

## Results of Tybee Neighbors Website Survey Questions

02-10 Mini-Survey -

104 responses

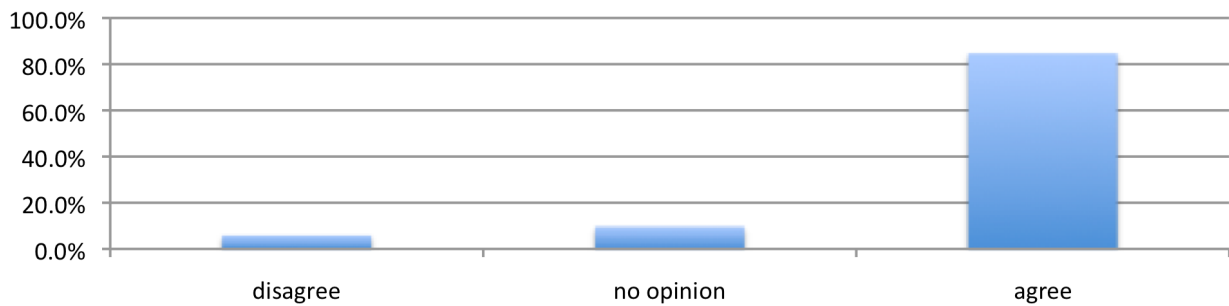
### Issue #1 --- Study Carrying Capacity?

Background: The carrying capacity is the number of individuals an environment can support without significant negative impacts to the individuals and to that environment. A study of Tybee Island's carrying capacity would examine the sufficiency of services and facilities including water supply, housing and sanitation to support our current year-round and seasonal population, and the extent to which those populations can reasonably be expected to expand.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT.

I believe that Tybee Island needs to conduct a carrying capacity study.

	disagree	no opinion	agree
percent	5.8%	9.6%	84.6%
number	6	10	88



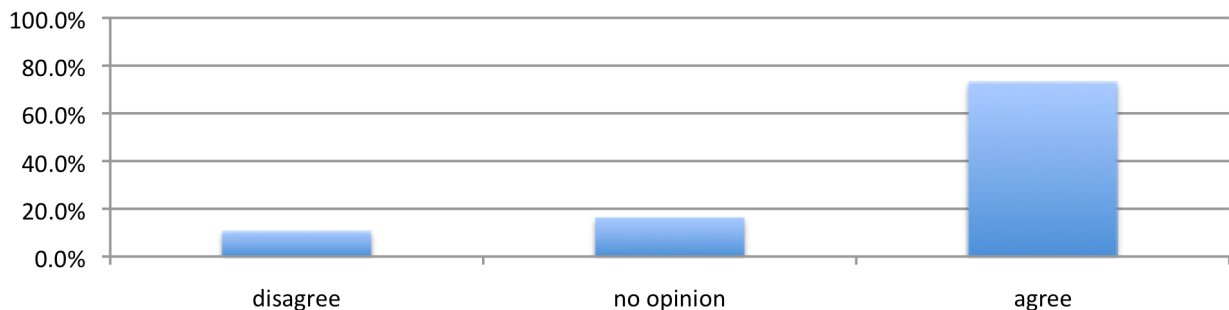
### Issue #2 --- Manage Tybee Pier?

Background: Some believe that the City of Tybee can benefit financially by assuming the management of the Pier. It is currently managed by Chatham County.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT.

I believe the Pier should be managed by the City of Tybee Island instead of by Chatham County.

	disagree	no opinion	agree
percent	10.6%	16.3%	73.1%
number	11	17	76





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Revisiting our land development code so that it more closely reflects our Master Plan has been discussed since the previous council all pledged to do so more than two years ago. Hopefully, our new council will be concerned with issues other than personal agendas and will move ahead with the protection rather than the ruin, of our island home.

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We do not need the burden of the pier. We lose enough money on the campground.

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Tybee should develop wind power and solar power and become energy independent if possible, electric cars, recycle waste water, desalination, etc.

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I believe we should stand by our NO DOGS ON THE BEACH policy rather than being like all the other dirty beaches...please keep them off the North End where we already have the pigeon poop!

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pier and pavilion is coming up on a wear cycle. let the county bring the structure they built up to a certain level ( new roof ) , and then we'll talk about taking it off their hands .

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Presently, the pier and pavilion are a bit of an embarrassment to tybee. The county seemed to be trying to extend the beer-soaked cigarette strewn tackiness of 16th street out over the dunes, beach and ocean.

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Need to know cost of studies. What is the financial record for the pier? Is it a burden or a benefit to manage it?

