



The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE PENSACOLA BAY AREA

Volume 57, Issue 7
March 2008

Current Role and Status of the Port of Pensacola and Future Prospects

Saturday, March 15, 2008

Coffee at 9:00 am, 9:30 am program
Institute of Human & Machine Cognition (IHMC)
40 S. Alcaniz St, Pensacola

Speakers: *Clyde Mathis*, Port Director and
Amy Miller, Assistant Port Director.

*Port of Pensacola Business Strategic Analysis
Executive Summary and Key Findings (2004)*

The Port has been operated by the City of Pensacola for many years as an industrial maritime operation focused primarily on domestic and international waterborne cargo. During the 10 years from 1994-2004, the Port has been unable to consistently generate sufficient revenues to cover operating and maintenance costs, annual debt service and capital needs because of several factors:

- Lack of stability in key cargo segments (bagged agricultural products)
- Competition from other ports on the Gulf Coast
- Lack of an approved Energy Bill
- Decision not to accept certain cargoes that are deemed “unacceptable or unpalatable” to the community (e.g. woodchips, ores)
- Delays in enacting recent leases

At the same time, the physical environment surrounding the Port has changed from a struggling and blighted business area to a thriving business center that includes retail shops, restaurants, entertainment facilities, housing, and academic and research centers affiliated with UWF. The waterfront has changed from industrial to mixed use, which leads the Port to be more sensitive to the needs and desires of its neighbors. While the Port needs to have financially sound seaport business activities, it also needs to be an asset to the development and redevelopment efforts of the downtown and waterfront areas.

Key findings and Recommendations of the Study Group

Cargo

The Port is a relatively small niche player focusing on bulk and breakbulk accounts. Competition with other area ports is described as fierce. Within this environment, the Port



can maximize its chances of success by targeting cargoes within its primary market area (within 100 miles of the Port terminals). Cargoes include products made by or for local industry, which accounts for the majority of the cargoes moving through the Port.

However, the Port has limited facilities for handling cargo. Also, as long as the Port is engaged in waterborne activity (cargo or non-cargo vessel activity) that requires dredging, the dredging disposal site will continue to be a need. Continuation of the disposal site will preclude any development of buildings, surface parking, marinas or other structures in this area.

Port revenues come mostly from long term leases, which provide minimum annual guarantees that help equalize Port revenues in periods of cyclical cargo downturns. The established term of the lease generally takes into account the value of the improvements paid for by the lessee, in order to allow a sufficient time to meet the lessee’s required return on investment. Under these conditions, attempts to curtail leases before reaching their term may be costly in terms of lease buyout provisions or assumptions of responsibility for demolition and cleanup. The additional costs to buy

out these leases could render the alternative use uneconomical. As a result, the City should honor the industrial leases. As leases expire or lease windows for renewal arise that include a mutual consent, a decision about renewal should be based on market conditions, economic impact and financial return. Currently the Port has commitments to industrial leases through 2022.

Cruise

If homeport and port of call cruise ships were attracted to the Port, it would generate a return on investment of 14% (combined with existing cargo operations) and an economic impact ranging from 319 to 432 total jobs in the Pensacola area. Cruise operations would be compatible with cargo if the terminal and access were properly designed.

Mixed Use Building

A mixed use building, including retail, restaurant and office uses, would contribute significant economic and financial returns to the Port. The return on investment is estimated at 11% (combined with cargo and cruise operations). The mixed use building would generate 149-210 jobs.

The study committee also recommended that the City establish partnerships with other community leaders and entities such as UWF, to preserve Pensacola’s maritime, archaeological and historical assets and make a gradual transition from a maritime-industrial usage to a maritime-related and commercial business usage.

Report highlights by Dian Parsley, LWVPBA director, with one perspective on the future of the Port of Pensacola. The complete report can be found on the Port of Pensacola website. League will review whether changes in conditions warrant restudy of our port positions in box below.

