



Whiting Aviation Park, Navarre pier, beach award

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The Santa Rosa County Commission is set to adopt pricing guidelines for land at the new Whiting Aviation Park; the new Navarre Pier is set to open on June 5; and the Navarre Beach renourishment project won a national award.

Price for Whiting Aviation Park land

Prospective tenants at the Whiting Aviation Park may soon know how much they'll have to pay to be a part of Santa Rosa County's newest industrial park.

The TEAM Santa Rosa Economic Development Council has recommended a pricing plan for land at the 269-acre park which is adjacent to Whiting Field Naval Air Station and has an agreement to access one of the base's runways.

Under TEAM's recommendation, the base rate for land would range from \$35,000 to \$75,000 per acre, depending on its location within the park. The most expansive land would be closest to the runway.

"We have it set up to where there are discounts on the price, based on the average wage rates, the number of jobs and whether they are a defense contractor," TEAM Executive Director Cindy Anderson told the Santa Rosa County Commission on Monday. "Defense contractors are a target industry of Santa Rosa County."

The current average hourly wage in Santa Rosa County is \$14.64.

The discounts are calculated using a point system that considers how much above the average wage the company pays, how many jobs it will create and whether it is a defense contractor. If a company pays an average of 25 percent above the average county wage level, employs more than 100 people and is a defense contractor, the property could be free.

The commission is scheduled to vote on the pricing plan at its regular commission meeting, set for 9 a.m. Thursday at the Santa Rosa County Administrative Office Complex, 6495 U.S. 90, Milton (behind

McDonald's).

Navarre Beach Pier set to open next month

The new Navarre Beach Pier is set to open at 9 a.m. on June 5.

At 1,545 feet long, the pier will be the longest on the Gulf of Mexico.

The pier, which replaces a shorter structure destroyed by hurricanes Ivan and Dennis, cost about \$8.5 million. Most of that was covered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The new pier features an octagon at the end for expanded deep-water fishing capabilities, as well as handicap-accessible rails and water faucets, among other amenities.

For daily use of the pier, an adult will pay \$7 to fish, while those seeking only to walk on the pier will pay \$1. Discounts are provided for anglers 6 to 12 years old, senior citizens or members of the military. Disabled veterans will be allowed to fish for free.

The pier will be managed by Navarre siblings Dorothy Slye and Everett Ratliff Jr., whose father once managed a previous incarnation of the pier.

The pier was constructed by Ed Waters and Sons Contracting of St. Augustine.

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Navarre Beach wins restoration award

The Navarre Beach renourishment project has received the 2010 Best Restored Beach Award from the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association, Santa Rosa County public information officer Joy Tsubooka announced.

The restoration project at Navarre Beach was designed to restore a critical protective buffer to the upland along approximately four miles of Gulf shoreline repeatedly damaged by multiple storms. The project was also designed to re-establish important recreational and economic benefits for the area, including 0.7 miles of beach and dune at the county's Navarre Beach Park.

Construction began in March 2006 and was completed in mid-November 2006 with a final volume of almost 3 million cubic yards.

Santa Rosa County co-sponsored the project with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems. Leaseholders and Santa Rosa County raised the local share of the cost through the establishment of a Municipal Service Benefit Unit on the barrier island.

The three main reasons for restoration are storm protection, habitat restoration and recreation.

The Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems nominated the Navarre project. An independent panel of coastal managers and scientists selected the winners.

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