



**April 2025
Volume 2**

Newsletter

What's Inside

The President's Corner

I hope everyone's spring is off to a great start and I want to let you know that the chapter has expanded its social media presence, please follow "FPZA Surfcoast Chapter" on Facebook and LinkedIn.

We're gearing up to provide you with a full slate of programming. Our next event on the slate is the return of our lunch and learn program. On April 11th, Sheeba West from our friends at Dix. Hite + Partners will be discussing Resilient Parks & Communities where she'll highlight the resiliency of parks as green infrastructure for public benefit. Visit the Chapter Website at fpzasurfcoast.org and register as we'd love to see you all at our lunch and learn events. May 9th, we're happy to host Samantha West as she presents on Volusia County's new Low Impact Development ordinance which culminates a multiyear effort by their team to offer incentive strategies to help promote sustainable development. Our Community Service efforts continue on May 15th with an Adopt-a-Road Clean-up at our adopted road at Orange Camp Road, so we'd love for you to join us as well.

That gets us up to the 72nd Annual FPZA Conference in St. Augustine. Session Proposals, Award Submissions, and Student Scholarship deadlines are coming up quickly, so make sure to get any submittals in by April 18th, as we'd love the Surfcoast membership to offer sessions for the state organization and be recognized for your hard work. For general conference registration, early registration ends on May 4th, so make sure you get registered on time to get the best rate. Since St. Augustine is so close to Flagler and Volusia County, we'd love for the Chapter to have a strong presence as we are

hoping to win the coveted FPZA Outstanding Chapter of the Year award.

This year, our legislators have been busy with a number of bills that may expand preemptions relating to planning and zoning that target an effective date of July 1. We've been tracking a number of such bills and working on scheduling a Legislative Update session after the conference to keep you aware of which bills are ultimately adopted at the end of the legislative session.

Lastly, I wanted to let the membership know that Deb La Croix has resigned from the Board as Secretary. We wish her well and thank her for her years of service to the Surfcoast Chapter. Helen LaValley briefly took on the interim duties. After reaching out for interest in filling the position, I appointed Rebekah Cottle of Zev Cohen & Associates to serve as the Chapter Secretary for the remainder of the term. The Chapter Board ratified this appointment at our March Board Meeting a couple weeks ago. We wish Rebekah success in the role, as the position is paramount to our chapter's communication.

Michael Hanson, President



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UPCOMING EVENTS!!! Luncheon Programs

- April 11, 2025
Resilient Parks and Communities
- May 9, 2025
Low Impact Development
- June 2025 Date TBD
Legislative Update
- July 25, 2025
Advanced Air Mobility
- August 22, 2025
Resiliency Session
- October 2025 Date TBD
NW Square DeLand Walk & Learn Tour
- November 21, 2025
Dark Sky Initiative

Community Service Project

- May 15, 2025
Adopt-a-Road Clean-up

FPZA State Conference

- June 4-6, 2025
Casa Monica Hotel & Spa, St. Augustine

Adopt-a-Road Cleanup Overview

February 21, 2025

By John G. Thomson, Newsletter Editor



Pictured from Left are Joe Ruiz, Danalee Petyk, John G. Thomson, Scott Ashley and Matt West



Joe Ruiz and Danalee Petyk Picking up Trash

On Friday, February 21, 2025, the Surfcoast Chapter held our third Adopt-a-Road program cleanup event. The Surfcoast Chapter previously volunteered as a partner with the Adopt-a-Road program with Volusia County as one of our community service projects. The Chapter is responsible for scheduling periodic roadway trash cleanups for the segment of Orange Camp Road between Blue Lake Avenue and I-4.

Several Surfcoast members met at 3:30PM at the Victoria Park Village Center and donned the yellow vests and pick-up supplies provided by the Volusia County Road and Bridge Department. The folks volunteering included Danalee Petyk, Scott Ashley, Matt West, Joe Ruiz and yours truly. After a couple of hours picking up trash along the roadway, the gang relaxed at Murph's Patio Bar and Grill at the Village Center for a debriefing over some hors d'oeuvres and beverages provided by the Chapter.

Be sure to volunteer for the next upcoming Adopt-a-Road cleanup scheduled for May 15, 2025! See the flyer on page 5 for more information.



Pictured from Left at Murph's are Joe Ruiz, Matt West, Danalee Petyk and Scott Ashley

RESILIENT PARKS & COMMUNITIES

Join us as we discuss designing park spaces that maximize environmental, social, and economic benefits, with a focus on parks as green infrastructure for community resilience. We will also explore strategies for adapting parks to inland flooding and storm surge.

