

FORT MORGAN NEWS

April 2021~Issue 170



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all and a warm welcome to our new FMCA members!

As you may recall, in early March, the FMCA and other partners hosted the 3rd Annual "Fort Morgan Clean Up". This year we were able to host and outfit 175 volunteers that removed an astonishing +150 tons of trash and debris from the Right-of-Way along SR180. Following this great event, it took only 48hrs and 2 different contractors were caught on video/photos dumping debris along the highway. These videos and photos were shared to social media and within hours, local news picked up the story.

https://myNBC15.com/news/local/suspected-illegal-debris-dumper-caught-in-the-act-in-fort-morgan?fbclid=IwAR0WZQNVfvTb1sakmSkGHPEqvHxN3v-zstNNjO70nTxKo7IJwt0u_2EEr0Y The contractor in question removed the debris and disposed of it properly and consequently no charges were filed.

Subsequent coverage of this story by NBC 15 posed the question to the Baldwin County Commission of what was being done to discourage illegal dumping in the area. It is my opinion that the \$500 fine for illegal dumping is not adequate. I believe that the fines for illegal contractor dumping in such an environmentally sensitive area should be increased to \$5,000 and strictly enforced.

At this month's meeting, I will ask the FMCA to encourage our County Commissioners and State Reps to draft legislation to increase that fine specific for the Fort Morgan area. This is just one of the many items suggested at this month's Executive Board workshop. We will have lots to discuss at the upcoming meeting on April 12th, 2021. I hope to see you there and remember to get there early, the meeting will come to order at 6:30pm. Thank you all for your continued support of the FMCA.

Joe

Joe Emerson
#fortmorganstrong



Agenda for this month's FMCA General Meeting:

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|---|--|
| Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance | Joe Emerson, President |
| Previous FMCA General Meeting Minutes | |
| Treasurer's Report | Greg Strategier, Treasurer |
| Government Affairs Report | Michael Ludvigsen, FMCA Government Liaison |
| Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Advisory Cte. | Ernie Church, Chair |
| Old Business | |
| -Executive Board Opening | |
| -SB 107 | |
| -Fort Morgan Bike Trail Update | |
| New Business | |
| -Donation to SBBC | |
| -Dumping Fines | |
| -Utility Lines-EMC | |
| -DCNR letter | |
| -Request for Funding "Clean Beach Initiative" | |
| Adjournment: Next Meeting, 10 May | |

FMCA Membership ~~~~~

Reminder: Annual Dues are due by Due December 31 annually. Additionally, please contact FMCA Membership Chair at fmcamemberships@gmail.com for any changes to membership status (i.e., address / email update, death of a member)

For membership application by mail or online, access Fort Morgan Civic Association website (<https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/>), click on membership tab, and select desired process (online or mail), then follow the prompts.

FMCA Executive Board Opening: Secretary ~~~~~

We are currently seeking to fill the vacant Secretary position on the executive board. The Secretary’s responsibilities include keeping, in permanent form: the minutes of the Association and the Executive Board, a list of committees and their members and a record of attendance at all meetings to be provided by the Membership Committee chair. The Secretary also shall conduct the correspondence and maintain the official administrative records of the Association. If you are interested in a nomination as Secretary, please let us know by email: fortmorgancivic@gmail.com

Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Committee ~~~~~Ernie Church, FM P&Z Advisory Cte Chair

The Fort Morgan planning and zoning advisory committee met in the Shell Banks Church Fellowship Hall at 9am on Wednesday Mar 24, 2021 to consider three cases: a conditional use request to rebuild the Veterans Rd cell tower that was destroyed during Hurricane Sally. The committee recommended the County approve the request.

In addition to the above case, the committee also considered a request for a variance from the 30-foot wetland setback requirement so the owner could build a residence on the upland portion of the lot. The committee recommended the County approve the request.

Finally, the committee discussed a case with a Corps of Engineer approved partial wetlands fill which necessitated an associated wetlands setback variance to accommodate construction of a single-family residence. The committee recommended the County approve the request.

