

Responses to Tybee Neighbors 10-09 Mini Survey –70 responses

Background:

In a recent survey, we asked our respondents to identify some of the issues they felt would be critical in the upcoming election. Our last survey presented some of those concerns and asked you to tell us if they were important to you or not.

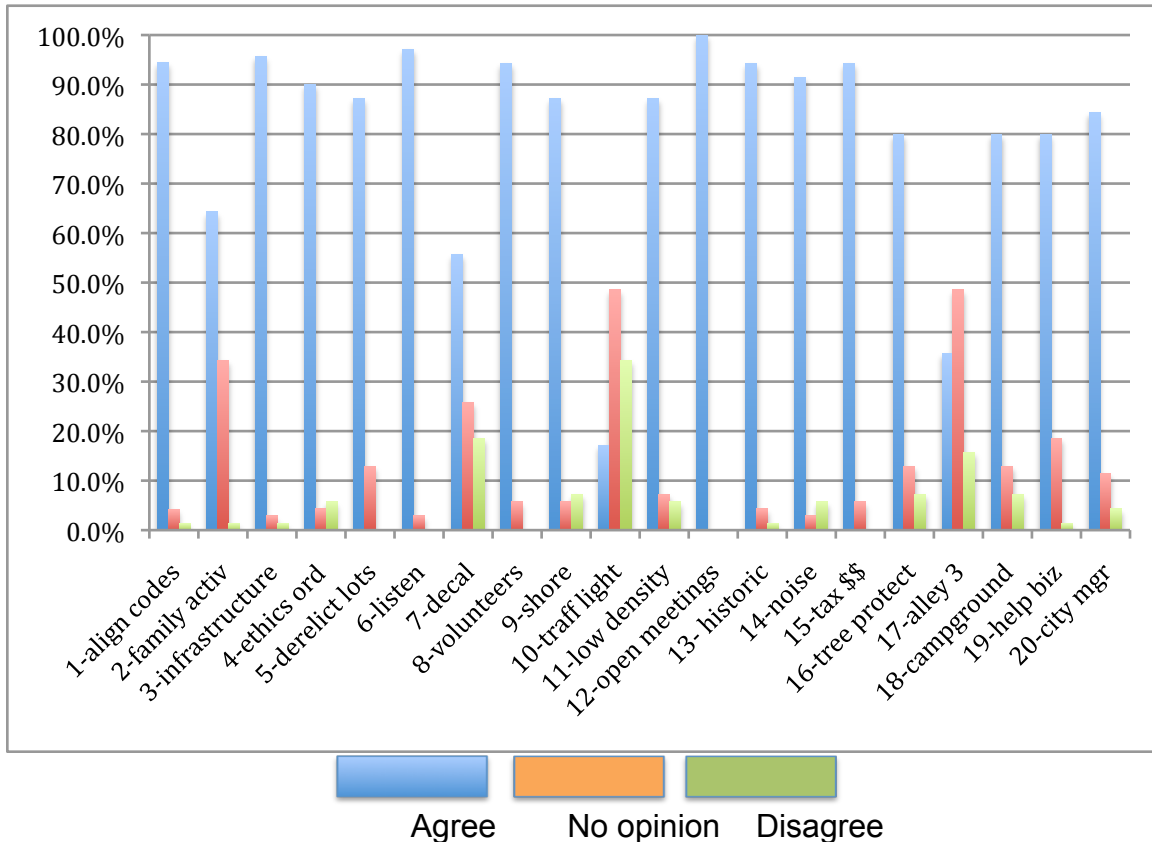
On this survey we have listed additional issues that you identified as important to our Island. We ask that you look at each issue and tell us whether or not you think it is something that the newly elected City Council needs to deal with when they begin their term of office. Next to each issue, check whether it is something you agree the City Council needs to address (1), have no opinion about (2), or disagree with (3).

1. Align the codes and ordinances with the master plan and uniformly enforce the land development code
2. Encourage more activities for families and seniors
3. Aggressively address infrastructure issues including the storm water management/ drainage issues and road resurfacing
4. Reinstate the rescinded Ethics Ordinance that includes recusals for campaign contributions and conflict of interest
5. Enforce the maintenance of vacant and derelict properties
6. Listen objectively and respectfully to City Committees and citizens speaking at public hearings rather than deciding on issues before hearing reports from the committees
7. Make a free parking decal available for all people who own property on Tybee- not just for those who live here
8. Encourage and support the work of volunteers on Tybee
9. Reinstate a meaningful Tybee Island Shore Protection Ordinance that protects our beach and sand dunes rather than “turn the whole thing over to DNR”
10. Request that a new traffic signal be placed on the western part of island in the vicinity of Tybee Oaks
11. Implement ordinances that encourage low-density development consistent with our Master Plan
12. Conduct meetings in a manner that reflects open, honest and transparent government
13. Protect our historic structures consistent with our Master Plan
14. Implement a fair and uniformly enforced noise ordinance
15. Keep more of our property tax dollars for Tybee
16. Institute a stronger Tree protection ordinance consistent with our Master Plan
17. Restrict Alley#3 for the use of non-motorized sea craft
18. Establish an independent board of business people to provide guidance for the management of the Campground
19. Provide assistance for Tybee’s small businesses and continue the Tybee Island Better Hometown Program

