

Meeting Called to order at 6:01 PM by Mark Frandsen, President

Invocation By: Mark

Pledge of Allegiance Led By: Bill

Mark began the meeting by clarifying some points that were brought up by one of the speakers at the last meeting. Mark wished to convey the truth about criticisms made and misrepresentations of one of the candidate's commitment to community due to their voting record. He emphasized it is important to vote.

A number of office holders and candidates were present this evening and each was called forth to provide a brief statement to the club. This was not an official presentation by any candidate. This was an impromptu part of the meeting used to fill time since the featured speaker was caught in traffic. The following persons spoke briefly, or were only introduced and acknowledged by Mark.

- Joe Neunder, Dist. 4 County Commissioner running for State Committeeman.
 - Robin Marinelli, Sarasota County School Board.
 - Karen Rose, Sarasota County School Board running for re-election.
 - Greg Wood, Candidate for Sarasota County School Board.
 - James Buchanan, 17th Florida State Rep running for re-election.
 - Tom De Sane, Charter Review Board running for re-election.
 - Andrew Sias, Candidate for North Port Commissioner.
 - Phil Stokes, North Port Commissioner and Vice-Mayor.
 - Barbara Langdon, North Port Commissioner running for re-election.
 - Duff Smiley, Candidate for State Committeeman.
 - Joe Justice, North Port and Sarasota County Charter Review Boards.
 - Joseph Garren, North Port Charter Review Board.
 - Audie Bock, Candidate for State Committeewoman.
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The featured speaker was then introduced by Mark. Mr. Ed Brodsky is the State's Attorney for the 12th Judicial Circuit of Florida. He began by noting the important role technology plays in law enforcement. These enhancements contribute to the community's safety and improve the apprehension and conviction of criminals.

There has been an uptick in violence and road rage incidents. These increases are consistent with national statistics. An increase in persons leaving the scene of an accident. He cautions us to be aware of your situation and attentive to surroundings as you drive. Most occur with cars hitting pedestrians, motorcycles and bikes. Increases in fraudulent activity. Do not give out your personal identity.

Mr. Brodsky has served 31 years as a prosecutor. He is currently running for re-election, however, since he has no opponent he has been re-elected. We were all glad to hear this news. He noted his efforts to remain non-political. Yet, it is important that the majority of state attorney's in Florida are Republicans.

Last year his office charged 16,000 misdemeanors with an 85% conviction rate. There were 6000 felonies with a 92% conviction rate. Despite all this and the increases previously mentioned Florida is at a 50 year low on crime.

He noted that the Sarasota County jail currently houses about 1000 inmates. The ideal capacity of the jail is 835. More jail capacity is needed as we have influx of new residents. More people bring more crime. His job is to protect the community and part of that means keeping criminals in jail. As the population grows, more deputies and prosecutors will be needed.

Mr. Brodsky again referenced the importance of technology from smart phones, street cameras, Ring cameras and police body cameras. A large problem now is driving without a license. He spoke of a balanced approach to criminal justice which includes programs like drug rehab, veterans' court, etc.

The North Port Police Dept. sends about 47 cases per week to his office to prosecute. That is the sign of a very active police department. He then thanked everyone present and stated he was grateful to be able to serve as our state's attorney. The following topics were discussed during the question session:

- Driving offenses: Starting July 1 the penalty is the same for driving without a license or driving on a suspended license.
 - Illegal immigration: The County will be having a discussion on impacts. The state courts cannot order deportation for crimes. Only a federal judge has the authority to order deportation. The Sheriff's office checks and notifies immigration of persons in custody. Then federal immigration will decide to deport.
 - Marijuana Amendment: He does not favor legalization as is proposed in the ballot amendment. He sees it as a gateway drug. He is leery about this amendment.
 - Currently, no legislation to address "dreamers".
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The Meeting ended at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marian L. Patricoski, Secretary