

# FORT MORGAN NEWS

## March 2016 ~ Issue 109



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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Hi, Folks,

Be sure to remind all your friends and neighbors of our community meeting on March 5 at Fire Station #2.

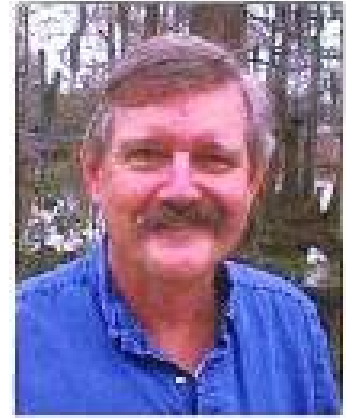
We are beginning to get some responses regarding our incorporation efforts. The most recent is a letter supporting incorporation from the Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust. They stated that "we are very interested in the preservation of Fort Morgan in its natural condition, to the extent possible..." Good to have such support.

Hope to see a good turnout for our March meetings.

*Paul*

Paul Barefield

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### MEMBER NOTICES

#### FMCA February 2016 Meeting Highlights

**The March 5<sup>th</sup> Community Town Hall meeting to discuss incorporation of District 25 will be held at 2:00 PM at VFD Fire Station #2 (next to Plaza West). We welcome all property and business owners and Fort Morgan peninsula residents.**

Copies of the **revised Incorporation bill draft were distributed.** [See copy attached.] At the request of Rep. Steve McMillan, David Whetstone is now serving as our liaison with Rep. McMillan and Baldwin County Probate Judge Tim Russell in their efforts to help us.

Members voted to **send all Alabama state legislators a letter asking for their support of the Fort Morgan incorporation bill.** The letter will include information on the historical and environmental importance of Fort Morgan and appreciation of their positive vote to allow only the voters of an affected county or political subdivision to vote on the amendment.

The **Welcome to Fort Morgan-District 25 roadside sign** is now being manufactured. Carol Kittrell and Ken Steiner will have it erected as soon as possible. It will be located on the north side of Fort Morgan Road, just west of the Gulf Shores city boundary. *Look for it soon!*

#### Incorporation of Fort Morgan District 25

A letter to District 25 property owners and registered voters was mailed February 24<sup>th</sup> explaining the rationale for incorporation and asking for their support and comments. **IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED**—please send your answer NOW to [INFO@fortmorgancivic.org](mailto:INFO@fortmorgancivic.org). Key paragraphs are quoted below. For the full content, see attachment to the February issue of the NEWS, or email us to request another copy.

*"Many people prefer the status quo. We have a beautiful low density beach area that residents and visitors have enjoyed for many years. To expect this to continue is unrealistic as forces will soon be pressing for higher density and commercial development that will totally destroy the Fort Morgan we love. Fort Morgan owners have little or no influence on those who currently make decisions. It is time for Fort Morgan people to make decisions for themselves.*

*Please consider carefully your decision — it will monumentally affect not only our generation, but generations to come. If you are interested in the future of Fort Morgan and have concerns, **please let us hear from you by February 29th.** Email: [info@fortmorgancivic.org](mailto:info@fortmorgancivic.org). Your support for incorporation will encourage the Legislative Delegation to begin drafting the amendment to the constitution. Legislation for incorporation of Fort Morgan must be approved by both the Alabama House and Senate and signed by the Governor."*

Please join us for the Fort Morgan Town Hall meeting on Saturday, March 5, 2016 at 2:00PM at Fire Station #2. This will be a presentation and informational session to explain the advantages and disadvantages of incorporation versus the status quo, and to discuss the upcoming draft legislation. In the spirit of a true town hall, you will be afforded an opportunity to express your ideas and concerns and have responses to your questions. Firefighters will be directing traffic for parking, and those who must park in remote locations will be picked up and shuttled to the meeting in Fire Department ATVs.

### **Turtle Tracks 2016~~~~~~Calling New Volunteers!!**

Fort Morgan Share the Beach team is accepting new volunteers for the 2016 sea turtle nesting season which starts May 1. BSNW Refuge has lost some of its funding and will cover only Refuge areas. This leaves us with 8.25 miles of beach that needs to be covered from May 1 through August 31.

We need volunteers who are willing and able to walk approximately 1 mile of beach in the early mornings. We will try our best to make it possible for you to pick the days you want to walk and the section of beach that you prefer. If you are interested, please email asap [fmseaturtles@hotmail.com](mailto:fmseaturtles@hotmail.com)

### **Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department .....Chief Glenn Stevens**

In January, your Fire Department responded to 19 calls: 16 medical and 3 false alarms. Seven of our firefighters have signed up for a Firefighter Certification Course. This 160-hour course will teach our members the basics of firefighting. This is quite a commitment as our members will attend the class in Gulf Shores twice a week for six months.

