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## Levy County residents are given Tire Amnesty Day



Levy Commissioners start the meeting on Tuesday morning. They are (from left) County Commissioner Rock Meeks, County Commissioner Matt Brooks, Commission Chairman John Meeks and County Commissioner Lilly Rooks. County Commissioner Mike Joyner arrived later in the morning.

### Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © April 4, 2018 at 7:18 p.m.

**BRONSON** – Levy County Commission Chairman John Meeks on Tuesday morning (April 3) found unanimous agreement by the County Commission members present at the outset of the meeting that day to award Levy County residents a fee-free day to drop off old car tires.

County Commissioner Lilly Rooks made the motion, seconded by County Commissioner Matt Brooks to approve Tire Amnesty Day. Chairman Meeks, Rooks, Brooks and Commissioner Rock Meeks voted in favor of it. County Commissioner Mike Joyner did not arrive until after that vote, although he learned about the approval when he arrived.

Levy County residents can utilize the Tire Amnesty Day (Saturday, April 21) from 8 a.m., to 5 p.m. at the Levy County Solid Waste Transfer Site, 12051 N.E. 69th Lane (between Bronson and Williston) to bring in car tires.

Levy County residents who show proof of residency, such as a driver license, can deliver from as few as one tire to as many as 24 tires per trip -- with no limit of trips during that period on that day. There is no fee for this drop-off on this day at this time.

The 24-tire-per-trip limit is from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Chairman Meeks explained, because transporting more tires than that in one load requires special permitting. He said any number of trips by Levy County residents dropping off tires that day can be made - even at 24-tires-per-load. Therefore, a person can save as much as \$48 per load as well as helping to clean up the environment.

**APRIL 21 • 8 AM - 5 PM**  
**24 Car Tires**  
**Per Person - Per Trip** **NO CHARGE**  
to drop off at Levy County Transfer Station (Dump)  
12051  
NE 69th Lane  
*Levy County*  
**TIRE AMNESTY DAY**

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Of the \$22 million collected by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection last year for old tire disposal fees, \$8 million is earmarked for the Small Counties' Solid Waste Grant in the state, Chairman Meeks said, and Levy County is among the counties eligible for that funding.

During a conference call Meeks was involved with, he asked the DEP and the Florida Department of Health what could be done to help Levy County clean up some of the tires that people have disposed of improperly – causing a mosquito-breeding ground.

The DEP said it would cover the cost of tire disposal in Levy County on Tire Amnesty Day (April 21), Meeks said.

Normally in Levy County, it costs \$2 per car tire to drop tires at the Solid Waste Transfer Station. Therefore, Levy County residents can save \$2-per-tire on that Saturday.

Beyond saving money, Levy County residents who use this amnesty will be helping reduce the potential for mosquito-breeding places because rainwater in discarded tires is a prime location for breeding those blood-sucking, disease-spreading insects.

This fee-free day for tire disposal is not open to Levy County business interests that make money from replacing tires, Chairman Meeks noted.

No truck tires, semi tires, lawnmower tires, wheelbarrow tires and the like are going to see the amnesty from the fee. This is for car tires.

Chairman Meeks mentioned that he knows Earth Day is April 22, but that is a Sunday and the Transfer Station is not open on Sundays.

Meeks reminded all of the listeners that this amnesty is for individual residents of Levy County – not for business interests that buy and sell tires.

## In Other News



**State Rep. Charlie Stone (R-Ocala, Dist. 22) speaks with the Levy County Commission on Tuesday (April 3).**

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In other news from the Tuesday County Commission meeting in Bronson, State Rep. Charlie Stone (R-Ocala, Dist. 22) visited to observe.

Commission Chairman John Meeks welcomed Rep. Stone and invited him to speak.

Rep. Stone said he is honored to represent the people of Florida House of Representatives District 22, which includes all of Levy County and the western part of Marion County.

The state representative expressed his thanks to the members of the Levy County Board of County Commissioners for the help they gave to him as the legislators went through this past session in Tallahassee.

Two events took the focus of the state leaders from the more common duties this year.

First there was Hurricane Irma, Stone said, which impacted almost every county in the state.

The state leaders spent weeks conferring to improve methods for response in the event of another storm event like Hurricane Irma.

Then there was the mass murder at a high school.

On Feb. 14, the mass shooting was committed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland. Seventeen people were killed and 17 others were wounded, making it one of the world's deadliest school massacres. The perpetrator, 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz, was identified by witnesses, and he was arrested shortly afterward. He confessed, according to the Broward County Sheriff's Office.

Rep. Stone said the Florida Legislature spent weeks working on methods to improve school safety, he said.

He thanked the County Commission members who went to Tallahassee this session.

"It is important that you do that," Rep. Stone said. "I encourage you to continue to do that in the future. Let us know what is happening here in your community; what your county needs; how we can help you. I promise that as long as I am in the Florida House I will always have an open door. I am here for you. I would love to have you visit. I love to be able to work for you. Keep up the good work. This is the way county government should work"

Chairman Meeks said he has consistently found Rep. Stone to be available, and at work for the people of Levy and western Marion counties.

## Back Taxes Sought

Due to a clerical error at some point, the appraised taxable value of Williston Crossings RV Resort was incorrectly recorded for a number of years.

After staff at Levy County Property Appraiser Oz Barker's found the oversight, it was determined that the property owner could be billed for Fiscal Year 2015-16, and 2016-17 for the total of just over \$9,200 for the two years combined.

Although the appraised value for taxing may have shown a similar error for a number of years before that, the county determined it could not bill for those taxes farther back in time.

The property taxes are not the "bed tax." The fee that Williston Crossings RV Resort pays for tourist development – 2 percent of the fees collected for overnight stays by the transit guests – goes to the Levy County Tourist Development Council (TDC). The TDC collects a 2 percent fee from every short-term guest who buys a hotel room, RV spot, etc., to help the county fund its marketing of Levy County as a destination for tourists.

RV resorts, hotels, motels, campsites and other business interests also pay ad valorem property taxes on the appraised taxable value of the commercial interests.

Speaking of the TDC, the County Commission by a 5-0 vote approved the members of the Council who are currently seated. County Commissioner Mike Joyner made the motion to

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approve the members and his motion was seconded by County Commissioner Rock Meeks, who voted in favor of it as did Chairman John Meeks and commissioners Matt Brooks and Lilly Rooks. The TDC members provide the County Commission with recommendations on how to spend TDC revenue and the Commission either accepts or rejects those recommendations.



**Ron Grant is recognized for his service as a past member of the Planning Commission for 14 years. Seen here are (from left) Chairman John Meeks, Commissioner Lilly Rooks, Ron Grant, Commissioner Rock Meeks and Commissioner Matt Brooks. County Commissioner Mike Joyner arrived shortly after the start of the meeting on Tuesday. Grant was wearing a ball cap with his Amateur Radio Operator License number of K14CRK. Before presenting the award, Chairman Meeks mentioned Grant's active participation in Ham Radio.**