

FORT MORGAN NEWS

December 2019~Issue 154



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all FMCA members and an especially warm welcome to our new members!

2019 has been a great year for the Fort Morgan Civic Association. Just this year, we were able to organize the inaugural "Fort Morgan Beach Cleanup" back in February where over 100 volunteers came together to help clean up our beautiful beaches. This year we also coordinated with the Alabama Department of Transportation, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, Department of Conservation & Natural Resources and other entities to fix the extremely dangerous intersection that was at Plantation Dr and Hwy 180. Finally, with what is perhaps one of the most significant actions of the year, The Baldwin County Commission implemented the text amendments to our local ordinances. These ordinance changes were a direct result of coordination between The Commission, Planning & Zoning (Baldwin County and Fort Morgan), Residents of our community and Fort Morgan Civic Association members. These measures, if properly enforced, are sure to help protect the nature of our beautiful community for the foreseeable future.



At the meeting this month, we will be hosting Ms. Mary Boatman. Ms. Boatman is a recruiting assistant for the 2020 Census. The coming census is very important for determining how Federal funds are distributed to local communities. Ms. Boatman will give a brief presentation about the census and provide information on how you can help.

I want to take a moment to thank you all for allowing me to serve this community over the past year as the President of our Association. While it has been a lot of work, I really do enjoy being able to help make a difference and protect the future of the Fort Morgan community. As we move into the next decade, I ask that you continue to allow me to serve in this capacity for 2020.

As always, I encourage each member of our association to help spread the word about the Fort Morgan Civic Association and its work to preserve and protect the Fort Morgan community. Our next meeting / Christmas party is scheduled for Monday December 9th, 2019. I hope to see you there!!

Joe

Joe Emerson

Agenda for this month's FMCA General Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance	Joe Emerson, President
Previous FMCA General Meeting 2019 Minutes	Carol Kittrell, Secretary
Treasurer's Report	Greg Strategier, Treasurer
Membership Report	Jennifer Noojin, Membership Chair
Government Affairs Report	Michael Ludvigsen, FMCA Government Liaison
Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Advisory Cte.	Ernie Church, Chair
Fort Morgan Fire & Rescue Report	Jerry Ralston, Chief FMF&RD
Old Business	
-Updates on ongoing actions	
New Business	
- FMCA Officer Elections – January - Guest Speaker – U.S. Census - Holiday Party	Mary Boatman, 2020 U.S. Census Recruiter
Adjournment: Next Meeting, Jan 13	

FMCA Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Monday December 9th

FMCA 2019/2020 MEETINGS:

FMCA Monthly Member Meetings ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Baptist Church Fellowship Hall
Jan 13~Feb 10~Mar 9~Apr 13~May 11~June 8

FMCA Membership Report~~~~~~ Jennifer Noojin

Reminder: Annual Dues are due by Due December 31 annually.

Membership Application process by mail:

Fill out Membership Application (available online at <https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/>), complete, and print. Write check for \$15. Mail Membership Application and check to:
Fort Morgan Civic Association
P.O. Box 5313 • Gulf Shores, AL 36547

Membership Application process electronically:

NOTE: The fillable form online will not work on Chrome or Edge or Safari browsers. Internet Explorer and Firefox are currently the only browsers that will work with the fillable form.

On the Fort Morgan Civic Association Membership webpage (<https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/>), Click on Membership Application (fillable form) on the webpage and complete. Select "Submit Form". Email will open in your email window. Complete email and send.

To complete the electronic submission process, utilize the PayPal link at the bottom of the Membership webpage and follow prompts to pay Membership Dues.

NOTE: Membership Dues are \$15.00 and \$3.00 is the PayPal processing fee for a total electronic transaction of \$18.00. Any amount above \$18 will be accepted as a donation to the Fort Morgan Civic Association.

Notice: FMCA Officer Elections- January 13 2020~~~~~~FMCA Bylaws

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1 The officers of the Association shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer

Section 2 Officers shall be elected annually by a majority of the votes cast at the regularly scheduled January General Meeting. The first item on the agenda shall be the elections. Nominations shall be made by a Nominating Committee of three current members elected by the membership at the October general meeting. Nominations also may be made from the floor after announcement of the Nominating Committee's nominee for each of the four offices. Nominations shall not be closed until the general members have an opportunity to nominate candidates from the floor. Each nominee shall be given five (5) minutes to state his or her qualifications and present a platform. Voting will immediately follow the close of nominations for each office. Outgoing officers shall deliver all records to the respective incoming officers at the conclusion of the meeting.