Future Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning Committee meetings will be noted on <https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/> as well as associated case files if a meeting is scheduled.

Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department ~~~~~

Stay Safe,
Chief FMVFD

Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~~~~~BCSO

“If you see something, Say something”. It is so important, for the Sheriff’s Office to know what you know.

EMERGENCY: 911 -Report all potentially life-threatening and suspicious activities

Sheriff’s Department—Administrative Office.....972-6802

Sheriff’s Office Website: www.sheriffofbaldwin.com

Anonymous Tip Email Address (NOT for Emergencies):

<http://sheriffofbaldwin.com/contactRC.asp>

Alabama Senate Bill 107 Talking Points~~~~~

The following information was provided through coordination between Chris Elliott, Alabama State Senator District 32 and Michael Ludvigsen, FMCA Governmental Affairs Liaison as a way to better clarify SB 107 for FMCA members. The following information is meant to help members to provide informed feedback to governmental officials about any issues/concerns they have with SB 107. You can find the complete bill at <https://legiscan.com/AL/text/SB107/2021> . The FMCA will continue to help provide our members with information relevant to the preservation and protection of the District 25 Fort Morgan community.

Senate Bill 107 Talking Points

POLICE JURISDICTION

Immediately freezes police jurisdiction to 1.5 or 3 miles respectively for those who are currently exercising police jurisdictions as of 1.1.21.

Limits enforcement in the police jurisdiction to state misdemeanors. This would stop enforcement of purely local municipal ordinances not tied to state misdemeanors (noise, leash, dust, etc....)

Allows for building code enforcement for those that are doing so as of 1.1.21 until the county provides building code enforcement at which point it then provides for a 24 month phase out by the municipality. Provides that County and City can agree for City to continue to perform building code enforcement.

REPORTING OF REVENUE IN POLICE JURISDICTIONS

Amends existing reporting requirements to a date certain (March 1 for the previous fiscal year) and provides that if reporting isn't made within 12 months of the deadline, the municipality may no longer continue licensing and taxing in the police jurisdiction. Provides requirements on what is required in the reporting.

In addition to the reporting, it authorizes the Legislative council to request an audit of the police jurisdiction of a municipality by the Examiners of Public Accounts. A municipality is only required to pay for this audit if the audit shows that they are not in compliance with spending in the police jurisdiction

PLANNING JURISDICTION

Immediately reduces the planning jurisdiction of a municipality to 1.5 or 3 miles respectively. Effective January 1, 2023, the planning jurisdiction of any municipality will be 1.5 miles

Clarifies that a municipality may only regulate subdivisions within its planning jurisdiction and provides for a "family" exemption from subdivision regulation in the planning jurisdiction.

Allows for continued subdivision regulation authority in the planning jurisdiction. If a county provides subdivision regulation and there is no agreement between the county and municipality to continue, there is a 24 month phase out by the municipality. It also allows a municipal planning commission to resume subdivision regulation if the county discontinues – again with a 24-month phase in/out. Provides that County and City can agree for City to continue to perform planning jurisdiction enforcement.

Upcoming Events/ Community Support Opportunities in Fort Morgan:

Fort Morgan Parkway Bike Trail Extension Update~~~~~

Andrew James, P.E.
Environment and Infrastructure
East Gulf Region Design Manager

"In regards to your inquiry about updates and the clearing of ROW: The recent clearing of utility ROW along SR180 is not part of our [Volkert] ongoing work. We [Volkert] are still working through the design process and should have environmental scientists/surveyors out in the field starting in early April."