Land Use - Port of Pensacola

Support the Port of Pensacola as an essential part of the transportation system of the region.

1. Support the operation of the Port as a service to the community, rather than as a source of revenue for the General Fund.
2. Support expansion of the sources of funding for the Port to reflect its regional impact.
3. Support broadening the governing body for the Port to include representatives from the region which the Port serves.
4. Support measures to increase the viability and visibility of the Port.

Education Committee Meeting Notes

Dr. James Hamilton, retired Chief of Staff of the School District of Hillsborough County, Florida, met with the LWVPBA Education committee last month. Dr. Hamilton is presently employed as an education lobbyist. He has recently moved to Pensacola and is a member of our local League.

Dr. Hamilton predicts the following will be topics for discussion during the upcoming legislative session.

1. “MONEY” will be the number one topic. With less or no new money, few laws will be passed.
2. An effort will be made to enhance vocational education.
3. Charter schools will be held more accountable.
4. Changes will be made in the FCAT, and it will not be the single rigid measure.
5. Class size reduction will be debated.
6. School grading will be examined.

Comments of interest to Leaguers:

Florida’s tax system is not one of equity; rather it is one by exemption.

Singapore students study for eight hours a day and attend school 240 days a year. Florida schools have a state mandated 5 hour day, 180 days a year, the same calendar as was instituted in 1912.

By Barbara Goggins, Education chair

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Amnesty Day for disposal of household hazardous materials will be on Saturday, **March 15** from 8 am-1 pm.

Santa Rosa County Locations:

- > Santa Rosa Administrative Complex parking lot (behind McDonald's)
- > County Service Center 5819 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Midway. Questions: call 981-7135

Escambia County Location:

- > Bailey Middle School on Bauer Road, Saturday, May 10 from 8 am-Noon

Recycling Report

Representatives from Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties presented updates on recycling at the February League meeting. The central focus of members was the potential for curbside recycling of reusable materials.

Santa Rosa Clean Community System Director John Tonkin noted that each individual, on average, generates 4 pounds of garbage per day, thus totaling 280 pounds per month. About half can be recycled, says Tonkin, potentially reducing emissions and conserving non-renewable resources.

Santa Rosa does not require waste management franchises to provide curbside recycling, but does maintain 27 sites where recyclable materials may be dropped off.

"We're doing right at one million pounds a month," Tonkin remarked. "So that's one million pounds a month that doesn't go into the landfill and that's a good thing." Gulf Breeze is the only Santa Rosa municipality where curbside recycling is available.

Dee Dee Green, Escambia County Outreach Coordinator at the Beulah Landfill, reminded the group that Florida's goal is to recycle 30% of wastes. Of Florida's 67 counties, plus Disney's Reedy Creek District, 31 offer full curbside recycling; 23 have partial curbside pickup; and the remaining 14 counties offer no recycling.

Escambia County has 17 drop-off sites, where plastics (1-7) can be taken; these bottles must have a neck to be accepted for reuse. Paper, metals and aluminum can also be placed in these bins. A Swap Shop at the Landfill offers items that are reusable.

The Processing Facility at Perdido Landfill separates materials and disposes of them. For example:

- * old tires are sold to a dealer in Alabama;
- * paint is cleaned and is used by Habitat for Humanity;
- * reusable shoes are sent to Roanoke, Alabama;
- * glass is ground and used for roadways at the Landfill;
- * plant materials containing plastic are used for daily cover at the Landfill.

Jim Howes, Escambia Recycling Operations Chief, has been responsible for the drop-off program at the Perdido Landfill since 1997. He pointed out that Escambia County offers no garbage collection in the northern sector. Where service is available, the County maintains exclusive rights for residential garbage as the Landfill is a self-supporting enterprise fund. Howes noted that Escambia County has relatively low tipping fees and has the state's fourth or fifth lowest fee, at \$31 per ton. Through an interlocal agreement, the City of Pensacola brings its recyclables to the Landfill.

