



The Facts

Official News and Information



October 10, 2025

Town Manager's Commitment

Professional management is essential to effective, efficient, fair, and democratic local government.

As a local government management professional, I am committed to keeping the Juno Beach community informed on local government affairs.

This newsletter is intended to support informed public participation in local government decisions, promote public transparency, and provide a trusted source for official news & information of interest to the Juno Beach community.

Cheers,
Rob Cole
Town Manager
rcole@juno-beach.fl.us

The Facts: Welcome, Juno Beach!

Welcome to this edition of *The Facts* newsletter.

My grandfather was a Methodist church deacon in rural Kentucky, where I spent summers as a youth. He taught me a lot of things growing up. He taught me how to drive fast cars. He taught me how to fish and hunt. He also taught me the importance of honesty, integrity, and service to others. In short, he taught me to live a good life – I've always tried my best, including in my career.

At the same time, he cautioned that there's a little monster living in everyone. Some may call it the dark side of human nature – traits and behaviors associated with malevolence, aggression, and manipulation. Persons choosing to feed their little monster may see it grow to the point of it being uncontrollable.

We've all encountered someone in our lives that has fed their inner monster a few too many energy bars, and it isn't so little anymore – *everyone* can see it. While nobody is perfect, imagine what it is like to be *that person* – the one incapable of seeing their reflection in the mirror; the one making conscious choices to manipulate and deceive others; the one gleefully bearing false witness. What a sad life that would be.

Clearly, half-truths, misinformation, and other forms of public deceit aren't productive tools for solving community issues. Such tactics and malicious attacks are beneath us, folks. Stick to the facts.

Warmly,
Rob Cole, Town Manager

The Facts:

The Facts: It was brought to my attention this week that a “newsletter” was distributed by Vice Mayor Pro Tem Davis relying upon false and misleading narrative to support a personal attack on my professional integrity in service to the Juno Beach community as Town Manager.

Additional Background

The subject newsletter – *propaganda masquerading as factual information* – is the latest in a rather desperate series of schoolyard bully tactics seeking to inappropriately influence or control my professional roles, responsibilities, and legal obligations.

To put it plainly, this is my commitment to the Town of Juno Beach: I will neither be coerced into violating the law, compromising my professional code of ethics, nor disregarding my Oath of Office.

The following block text is excerpted from an email Town Attorney Rubin distributed to Town Council following dissemination of the false and misleading information by Ms. Davis, in which Mr. Rubin’s support for her fallacious statements was expressed:

Vice Mayor Pro Tem Davis recently distributed a newsletter where she quoted me in support of her assertion that the Town Manager “overrode” a vote of the majority of the Town Council. **Let me be perfectly clear – I never stated that the Town Manager overrode a vote of the majority of the Town Council or otherwise opined that the Town Manager acted in violation of the Town Charter.** My comment to Vice Mayor Pro Tem Davis, which was never intended to be published, was in the context of discussing the respective roles of the Council and the Manager in the Council-Manager form of government. The comment solely addressed the advocacy of a policy (reverting back to base zoning for single-family homes) that had not yet been accepted by a majority of the Councilmembers.

I did not discuss the propriety of the Town Manager’s actions as they pertain to the current appearance review procedures and did not opine on the Manager’s direction to Town Staff. Most importantly, I never characterized the Town Manager’s actions as violating the Town Charter or any other legal or ethical standard. While I certainly regret ever making the comment and have personally apologized to the Town Manager, the comment addressed his style and approach, which is admittedly different from other Managers I have worked with during my career. However, I never intended to impugn Mr. Cole’s professional reputation, and I do have the utmost respect for his intelligence, communication skills, and analytical ability.

In keeping with my professional training, ethical commitments, and legal obligations, I am proud to provide factual content, promote public transparency, and support thorough vetting of public policy alternatives. I take honesty, integrity, and public service seriously and acknowledge that other Managers Attorney Rubin may have encountered in his career may not have adhered to the same professional standards. I don't sit idle while Town Council members or the community struggle to decipher fact from fiction when navigating complex or controversial public policy issues. To the extent that such ethical, legal, and professional city management commitments distinguish me from others, I take pride in such distinction.

