

Scotty L. Kelly

From: Denise <drdc@comcast.net> on behalf of drdwood@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2026 3:06 PM
To: Laura J. DeBruce; Holly Smith; John Henshaw; Richard Johnson; Mike Miller; Scotty L. Kelly
Subject: Objection to Proposed \$1.7 Million Annual Stormwater Special Assessment

You don't often get email from drdwood@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This is an external email. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact MIS Support.

Subject: Objection to Proposed \$1.7 Million Annual Stormwater Special Assessment

Dear Mayor and Members of the Sanibel City Council:

I am writing to formally object to the proposed \$1.7 million annual stormwater special assessment.

I recognize the importance of maintaining Sanibel's drainage and stormwater infrastructure. However, residents should not be asked to accept another substantial, recurring financial obligation with no end date.

Sanibel property owners already pay significant property taxes, often on very highly valued properties. At the same time, residents have personally spent enormous amounts repairing, rebuilding, and recovering from Hurricanes Ian, Debby, Helene, and Milton. Many homeowners are still dealing with increased insurance costs, deductibles, repairs, construction expenses, and other storm-related financial burdens. The City should recognize this cumulative burden before adding another annual charge.

I am particularly concerned that the proposed assessment appears to have no clearly established sunset date. An annual assessment without a defined completion date can easily become a permanent tax-like obligation. Residents deserve evidence that the proposed expenditures will actually produce measurable improvements. General statements about the importance of stormwater management are not sufficient justification for collecting \$1.7 million every year. The City should provide specific engineering plans, project priorities, cost estimates, expected results, and a system for publicly measuring those results.

The City should also exhaust federal, state, FEMA, EPA, and other grant opportunities before placing another burden on local property owners. Sanibel has already received substantial outside funding for hurricane recovery and infrastructure, and every reasonable source of outside funding should be pursued before creating a new recurring assessment.

Finally, before imposing another charge, the City should consider the possibility of leveraging existing tax revenues, stormwater revenues, reserves, grants, and other available resources to fund the proposed work.

Sanibel residents have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to this community. Now is the time for fiscal restraint, transparency, and accountability—not another open-ended annual assessment.

I respectfully urge the Mayor and City Council to **reject the proposed \$1.7 million annual stormwater assessment.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Denise Wood

5424 Shearwater Dr., Sanibel, FL 33957

Thomas P. Heeney
Po. Box 1064
4539 Bowen Bayou Rd.
Sanibel, Florida 33957
Tph1@rcn.com

RECEIVED CITY OF SANIBE
AUG 17 2026 AM 11:2

08/07/2026

Mr. Dana Sauza
City Manager
800 Dunlop Rd.
Sanibel, FL 33957

Dear Mr. Sauza:

During the city council meeting of 7/21/26, the city council discussed a proposal to establish. A special city assessment for stormwater management under the provisions of the State of Florida statute section 170.01 through 170. 21 to replace the existing 2026 stormwater budget line item under the general fund budget, which currently amounts to \$773,150.00. This revenue is currently generated from property taxes charged to residents, which limits the amount of tax increases per year under Florida law and takes into account the homestead exemption for qualified residences. The current property tax scheme uses the assessed value of the property to determine the tax assessment on the property.

During the meeting presentation, it appears that the city consultant suggested using a Special assessment to circumvent the state's limits on how much property tax rates can be increased each year for residents and does not establish a sunset (end of assessment period). The assessment values are not limited, and the assessment value method that the consultant was suggesting is arbitrary and capricious. The tax scheme presented appeared to penalize the single-family homeowner and not to take into consideration the effect that other properties, such as commercial shopping centers and business properties, contribute to the stormwater impact on our island. It places the financial burden on the single-family homeowner during a time of high inflation and economic uncertainty in the past few years.

The consultant suggested that the use of Florida State Statute 170.01 appears to be a distortion of the state's legislative intent when the statute was created, which states it was to provide municipalities with the authority to levy SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS, INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, while it outlined the procedures for assessment and bonding issues. I understand that the city is developing a stormwater management plan; however, I have not seen any infrastructure plans such as stormwater piping systems, creation of reservoirs, or other physical infrastructure projects that

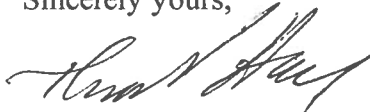
TH

Thomas P. Heeney
Po. Box 1064
4539 Bowen Bayou Rd.
Sanibel, Florida 33957
Tph1@rcn.com

may be designed or submitted to the public at this time to justify building a reserve fund for future projects when several FEMA, federal, and state grants are available or will be available in the future that can offset future infrastructure needs for stormwater management on the island.

