

## Mayor's Report to the Citizens – October 5, 2015

First of all in this report, I want to say the voice of every citizen is important to me. My definition of citizen is: residents who live in Perdido Beach 24/7 and property owners who live elsewhere.

For a while now I have heard comments concerning the voices of out of town citizens vs. the voices of residents. Are all voices important? Of course they are.

My position is this: All property owners pay taxes and have a stake in the Town. All have a right to be heard on any issue that affects them. Some property owners are vested 100% in the town and some are not. Each group has its distinct perspective on what the town means to it.

Property owners who live elsewhere are divided into at least two distinct groups, each with distinct perspectives; those who own second homes on their property and those who own undeveloped property. Neither is 100% vested in the town.

On the other hand, residents are 100% vested in the Town. They either own their homes, which they occupy 24/7, or they rent their homes, which they occupy 24/7.

Property owners living elsewhere are 100% vested where they live, including their right to vote and elect officials who represent them where they live. They do not vote in Perdido Beach. Does that mean their voices should not be heard? Absolutely not! If a matter affects them, they have a right to express their concerns.

In contrast, residents of a voting age have the right to vote in Perdido Beach and to elect officials who represent them where they live. They are the folks who have the most to lose or gain by the decisions made by their elected officials. This is where they live 24/7, where they leave from in the morning and return to at night. This is where they spend their days, where they care for their children, where the children play and develop a sense of community, where the folks work and serve. These are the folks who make up the heart and soul of the community on a 24/7 basis.

It's my hope that the elected officials of the out-of-town property owners serve them well. I'm happy that they own property in Perdido Beach and I welcome them. Again, their opinions and concerns are important to me, which is evidenced by their representation on town committees and boards, by my appointment.

But, let me make this clear – I represent the folks who elected me to serve them. If I can make decisions in the best interest of both the folks who live here and the folks who live elsewhere, wonderful! But, if it comes to making decisions that favor those who live elsewhere over those who live here 24/7, be assured that the best interests of those who live here 24/7 will take precedence over those who live elsewhere. This may sound harsh to some ears but it's my duty as mayor where I live, to serve the folks where they live – here in Perdido Beach.

In closing, the statement made when I first became mayor in 2009 still stands - that my door is open to every citizen of the town. Feel free to visit and talk – I want to hear your hopes, desires and concerns.

As Always, In Your Service, Patsy