

General Membership Updates

- I have an announcement to make and if you will bear with me a few remarks as well. I wanted to let you know that I will be stepping down as president of the Council. The reins will be handed to the Council's amazing 1st. Vice President Mary Peloquin. Aka Mrs. Claus as of next month.
- Over the last few years our board and our membership have become stronger, more diverse and more cohesive and our partnership with the City has deepened. I thank all of you for your continued investment and truly amazing leadership in our community.
- As many of you may recall, I became the Council president after our beloved Ron the Cop, Ron Centamore, passed away on January 28, 2019. It would be nice to take a moment to remember Ron and all the good he accomplished and what a good man he was. Pause, Thank you.
- What followed Ron's passing was dozens of you stepping up to deliver food to Ron's widow Kim. That went on for months. Kim received sustenance both from the meals you delivered and from seeing and spending time with each of you. Steve, Barbie, Michael, Marilyn, Mary – so many of you chipped in. Tragically we lost Kim a year later. But in the aftermath of Ron's death until her passing, we as a community were there for her.
- And who could forget the wonderful surprise birthday party we held for Betty Shelley's 90th? What a tribute to another long serving and beloved leader of our community.
- These are two small examples of what this council is all about. Our entire intent is to help lift each other up and help our community be better.
- What are other ways we are doing that? I pulled this slide from a joint workshop we held with the City Commissioners and Mayor back in May of 2019.
- We believe a better community begins with an informed citizenry. With rare exception, the Council does not take sides on specific issues. Rather we work to provide information from knowledgeable experts that will help you better understand the citywide topics that cross all our desks. Consider just our speakers from last year:

- Alan Cohen and Lee Weintraub providing an excellent discussion on the ins and outs of P3's, - we were the first group to host a purely informative session on the topic – the Tower Club and others followed suit.
 - Scott Dudley, the speaker from the League of Cities explaining a productive citizen-informed response to legislative issues in Tallahassee,
 - Nik Harris who came to talk with us about why equity, particularly racial equity matters.
- These are just a few.
- We also had several City department heads providing meaningful presentations on their departments among them – Dr. Gassman from the Department of Public Works, Ben Rogers from TAM, Laura Reece from the Office of Management and Budget, Daphne Sainvil from External Relations.
- And we have been blessed with the monthly participation at our general meetings by two very special people - City Manager Chris. Lagerbloom and our local Dr. Fauci, Dr. JJ Rajter. How special is it that these two leaders have taken their time to meet with us month in and month out? How better-informed and reassured are we thanks to Chris and JJ? Please show your appreciation in the chat!
- Let me wrap up by expressing what I believe many of us have **long** felt and hope that more are willing to embrace – the simple concept that we go further *together*, that, as Michael Albetta is fond of saying, unity in the community is what it is all about. Translated, we are far more productive when we tackle issues collaboratively rather than with an us-them mentality. Yes, we are the unifying voice of the mosaic of our neighborhoods. This means embracing all the stakeholders in our community across our neighborhoods, including not only our residents, but our businesses, our investors, our city staff our elected officials. Working in partnership to define a shared agenda and common goals will take us further and to better outcomes.
- As we continue to face challenging times, let's continue to work. Together.

- To my council board, I have so enjoyed working with all of you– your good ideas, your passion, your leadership. Thank you for allowing me to be of service as your president and I look forward to Mary’s leadership moving forward.
- Speaking of those stepping down, you all know that Hal Barnes is retiring. Junia asked us to share the updates for his retirement reception. The date, time and location have changed.