I am recommending that the city council reject these proposals and continue to fund stormwater management through the normal tax revenue sources, increase user fees for parking, the use of the recreation center, fines, and other revenues that the city is currently using to provide for a strong financial position in the yearly budget process for the city.

Sincerely yours,



Thomas P. Heeney, MPA

239-472-2385

12 August 2026

Dear Mayor Miller and City Council Members:

RECEIVED CITY OF SANIBEL
AUG 13 2026 PM 1:5

Upon receipt of the Legal Notice regarding the Stormwater Assessment -I had some thoughts.

#1 in the paragraph regarding the effect that could be expected on the General Fund Revenues-it seems to me that in order to properly evaluate the proposed assessment-the staff should have prepared a detailed review-prior to sending this to the Council for action.

#2 The decision to provide funding as proposed-changes the funding from an ad valorem tax to a regressive tax akin to a sales tax.

It seems patently unfair that a 6,000 sq. ft. house would pay the same amount as a 1,000 sq. ft. bungalow. It also seems unfair that certain condominium units that could total 4,000 sq ft or more would pay a lesser amount than that 1,000 sq ft bungalow.

#3 No mention has been made if this is to be another item that is automatically raised by 10% per annum as so many City billings have been done previously.

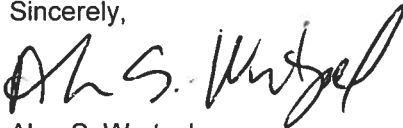
More to the point, all of the Special Assessments that I have previously been aware of have been for a one-time item for a discrete amount. This appears to be a continuing tax item that may be adjusted in the future with minimal public input.

A comment that came from one of the City Council members suggested that having this item heard during the "dog days of summer" when most island residents are not here-is not extraordinary because" governing goes on all year. It seems to me that a "tax increase" for something that is ongoing and is already funded through the General Revenue Fund-is not critical and easily could wait until after Thsnksgiving.

I would respectfully suggest that this item be tabled and a serious review of the effect that this would have on the general revenue and mileage rate be determined.

I would also suggest that the City Council review the proposal regarding the funding schedule to see if a more equitable method could be employed.

Sincerely,



Alan S. Wortzel
PO Box 622
Sanibel, Florida 33957

floridal@aol.com
239-281-5078

Scotty L. Kelly

From: Joe Sette <joesettee@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2026 8:49 AM
To: Scotty L. Kelly; John D. Agnew; sancouncil
Subject: Objection to Proposed Special Asseement for "Stormwater"

Some people who received this message don't often get email from joesettee@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This is an external email. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact MIS Support.

Sanibel City Clerk and Mayor MikeMiller

We are the owners of parcel 10021298, located at 1020 Bird Watch way Sanibel Florida. We have been owners of this property for in excess of 20 years. We hereby register our objection to the city of Sanibel's proposed "Stormwater" assessment, for what is described as Stormwater management.

There are a number of reasons for this objection, which are identified herein. First stormwater management does not identify what it means by the use of the term. "Stormwater" other than likely to try to get around legal objections to more accurately describe the proposal as a general funding assessment/tax. However, the use of the general term "stormwater" without identification does not provide sufficient clarity to determine what "stormwater" actually means in its use.

Additionally, the assessment seeks to make the assessment based upon an ERU which has no bearing or relationship to the actual use of the property and our Individual lot; development thereon I can assure you does not match the ERU as defined. The impervious area of our particular lot is nowhere near the estimated 6300 square feet. We cannot determine the relationship of our lot to the needed funding and use of funds given the lack of information on the specific use of the funds sought.

Further, the proposal does not identify what specific needs give rise to the proposed special assessment other than identifying improvements for stormwater and future infrastructure projects. What specific improvements and infrastructure is required that demands a special assessment beyond that which is already paid by the yearly property taxes.

We oppose any such assessment.

Joe and Lesley Sette

--

Joe Sette



Scotty L. Kelly

From: Greg Andersen <gregandersen3913@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2026 12:12 PM
To: sancouncil
Subject: Stornwater assessment.

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gregandersen3913@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This is an external email. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.
When in doubt, contact MIS Support.

Hello

We are opposed to the assessment . Our property tax is for this type of infrastructure. What starts as a small \$277.55 will soon be \$1200. We all know this is what happens.

We should go for state and federal grants etc etc.

We appreciate all your hard work.

Thank you

The Andersens

888 Rabbit Rd Sanibel Fl