

Beaches Watch

Candidates: Matt Carlucci, Jacksonville City Council at Large Group 4

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1. Interlocal Agreement:

a. What is your opinion of the interlocal agreements between Jacksonville and the three beaches municipalities?

Because of our consolidated government, interlocal agreements between Jacksonville and the beaches cities are a necessity.

b. Are there any changes to the agreements you would suggest?

There is always room for improvement. I have been involved in this process before and it's not easy and very time-consuming. If elected, I will be a fair broker involved in such negotiations. The goal should be an agreement that incorporates give-and-take and compromise that ultimately benefits both the city and the beach municipalities.

2. Mayport Village:

a. What is your vision for the future of Mayport Village?

I would like to see Mayport honor and build upon its roots of a fishing village in a way that attracts visitors from across our city and visiting tourists. At a minimum, it will take public investment to clean up the waterfront and upgrade infrastructure to attract new investors who will bring new restaurants, retail shopping, arts and cultural opportunities. There is no reason we can't leverage the history of Mayport in the same ways other east coast fishing villages have done.

b. What is your plan for bringing your vision to reality?

Mayport falls under the jurisdiction of the City of Jacksonville, I will work to develop dedicated city partners who want to improve Mayport. I will coordinate with local citizens and beach officials, the district council person, the Chamber of Commerce, Port Authority and any other Jacksonville officials who are willing to help Mayport develop a business plan and put it into action.

c. Are you willing to vote for additional funding for dock construction and/or development costs at the Village of Mayport?

Yes.

3. Penman Road: Penman Road is a heavily utilized roadway by all the beaches communities and has a myriad of problems from traffic flow to pedestrian and bicycle safety. What is your plan to ensure that adequate planning and resources are dedicated to Penman Road?

We can utilize a plan similar to what is taking place in our core city, where pedestrian crossings and bike lanes are marked, and sidewalks improved, we can add shade trees and take traffic calming measures to make the road less of a cut through. We can create more walkable opportunities that will create opportunities for sustainable commerce.

4. Dredging the St. Johns River: Both the St. Johns Riverkeeper and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have stated that dredging the St. Johns River will increase storm surge and flooding at the beaches and

Jacksonville without a mitigation plan in place. What mitigation plan, if any, would you support to protect the beaches communities and Jacksonville?

I've studied the results of several reports and analyses, spoken with numerous informed persons and have concluded I will support the Port's plan to dredge the river to 47 feet. Our Port is an invaluable economic driver for our city, we must be able to compete and that means a deeper dredge. That said, I've not convinced the mitigation currently contemplated by the Corps is adequate to protect our beaches coastline and the river. Getting mitigation for the dredge right is extremely important. We must have a comprehensive understanding of the overall health of the coast, the River and its tributaries, wetlands, and riparian uplands—we need a thorough appreciation of the coast and St Johns River system. We should review city environmental and land use policies. To do this, I will continue to advocate for a standing committee of the City Council to initiate this important work.

5. Resiliency:

a. How would you support the beaches communities in their efforts to address resiliency and sea level rise?

I will include the beaches communities my proposal of a standing committee, see #4. Also, I will encourage more natural buffers and borders to help guide against storm surge. Strategies for the health of St. Johns River and the adjoining tributaries are very important for the protection of the beaches communities and the City of Jacksonville. I propose dredging many of our tributaries to their original depth, removing years of silt will increase their ability to hold additional water and reduce the threat of flooding. There should be land-use policies that shift development away from flood-prone areas.

The issue of resiliency may very well be the biggest issue we need to solve for the benefit of future generations

b. Would you support City of Jacksonville continued funding of beach re-nourishment and, as a result of a disaster, City of Jacksonville funding of dune restoration?

I support funds from Jacksonville as well as other funding sources, we need to have ample reserves for damage to our beaches. I expect hurricanes to become more frequent and more severe so we must have financial resources that can be drawn upon. In addition, private citizens should have flood insurance so they can draw upon those resources should the need arise.

6. Communication: What, if anything, would you do to improve the City of Jacksonville's communication and relationship with the beaches municipalities?

First, at Large council members should not be absentee from the beaches. In addition, the appointment to different boards and authorities should include people from the beaches communities. Likewise, beaches boards and authorities should include members from west of the intercostal.

7. Beach Visitors: Spring and summer holidays, especially July 4th, bring a great number of people to the Beaches, straining the resources of all three communities. What suggestions do you have for Jacksonville to assist the communities in shouldering that burden?

I believe that during peak season events additional funding should be available to help control crowds and maintain safety.

8. July 4th Fireworks: Will you support continued funding assistance of \$25,000. By the City of Jacksonville for the July 4th fireworks at Jacksonville Beach.

Yes

9. Other issues: What other specific issues that affect the beach communities top your priority list?
Repair of the pier, support of the Ferry and repair or replacement of a second, additional parking and always an eye on renourishment. Resilience is top of the list.