Cheers to 2019!

Hello from City Hall and Happy New Year! 2019 is shaping up to be a great year for our city.

It seems like there is always BIG things happening in St Pete! As I enter my second year as a Councilmember, I want to encourage each and every one of you to engage with me on the city issues that matter most to you. At the bottom of every newsletter is all of my contact information. I encourage you to share this newsletter with your friends and neighbors and ask them to subscribe as well. Anyone can click here to sign up!

Your opinion matters to me and I look forward to working together as we move St Pete forward in 2019!

Brandi

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2019 Committee Assignments

On January 3rd City Council voted for a new Chair and Vice Chair for 2019. Congratulations to Council Chair Charlie Gerdes (District 1) and Vice Chair Ed Montanari (District 3). I look forward to serving under your leadership!

In addition, 2019 committee appointments were ratified. I am proud to announce that I will be serving on the following:

- Housing, Land Use and Transportation Committee
- Health, Energy, Resiliency and Sustainability Committee
- Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Committee
- Youth and Family Services Committee
- Forward Pinellas
- Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
- Community Development Block Grant Committee
- Arts Advisory Committee

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Tiny Homes for Homeless Veterans

Celebrate Outreach, a local non-profit dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness, recently broke ground on a tiny home that will soon house a homeless veteran. The land for the tiny home was obtained from the City’s new program to dispose of lots acquired through foreclosure. The Affordable Housing Lot Disposition Program connects qualified developers and non-profits to

vacant lots which are provided at a nominal amount, with no up-front cost, on one condition: the property must go to a qualified buyer whose income meets affordable housing standards. The University of South Florida School of Architecture & Community Design joined Celebrate Outreach for this project. Professor Josue Robles Caraballo and 16 of his architecture students helped design the sustainable home. This new city program along with the help of non-profits and developers moves us one step closer to creating affordable housing options for St. Petersburg residents. Providing sustainable and affordable housing for all is a passion for me and nothing makes me prouder than when the efforts go to helping someone who has served our country. I hope you will join me in supporting this effort in any way you can! For more information on the lot disposition program, click here. For more information on how you can help support Celebrate Outreach, please visit their website.

New Straw and Polystyrene Regulations

Last month, City Council passed a new ordinance that will regulate the use of straws and expanded polystyrene, commonly known as Styrofoam, within St. Petersburg. The city will use 2019 as a transition year to work with community members, volunteers, and businesses as part of a robust education program about the new ordinance. In addition, city staff will work with businesses to develop acceptable product lists with unit price comparisons. By January 1, 2020, the full ordinance will take effect and single-use plastic straws and expanded polystyrene products will not be allowed to be distributed by business. For more information about the new ordinance, click here. This ordinance goes a long way in reducing the amount of plastics used within our city but more can must done. I encourage all residents to look at your own plastics usage and habits and find ways to limit single use items when you can. Our environment is precious, especially here in St Petersburg and it will take everyone to make a difference!

New Year, New You!

Healthy St. Pete has many options to help you achieve your New Year’s Resolutions. Free fitness classes are offered once a week including, Yoga at Crescent Lake Park on the first Saturday of the month, a Trail Run at Boyd Hill on the second Saturday, Bootcamp at Lassing Park on the third Saturday, and Dance Fitness at Lake Vista Park on the fourth Saturday. Healthy St. Pete also offers many free resources to residents online including a healthy shopping guide and tips for healthy eating. Also, a full list of city parks and their amenities as well as class schedules and descriptions for city recreation centers can be found on their website. For more information, click here!

Calling All Volunteers!

On February 8th from 10 am to 12 pm, Councilmember Gabbard will be partnering with Farm Share Inc. to distribute free food to needy families. The location of the event is yet to be finalized, but will take place somewhere in District 2. We are looking for volunteers to help distribute set up the event and distribute food. If you are interested, please email kayleigh.sagonowsky@stpete.org!
St. Pete Wins Climate Change Challenge

On January 3, at Albert Whitted Park, Mayor Kriseman welcomed former New York City Mayor and philanthropist Michael Bloomberg to St. Petersburg to make a special announcement. Bloomberg explained the American Cities Climate Change Challenge, a contest created by Bloomberg Philanthropies. St. Petersburg is one of 25 winning cities to win $2.5 million to further city efforts to increase sustainability and resiliency. According to the Tampa Bay Times, "The $2.5 million worth of technical resources is supposed to help St. Petersburg significantly expand access to solar energy, particularly among lower income residents, promote transportation alternatives and reduce energy use in public and privately owned buildings." Congratulations to the City's Sustainability Manager Sharon Wright and all other staff that have worked so hard to bring this award to our city!

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