20. Avoid direct involvement in the day-to-day operations of the City and respect the city manager form of government

Survey participants were asked to identify if they:

- a. are over 18 years old: 64 were
- b. live on Tybee Island: 59 do
- c. own property on Tybee Island: 60 do



Comments:

I think the ongoing idea of getting folks registered to vote, if not already registered, is so very important. I also think we can do better than 46% of voter turnout like the last election.

These are all questions that we as Tybee residents need to evaluate answers to before the City Council election. What is interesting is that FIVE of the last City Council members, plus the one new candidate take one stand on these questions or issues, and Paul Wolff and FIVE others, who would like to win the election in 2009, take a completely different stand.

There is a tool available which will reflect campaign promises and what actually took place at many of the City Council meetings over the past TWO years. Go to foreverytybee.com. READ FOR YOURSELF. THE FACTS DON'T LIE.

I am most strongly in favor of providing free parking decals for all those who own

property on Tybee, not just residents. We who own a small rental property on the island and can't get Stephens-Day are being unfairly charged for parking decals like those who do not contribute a dime towards the running of the Tybee government.

This past summer we didn't set foot in the South End area except after 8PM when parking was no longer a problem.

Also, it would seem to me that especially after the summer season is over there should be parking-free days such as Savannah has on Saturdays and Sundays. This will encourage people to park on 16th Street and patronize the shops and restaurants in the area.

After the last two disastrous years, we must elect a council who will truly serve the people of Tybee. This council has repaid their supporters by rescinding the ethics ordinance and shore protection act. They have made a mockery of open and transparent government. They micromanage our city staff and have disenfranchised volunteers. A couple of council members advertise their businesses at every opportunity during council meetings. Tybee can't take another two years...vote for people who will work for Tybee, not themselves or special interest groups.

Parking passes are available to anyone who has their vehicle registered on Tybee. They pay additional ad valorem taxes and are therefore entitled to the pass.

The campground management is doing a good job and doesn't need outside interference from other groups.

If a council person walks out on a spokesperson during a meeting, they should be admonished & not allowed to return to that meeting.

The Ethics ordinance needed to be looked and changed.

Listening to citizens who have called the council member "scum" is a difficult thing.

Volunteer work is wonderful, but we have to know if it was something we all wanted.

Wasn't the skateboard something that people already had their minds made up on before they voted?

The City Council we have in place today has set "WE THE PEOPLE" up for disaster. What are we to do if we do have a big storm....??? Tybee Island would be rebuilt in the fashion "THEY" want and not anything what "WE THE PEOPLE OF TYBEE" would even consider....

Tybee needs to keep up with the maintenance of our parks. Everyone screams about the state of the restrooms at the pier, ever been to the restrooms in Memorial or Jaycee Park? Also, we would love to see a pool for the kids.

For number 11, I support a flexible low-density development but would like it to allow for new urbanism principals in doing so. That is to combine some concentrated houses with open space. On number 13, I think that old concrete

bunkers are not that significant and would support adaptive reuse. We have enough military structures on the Island. Enough already!

Woody has more small business experience than most on the island. Why would you put those who would like to close the campground on a committee? Tybee business owners do not understand synergy.

I would like to see and or is it possible to see the numbers with regards to the following 3 Yes and No questions posted at the end of this survey? (note: a good idea - see above)

The one thing that I can say is that our present council (5 new members) did exactly what they agreed to do on the "20 Points Platform" that each of them signed. This document was circulated thoroughly though out Tybee. Their decisions on these issues were all addressed in the platform, and it should have been no surprise to anyone as to what action they would take if elected. This to me is transparent government.

However, nontransparent government was certainly in play when the previous council decided to buy the Riversend Campground behind closed doors for \$7,000,000 with no input from the taxpayers and voters of Tybee Island. Now this council is taking the "heat" for a bad decision made by the previous council.

Another bad decision was to purchase the \$400,000 Buckley marsh property for what? A bike trail that may or may not ever get across Lazaretto Creek. We have more pressing issues on our little island like roads, drainage, restroom facilities, parking, etc. During the past 19 months, this council has address many of these issues and is improving drainage systems on both ends of the island, changing to computerized parking meters, monitoring water usage through technology, etc.