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The implementation of any or all three issues should be closely evaluated for the amount of money it/they would cost the citizens of Tybee.

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I believe the pier can provide financial gain provided we have a clear understanding of the cost of upkeep and improvements to the property. If the property is in need of expensive renovation or the upkeep, including all city services and this results in a financial burden to the city -then leave it alone. Also with the pier, campground and other city properties (parks etc) a long range strategical outline of how they are used and how they will be maintained, cost effectively, is important to consider before just deciding it would be nice for Tybee to own and control that property.

I am in favor of studies for both capacity and alternate energy provided the costs of the study is not prohibitive. The conclusion may be that there is nothing further for the city to do in either case or it may be there are options to consider now -for the future. At least we would be prepared with definitive information to address issues in the future. My caution is that, especially with new

technologies, the cost would be passed on to the taxpayers and that would create an unnecessary burden to us all in these economic times.

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The master plan states that Tybee is already exceeding its carrying capacity for water. That means that if all those folks who own property on Tybee retire and move here, as they say they plan to do, we do not now have enough water to meet their basic needs. It is unlikely that our draw will be increased so that means we must not only conserve, but also develop a growth management plan.

A couple of years ago I would not have supported Tybee's ownership and management of the pier. Now, I believe that the island now has more professional and experienced staff along with improved policies and procedures that would facilitate absorbing this venue. I also support Tybee's ownership because the pier and pavilion is not now being operated in the best interest of the island, but as a profit-making enterprise only benefiting the lessee. Wouldn't it be great if the facility were weatherized so that it could be used in inclement weather.

The city has gained recognition and experience in innovative projects over the past few years. We need to parlay that into applying for grants and becoming a demonstration site for alternative energy. This will give us an opportunity to redirect the skills of our construction workforce into activities more in line with our future than the continued building of spec housing.

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We believe Tybee has let the horses out of the barn for years now. We live on Estill Hammock Road, for 20 years Jan 11th. It is nothing like the Tybee we arrived to. Also, we believe there is too much talking and not enough being done, you can do all the surveys you want, but without action, and someone to actually have the guts, determination, nothing will change. Ex: the dogs on the beach has been going on for much TOO LONG..... IT will only change when the Tourist go to Hilton Head and other places, and they notice, if they're smart enough, to realize it is hurting their pocketbook. VERY SAD INDEED

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I don't have enough info to have an opinion in question # 2. It seems on the face of it that it could be a good thing for Tybee to assume management.

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The problem I have with #1 is that such a study would be time-consuming and expensive even if funded by a grant of sorts. A census is upon us and the data which it will produce along with some common sense should dictate future growth. Increased population beyond current building restriction, i.e., up, would certainly bring more revenue and thereby provide for larger capacity water/sewer, etc. But, it would be a "fool's folly" since such growth would destroy what is so attractive (to me) about Tybee. That is, we have a true small town that provides a tourist attraction during 6-7 months or more of the year. That activity provides revenue and income for our businesses. We truly need to find better ways to support our businesses year-round, but that too is a responsibility of the business. Clever marketing, good product, etc. are all part of the solution and government can't

provide much beyond broad based marketing. Food, drink and souvenirs are not enough to sustain year round income. While we have quite a number of artists in our community, beyond their efforts with art fairs, etc., we should promote them as an integral part of the community. Birding (bird watching) is another activity that works year round and draws folks that, in general are older and have good incomes. For years, I have thought that we should look to Cape May, NJ for some ideas to promote Tybee as a base for birding since it is a community which like ours has little but the beach to offer and makes its way almost by birding alone. The beaches stink compared to ours.

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1. According to the short term work objectives within the Master Plan for Tybee, this carrying capacity is supposed to have begun. We should receive updates on whether this has been completed. When finished, then all our ordinances and variance requests from the Land Development Code, need to take the result into consideration rather than ignore such figures. For our continued survival, it only makes sense that one, small island such as Tybee can only 'hold' so many people and all our needs (utilities, etc).

2. I only agree that the City should own and manage the Pier and Pavilion IF it is of ultimate benefit to all who live here. Users fees, rents or leases, etc. need to exceed the potential costs to the City (repairs, upkeep, etc.). I think more than one person should be able to run a business on the pier--or no one should. It seems than Tybee gets blamed for all things wrong with the pier, the general public does not get it that Tybee is not in control.

3. In this day and age, it makes sense for all small communities to explore future resources. Many local communities are parts of electrical co-ops. What is involved in this? Could Tybee possibly go off the grid? Solar, wind, etc. all should be researched. How about desalination for water usage? We need to be as self-sufficient as possible. Of course this also ties into question 1, regarding the carrying capacity. We should not allow our population to expand over what the island can handle.

