

**The Villages Homeowners Advocates**  
**Caring for the residents of The Villages®**



***KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE***



## Our Mission

- The Villages Homeowners Advocates (The VHA) is a lifestyle organization whose members are committed to championing the needs of Villagers through:
  - Positive, constructive dialogue
  - Problem solving
  - Education
  - Philanthropic efforts

## Accomplishments

### Advocated for:

- Golf Cart Bridge over US 441/US 27
- The Villages Public Safety Department
- The Villages Health Care System
- The Enrichment Academy
- Installing AED's in Recreation Centers
- The Weather Alert Radio Station

## Philanthropic Efforts

- VHA Helping Hands program
  - Loans approximately 6,000 pieces of durable medical equipment each year free of charge
- VHA Foundation Committee
  - \$1,000 Shared Harvest Community Garden
  - \$500 Purchase Pajamas for Homeless Children
- Fund raising for hurricane and tornado victims
- No-charge monthly Golf Cart Safety Clinics
- No-charge monthly New Resident Night

# CDD 13

Landowner Election

Nov 8<sup>th</sup>

Everglades Recreation

7am – 7pm

- If you live in the following Villages you are in Community Development District 13
  - Bradford
  - Chitty Chatty
  - St. Catherine
  - Hawkins
  - Citrus Grove
  - Hammock at Fenney
  - Cason Hammock
  - St. Johns
  - DeLuna
  - Richmond
  
- We are beginning the transition from appointed CDD Board members to elected board members
  - Tina Williamson is now on the Board
  - Gary Frigiola and Tom Law are running for the two open positions

# Does my vote *really* matter?



Only qualified electors residing within the proposed district may vote on the referendum — be an informed voter!

## Facts Bearing On The Problem

- Significant delay in medical transport response time from the contracted provider AMR for Villages residents
  - VPSD was on site and provided emergency first aid but was not authorized to transport to hospitals
  - Residents last year had wait times from 30 minutes to 90 minutes
  - Sumter County formed a task force to examine the problem. The task force examined 10 different options to provide fire, rescue and emergency medical support.

## Facts Bearing On The Problem

- **Sumter County voted to support the creation of an Independent Fire Control and Rescue District for The Villages in October 2021.**
- **The Florida State Legislature unanimously approved the request in March 2022**
- **Governor DeSantis signed the bill on June 24, 2022**

**Final decision rests with the Voters who will decide on November 8<sup>th</sup> as part of the general election.**



## Benefits of Approving Independent Fire and Emergency Services District

- **Local control of Fire Control and Rescue District by Village residents. Five Fire Commissioners will oversee the District operations. Each Commissioner must be a resident of the District.**
- **Currently, County Commissioners govern fire and rescue operations for each county.**
- **A contract is currently in place with Sumter County that has VPSD providing fire services and emergency medical services and ambulance transport beginning Oct 1, 2022. The contract must be negotiated each year when it expires with Sumter County.**

## Benefits of Approving Independent Fire and Emergency Services District

- **Dedicated number of ambulances available for transport**
  - We currently have 12 ambulances available for emergency medical support for the villages. Nine are in service at all times with 3 spares.
- **Dedicated number of EMTs and Paramedics available to immediately begin treatment as required.**

**VPD currently has 103 Paramedics and 55 EMTs**

## Costs of Approving Independent Fire and Emergency Services District

- Sumter County residents within the fire district will continue to be charged \$124 for fire protection that they currently pay. This amount would be paid as part of fees to Independent District and not to the county if the District is created. The total amount for this fee is approximately \$7.7 million dollars.
- An additional approximately \$9.8 million is currently provided to the VPSD by Sumter County for Fire Protection Services through the ad valorem tax .
- Sumter County proposed Ad Valorem Taxes for FY 223/24 are approximately \$13.6 million less than FY 22/23 in anticipation of the creation of an independent Fire District.

## Key Benefits of Approving Proposed District

- Provides more local control as the District Commissioners will be elected by Village residents and must also live in the District.
- Services can be tailored to support the unique needs of the residents of The Villages.
- Taxes to pay for District operations are estimated and will take some time to be more accurate but costs are reasonable and desirable to have the high quality and responsiveness desired for emergency medical services for the community.

