

# **Board of County Commissioners**

## **Agenda Request**

Date of Meeting: January 25, 2010

Date Submitted: January 8, 2010

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator  
Lindsay Stevens, Assistant County Administrator  
G. Scott McDermid, Director, Department of Public Safety  
Mark Lundberg, Acting Administrator, Wakulla County Health Department

Subject: Request Board Consideration and Approval to Design and Place Public Information Signs on the Approach to Shell Point and Mashas Sands Beaches to Clearly Notify the Public that Results of Cyclic Water Quality Evaluations Performed by the Wakulla County Health Department are Posted

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### **Statement of Issue:**

This agenda item requests Board consideration and approval to design and place public information signs on approach to Shell Point and Mashas Sands Beaches and the public beach areas to clearly notify the public that results of cyclic water quality evaluations performed by the Wakulla County Health Department are posted.

### **Background:**

The issue of concern that prompted this request was a citizen that was unaware of the current status of the bacterial levels of the beach and did not learn that there was an advisory in place until after they had been swimming.

At the August 4, 2009 Board Meeting, the Board directed staff to research the cost of placing public notification signage on public beaches at 150 foot intervals. The Board requested staff to look into placing signs at the two Beaches (Shell Point and Mashas Sands) that would help the public identify the bacterial condition of the waters. Further the Board directed staff to research the creation of an informational booth of sorts to give out information to the public using these beaches.

### **Analysis:**

Both of the beaches applicable to this project have a strategic advantage in that there is only one road that leads to their entrance and parking. It is because of this that staff is recommending that both roads have two "burma shave" type signs installed that welcome the public to the beach and then further direct them to go to the bathhouse to see the current advisory level and to get additional information.

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A “burma shave” type sign is where multiple signs are posted along the edge of highways spaced for sequential reading by passing motorists. When the signs are read in sequence they provide a singular message to the passing motorist. This system keeps sign sizing flexible and permits a longer message to be provided to passing motorists, even at higher speeds.

The Board direction was to research posting signs on the beach every 150 feet. The signs for this will need to be made to withstand salt water spray and other conditions of the marine environment. A concern of staff is that these signs while informative and could help the public to finding the information, may distract from the beauty and the natural surroundings that make our beaches unique and special. Staff recommends the following:

- Shell Point Signs: To be posted every 150 feet (starting at the bathhouse) in the parking area only.
- Mashes Sands Signs: Two signs to be posted at the end of Mashers Sands road in either direction at a distance of 150 apart, and at the other possible entrance point near the boat ramp that two additional signs be posted. This arrangement will meet the proposed need by reaching those who may have missed the welcome signs, but will not distract from the natural beauty of our Beaches.

In addition, at both beaches bathhouse, staff is recommending that a Plexiglas type dispenser is installed that can hold information about the beach water sampling program. Above the informational dispensers, staff proposes to have the official signs installed to be updated weekly with the advisory level. The official signs will be enclosed within a protective casing that will reduce access to the public, while further identifying the official nature of the sign.

The total cost of the signs is \$4,628 (Attachment #1) and funds will be absorbed from Public Works budget. The fencing will be provided by ESG through current service contractors with them managing the sign development and placement. Facilities Management will move the County Health Department sign, enclosing it within a frame, and property installing the sign.

**Options:**

1. Authorize the creation of the beach signs, frames, information holders, and cost at the levels recommended in the analysis above.
2. Authorize the creation and cost of the signs at the level originally suggested by the Board (every 150 feet) along the entire beach.
3. Do not authorize the creation, payment or installation of these signs.
4. Board direction.

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**Recommendation:**

Option #1

**Attachment(s):**

1. Cost Analysis
2. Aerial Photographs of Public Beach Areas