The Fire Department will be hosting three events during March:

- ~ Primary Election at Station 1 on Tuesday, March 1, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- ~ Community Meeting “Town Hall” at Station 2 on Saturday, March 5, at 2 p.m.
- ~ Spaghetti Dinner fund raiser at Station 1 on Saturday, March 12, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Community Meeting at Station 2 will have limited parking in the parking lot. We plan to have firefighters directing traffic for parking and those residents who must park in remote locations will be picked up and shuttled to the meeting in our Fire Department ATVs.

The Fort Morgan VFD Auxiliary will have their **Spaghetti Dinner March 12** at Station #1 (across from Shell Banks Church). Also on sale will be Baked Goods, 50/50 Raffle, and the Auxiliary’s own Fort Morgan community family-recipes-passed-down Cookbooks. For the first time, VFD T-Shirts will be available, designed by Firefighter Alicia. This event raises money for firefighters and fire departments that might need financial assistance.

As always, our meetings are open to the public. Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at Station 1 at 5:30 p.m. Our training meetings, which give our residents an insight on becoming a Fire Department member, are held the first and third Mondays each month at Station 1 at 6:30 p.m. As you can see in this newsletter, the Fire Department does a lot more than just fighting fires. Come by for one of our meetings and see if you might want to consider becoming a member.

### **New Gulf State Park Lodge and Conference Center Hits Potential Snag**

Alabama Governor Robert Bentley has long maintained that there will be a lodge and large conference center at Gulf State Park to replace the lodge destroyed by Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and that BP funds will be used to accomplish this project.

The Gulf Restoration Network (GRN), a non-profit environmental organization, filed suit against the State and federal trustees for the BP monies, contending that building a lodge and conference center complex is not a proper use of funds intended to restore the Gulf coast after the BP oil spill in 2010. The State planned to use \$58 million of the settlement to build the hotel and conference center. An additional \$17 million was to be spent on park improvements. Building of the lodge and center was lumped with park improvements into the “Gulf State Park Improvements” project.

A federal judge recently heard arguments from both sides and declared that the money was intended to restore the coastal environment damaged by the oil spill and that, since the original Gulf State Park Lodge was destroyed by Hurricane Ivan several years before the oil spill, this was not an appropriate use of oil spill funds.

### **Fort Morgan Beach “Governor’s Mansion” Being Rehabbed**



Complete renovation of the “Governor’s Mansion” on Gulf Way Drive in Surfside Shores has begun! For those unfamiliar with the history, this large beach residence with meeting room has sat relatively unmaintained and deteriorating for nearly 40 years after having been damaged by a hurricane. The land was donated to the state by the developer who

designed and built Surfside Shores with the condition that if ever the state decided not to utilize the property it would revert to the original owner. The developer brought suit against the State for not utilizing the property, and the estate had been tied up in court for many years.

Governor Bentley announced on a recent trip to Fort Morgan peninsula to view the Navy Seals exercise on the property that BP funds would be used to rehabilitate the residence. The project is expected to take approximately four months, scheduled for completion May 1st.

**2016 DUES ARE LONG OVERDUE ~ WE NEED YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!!**

**PLEASE** support our efforts at this critical junction in our history. Not since FMCA was established in 1983 have we been this close to independent control of our future. Send the completed member form [attached] with your dues **before March 25<sup>th</sup>** or be deleted from the rolls and newsletter distribution. Fill out the complete form, including the new questions regarding voter location. Also please include your e-mail address for emergency contact.

### **NEW Garbage Policy (“Solid Waste”) Affects Fort Morgan Peninsula Home Owners**

Please read the policies to see how you might be affected. For more info, see the February NEWS issue. <http://baldwincountyal.gov/departments/solid-waste/>

Major policy changes affecting Fort Morgan home owners:

- (1) **Twice a week pick-up required for ALL RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS in District 25** ~ Single-family, owner-occupied residences not rented seasonally may apply for a variance to the 2x/week rule (to receive once per week pick-up) by calling BCSW at 972-6878, or by filing the Department’s request for variance (called a “Seasonal Rate”) form via the website. At that time, you must also request a smaller bin if you are unable to roll the larger one to and fro.
- (2) All customers will be required to use ONLY the green BCSW garbage containers.
- (3) Rental structures will be charged by size and may be required to have more than two containers. **See the website for new rates for rental properties.**

If you need an exemption from any of the new policies, see the phone number in #1 above or visit the County website. If you have other comments, contact your Baldwin County Commissioner, Charles “Skip” Gruber: [cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov)

### **Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~ January 2016**

**EMERGENCY: 911 ~ Report all potentially life-threatening and suspicious activities**

Sheriff’s Department—Administrative Office...972-6802

Sheriff’s Office Website: [www.sheriffofbaldwin.com](http://www.sheriffofbaldwin.com)

Anonymous Tip Email Address (NOT for Emergencies): <http://sheriffofbaldwin.com/contactRC.asp>

**Crime Report ~ February 2016**

Not available at time of publication.

