



February 2019

Palm Beach County District Six



## Great News for Firefighters



Firefighters perform one of the most dangerous jobs in our society. It's imperative that we understand what they need to do their jobs effectively to keep us safe. That's why I'm so happy with what Palm Beach County has done recently to support them.

### Presumptive Cancer Coverage

On February 5, Palm Beach County approved a new collective bargaining agreement with the Professional Firefighters/Paramedics of Palm Beach County, Local 2928, IAFF, Inc. Included in this agreement is cancer presumption language that provides firefighters with on-the-job disability and supplemental long term disability benefits if they are diagnosed with certain cancers during the performance of their regular duties.

This makes Palm Beach County the first county in Florida to approve cancer presumption language for firefighters. With the Florida Legislature consistently failing to pass similar legislation in recent years, I pushed for this language to be included so that we could lead by example. A growing body of research and data

shows the significant risks of carcinogenic exposure faced by these brave men and women during their careers, and it underscores why government must act immediately. I hope our County's actions send a strong message to the Florida Legislature to pass essential legislation to protect all firefighters statewide.

**New                            Acreage                            Fire                            Station**

On February 6, Palm Beach County broke ground on the long overdue Fire Rescue Station #22, located in Westlake. The new station will be built in accordance with cancer prevention recommendations. Furthermore, thanks to a staffing increase in the FY 19 budget, as well as in the new collective bargaining agreement, the new station will have a staff of seven.

**Fully                            Staffed                            Ambulances                            County-Wide**

Staff on ambulances will increase from 2 to 3 countywide, a significant public safety improvement.

These breakthroughs are the culmination of years of work. I thank all of the first responders, county staff, and Acreage residents who pushed to make this happen!



## Everglades Oil Drilling

On February 19, Commissioner McKinlay participated in a press conference sponsored by the Sierra Club to oppose oil drilling in the Everglades. She was joined by Broward County Commissioner Beam Furr, Miramar Mayor Wayne Messam, Pembroke Pines Mayor Angel Castillo, and dozens of community leaders to ask Governor Ron DeSantis to appeal by the February 20 deadline the court ruling allowing Kanter Real Estate a permit to drill in the Everglades. Thankfully, his administration sought a reconsideration of the ruling, which allows us to continue fighting this reckless decision that endangers one of the most unique and fragile ecosystems on the planet.

Below is the letter Commissioner McKinlay sent to Governor DeSantis calling for him to appeal the 1st District Court of Appeal's decision.



Photo Credit: Carol Porter



**MELISSA McKINLAY**  
**County Commissioner**  
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February 19, 2019

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
Governor of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

I am writing to urge you to appeal the recent decision by the 1<sup>st</sup> District Court of Appeal ordering the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to issue a permit allowing Kanter Real Estate to drill in the Everglades.

Oil and natural gas drilling is one of the greatest threats facing the Everglades. Our state has not granted an exploratory drilling permit in the Everglades since 1967, and now is not the time to place this fragile, rare ecosystem at risk. Our elected leaders on both sides of the aisle have rightly rejected offshore drilling because of the risk to our beaches and tourism economy. The Everglades are just as important as our beaches to protect from drilling.

We must continue the good work of generations of public servants who have fought to preserve and restore the Everglades through increased funding for restoration projects, protections for wildlife such as wading birds and Florida panthers, and smart restrictions on development near sensitive Everglades habitats.

By appealing the 1<sup>st</sup> District Court of Appeal's reckless decision and standing up for one of the most unique environmental treasures in the world, you will display the strong leadership that Floridians expect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Melissa McKinlay".

Melissa McKinlay  
Palm Beach County Commission  
District 6

cc: Sen. Bill Galvano, President, Florida Senate  
Rep. Jose Oliva, Speaker, Florida House of Representatives  
Noah Valenstein, Secretary, FL Department of Environmental Protection  
Rep. Matt Willhite, Chair, Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation

**Town Hall Meetings**

Commissioner McKinlay scheduled three town hall meetings over the first quarter of 2019 to hear directly from constituents. The first two were held in the Village of Wellington and the Acreage on January 29 and February 13, respectively. The third will be held on March 13 at the Belle Glade Branch Library. County staff will be on hand to help answer questions and resolve any issues.

In addition to these town hall meetings, Commissioner McKinlay held meetings with the mayors and managers of District 6 municipalities and one with the Special Improvement Districts. These annual meetings allow officials of the municipalities and special districts to discuss county priorities directly with Commissioner McKinlay and county staff to ensure that all needs are being met.