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Tybee Island has great potential in the area of alternative energy. We should explore wind, solar and other forms of alternative energy.

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Question #1: A study would be beneficial for statistical purposes. This would give us the data we need to secure funds from the county, state and federal governments to improve our infrastructure. (Sidebar: Thompson and Hutton Engineering firm did an infrastructure study (cost:\$25K) and submitted it to the mayor in 1986 ... no action was taken.) If the intent of the study is an attempt to limit the number of people who can live here, then forget it. We cannot legally limit the number of people who can live at Tybee. If this were the case, I would have voted to close the bridge at Lazaretto River back in 1940! As to limiting the number of visitors, this would be another dead-ender. The Federal government re-nourishes our beaches; therefore, we have no legal grounds to limit visitors to Tybee's beaches. In fact, Tybee only owns the beaches to the mean high water mark. After that, the beaches belong to the county/state. A study would give us the ammo to secure the funds for beach improvements at the expense of the higher governments. Also, the State of Georgia has responsibility for US80. We cannot close the road to visitors since federal/state tax money has been used and still is being used to maintain the road. This also holds true for any paved road on the island that is not located in an area such as Eagle's Nest which is maintained at private expense. Other roads at Tybee fit into the same category. This is a good example of "holding-out-you-hands" for goodies from higher authorities ... they control what we can do at the lowest level of government.

Question #2: When I was mayor in 1994-1995, I tried to get the county to deed the P/P to Tybee with the provisions that the county would pay 2/3 of the cost to maintain it, the beach (extra police officers on the beach in the tourist season), lifeguards' salaries, and beach clean-up. The City of Tybee would pay 1/3 of the cost. Chatham County Chairman Mahany agreed to form an Enterprise Fund at the county level to accomplish this task. The cost would be looked at yearly and adjusted accordingly. I was defeated in the 1995 elections. No further action was taken by the new mayor. HOWEVER, Mayor Buelterman has had discussions w/the county chairman and our county commissioner on this subject. You need to get his input.

Question #3: "Excellent question" as you hear politicians say on TV! This was another area I discussed w/the Atlanta Gas Company when people stated that they would like to have natural gas on Tybee in place of propane. Atlanta Gas studied the problem and stated that it was cost prohibited to run a line to Tybee. Also tried to get electrical and telephone lines buried. Again, cost prohibitive. Third was windmills off our shores. Savannah Electric (now Georgia Power) and Georgia Tech were doing a feasibility study. It was in phase one. When Jason Buelterman became mayor, he talked w/a representative from Savannah Electric. You will have to ask him about the results of the talks. I understand that Paul Wolff is working on a grant to study windmill power. Possibility, you can get w/him and Jason to see where this project is heading.

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Other topics your organization should take up since you seem to have the get-up-and-go and time to do them:

1- IF Tybee Road is four-laned, have the construction done on the south side of the road. Currently, GDOT plans to widen the road on the north side. If so, it would be very close to the walking trail.

2- Dogs on the beach. We really have a hell-of-a-lot-of-more important issues - like infrastructure, zoning, beach upkeep, adequate police protection, probability of the YMCA building an indoor swimming pool somewhere on the island (possibly at the camp grounds) - to study than dogs on the beach. In 1986, I retired from the military and came home to find that dogs on the beach were verboten. I wrote a paper for the group that wanted to have the opportunity to take their dogs for walks on the beach. I went to Dr. Lester, a Veterinarian, and asked him to provide me a paper concerning dogs on the beach. He wrote that dogs and cats today would not contaminate the soil. HOWEVER, the seabirds' droppings were contaminants! The paper and Lester's findings were present to council by Paul Jackson, a Council member. It was voted down (I believe it was 3-3 w/Parker voting against it). We are really a sad bunch of people when we cannot come to the table and workout a solution that would be satisfactory to both sides of an issue. Like Tybee, like Washington, D.C!

3- Do a study concerning extending our city limits to Bull River. I would venture that w/in the next 10 years that the City of Savannah will extend their city limits to, first Bull River, and then to Lazaretto Creek. The reason is that Savannah needs the revenue and the population count for the census to obtain more Federal funding. The islands between Tybee and Bull River are growing and a lot of the growing population is minority. Thus, Savannah could expand w/o violating the Civil Rights Voting Act. If the Savannah City manager is a go-getter, then he/she might just go all the way to Lazaretto Creek since there are no voters in the area. This would provide Savannah w/additional Federal funds since McQueen's Island and Fort Pulaski are already Federal property. If we were to annex to Bull River, the spoils would go to Tybee. Also, we would have control over Tybee Road. Maybe then, we could prevent vehicles from barreling down the road. Might even save your life.