Vessel Wake Awareness Program for Property Owners along Mobile Bay~~~~~

Last year, the Alabama Coastal Foundation developed a program to track large vessels that create large wakes in Mobile Bay which claw away at our shorelines. They are looking for shoreline property owners to take video for this project. If you, or anyone you know (or know anyone who knows someone) can help in providing video footage please contact:

ACF Administrator Pamela Brewer: pbrewer@joinACF.org

or

Coastal Relations Coordinator Toni Thomason: tthomason@joinACF.org

Share the Beach~~~~~

Turtle nesting season ended 31 October. Please be aware that outside lights hinder the nesting process of female turtles. If you own directly on the beach please consider checking into turtle friendly lights prior to the 2021 turtle nesting season (starts 1 May 2021). Contact Alabama Coastal Foundation or US Fish and Wildlife for details. Make sure to continue to fill in holes and take up beach equipment to ensure safe beaches for residents, visitors and turtles throughout the year.

Fort Morgan State Historic Site~~~~~

Check for current updates on daily operations / park entry procedures at Facebook (Fort Morgan State Historic Site) and website <http://www.fort-morgan.org> .

Bon Secour NWR~~~~~

Check for current updates on refuge operations by <https://www.facebook.com/BonSecourNWR/>, calling the office at 251-540-7720 or emailing bonsecour@fws.gov, messages will be returned as soon as possible.

Fort Morgan History:

Request for contributions – please contact the FMCA newsletter editor if you are interested in researching Fort Morgan history or providing personal memories to share of Fort Morgan

***Diary of the Storm – September 26-17, 1906 – Continued from March newsletter
Maude M. Midgette, November 1st 1912***

After Papa left us, we were all wondering how soon the time would come for us to go to our homes in Mobile. Just about ten o'clock we saw smoke up the bay and knew that we would soon leave Fort Morgan and go to the city, but when she came close enough for us to see, it proved to be the tug Gertrude and she was too small to take such a large crowd, most all of whom were children, and right disappointed we were to think we had to stay at the Fort perhaps another day, but our hopes were soon raised again when we saw in the distance and recognized the U.S. mail boat General Batchelder.

We knew that after she arrived at the Fort our stay would be really short and we at once made preparations to leave. We had started for the boat when the 1st Sergeant of 99th Co. came and said he could not think of us leaving the Fort until after he had served us dinner. Therefore, we had to remain over another hour. Dinner was served us very much on the order as breakfast. There was forty some-odd in our crowd, and full justice was done the meal they so kindly set before us. Then again thanking the brave soldiers for all their kindness to us, we once more started for the boat.

The General Batchelder could not land at the large wharf, as the storm had completely demolished it, so we had to be rowed in the sub-marine boat (which had brought us from the Cove) to the mail boat. What a picture we must have made for the crew of the mail-boat to gaze upon, for we were wearing soldiers' hats (we having lost ours in the storm). The kindness which the soldiers showed us that day will never be forgotten by any of us.

To be continued in the February FMCA newsletter. *Thanks to Chan West, long time Fort Morgan resident and FMCA member for this submission.*

FMCA Executive Board Contacts

Officers

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| President | Joe Emerson | 251-550-9021 | captjoesells@gmail.com |
| Vice President | Ernie Church | 334-220-0851 | ecaces4@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Greg Strategier | 337-849-6506 | samsplace41805@gmail.com |
| Secretary | Vacant | | |

Non-Officers

| | | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------|--|
| FMCA / Local / State / Federal Government Liaison | Michael Ludvigsen | 217-473-9728 | mtludvigsenjr@gmail.com |
| Editor Fort Morgan Newsletter | Karrie Lovins | 580-917-4593 | klovins68@icloud.com |

Standing Committee Chairs

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------|--|
| Future Fort Morgan Options | Ernie Church | 334-220-0851 | ecaces4@gmail.com |
| Hospitality | Thelma Strong | 251-540-7383 | twstrong@gulftel.com |
| Land Use & Conservation | Chan West | 251-979-4932 | chan@goefish.com |
| Legal | Judy Newcomb | 251-955-1572 | judynewcomb@aol.com |
| Legislative/Government | Bonnie Lowry | 251-540-9327 | |
| Membership | Jennifer Ishler Noojin | (205) 249-1025 | jnoojin1@gmail.com |
| Sunshine | Vickie Matranga | 251-543-1555 | vpowers110@gmail.com |