Section 3 Vacancies occurring in an office before the end of term, with the exception of Section 5 below, shall be filled by election by a majority vote of current members. Such officer shall serve until the end of the unexpired term.

Section 4 Working closely with the Executive Board and general membership, the President shall provide the leadership to develop and accomplish the goals and objectives of the Association as approved by the membership. The President shall preside at meetings of the

Association as facilitator through the democratic process and may call special meetings and appoint ad hoc committees.

Section 5 In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of President. Upon the President's resignation, removal or inability to perform the duties of office, the Vice-President shall become President until the next annual election of officers. The Vice-President shall be responsible for representing the interests of the general membership, for assisting the President in facilitating the democratic process and for carrying out the decisions of the members.

Section 6 The Secretary shall keep, in permanent form: the minutes of the Association and the Executive Board, a list of committees and their members and a record of attendance at all meetings to be provided by the Membership Committee chair. The Secretary also shall conduct the correspondence and maintain the official administrative records of the Association.

Section 7 The Treasurer shall receive all monies, pay all legitimate bills, and prepare a financial report to be submitted at each regular meeting. The Treasurer also shall disburse funds as directed by majority vote of a quorum of members at a scheduled meeting. Amounts of less than two hundred dollars (\$200) for legitimate, receipted expenses shall not require a vote but may be disbursed at the Treasurer's discretion. All checks drawn on the Association account shall bear the signatures of two officers of the Association. The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining official financial records of the Association and an alphabetical roster of members, for ensuring the appropriate and legal disbursement of the Association's funds and for arranging an annual independent accounting review of the Association's financial records.

FMCA Hospitality Committee – Christmas Celebration~~~~~Thelma Strong

The Fort Morgan Civic Association members will celebrate Christmas December 9th at 6:30 at Shell Banks Baptist Church. Refreshments will be served. We will see you there. -Thelma Strong, Hospitality Chairman. Contact Thelma at twstrong@gulftel.com if you can assist in setup / cleanup.

Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department~~~~~Jerry Ralston, Fire Chief, FMFRD

The Fire Dept. Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of each month. The public is encouraged to attend.

The Fire Dept. Board of Directors Annual Meeting and Director Election will be held January 14, 2020. The public is encouraged to attend. Please reference the Fire Department By-Laws (<https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/links>) if you are interested in becoming a member and or serving on the Board of Directors. Board members include both firefighters and community members.

Stay Safe,
Jerry Ralston,
Fire Chief

Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~~~~~Corporal Bill Bedgood, BCSO

During the Spring and early Summer of 2019, the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office started receiving multiple reports of home burglaries along a mile stretch of Fort Morgan Rd. Several unoccupied and occupied residences were entered during nighttime hours. Video surveillance was obtained and disseminated to the community and media in an attempt to identify who the suspect or suspects were. Deputies also stepped up patrol efforts, in the area, to put pressure on the suspect. The number of burglaries in the area slowed down and eventually ceased in the areas patrolled by the Sheriff's Office.

During August of 2019, the Gulf Shores Police Dept., started having burglaries occur in their jurisdiction that were similar to the burglaries that occurred further down Fort Morgan. Investigators with BCSO and GSPD teamed up to search for and arrest the suspect. The suspect appeared to be living in the woods where the burglaries were occurring. The suspect would break into and stay in

unoccupied summer homes for a period of time and then pick up and move to another home. There were sightings of the suspect around September of this year that led to several manhunts in the area. The suspect was able to elude law enforcement on every occasion.

In October of this year, investigators were able to put a name to the face that had been seen on video during the Gulf Shores investigations. The suspect was identified as Joseph Reed. It is believed that Reed left the Fort Morgan area and went to the Yupon area West of Magnolia Springs. Additional thefts and burglaries started occurring in this area that closely matched Reed's methods from Fort Morgan. There were three manhunts in this area in an attempt to arrest Reed for the criminal activity. Each time, Reed was able to elude capture due to terrain and his familiarity with the area. During one of the manhunts, Reed discarded a loaded firearm.