## Baldwin County Commission Contacts

### Commissioners:

**Charles "Skip" Gruber**  
[cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov)  
251-943-5061

**Tucker Dorsey**  
[tdorsey@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:tdorsey@baldwincountyal.gov)  
251-972-8502

**Chris Elliott**  
[ctelliott@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:ctelliott@baldwincountyal.gov)  
251-990-4606

**Frank Burt, Jr.**  
[fburt@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:fburt@baldwincountyal.gov)  
251-937-0395

To speak at a regular commission meeting, you must have signed up before the meeting. Check the dates, times and locations for all meetings at <http://www.baldwincountyal.gov>

## FMCA Executive Board Contacts

If you have questions, need information or would like to volunteer, please contact one of the following board members:

### Officers

President	Paul Barefield	540-7727	<a href="mailto:csbarefield@gmail.com">csbarefield@gmail.com</a>
Vice President	Ernie Church	334-220-0851	<a href="mailto:ecaces4@gmail.com">ecaces4@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Chan West	979-4932	<a href="mailto:granchan@earthlink.net">granchan@earthlink.net</a>
Secretary	Carol Kittrell	251-605-4134	<a href="mailto:ckittrell@southalabama.edu">ckittrell@southalabama.edu</a>

### Standing Committee Chairs

District 25 Planning & Zoning	Ken Steiner	540-7223	<a href="mailto:kennethjsteiner@centurytel.net">kennethjsteiner@centurytel.net</a>
Hospitality	Thelma Strong	540-7383	<a href="mailto:twstrong@gulftel.com">twstrong@gulftel.com</a>
Incorporation	Paul Barefield	540-7727	<a href="mailto:csbarefield@gmail.com">csbarefield@gmail.com</a>
Membership	Bonnie Lowry	540-9327	
NEWS & Website Editor	Sonja Sanders	543-1030	
Sunshine	Vickie Matranga	543-1555	<a href="mailto:vpowers110@gmail.com">vpowers110@gmail.com</a>

### Mark Your Calendars:

**VOTE ~ Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, Fire Station #1, 7am-7pm**  
**TOWN HALL: INCORPORATION ~ Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2:00PM, Fire Station #2**  
**FMCA Monthly Meeting ~ Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 6:30PM**  
**EASTER ~ Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>**

FMCA 2016 MEETINGS ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church:  
March 14 ~ April 11 ~ May 9 ~ June 13 ~ July 11 ~ August 8 ~ September 12

VISIT OUR FMCA WEBSITE—[www.fortmorgancivic.org](http://www.fortmorgancivic.org)

Please send kudos, complaints, and ideas for future expansion.

<[INFO@FortMorganCivic.org](mailto:INFO@FortMorganCivic.org)>

**Fort Morgan Civic Association**  
**P. O. Box 5313 ~ Gulf Shores, AL 36547**  
[www.fortmorgancivic.org](http://www.fortmorgancivic.org)



**[DRAFT LEGISLATION FOR INCORPORATION OF FORT MORGAN DISTRICT 25]**

173198-1 : n : 01/26/2016 : FC / cj LRS2016-217

**SYNOPSIS:** This bill would propose an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, which would provide for the incorporation of the Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning District 25 in Baldwin County as the Town of Fort Morgan.

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED AN ACT**

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, to provide for the incorporation of the Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning District 25 in Baldwin County as the Town of Fort Morgan.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:**

**Section 1.** The Legislature finds that the general laws of this state provide procedures for the incorporation of municipalities in this state, but that the requirements of general law are not appropriate for the incorporation of a municipality on the Fort Morgan peninsula of Baldwin County due to the unique geographic features and population characteristics of the Fort Morgan peninsula. The Legislature further finds that Fort Morgan District 25 is the appropriate political subdivision affected by the proposed amendment and that the vote on the approval of this amendment serves as a referendum election on whether the Town of Fort Morgan consisting of the property within the Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning District 25 will be incorporated as a municipality provided the amendment is otherwise ratified pursuant to procedures of Amendment 555 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 284.01 of the Recompiled Constitution of Alabama of 1901.