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1. I agree assuming this study is conducted by a qualified, objective, independent group.
2. I agree assuming all the costs involved in managing and maintaining the facility are also taken into account.
3. I agree again assuming this study is conducted by a qualified, objective, independent group.

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It would make sense logistically for Tybee to manage the Pier; however, I have questions concerning the financial responsibility (maintenance, liability, etc.) related to the management.

Also, regarding the carrying capacity of Tybee Island - it appears that Tybee is at or close to the limit that the infra-structure can support.

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I think property owners should have to clean up. A guy behind us (Laurel - he's on 80 across from storage sheds) has lumber, trash just all piled up behind and beside his house...an eyesore. And what about the property that wasn't developed across from the campground? All that construction wrap should come down.

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While I indicated agreement on all of these issues, I am concerned about what "study" means. All too often it means hiring a consultant or forming a study group to justify a pre-determined outcome. IF the studies can be conducted objectively and at little or no cost they could be very worthwhile.

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I don't think that we are large enough to create much impact with alternative energy sources. Just depend on GA Power to deliver the juice.

I have always advocated a carrying capacity study for Tybee. I'm not sure that now it is not too late. Right now would probably not be the best time to push for it due to the economy. Who could do it? What would it cost? How long would it take? These questions need to be answered first.

You must remember that the pier is getting some age on it. And repairs will be very expensive. I have talked to several people about this in the past. There are pros and there are cons. I think Tybee should first examine the overall condition of the pier, estimate costs for repair in the future versus income before reaching a decision. Right now it is almost break even for Chatham County which is why they are in no hurry to turn it over to someone else. Check it out CLOSELY. Repairs could be very costly. A hurricane could once again wipe it out or damage it.

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We should not even consider taking over mgmt/ownership of the pier before understanding financials...cost to maintain this capital structure are great...several million dollars...very difficult to recoup that much cost! If it is truly just "management" (not ownership), then perhaps it should be looked at. Again though, a business case must be made.

I was astounded at the number of consultants at the last council meeting. I am wondering just how much we are paying for these consultants. I don't think we need to study anything right now, like

alternative energy or look at carrying capacity. Let's concentrate on the things we are looking at right now, bring them to rest and then look ahead for other initiatives.

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Regarding Question: #1. Only conduct a carrying capacity study if results are followed. #2. Don't feel that we can afford cost of upgrading Pier (roof, etc). #3. In this economy don't feel that we can afford the cost.

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1. I don't believe that government -city, county, state or federal - has the where with all or expertise to profitably operate any business --- period. They never have, they never will and let's not assume or pretend otherwise. If you want the pier to be operated properly and successfully and the city of Tybee wants to maximize the "profit" from its operations it would have to be contracted to a management company that would pay the island a fee. However, does the Tybee City Council or the city employees have the expertise to design a mutually acceptable business contract that would benefit all parties? Probably not. Can this expertise be found? Yes. Would the contract be fairly advertised and then a candidate without political connections selected? Hmmm ...

2. In regards to this issue of carrying capacity for the island. Any limited environment such as Tybee Island needs such a study, however, if at the outset it is the intent to infringe upon or restrict even more the rights of those who own property here then such a study only creates more ill-will and more dissension.

3. And in regards to alternative energy. <Sighing here - here we are redoing the 70s all over again>

Would I like to see alternative energy maximized and used for the island? Yes, I would.

Will it ever be the main source of energy? No, it won't.

If solar, wind, geothermal, etc. were truly efficient and effective sources of energy and they could compete in the marketplace without subsidies and free market tax support they would already be in place and a part of the grid. Just as we did in the 70s we are throwing good money after bad.

Before we track down a road of development of alternative energy for the island let's first 1) thoroughly audit all the city owned buildings and processes; 2) take that audit and implement those repairs, renovations and upgrades that have an acceptable cost-to-benefit ratio that can show a return to the taxpayer on savings generated; 3) secure grants and loans - after all folks BHO is coming to Savannah to give away our tax dollars let's get some ^ it's our money er debt!

Let's secure some DOE grants to allow any citizen on the island who owns property to have their properties audited and repairs and renovations done to upgrade their property. Then let's take the time to carefully and with thought explore how we can use solar at our parks including the "bark park" - or let us look at a demonstration of wind energy at the Marine Science Center, the pier or the Lighthouse.

However, let's not delude ourselves into thinking that alternative energy will take the island and its residents off the grid because it simply will not happen without considerable subsidizing by Georgia Power or by using Federal/State tax dollars.