## Facts vs Fiction

- **Fiction:** Medical services issues related to AMR are now all resolved due to Sumter County no longer using AMR for emergency medical services
- **Fact:** The Villages Public Safety Department has a one-year contract to provide fire, ems and ambulance transport to village residents. A new contract must be negotiated next year if the Fire and Rescue District vote fails. The level of funding for fire, rescue and emergency medical services is dictated by Sumter County. Sumter County can decide not to renew their contract with VPSD next year or decide to change the level of funding they provide.

## Facts vs Fiction

- **Fiction:** Voting YES means I will be paying hundreds more for the same service
- **Fact:** You already pay \$124 per year plus approximately .71 mils per thousand of your county al valorem tax towards fire and rescue services. This same amount accounts for most of the taxes you would pay to the new District as opposed to Sumter County.
- **Sumter County** will no longer need the \$124 fire protection service fee or the .71 mils per thousand that they now take from you and give to VPSD. Sumter County currently provides approx. \$17.5 million to the VPSD.



# The Villages®

## Community Development Districts

PARCEL ID NO.	OWNER NAME	LOCATION	TIER 1 (\$0.75/\$1000 OF RELATIVE IMPROVEMENT VALUE)	TIER 2 (\$124.00 PER TAX PARCEL)	SUB-TOTAL (TIER 1 + TIER 2)	MILLAGE RATE (1/10 OF 1 MIL)	TOTAL
G35C009	FOUNTAIN DAVID WAYNE & CYNTHI	1185 ISABELLE PL	\$266.81	\$124.00	\$390.81	\$33.10	\$423.91

Total Estimated Tax for Independent District **\$423.91**

Current Estimated Tax

County Fire Fee **\$124.00**

Ad Valorem

331,000 taxable value/1000 = 331 x .71 = **\$235.01**

Total Currently Estimated Taxes paid to Sumter County for Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services **\$359.01**

Total Additional Estimated Tax for Independent District **\$64.90**

Total monthly additional taxes **\$5.41**



QUESTIONS



## Far South Area News

- **The Far South Area Continues to Grow!**
  - Membership has grown from approximately 42 members in January 2022 to 1,316 in October 2022
  
- **New Villages soon coming**
  - Newell
  - Lake Denham
  - Dabney
  - Well Point
  - Oak Hollow
  - Edenfield
  - Green Hill Grove
  - LaGrange
  - Lakeview
  - Waters Edge
  - Shady Brooke
  - Moultrie Creek
  
- **2023 – Far South Programs still being developed. Intent is to have monthly programs to help orient new residents and inform current residents**

## Far South Area Neighborhood Representatives

- Find your representative by going to [thevha.net](http://thevha.net), then under “member” tab select “Neighborhood Rep Lookup”
  - Bradford – Renee Castleberry
  - Citrus Grove – Jim DeCastro, Mike & Tina Williamson
  - Hammock at Fenney - CDD 13) Iris and Bernie Burgman and Ron Brocius
  - Hammock at Fenney - (CDD 12) John Kerrigan
  - St Catherines- Rafe Garcia and Carl DiRobbio
  - Marsh Bend – Roger Kass
  - Hawkins - Pam Benzing, Ron Thomas, Peggy Sickel, Bob Massaro, Dave Fountaine, Gary Frigiola
  - Desoto - Larry Donnelly
  - Fenny - June Kennedy and Mike Hassett
  - Reps still needed for: Chitty Chatty, Richmond, Deluna, Cason Hammock, McClure and Linden

## Closing Comments

- **VHA Continuous Improvement Program**
  - The Voice changing format
  - More member benefits
    - Member only programs
    - Member only information on VHA website
- **Upcoming 2022 VHA/District Government Events**
  - VHA Bingo Nov 1<sup>st</sup> at Everglades; December 12<sup>th</sup> at Ezell
  - Government Day 2022 -10am to 1pm Eisenhower
  - New Resident Night - Nov 8<sup>th</sup> at Ezell
  - Golf Cart Safety clinic – Nov 16th at Colony Recreation



THANK YOU!!!