In each issue brought before Town Counsel, I support and promote:

- Sound decision-making supported by facts;
- Understanding of the legal boundaries for our decision-making;
- Respect for our staff and volunteers;
- Public transparency; and
- Adhering to the law and our Oaths of Office.

The Facts: Single-Family Appearance Review

The Facts: Single-family Appearance Review remains broken and still needs to be fixed.

Additional Background

For those interested in becoming an informed participant in the discussion, please refer back to the [September 10](#) and [September 30](#) editions of **The Facts** for information and background necessary to inform one's participation in the public conversation surrounding Single-Family Appearance Review. (Note that because state law is different for multifamily and commercial properties, none of the Appearance Review problems that exist for single-family homes apply to such properties.)

For others simply seeking to understand foundational problems needing to be addressed, here's a concise Reader's Digest version of the issues that no viable Single-Family Appearance Review policy solution can ignore:

1. ***Neither architectural review nor building design elements are legal to use*** for Single-Family Appearance Review.
2. ***Metrics that staff had developed to interpret and apply the vague language in our code were found to be constitutionally impermissible***, so they can no longer be used, either.

3. We are statutorily prohibited from fixing the problem of our code being too vague; **it is not legal for us to make our requirements more restrictive or burdensome** at this time.
4. Against the backdrop of (1), (2), and (3), both our professional staff and objecting members of the Planning and Zoning Board have indicated they are **unable to apply** words like “... proper consideration of setback, scale, mass, bulk, proportion, overall height...[etc.]” to their consideration of Single-Family Appearance Review.

At our last Town Council meeting, Councilmember Halpern indicated that our Planning and Zoning Board should “just do it” or resign. **That statement is below my standards for respect and fails to recognize the simple fact that the direction can’t be ethically or legally executed.**

Absent clear guidance, standards, or applicable metrics, it is an impossible job to ethically, legally, and responsibly execute. **“Ya know it when ya see it” does not meet legal sufficiency standards for subjective reviews, and a variety of legal exposures result from attempting to force the matter, not to mention other practical considerations.**

As of this writing, Town Council has not provided direction on a consensus path forward and has not scheduled the next public discussion, though action is necessary and anticipated.

The Facts: Master Development Plan

The Facts: The next Town Council meeting (October 22) will include Council consideration of applicants having expressed interest in participating in the Master Development Plan Forum Work Session. The method for participant selection, as well as the work session date will be set at that time.

Additional Information

In brief, the Forum Work Session will provide an opportunity for selected participants to speak in detail with the Town Council in a work session format to help inform and shape the Master Development Plan. While participation in the Forum Work Session will be limited to selected participants, the meeting will be open to the public for viewing and broadcast as usual.

The Facts: A statistically valid communitywide survey is in the works. We are working with a professional survey firm, POLCO, to craft the Master Development Plan survey, which will be distributed to every address in Juno Beach by the end of the year. POLCO will be

responsible for collecting responses, analyzing the results, and presenting a final report to the Town Council upon completion.

The Facts: Fun Fact

With each newsletter, I conclude with something of personal interest, not necessarily associated with our local context, ranging from a personal photo I've taken to a recent news article of interest . . . to *who knows what* – the idea is simply to allow each of you to get to know me not just as the Town Manager, but as a person you have some familiarity with, even if we have not had the opportunity to meet in person. Of note, I am available to meet with community members to discuss any topic of interest – just reach out to schedule: rcole@juno-beach.fl.us.

The image to the right was captured this week near JB-5 (Mercury Road).

As I surveyed the landscape for shark teeth that may have been deposited by the recent wave action, I noted this driftwood that had shifted from about ½ mile north to its present location; not even a large chunk of driftwood sits idle while the world changes around it.

In the moment, it occurred to me that every now and then, even a black and white lens on the world is a good and necessary thing, particularly when the skies are dark, the seas are rough, and the waves are pushing.

Thank you for caring enough about Juno Beach local government affairs to read ***The Facts***.