On November 18, 2019. Investigators with the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office received information from the public that Reed would be at Flamingos gas station in Foley (US 98/Foley Beach Express). Investigators and Patrol units watched the business until Reed arrived in a vehicle. Reed immediately ran from the vehicle into a neighboring mobile home park. Reed was eventually taken into custody after a brief foot chase. Reed was treated for a head injury at South Baldwin Regional and then transported to the Sheriff's Corrections Center. Reed is currently facing several charges. Additional charges are forthcoming from multiple law enforcement agencies. Reed has prior theft and burglary convictions.



Joseph Shane Reed 34 Foley, AL.

Charges:
Unlawful possession of a controlled substance
Possession of drug paraphernalia
Resisting arrest
Attempt to elude. Two counts
Active felony warrants

No Bond

The Gulf Shores Police Dept., Foley Police Dept., US Marshals Service, ALEA Air Unit, Alabama Dept. of Corrections K-9 unit and most importantly the public and media contributed to this suspects arrest.

Additional charges were brought against Reed following this press release, including manufacturing and possessing child sexual abuse material. Reed will be charged with more property crimes relating to the Fort Morgan Road area this week.

EMERGENCY: 911

Report all potentially life-threatening and suspicious activities

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

Sheriff's Office Website: www.sheriffofbaldwin.com

Anonymous Tip Email Address (NOT for Emergencies):

<http://sheriffofbaldwin.com/contactRC.asp>

Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Committee~~~~~Ernie Church

The Ft Morgan P&Z Advisory Committee will meet on Dec 2 to consider an appeal to "stop work" order issued by the County Planning and Zoning Department. The appellant wants to build a duplex residence that exceeds the two-story habitable limit specified in ordinances for District 25 (Ft Morgan). The advisory committee will make recommendations to the County Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment which will meet on Dec 12 in Foley.

Upcoming Events/ Community Support Opportunities in Fort Morgan:

U.S. 2020 Census~~~~~Mary Boatman, Recruiting Assistant, U.S. Census

The United States Census Bureau is accepting applications for jobs with the 2020 Census. These jobs offer great pay and flexible hours. In addition to apportioning seats in the House of Representatives, Census data determine how federal funds are allocated to local communities. Non-profit organizations use census data when applying for grants. If you are interested in doing important work in your community, please apply online at 2020census.gov/jobs.

Sea Turtle Lighting – Follow up to the 20 November Workshop~~~Susan West, Alabama Coastal Foundation



CONNECT TO
YOUR COAST



Sea Turtle Lighting Issues along the Alabama Coastline

Sea turtle nesting and hatching season is May 1 – Oct 31. During this time, sea turtles can become confused by artificial light. Nesting females may not come ashore to nest or may become disoriented while making their way back to the water due to artificial lights on condos, houses and beachfront businesses. Hatchling turtles are attracted to these lights as well and can get confused and end up in the dunes, in the roads or be eaten by predators instead of reaching the safety of the Gulf.

All species of sea turtles are protected by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) endangered species act. Changing out or retrofitting exterior lighting to sea turtle friendly is the more effective way to have the most impact and reach USFWS compliance. You can also help mitigate lighting issues by turning off all interior lighting that faces the beach or simply closing curtains to minimize the effect of indoor lights.

Alabama Coastal Foundation was approached last year by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to create a sea turtle lighting retrofit pilot project to help private landowners navigate the complex process of changing their lights to ones that are more sea turtle friendly and meet federal compliance guidelines. This past summer ACF worked with two single-family homeowners to address lighting issues on Mobile Street on Fort Morgan. They also worked with a condominium and a business in Gulf Shores. The results are remarkable. Reduction in light levels reached upwards of 50-100% in most of the cases.

Why should my property change our lights?

- *It is the right thing to do* to have lights that are both effective for human safety and does not have a negative impact on sea turtles (as well as other animals).
- *It's the law.* All sea turtle species in the state are protected under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Having lights that disorient turtles is a violation of that Act and could result in fines of up to \$25,000 per nesting turtle or hatchling.
- *It is a good time.* Technology has improved greatly over the past two decades and there are more options from which to find a good and affordable solutions.
- *Local people and tourists see the connection between why people spend their time and financial resources in Alabama's coastal environment!*

What steps do I take to become sea turtle friendly?