**Section 2.** The following amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901 is proposed and shall become valid as a part of the Constitution when all requirements of this act are fulfilled:

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

(a) For the purposes of this amendment, the "Baldwin County Planning and Zoning District 25" means the Baldwin County Planning and Zoning District 25 as established by the Baldwin County Commission pursuant to Act 91-719 of the 1991 Regular Session (Acts 1991, p. 1389), as amended, as hereinafter referred to as the Fort Morgan Zoning District, as that zoning district was adopted and in effect on February 1, 2014 [2003], and ratified and confirmed in Act 2015-411 of the Legislature.

(b) Subject to the approval of a majority of the qualified electors in the Fort Morgan Zoning District voting at the constitutional amendment election on the approval of this amendment, the Fort Morgan Zoning District is incorporated as a municipality in this state in the same manner as if otherwise incorporated as a municipality pursuant to the general law of this state. Upon that approval and ratification of this amendment, the Judge of Probate of Baldwin County shall issue his or her order of incorporation as provided by general law.

(c) Upon the incorporation of the Town of Fort Morgan pursuant to this constitutional amendment, the zoning ratified and confirmed and adopted by reference and expressly made applicable to the Fort Morgan Zoning District pursuant to Act 2015-411 shall remain in effect and the property in the Town of Fort Morgan shall continue to be subject to Act 2015-411 and the Baldwin County Planning and Zoning Commission until the Town of Fort Morgan by affirmative resolution of the town council acts to assume jurisdiction of the zoning of the town.

**Section 3.** An election upon the proposed amendment shall be held in accordance with Amendment 555 to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 284.01 of the Official Recompilation of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended, and the election laws of this state.

**Section 4.** The appropriate election official shall assign a ballot number for the proposed constitutional amendment on the election ballot and shall set forth the following description of the substance or subject matter of the proposed constitutional amendment:

"Relating to Baldwin County, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, to provide for the incorporation of the Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning District 25 as the Town of Fort Morgan.

"Proposed by Act \_\_\_\_\_"

This description shall be followed by the following language:

"Yes ( ) No ( )."

**Fort Morgan Civic Association**  
**P.O. Box 5313 • Gulf Shores, AL 36547**  
*www.fortmorgancivic.org*

**MEMBERSHIP FORM – ANNUAL DUES \$15.00**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Fort Morgan Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

This property is west of mile 14.7:  yes  no -- See Article III, Section 1 below Associate Member?  yes

Registered Voter? Yes  No  Fort Morgan District 25 \_\_\_\_\_ Alabama-other district/city \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

**Email (please provide for special alerts)** \_\_\_\_\_  
 [Save trees, stamps, time, get your news in color by e-mail.] Send newsletter by email  by U.S. Postal Service

Your employment \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's employment \_\_\_\_\_

Referred to FMCA by \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for joining the Association \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE: We need volunteers to help the Association in the following areas. Where can you assist? (circle)**

- Program Planning:** Identify & Arrange Speakers Phone/Survey Members for Interests  
**Zoning:** Attend Meetings of Baldwin County/Gulf Shores Write Brief Reports  
**Membership/Hospitality:** Recruitment Phone Tree Greeter at Meetings Help with Dinners  
**Communications:** Postal Mailings E-mail Writing for Newspaper, Publicity Releases, etc.  
**Newsletter:** Desktop Graphics/Layout Gather/Submit News Items Write Brief Articles Photography  
**Computer:** Set Up/Maintain Data Base Spreadsheets Excel Access Word PowerPoint  
**Financial:** Help with Fundraising Bookkeeping Annual Audit

What other skills, experience or talents could you volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

**From the By-laws Adopted April 11, 2005**

**ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1 Regular (voting) Membership in this association shall be open only to property owners and/or residents in the unincorporated area west of mile 14.7 of the Fort Morgan peninsula.
- Section 2 Associate (non-voting) Membership shall be open to residents of areas outside the Fort Morgan Peninsula whose interests coincide with those of the Association including the preservation of the environment and quality of life of the Fort Morgan peninsula.
- Section 3 Membership application shall be made by completion of a form provided by the Association and payment of the required dues. Dues for the following year shall be determined at the October general meeting and shall be for the following calendar year January 1st through December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Section 4 Payment of Regular (voting) Membership dues entitles a member household to one (1) vote. A member household is comprised of Association members living at one physical address. Past year member households paying dues after January 31st and new members joining the Association will have no voting rights until thirty (30) days after payment of dues.
- Section 5 Payment of Associate (non-voting) Membership dues entitles the member to attend all member meetings and receive the monthly newsletter.

Make checks payable to: **Fort Morgan Civic Association or FMCA**

**I would like to make a donation to the Legal Fund in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**2016 dues @ \$15/household \_\_\_\_\_**

**Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Your donation to the Fort Morgan Civic Association is not tax deductible as we do not qualify because of our political activity attempting to prevent proliferation of large-scale high-rise development on Fort Morgan Peninsula.