money and this attitude has served me well. This is the time of year when the fiscal year budget is formalized. Like any other government, the Town Commission must fund the routine costs of doing business like utilities, equipment, maintenance, supplies and the most critical, employee salary and benefits. Bottom line: The Town does pay employees higher than minimum wage and we have a good benefit package, but most of our employees could find a higher paying job elsewhere. In my 20 years of elected service, however, I cannot think of one employee that left the Town for a higher paying job where I thought we should have paid that person more to stay. Yes, I want our employees to be happy, but it's not all about money. I truly hate this time of year; the Town Commission must discuss employee salary and benefit entitlements in front of the employees – due to the Florida Sunshine Law. Often, employee's feelings are hurt when they don't get the pay raise they most likely deserve. No matter how much an employee is paid by the Town, there will always be some organization which pays more for a similar job. Unfortunately, I cannot see a way around this annual "all about the money" endeavor.

NOTES FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The kids are back in school. Be vigilant while driving the neighborhood streets. Remember the school zone times as indicated on the roadways and abide by the posted speed limit for the safety of our children. The Police Department has ramped up enforcing no parking on the right-of-way. Review the following Ordinance 6.04.07 on Vehicles: *No person who owns or is in possession of, in charge of or in control of any lot, tract or parcel of land shall park any vehicle, trailer or any equipment of any type on any public sidewalk or cross over a public sidewalk to enter upon any public or private land except where a designated right of entry or deeded driveway exist. Parking on the right-of-way is prohibited except on private driveways unless there is a parking agreement with the town allowing such use. Temporary and intermittent use of public right-of-way for special event vehicle parking may be approved by The Town Chief of Police or Town Administrator or designee.* The Police Department will issue parking warnings or tickets for this violation.

The Police Department has implemented a new way to alert our residents when an officer responds to your residence. When the resident is not home and an officer receives a call for service or observes something suspicious, the officer will place a hang tag on the door indicating the reason for the response. The Police Department is also in the process of adding electronic reporting to our daily patrol duties. This will allow us to provide a quicker return of completed reports when necessary. The Shalimar Police Department is in the final stages of achieving accreditation. The Shalimar Police Department will be the smallest agency to achieve this status in the State of Florida. If you have any questions or concerns about the Police Department; please do not hesitate to call Town Hall (651-5723) or the Police Department (651-1115) or refer to **428-0148** to speak to an officer directly.

USE OF TOWN EQUIPMENT

The equipment listed below is available for Town resident use (Note: The Shalimar Maintenance Department use takes precedence). All equipment must be reserved one day in advance, have a Hold Harmless Agreement form signed and be given permission by the Town Maintenance Department personnel. If something is not on the list, we are no longer lending it.

12-Foot Dual Axle Trailer	Concrete Mixer	8-Foot Single Axle Trailer	1/2-Inch Hammer Drill
8-Foot Single Axle Trailer	Pressure Washer	Leaf Blower	Tables and Chairs
6-Foot Box Trailer	Pole Saw	Tiller	Extension Ladder
Kabota Tractor	20-Inch Chainsaw	Live Animal Traps	8-Foot Step Ladder
Golf Cart	12-Inch Chainsaw	Scaffold	Hand Truck

FLOOD INFORMATION

Check our website at www.shalimarflorida.org for updated flood information and links to State and County information. Be sure to print out the Okaloosa County Disaster Evacuation Map and store copies in your vehicle and Disaster Supply Kit.

ALL TREES greater than 8 inches in diameter at a height of 54 inches above the ground, require a permit for removal (normally \$10.00 if contracted) prior to commencement of removal activity. Some species of indigenous trees of this size are classified as "protected" by [Shalimar Ordinances](#). Removal of these protected species may be approved by a Town Administrative Official if presented with sufficient documentation of an existing safety hazard, disease, or root damage to real property. Other protected trees may be removed or relocated with approval of the Planning and Zoning Board - a \$135.00 fee covers required application and legal advertising prior to the P&Z Board approval meeting.

FEMA FLOOD INSURANCE REMINDERS

Residents can stop by the Town Hall and check out flood maps for specific flood zone determinations. Copies of elevation certificates for structures located in special flood zones should be on file at the Town Hall and applications and instructions for elevation certification are also available.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) provides Standard Flood Insurance Policies (SFIPs) which are designed for properties lying within special flood zones (usually zones AE and VE on the Flood Rate Map). Those of you who may have one of these policies on property that is *outside the special flood zones* (in areas designated zone X -the old zone C) may be eligible for what FEMA calls a Preferred Risk Policy (PRP). Premiums for a PRP policy are less than for the Standard Policy, and policies may now be changed anytime during a policy's term. In addition, there is a new V-Zone Risk Factor Rating Form that may provide maximum insurance discounts for properties that are built (or modified) according to best construction practices as outlined in the updated Coastal Construction Manual. Contact your flood insurance provider or Town Hall for additional details.

Reminder: [Shalimar Ordinances](#) state that no person shall throw or place any debris in any drainage ditches, drainage easements, catch basins, or any part of the storm water management system. It is also illegal to dispose of any pollutants that may end up in any of these areas. These include yard trash, earthen fill, and all trash/litter. Please notify Town Hall if you observe any illegal dumping in our storm water drainage systems – *let's stay high and dry and help keep coastal waters clean!*

*** Visit www.shalimarflorida.org or find us on [facebook](#)***