Our parks are in the best condition they have ever been. Our Public Works and Sewer Departments are doing an excellent job. All in all, are we better off now than 19 months ago? I certainly think we are.

These are wonderful questions and a lot of them remind me of platform promises that the current City Council ran on in the last election. Do you remember hearing the words, "Master Plan", from anyone but Paul Wolff in the past two years?

What about listening objectively and respectfully to city committees and individual citizens? Excluding Paul Wolff, the five City Council members had their minds made up on the issues ahead of time, not listening to community input. The current five, with their agenda, discouraged volunteerism on Tybee. AND, low density, how can the five current TIRPOA council members support low density when they passed every VARIANCE request presented to them? Don't be fooled folks, the six TIRPOA candidates running for 2009 are offering the same platform, but if elected will revert to their agenda and not what is best for TYBEE.

I'm suspicious of aggressive infrastructure projects. Often this is just a pathway for more development. For example, remember the "White Rock Project" on Solomon that was opposed by the residents but completed at the whim of one politician.

The aftermath of was very expensive for the city.

Personally, I've haven't seem much superior management from Tybee business

owners. What makes everyone think they are qualified to provide assistance at the campground?

We need to encourage resident, dog, and family/child friendly policies. Although this is a tourist destination, a strong full-time community is essential to keeping the Tybee that we love.

As well, adopting environmentally friendly policies for the city and implementing incentives for residents to also adopt such policies will provide a better outlook for Tybee's future.

A willingness to listen to all viewpoints and be open to the value of all viewpoints is essential.

Interesting that speed control did not make the list. (note: this issue was on a previous survey)

Strictly enforce the trash ordinances and require all rental units/companies to have someone responsible for putting out/putting back trash cans, recyclables, etc. within the designated time. Require all recyclable containers to have lids to keep the contents contained. That would keep our streets cleaner, healthier, safer, and keep our parking spaces usable rather than blocked by containers for days at a time.

I think Tybee Voters need to be reminded this election cycle that Tybee City Government is badly broken, but can be fixed by the voters on Election Day. Our present council has really reached a low, with simple-minded snap judgments, petty and mean spirited initiatives, and decisions based on self-interest.

"Vacation Rentals" need to be referred to as "Nuisance Rentals" as this is my number one issue presently on Tybee Island.

Rental companies can't be expected to do the right thing. Rental companies are closed nights and weekends and don't respond to the concerns of the full-time neighbors of weekly rentals that have to endure the noise, the litter, the reckless driving, the reckless parking, and the drunken behavior.

Does the Tybee Police really believe in enforcing speed limits or not? Rarely do you see them. Far too many drivers apparently could not care less about speed limits.

I want to address question number six, listen respectfully to citizens. What this means to me is that a council member does not walk out on a citizen who is speaking or turn their back to a citizen who is speaking. Wanda and Eddie walked out of a council meeting where I was speaking. I was astounded. I know of another case where a private e-mail was made public, they took offense and walked out the next time that person spoke before council. Eddie has numerous times turned his back to citizens speaking at council. To me, each time this happens they should be dismissed for the remainder of the meeting. Aren't there rules to adhere to at council meetings? We need mature, respectful and dedicated council members. Being elected to Tybee's City Council is not a club in high

school. What did you think when you were elected that everyone was going to agree with your point of view? An elected official needs to have a thick skin, set the example, and rise above criticism.

Form a committee to encourage new people to run for city council. It's always the same old, same old. No wonder the turn out is so poor.

I think this council has looked for excuses not to listen to its constituents. A private email, intended only for a few recipients was hijacked and circulated, not by the person who wrote it, but by folks with opposing views advancing their own agenda. Had they left it alone, it would never have become an issue. What a surprise it was to hear, during the candidate forum, a member of council distort this into someone "standing at a council meeting calling me scum of the earth".

It is amazing how political candidates can say they agree with something (what they think people want to hear) while going on to give examples that clearly show that they have not during their time in office NOT acted in a way that would show agreement. And to all five current council members who claim they speak for open and transparent government, I say you have bad memories. We kept asking what was the plan for the area in front of the gym when there was such a predetermined decision to remove the no-tax-dollars dog park. Where were the council members who listened to the citizens then? And where were the council members who openly said that they had someone who, in spite of the veterans desires to have the memorial placed by the cemetery, insisted that the dog park go?

Maybe this time we really will get some people who will listen to the people of Tybee and who will engage openly and transparently in governing.

Note: the remainder of this comment was not included because it included personal attacks on individual council members.