And while we are at it let's revisit this issue of off-shore drilling that is IF we are serious about getting out from under the thumb of our Middle East folks.

Further let's look at way we can put our law enforcement folks into more efficient vehicles and use their services more efficiently ^ not every police officer needs too be patrolling in a car especially during the busy months.

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While I feel certain that Tybee is WAY past its carrying capacity, I also believe that a study should be done to confirm that (for water use if nothing else). And while I agree that we should take over the management and income of the pier, I would certainly do some inspections before agreeing to take it on (roof, plumbing, etc.). Alternative sources of energy are the ONLY way we will be able to sustain life on the planet in the not too distant future. We MUST explore now!

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Energy is a biggie; either bury the cables so we don't lose power in high winds/storms, or ponder an offshore wind farm.

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Sorry: I need fact to make an informed Judgment. What will a carrying capacity cost and to what end will it serve? I know at peak time you can cross the street - but thankfully those are few.

The management of the pier - wonderful, but does this include the maintenance of the pier also. The roof looks suspect to me and Tybee is neck and neck keep up with the vandals repairing the bathroom we manage now. Do we want the additional responsibility. Has there been any issues with the Pier management now?

Alternative sources of energy - simply put a windful in front of all those ethics now people and you would have all you ever wanted.

Provide facts and then we can respond intelligently.

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Conditions on the pier (especially rest rooms) are often deplorable. The county does not seem to be doing a good job of managing it. Since the city of Tybee has a vested interest in drawing visitors to the pier, I believe they would do a better job of managing it. It is also frustrating to have the door on the stairway to the beach locked on weekdays. Being visually impaired, it is difficult for me to access the pier any other way. I am hopeful that, if Tybee were in control, this gate would be opened every day.

Why should the new pier have roofing problems? I graduated from 37th Street School in 1945 and it had a red tile roof that had never leaked. When the roof tiles were removed and an ordinary asphalt shingle roof was installed, I noticed those red Spanish tiles showed up on a politician's home on Tybee. So why can't the pier, if it ever needed a new roof, have Spanish tiles put on like so many of the homes in Southern Florida? They will last forever.

I want to also comment on usage of the pier. I own a small cottage on the north end but am not a resident of the island so I can't get a free or even a cut-rate parking decal. For that reason, I don't use the pier at all or patronize any of the commercial facilities on the South End. I feel we are unfairly being charged for parking decals when we pay far more in taxes to Tybee than residents with Stephens-Day. Each time visitors of ours want to go to the pier, I drop them off on 16th Street, then go back to the cottage and wait for them to call me on my cell phone and then I pick them up. If it's a concert on the pier or the July 4th fireworks, it's the same thing: I drop off family members on the

South End, then I go back to the cottage and wait for them to call me to pick them up. I did some shopping at Christy's last December, the first time I have set foot in there in decades for one reason: the parking was free.

You have no idea the business being lost in Tybee due to the parking problem.

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Let's ask Tybee about no smoking on sections of the beach and Dogs on the beach

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The pier and restrooms are under contract with Mr. Dean who runs the food service on pier. The restroom are almost impossible to keep clean because the City turned off the showers on the beach and foolishly torn down the old baths. We need to enforce the rules against changing and bathing in the restrooms. They are not BATHROOMS

If the City owned the pier we will have the same folks on PW keeping it clean? Right now it takes about 5 PW employees to keep up the Y Image the new cost with pier. The real problem is lack of facilities up and down the beach

Maybe better use of the marine center building once it moves out will help. Add changing rooms/ recycle water stations. The pier is just the tip of the real issue.

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Carrying capacity of what? The roads & bridges? The water/sewer system? The electrical grid? each of these is likely being done periodically by those in charge of each respective infrastructure area, and to put them all together is the job of masterplan update committee of the Planning Commission. A separate "study" is unnecessary if masterplan committee and planning commission does its job.

The financial planning and budget discussions for the city should look into whether or not this would make sense. The county takes property tax dollars off Tybee in greater proportion that it gives back-- perhaps if the pier were included in a special tax district of Tybrisa the dollars could come back to Tybee for its upkeep and management.

Tybee should look at all areas of infrastructure for monopoly and potential weaknesses. At present, there is one electrical line and one power source serving the city. It would make sense to investigate alternatives.

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1. It is essential that we establish our maximum carrying capacity allowing a reasonable, safe margin, lest we kill this beautiful island.
2. It's impossible to answer this question without knowing the complete costs of updating the pier and review past events held there to determine the pier's financial production potential.
3. I agree, however, an alternative must be found to the way electrical power currently gets to this island as it continues to be at risk from drunk drivers and potential natural disasters.