

## Theodore Roosevelt – Great Advice for Our Time

On Thursday, June 14, the Gulf County NAACP branch hosted a meeting to provide a forum for the residents of North Port St. Joe to voice their opinions relative to inclusion in the PSJRA. Over 60 residents of NPSJ attended that meeting, along with Walter Miller of WIM Associates, Mayor Elect Mel Magidson and PSJRA Directors Annie Sue Fields, Tracy Melvin, Erin Searcy and Carl White.

The passion shown by the attendees was inspirational. It was clear by the opening remarks that there are varied concerns, which further highlight the necessity to have ongoing public forums and dialog. The outcome of the meeting was very positive. Pastor Charles Gathers encouraged “Let’s leave the past in the past; let’s move forward,” and “Let’s start telling these people [PSJRA] what we want as a community.” Eddie Fields noted, “We are ready to work together; we’ve been ready to work together for a long time...all the folks want the same thing. Listen to facts; don’t listen to rhetoric.”

At the end of the meeting, several attendees exclaimed (and seemed surprised), “We are all on the same page,” and “We all want the same things for North Port St. Joe.”

Public process is not easy and it is never perfect—there can be as many opinions as there are people. However, when we agree on the same goal, the process will move forward; and your continued involvement will create the foundation for ultimate success. Those who may have questioned the process heretofore, we welcome you to join in...without reservation. For any who may feel some reluctance or hesitation (it is sometimes unsettling to express opinions in public), please consider the following timely remarks from Theodore Roosevelt about “doers” and “critics.”

"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat." (1910)

"...the man who really counts in the world is the doer, not the mere critic—the man who actually does the work, even if roughly and imperfectly, not the man who only talks or writes about how it ought to be done." (1891)

"Criticism is necessary and useful; it is often indispensable; but it can never take the place of action, or be even a poor substitute for it. The function of the mere critic is of very subordinate usefulness. It is the doer of deeds who actually counts in the battle for life, and not the man who looks on and says how the fight ought to be fought, without himself sharing the stress and the danger." (1894)

We are in a position to create real progress with a significant foundation of public support and participation. Each of you has something significant to add. We are ready to “do.” Port St. Joe Business District, Marina District and North Port St. Joe—This is your city and will be revitalized your way.