

FLAGLER BOCC HEADLINES



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JOE MULLINS

Flagler County Board of County Commissioners appointed Chairman representing District 4, which includes the city of Bunnell and everything west of U.S. 1, and is geographically the largest district in Flagler County. He is serving his first term and was elected in November 2018.

BIOGRAPHICAL:

Commissioner Mullins is President and CEO of The Mullins Companies. He is active within the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) on the Federal Policy Committee as well as on the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Policy Committee. He serves on three committees at the National Association of Counties (NACo): Community, Economic and Workforce Development Steering Committee; Rural Action Caucus; and, Membership Standing Committee. Additionally, he serves on the Northeast Florida Regional Council, and several local committees.

OF IMPORTANCE:

Opioid deaths in Flagler County are something Commission Chair Joe Mullins is adamant about keeping at the forefront of discussions to better address how to ensure residents have the needed services and treatment available to turn the tide. "It's not a choice; it's a disease," he said to fellow commissioners at the April 18 regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners, updating them on the Project Opioid breakfast – Solving the Overdose Crisis in Central Florida: Community Impact Breakfast – he attended in Orlando. "It's something we've got to work on and acknowledge. Acknowledging it is power."



INDOMITABLE PERSEVERANCE, PATIENCE, REBUILD FLORIDA GRANT PROVIDE NEW HOME FOR WEST-SIDER DEVASTATED BY HURRICANE IRMA

Good things come to those who wait, and William Wilkinson – now 89 – waited. And waited. And waited. In fact, it was 1,626 days from the time Hurricane Irma brought her wrath on September 10, 2017 that devastated his west side home and February 22, 2022 when he moved into his new residence.

The new manufactured home was provided through a September 2018 "Rebuild Florida" grant for Irma victims and the indomitable perseverance of Senior Services Case Manager Winnie Costello and Community Paramedic Caryn Prather, who retires on April 29, both of whom helped Wilkinson every step of the way – from filing the initial 30-page application and every addendum to follow, to ensuring his new home was properly connected to utilities and furnished.

"To be fair, this process was happening in the midst of the pandemic," Prather said. "So even though we had William file right away and stayed on top of things on his behalf, there were legitimate supply chain issues and worker issues."

Prather and Costello became increasingly concerned about Wilkinson's living conditions following Irma. They were encouraged to learn about the program – funded through a partnership of the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – that would potentially provide sound housing for him.

"He never married and has no children. He has one sister who is two years older and lives out of state, which means he really is on his own," Costello said. "He's very comfortable on his street where he knows everyone and has his cats. Moving away really wasn't an option that would have suited him."

Even a few months' stay at the Best Western Plus in Palm Coast during the transition proved to be a hardship.

All progress stalled from May 2021, nearly a year after the clean-up, to Thanksgiving that same year.

"Winnie did it all," Prather said. "At least 50 emails back and forth. Anytime they said something else was needed, she was on it. She was willing to give everything she had to get this done."

Costello secured a new mattress and box springs. Families of local firefighters donated sheets, towels, blankets, and cookware. Larger, gently used furniture made its way into the house. The firefighters' union donated money to buy Wilkinson a television. An accessibility ramp was added.

"He cried, 'This is mine, this is mine,' when he saw it," Prather said. "It's great because it allows him to enjoy the outdoors, his neighbors, and his cats."

'TUNE IN' TO MEETINGS

MAY 10: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT 6 p.m.
MAY 16: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 5 p.m.
JUNE 6: BOCC REGULAR MEETING AT 9 a.m.
JUNE 14: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT 6 p.m.

LIVE STREAM

www.youtube.com/flaglercounty/live



MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE TO FEATURE CECIL HENGEVELD, FORMER DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

Join Flagler County at its Memorial Day Ceremony at 10 a.m. Monday, May 30, featuring special guest speaker Cecil Hengeveld, Colonel, U.S. Army (retired), a Vietnam War veteran, whose decorations include Legion of Merit, Air Medal with "V" device and 30 oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal, and the Pennsylvania Commendation Medal.

"It is an honor and a privilege to have an accomplished veteran like Cecil Hengeveld help us pay tribute to those who lost their lives in service to our country," said Veterans Service Officer David Lydon.

Hengeveld, following his tour in Vietnam, served as a flight instructor and later joined the Pennsylvania Army National Guard receiving a direct commission from warrant officer to second lieutenant. He retired in 1998. Hengeveld holds a Master Aviator rating with over 7,100 flight hours in rotary and fixed-wing aircraft.

He was the commander of the 1028th Transportation Helicopter Company, Eastern ARNG Aviation Training Site simulator and instruments branch chief and operations and training officer. He served as an aviation staff officer in the State Area Command Headquarters of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. Hengeveld has commanded Army Aviation Support Facilities in Washington, PA and the Fort Indiantown Gap.

Hengeveld was appointed Deputy Adjutant General for Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in 2001 and has since retired.

The ceremony will be at 10 a.m. in front of the Government Services Building, 1769 E. Moody Boulevard, Bunnell.

'DO DATE' EVENTS

05/20/22: MOAS LECTURE SERIES (2 p.m.)
The Lost Roadside Attractions of Florida
Palm Coast Main Branch LIBRARY
2500 Palm Coast Parkway Northwest
www.facebook.com/FlaglerCountyPublicLibrary

BREAKERS

TOUR HALF DOZEN PARKS FOR FREE

Who says there's no free ride? More than a dozen lucky residents will be able to join Parks and Recreation staff and the Flagler County Parks Advisory Board for the Summer 2022 Tour of Parks on June 10.

Reservations are required and can be made online. Participants must be at least 18 years old.

"Twice a year the Flagler County Parks Advisory Board schedules a parks tour, and invites the public to join them on an adventure through some of the 28 parks the county maintains," said Parks and Recreation Manager Frank Barbuti. "We have room to take about 14 residents with us, so don't delay making your reservation."

Stops on the tour include the following Flagler County parks: Herschel King, Wadsworth, Hammock Community Center and Park, Mala-Compra Park, Bay Drive Park, and Princess Place Preserve. There will be a lunch stop at High Jackers Restaurant at the end of the tour, but attendees will be responsible for paying their own way there.

"This is a great opportunity to get an overview of some of these spectacular parks," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "It also gives residents a chance to talk with the advisory board and provide input."

FREE SKYWARN STORM SPOTTER CLASS

Emergency Management and the National Weather Service will host a free Skywarn Storm Spotter class at 6 p.m. on Friday, May 20.

Ben Nelson, meteorologist with the National Weather Service, will teach the class that will provide attendees the knowledge to become a part of a nationwide network of volunteers who support the National Weather Service by reporting severe weather.

Students will learn about storm formation and structure, and how to identify and report severe weather.

Registration is required, and can be done by email: EOC@FlaglerCounty.gov or calling 386-313-4250.

Stay informed about significant weather and by signing up for ALERT-Flagler on the county website: FlaglerCounty.gov/ALERTFlagler.