

PBC Artists Invited to Transform Lake Region Traffic Signal Boxes

Palm Beach County Art in Public Places invites students, emerging and professional artists residing throughout Palm Beach County to participate in Outside the Box, a com-

munity public art project that transforms up to 23 ordinary traffic signal boxes into vibrant artworks. Located in municipal and unincorporated Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay,

public infrastructure provides ideal “canvases” to enhance streetscapes and foster a unique sense of place for residents and visitors to the Lake Region. Artists are invited to cre-

ate original art in diverse media inspired by contemporary and historical attributes of the Lake Region’s natural and human-made environments, communities, recreational activities,

education, arts, culture, industry and more.

Deadline for entry is Feb. 26 at 5 p.m.

“Outside the Box offers artists a chance to create site-specific outdoor public art even if their original artwork medium cannot withstand South Florida weather,” said Palm Beach County Public Art Program Administrator Elayna Toby Singer. “Digitally translating images onto vinyl to wrap traffic signal boxes enables us to transform two-dimensional artworks into outdoor three-dimensional sculptures.”

The Palm Beach County Public Art Committee and the Engineering and Public Works Department Traffic Division will select concept art designs. After artists finalize their artwork, county-hired vendors will photograph all artwork, print images onto adhesive vinyl and install them onto pre-selected FDOT traffic signal boxes. Singer will curate and finalize art locations with input from government representatives in

Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay. Artists will keep their original artwork.

In mid-March 2021, up to 46 artists will be short-listed and receive \$250 to develop a concept art proposal. In mid-May 2021, up to 23 artists will be chosen as finalists and awarded an additional \$750 to complete their art design. Vinyl art wraps of those designs will then be installed on traffic signal boxes in the spring of 2022, culminating with a creative community event and exhibition in winter 2023 featuring the artists with their artworks at the community center in Belle Glade. In addition, a downloadable brochure highlighting artworks and their locations will aid the public in connecting with the Lake Region and experiencing it anew through diverse artist interpretations of place.

Visit online at <http://discover.pbcgov.org/fdo/art/Pages/Calls-to-Artists.aspx> for the complete Call to Artists and application details.

Gov. DeSantis Appoints Three to PBSC District Board of Trustees

LAKE WORTH - The Palm Beach State College District Board of Trustees will welcome three new members to the dais.

Gov. Ron DeSantis has appointed Omar Soto-Jimenez, Patrice Bishop and Dr. Melissa Friedman-Levine to the five-member governing board for varying terms that began December 23. They replace Darcy Davis, Philip Ward III and Barbara Miedema.

Soto-Jimenez, of Boynton Beach, is the chief technology officer at Rybovich boat company. Previously, he was IT area head for EFG Capital International. He

served in and received an honorable discharge from the United States Army Signal Corps. Soto-Jimenez has been a member of the United States Military Academy Association of Graduates and was recognized as Volunteer of the Year by Junior Achievement of the Palm Beaches and Treasurer Coast. He earned his Bachelor of Engineering degree in computer science from the United States Military Academy at West Point and his Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. His term is through May 31, 2022.

Bishop, of Palm Beach Gardens, is executive vice president of Human Resources and Risk Management for Kitson & Partners, a real estate development company. She has been involved with the Society for Human Resource Management, Human Resources Association of Palm Beach County, Executive Women of the Palm Beaches and the Babcock Ranch Foundation. Bishop earned her bachelor’s degree from Western Kentucky University. Her term is through May 31, 2021.

Dr. Friedman-Levine, of Lantana, is a medical

doctor and Fellow of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists practicing at Women’s Health Partnership, LLC of Boca Raton. Her experience includes working with medical students and residents teaching them surgery and the practice of medicine. She earned her bachelor’s degree and Doctor of Medicine from the University of Florida before completing her residency at New York Hospital, Cornell. Her term is through May 31, 2023.

The appointments are subject to confirmation by the Florida Senate.

Revived vacation rental bill signals renewed Florida preemption push

By John Haughey | The Center Square

(The Center Square) – Preemption has been a percolating issue in Florida since 2011, when the Legislature inserted

political penalties into the state’s 1987 preemption law banning municipalities from adopting their own gun laws.

The 2019 legislative session generated nearly 50 preemption bills, pro-

ducing laws that prohibit local governments from banning front-yard gardens, from collecting fees from communication providers for using public rights-of-way, and award attorney fees and

damages to residents who win lawsuits against local governments for taking actions that exceed their constitutional authority.

During the 2020 session, Florida lawmakers pondered more than three dozen preemption bills. Among those adopted:

- The Florida Drug and Cosmetic Act, which prohibits local governments from regulating over-the-counter proprietary drugs or cosmetics. The bill was a response to Key West’s now-defunct ban on sun screens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate.

- The Occupational Freedom & Opportunity Act, which reduces or eliminates regulatory requirements imposed by 18 state boards that license 440,000 Floridians working in a swath of professions, including barbers, Realtors, certified public accountants, engineers and auctioneers.

- Senate Bill 1066, which blocks local governments from increasing impact fees on pending building permits, requires each local government to create an impact fee review board and streamlines the approval processes.

One realm of local regulation leaders have targeted unsuccessfully with preemption bills is short-term or vacation rentals.

Short-term rentals of

homes by Florida residents is an estimated \$31 billion industry, with 6.6 million visitors in 2019 staying in a home rented via a digital platform rather than in a hotel and generating about \$1.2 billion in state, county and local fees and tax revenues.

Sen. Manny Diaz Jr., Hialeah Gardens, filed Senate Bill 522 on Monday. It seeks to place vacation rental regulation exclusively under the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation’s (FDBPR) Division of Hotels and Restaurants.

The bill is similar to Diaz’s 2020 bill, Senate Bill 1128, which languished in committee. A House companion, House Bill 1011, sponsored by Rep. Jason Fischer, Jacksonville, died on the House floor without a vote.

SB 522 would preempt local laws, ordinances and regulations that have been adopted by municipalities since 2011 from allowing or requiring inspections or licensing of all lodging establishments and restaurants.

It also would require licenses from the FDBPR’s Division of Hotels and Restaurants and requires the platforms’ Florida users to abide by state tourism tax codes.

The Legislature’s impetus in streamlining vacation rental regulations comes on behalf of

Floridians who argue local ordinances that restrict their ability to generate income by renting their homes is “taking” under the 5th Amendment, and in response to internet platforms, such as Airbnb and HomeAway, that argue the state’s 488 municipalities have created an inconsistent and burdensome checkerboard of rules and regulations.

Preempting vacation rental regulation is opposed as potentially unconstitutional by local officials across the state, by residents who don’t want vacation rentals in their neighborhoods and by the state’s powerful hotel industry.

Senate Joint Resolution 540, filed Tuesday by Senate Minority Leader Sen. Gary Farmer, Fort Lauderdale, asks lawmakers to place a proposed constitutional amendment before voters in November 2022 to require a supermajority of each chamber to approve a bill that preempts “a subject of legislation” to the state beginning Jan. 1, 2024.

The resolution reads, “The legislature may not, except by a general law passed by a two-thirds vote of each house, preempt to the state a field of regulation or other subject of legislation not preempted to it by this Constitution.”

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