

# From the Desk of Mayor Weinroth

## A message from the mayor

I am honored to have been selected by my fellow commissioners as the county mayor of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) at our annual reorganizational meeting on November 16, 2021.

Every year, the BCC selects a mayor to preside over commission meetings and serve as the ceremonial head of Palm Beach County government. A vice mayor is also selected to assume these duties in the absence of the mayor. Consequently, I would like to extend my congratulations to fellow commissioner Gregg Weiss who was selected to serve as vice mayor.

The county mayor, introduced by former commissioner Steven Abrams, was created in 2013 and replaced the title of chair. The reason for this was to heighten the board's visibility by increasing public awareness of the role of the commission since the general public identifies more with a mayor than a board chair.

Having a county mayor benefits us regionally when partnering with the mayors of Miami-Dade and Broward counties and provides a stronger voice in Washington and Tallahassee. The three most populous counties in Florida are a powerful force when united together on common issues such as economic development, transportation funding and environmental issues including Everglades restoration.

Surprisingly, a lot of residents are not aware of the role of county commissioners. The BCC adopts ordinances (local laws) and resolutions to establish policies and programs aimed at protecting the health, safety and general welfare of Palm Beach County residents.

Following are some of the BCC's duties:

- Set property tax rate which has not been increased in 11 years
- Oversee the \$5.6 billion budget which includes three airports (including PBIA), waste disposal plants, potable water, 8,000 acres of parks and so much more
- Provide law enforcement, fire-rescue protection and disaster relief services
- Construct and maintain county-owned buildings, roads, bridges and utility systems
- Provide programs for housing and community redevelopment
- Manage programs for 31,000 acres of conservation lands, flood and beach erosion control and air-pollution control
- Adopt and enforce building and housing codes and regulations
- Construct and operate cultural, recreational and library facilities/programs
- Coordinate policies with other governmental agencies for the joint performance of duties
- Provide services for over 500,000 residents living in unincorporated Palm Beach County

I am looking forward to the next year as your mayor and addressing a number of issues such as mental health, food insecurities, housing, inflation and opioid use.

## **Veteran services**

Florida has over 1.6 million veterans, the third-highest number in the country, with over 90,000 living in Palm Beach County. Whether they served in active combat or in a support role, military veterans are at a high risk of mental health and post-traumatic stress disorders, and many are living with disabilities, chronic pain and other service-related illnesses.

The county's Division of Human and Veteran Services has a dedicated team of professionals, including many retired veterans, who work closely with local veterans to help them get assistance through resources such as local nonprofits and state or federal agencies. Some examples include financial and housing assistance, mental health/wellness therapy, housing, disability compensation, employment opportunities and other resources for life after discharge.

Additionally, the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VA) in West Palm Beach provides a full range of services including mental health, medication and rehabilitation. The VA also has outpatient clinics in six cities, including Boca Raton and Delray Beach, that offer mental health assessments, nutritional consultations and management of chronic illnesses.

For more information, visit

<https://discover.pbcgov.org/communityservices/humanservices/Pages/Veteran-Services.aspx>

## **Holiday scam alert**

With the holidays fast approaching, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) is warning of the many ways consumers and donors could get scammed this season.

The BBB released its "Naughty List" which details the top scams that are most likely to catch people off guard during the holidays.

Be mindful of these scams that could cut into your holiday cheer, and tips to avoid them:

- ***Fake charities***: verify a charity at BBB's give.org
- ***Alerts about compromised accounts***: an email, call or text message that explains there has been suspicious activity on Amazon, Paypal, Netflix or a bank account
- ***Free gift cards***: emails requesting personal information to receive free gift cards

For the full "Naughty List", visit [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org).

**If you require assistance, please contact our office at 561-355-2204 or email me at [RWeinroth@pbcgov.org](mailto:RWeinroth@pbcgov.org).**