- Conduct daytime evaluations to identify and inventory all lighting on your property.
- Conduct nighttime evaluations to determine what lighting is visible from the beach. Be sure to look at your property from all directions.
- Develop a detailed lighting plan to outline all lighting issues and applications.
- Work with lighting specialists to determine best lighting solution to meet human safety and federal sea turtle friendly requirements.
- Have all plans approved by USFWS prior to making any purchases or installing any lighting fixtures. Contact Shannon Holbrook, USFWS 251-441-5871 shannon_holbrook@fws.gov

ACF is available to assist with addressing all your lighting issues to meet both sea turtle lighting requirements and USFWS compliance.

Susan West
 Alabama Coastal Foundation
 swest@joinACF.org
 901-412-0944

Before:



After:



	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
25' from Building:	0.18	0	100%
Toe of Dune:	0.02	0	100%
High Tide Line:	0	0	-

	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
25' from Building:	0.02	0	100%
Toe of Dune:	0	0	-
High Tide Line:	0	0	-

Hangout Before:

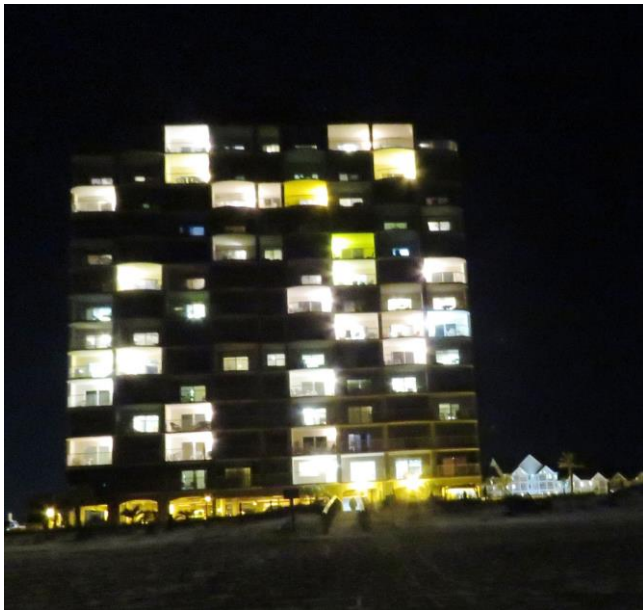


After:



	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
25' from Building:	0.61	0.4	34%
Toe of Dune:	0.14	0.03	79%
High Tide Line:	0.06	0	100%

Royal Palms Before:



After:



	<u>Before</u>	<u>After</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
25' from Building:	0.8	0.4	50%
Toe of Dune:	0.15	0.07	53%
High Tide Line:	0.04	0	100%

Fort Morgan State Historic Site~~~~~**Wendy Hyatt**

Please visit Facebook (Fort Morgan State Historic Site) and website <http://www.fort-morgan.org> for information on events at Fort Morgan State Historic Site.

Please visit <http://facebook.com/BonSecourNWR> , or contact the Refuge Office by phone (251) 540-7720 or in person Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. for information on events at the Bon Secour NWR.

Fort Morgan History:

Request for contributions – please contact FMCA newsletter editor if you are interested in researching Fort Morgan history or providing personal memories to share of Fort Morgan

Indian Village Achuse

The following is the inscription on the Historical Marker at Shell Banks Baptist Church. “This Shell Banks Baptist Church rests near the location of the first Indian village in America visited by a white man. This was the Indian village of “Achuse” visited by Admiral Maldonado who was one of De Soto’s officers. He scouted the Florida and Alabama coast from Tampa Bay and entered the port of “Achuse” before De Soto started from Tampa Bay on the longest, strangest, boldest adventure in the history of the world. This was in 1539, 81 years before the Pilgrims kneeled at Plymouth Rock and 68 years before the colony landed at Jamestown. The name of this village, “Achuse” is shown at this location on the official map made by the U.S. De Soto Expedition Commission created by Congress in 1936. On an old crude Spanish map made of the Gulf Coast region in the 16th century, the Indian village of “Achuse” shows on this map near the same location, now occupied by the Shell Banks Baptist Church.” The name Shell Banks comes from the oyster and clam mounds that were on the site. The Historical Marker was erected in 1966 and is located at 30° 15.104’ N, 87° 48.938’ W., on Alabama Route 180 east of Gasque Lane, on the right when traveling west.

Special thanks to Bonnie Lowry, longtime Fort Morgan resident for her contribution to the Fort Morgan History segment this month.

FMCA Executive Board Contacts

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