While Howes supports curbside recycling, he points out that potential implementation costs have been a deterrent to public support. Nevertheless, he encouraged citizens to support government efforts to develop recycling programs, noting, "grassroots initiatives are a lot stronger than people think."

The proposal of garbage pickup once a week, rather than twice, needs further consideration, says Howes, along with waste-to-energy initiatives. "I think we've got some opportunities," he remarked. "People are listening."



Following an enthusiastic discussion period, League members considered the question: Should there be curbside recycling in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties? The answer was a resounding **Yes!** ◇

The following LWVPBA positions are the remaining study items the Recycling Committee, under the leadership of Muriel Wagner and Carolyn Kolb, will be working with in the next year:

Collection

- The county or a public utility should own & control the collection & disposal system.
- Institute a mandatory/equitable collection policy for the developed areas of the county (Escambia & Santa Rosa)
- Support monitored transfer stations/collection sites
- Support legislation against non-returnable bottles.
- Support use of all-steel or all-aluminum cans

Disposal

- Update/ support methods for sludge disposal
- Study disposal or household waste, commercial waste, debris from construction & demolition, debris from severe storms.



FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

In the Spring of 2006, a used cell phone project was initiated by the League. Collection boxes were set up at ten locations in the two counties. Since that time, **we have collected and sold more than 250 phones and have received more than \$725 for our efforts.**

We are continuing this program and the collection boxes are checked frequently. Do your part. If you or family members have used cell phones tucked away in a drawer or stored in your garage, bring them to monthly League meetings, or call Susan Metzger, 932-4039, for pick up.

The League is also a member of the WorkLife program at Office Depot. Every three months your League receives a gift card for a percentage of our purchases and the award amount represents an income of at least \$125 per year.

Each of our members may participate. When you make your Office Depot purchase, tell them that you have an Awards membership and give them Susan’s phone number, **932-4039. Put that number in your wallet!** Each purchase of ink cartridges, paper, school supplies, equipment or computers benefits your League. ♦

“You go, girls...doing a great job!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Mary G. Wilson, National League president, shared a small sample of the over 1,000 birthday wishes received this month—a truly heartwarming reminder of the League’s impact!

“When LWV speaks, civic leaders listen. Happy Birthday to a group that has earned respect because of all the hard work of its volunteers.”

“From the bottom of my heart, body, mind and political soul - Women can and do change the world. Let’s keep it up!”

“Happy Birthday to a group that still believes in the "high road" and making things transparent, honest, and positive.”

“Without you, we'd be nowhere. Thanks for changing the world.”

“At 88 you still have the ‘it factor’ and still rock.” ♦

LOBBY FUND CHALLENGE WE REACHED OUR GOAL!

With a current membership of 143, Pensacola Bay Area was challenged to raise \$725. We exceeded that amount and are sending \$800 for the LWVF Lobby Fund. Dues at the state League have not been raised since 1995, and it has become clear that additional funds are needed for the League to continue its mission of good government for all of us.

The following members contributed:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Janet deLorge | Jan Hervieux |
| Betty Enfinger | Sherlee Aronson |
| Frankie Van Horn | Miriam Jennings |
| Gloria Dawson | Vivian Faircloth |
| Muriel Wagner | Barbara Goggins |
| Laurie McBee | Mary Lou McBee |
| Charlotte Schipman | Annabeth Carter |
| Sharon Barnett | Annie Griffin |
| Susan Metzger | Corrine Wade |
| Kathy Barber | Dian Parsley |
| Paula Montgomery | Fran Jones |
| Bonnie Exner | Elizabeth Andrews |
| Miriam Birdwhistell | Ellen Roston |
| Sara Williamson | Anne Lett |
| Enid Sisskin | John Manning |
| Priscilla Lamore | Elizabeth King |
| Marilyn Badessa | Kathy Kerr |
| Carolann Holmes | Don and Ina Freeman |
| Charles Fairchild | Michael Perkinson |
| Deborah Nelson | Margrette Barker |
| Bea Belous | |



Earth Day

**April 19
Until 4 pm at
Bayview Park**

In 1970, the first Earth Day promoted environmental citizenship and year-round progressive action worldwide. Join Kathy Barber and Ellen Roston to celebrate this year's special event. To volunteer, call Roston at 453-0730 or Barber at 469-0009.

