

**STATEMENT BY INDIAN RIVER SHORES BRIAN BAREFOOT  
REGARDING THE CONFLICT ASSESSMENT MEETING**

“I believe the Conflict Assessment Meeting held on August 21 was a productive session, and I thank our staff and consultants for their efforts. I also thank our colleagues in Indian River County and the City of Vero Beach for their participation.

“We still believe the optimal solution to this rate crisis is a sale of the Vero Beach Utility System to Florida Power and Light (FPL). I find it disappointing that the City admitted in the meeting that it has put those negotiations on the back burner. I encourage the City to reconsider that decision and renew its efforts to make the sale happen.

“If the sale to FPL does not go forward, it remains my hope that we can work together through this process to find a solution that brings meaningful, long-term rate relief to our citizens, and provides for proportionate utility authority representation.

“The objective of this first session was to assess the issues involved and discuss opportunities for further negotiations to resolve our differences. I was pleased to see that all parties involved have agreed to ongoing discussions about these issues. The next public meeting was scheduled for 9 a.m. Friday, September 26, at which point the City team clearly indicated it plans to present proposals that would close the rate differential ‘substantially.’

“As we move forward, it is important for our residents to know that the Town Council is fully committed to seeking significant, long term electric rate relief for our residents.