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## **Galveston Park Board Update: November 13, 2013**

The Galveston Park Board of Trustees held its regularly scheduled meeting at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 12 at Park Board Plaza. Below is an update of news from the boardroom.

### **Park Board Approves Private Party Rental Program for Stewart and East Beaches**

Soon, you will be able to host hassle-free beach weddings and other private events at Stewart Beach and East Beach, with a new private party rental program recently approved by the Park Board of Trustees. The private rental program will offer individuals the opportunity to rent an area designated for special use which includes 20 reserved parking spaces. The designated special use areas will be groomed, roped off with decorative bollards and will offer an unobstructed view of the Gulf. The rental rate for a three-hour period is \$250 plus \$75 for each additional hour. Later this month, an application to rent the special use areas will be available at [www.galvestonparkboard.org](http://www.galvestonparkboard.org).

### **2013-2014 Funding Approved for Sargassum Early Advisory System**

Tuesday, the board unanimously approved to designate \$7,500 from the organization's nourished beach budget toward Texas A&M University at Galveston's Sargassum Early Advisory System (SEAS) for the 2013-2014 fiscal year. The funds will continue to help the school research and develop its SEAS program which was designed to predict seaweed influxes before they hit land. The SEAS tool was first introduced in Galveston in spring 2012 and has been 90 percent accurate in its predictions. Park Board Chairman Craig Brown said the system is beneficial to the board, because it allows its beach maintenance team to better prepare staff and equipment for seaweed influxes that could affect tourism.

### **Board Approves Resolution Supporting Positive Impact Generated by Rental Properties**

Tuesday, the board unanimously approved a resolution in support of the development and implementation of rational regulations governing vacation rentals on Galveston Island. Clint W. Smith, president of the Short Term Rental Owner's Association of Galveston (STROAG), addressed the board to express the positive impact rental properties have on Galveston's tourism economy. Serving as Galveston's primary organization responsible for the promotion of tourism, the Park Board considers vacation rentals an important component of the overall tourism product. Vacation rentals contribute a significant portion of all HOT revenue during Galveston's peak tourism season.

### **Board Appoints New Member to the Galveston Island Nature Tourism Committee**

Tuesday, the board appointed Joanie Steinhouse to the Galveston Island Nature Tourism Committee (GINTC) after hearing a recommendation made by Dian Olsen, the committee's chair. Steinhouse is currently involved with the island's turtle rescue program and the board believes that she will bring valuable insight to the Galveston Island Nature Tourism Committee.

### **About the Park Board of Trustees**

The Park Board of Trustees oversees beach maintenance and tourism development on Galveston Island, including operations for beach cleaning, the Galveston Island Beach Patrol and the Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau. For more information on the Park Board of Trustees, please visit [www.galvestonparkboard.org](http://www.galvestonparkboard.org).