LWVUS 2008 Legislative Priorities

Legislative priorities were adopted at the January LWVUS Board meeting in Washington. Legislative priorities for 2008, which are (in alphabetical order): Campaign Finance Reform, Civil Liberties, DC Voting Rights (we got close last session!), Election Administration, Ethics and Lobby Reform, Global Climate change, Health Care Reform, and Tax Policy. As opportunities arise, members and Leagues will be asked to email their members of Congress to support or oppose legislation in these areas. If you are not already on the National Action Alert list, you may go to www.lwv.org to sign on. ◇

Increased Visibility

The League has received considerable coverage in the press, increasing our visibility in this presidential election year. Read "Precinct Hiccups Blamed on Poor Training" article in the Washington Post February 23, 2008 on the need for improved poll worker training. This report garnered extensive coverage in newspapers nationwide. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/23/AR2008022300964_pf.html ◇

Sunshine Week

The first national "Sunshine Week: Your Right to Know" was launched in March 2005 and will be celebrated in 2008 from March 16-22. Sunshine Week's intent is to raise awareness of the importance of open government to everyone in the community, not just journalists. LWVUS is a co-sponsor of "SunShine Week 2008 National Dialogue". ◇

Florida Legislative Session Opening Day March 4th

The League is ready. Local Leagues have been meeting with their local legislators. League point persons and the League legislative issues they will follow have been identified. LWVF Lobbyist, Jeanne Zokovitch has started posting the *Capitol Report* on the website at www.lwvfla.org. To keep you informed on current activity during the legislative session, the *Capitol Report* will be posted every Friday with that week's update and issues likely to happen during the next week of session. ◇

Calendar

March

- 4 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at Tryon Branch Library, 9th Ave.

General Meeting

at IHMC

Saturday, March 15, 2008,

9:00 am coffee, 9:30 am program

Port of Pensacola: Status Report

Speakers: *Clyde Mathis*, Port Director and
Amy Miller, Assistant Port Director

- 16-18 Sunday -Tuesday **48th Legislative Seminar**, Tallahassee

- 16-22 **Sunshine Week** – www.sunshineweek.org to learn more about Sunshine Week.

- 17 Monday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**. Azalea Trace, **Great Decisions**, *Dr. Don Freeman* will lead the discussion on "Blacklisting the Enemy".

- 18 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Natural Resources/Growth Management Committee** meeting at Caldwell and Associates Architects Inc., Interior Designers's Conference Room, 116 North Tarragona Street.

April

- 19 Saturday until 4 pm **Earth Day Celebration** at Bayview Park. Contact Ellen Roston, 453-0730, or Kathy Barber, 469-0009

May

- 16-17 Friday & Saturday LWVF/EF Council of Leaders, Daytona Beach, *Leaguer's – Start Your Engines*.



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Established in 1949, the Pensacola Bay Area League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a member. All members receive the *National Voter*, the *Florida Voter* and this publication.

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LWVUS Website: www.lwv.org
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Join the League of Women Voters today!

It's easy! Just send your check to:
League of Women Voters, P O Box 2023,
Pensacola FL, 32513
\$50 Individual membership ● + \$25 each additional household member ● \$25 student membership
Here's my extra contribution to the League \$ _____

My contribution to the Lobby Fund Challenge \$ _____
 I'm renewing my membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

Email Address _____

The League is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civil improvement.



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