## **Acreage-Area Roads and Traffic Community Meeting**

On Monday, March 11, 2019, Palm Beach County Commissioner Melissa McKinlay will hold a community meeting at Seminole Ridge High School in Loxahatchee to discuss Acreage-area roads and traffic.

Representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation, County Engineering, Westlake, Indian Trail Improvement District, and the Transportation Planning Agency will be on hand to provide updates on road projects. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide input.

**Who:** County Commissioner Melissa McKinlay, District 6

**What:** Community Meeting on Acreage-area Roads and Traffic

**When:** Monday, March 11, 2019  
6 pm

**Where:** Seminole Ridge High School Auditorium,  
4601 Seminole Pratt Whitney Road, Loxahatchee

## Economic Development Week

On February 5, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners supported the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County (BDB) and community wide efforts by passing a proclamation declaring Economic Development Week in Palm Beach County. The purpose of this initiative is to promote the importance of economic development for our communities and to appreciate economic, workforce, and community developers' contributions to Florida's business climate, job retention and growth, tax base and overall quality of life.

During Economic Development Week, the BDB took part in several initiatives, one of which is in collaboration with South Florida's economic development organizations. On February 15, the Business Development Board, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, and the Miami-Dade Beacon Council met in West Palm Beach to discuss tri-county collaborative opportunities and explore additional ways to market the region to larger prospects.

Palm Beach County Commissioner Melissa McKinlay said, "Thanks to the tremendous work of Palm Beach County's economic development community, our residents benefit from a diverse, dynamic economy and significant educational opportunities for career enhancement. I am particularly grateful that our partners work together to build the economic conditions in all corners of the County, including the Glades. This collaboration has made Palm Beach County one of the most attractive places in the nation for businesses and talent."



## **Great Charity Challenge**

On February 2, Commissioner McKinlay attended the Great Charity Challenge at the Palm Beach International Equestrian Center in Wellington. This fun night is a way for the equestrian industry to give back to our community. Equestrians competed on behalf of 34 charities to share part of a \$1.5 million dollar purse. To date, the GCC has given back \$13.5 million to local charities! We thank Wellington Equestrian Partners and the Bellissimo family for all of their support.



## Recent BCC News

**Addiction Stabilization Center** – approved an interlocal agreement with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County for the period January 15, 2019 through January 14, 2020 and funding in the amount of \$1 million to establish the Addiction Stabilization Center (ASC). The facility will have an emergency room for lifesaving overdose intervention and behavioral health services to assist patients in addressing their addiction moving forward.

**HOME** – approved HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) program funding awards of \$802,121 for the Isles of Pahoee II (to rehabilitate 6 units) and \$343,765 to Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (for the new construction of four housing units). These are federal funds that require a 25 percent local match provided by state SHIP funds.

**Workforce Housing** – approved the creation of two temporary positions within the Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability to intake, process, underwrite and close homebuyer files through the Workforce Housing Program, and a budget transfer of \$100,000 from the general fund contingency reserves.

**Voting equipment** – approved a sales order agreement with the Supervisor of Elections Office and Election Systems & Software, LLC (ESS) in the amount of \$8.676 million for the purchase of the following voter tabulation equipment: 900 complete DS200 scanners, 75 DS200 scanner components, 10 high-speed digital scanners, and 525 ExpressVote terminals with ADA-compliant accessory equipment. A budget transfer of \$4.551 million was approved to acquire additional equipment including a new VR Systems voter registration/check-in system and more computers to handle provisional ballot processing, phone banking and vote by mail.

**Dubois Park** – agreed to suspend imposition of parking fees slated to take effect March 1 at Dubois Park in Jupiter and to remove the fees from the current budget. Staff was directed to draft an agenda item for further discussion.

**Fire inspections** – approved on first reading and to advertise for public hearing on March 12 an ordinance amending the Palm Beach County Fire Code to include annual inspections of certain apartments. This will enhance public safety, improve PBC Fire Rescue’s ISO PPC rating, and lower insurance rates in the future for homeowners within Palm Beach County Fire Rescue’s jurisdiction.

## Upcoming Dates

- Palm Beach County Days in Tallahassee. March 5-6.
- Acreage-Area Roads and Traffic Community Meeting. March 11. 6 pm. Seminole Ridge High School Auditorium, 4601 Seminole Pratt Whitney Road, Loxahatchee, FL 33470.
- Board of County Commissioners Meeting. March 12. 9:30 am. 6th Floor Commission Chambers, 301 N. Olive Ave. Matters by the Public at 2 pm.

- District 6 Town Hall Meeting. March 13. 6 pm. Belle Glade Library, 725 NW 4th Street, Belle Glade, FL 33430.

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