April 11, 2025
11:30 AM TO 1:30 PM

LOCATION

The Center at Deltona
1640 Martin Luther King Blvd.

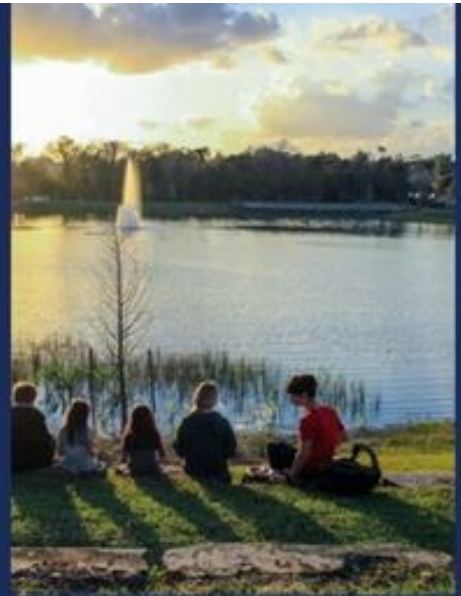
- ✓ \$25 for FPZA Members
- ✓ \$35 for Everyone Else
- ✓ Price includes LUNCH
- ✓ 1.5 CM credits pending



REGISTER ON-LINE AT:
WWW.FPZASURFCOAST.ORG

SPEAKER:

Sheeba West, PLA, ISA, ASLA, Principal
with Dix. Hite + Partners



LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT



Discover how Volusia County is reducing regulatory barriers and promoting sustainable, resilient development through its newly adopted, voluntary, and incentivized LID ordinance. This presentation highlights key milestones, interdepartmental coordination, and the creation of a new LID Guidance Manual.

SPEAKER: Samantha West, Volusia County Sustainability & Resilience Mgr.



FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025

STARTS FROM 11:30AM TO 1:30PM | UF/IFAS EXTENSION OFFICE AT
3100 E. NEW YORK AVE. DELAND

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

\$25 MEMBERS

\$35 NON MEMBERS

LUNCH INCLUDED

1.5 CREDITS

REGISTER AT:

WWW.FPZASURFCOAST.ORG



Join Us for our Adopted Roadway Cleanup!



Location: Orange Camp Road
[S. Blue Lake Ave to Frontage Rd.]

Date: May 15, 2025

Time: 3:30pm to 5:00pm

Cleaning Supplies will be provided

***Meet-up at Murph's for Post-cleanup celebration**

***Check-in at Victoria Park
Village Center (Murph's)
1431 Orange Camp Road
Deland, FL 32724**



Memoriam to Sans Lassiter

By: Current and former Staff of the Lassiter Transportation Group



Robert Sans Lassiter, 70, of Flagler Beach, Florida passed away on January 28, 2025, after a brief illness. He was born on September 17, 1954, in Oakridge, Tennessee.

Sans graduated from the University of Florida in 1978 with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a master's degree in civil engineering. On July 26, 1975, he married Roberta McDaniel, the love of his life, in Leesburg, Florida. In 1996, Sans and Roberta moved from Orlando to the Volusia/Flagler County area.

He dedicated 46 years to his career as a civil engineer and was the President and Founder of Lassiter Transportation Group (LTG), which he established in 2002.

A dedicated member of his community, Sans was actively involved in numerous organizations, including Team Volusia Economic Development Corporation

(EDC), the Volusia and Flagler County Association for Responsible Development (VCARD/FCARD), the Daytona Beach Partnership Association, the Daytona Beach Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency, the International Speedway Boulevard Coalition, the Regional Coordinating Council for Central Florida, and the School Advisory Committee for Champion Elementary School. He was also a member of the International and State Chapters of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and a regular supporter of the Surfcoast Chapter of the Florida Planning and Zoning Association. A true friend to the planning community, his contributions left a lasting impact.

Sans had a deep love for adventure and a wide range of hobbies, including hunting, fishing, camping, woodworking, kayaking, collecting antiques, riding motorcycles, cheering on Gator football, spending time with family, traveling, researching family history, flying planes, watching westerns, golfing, and boating.

Generous with both his time and resources, Sans was always willing to drop everything to help those in need – whether family, friends, or strangers. His outgoing nature and wild sense of humor made him a friend to everyone he met.

He embraced life with passion and a sense of adventure, always eager to discover what lay around the next corner, over the next mountain, or down the next road or canal. Driven, industrious, and full of curiosity, Sans pursued every idea that captured his attention with enthusiasm.

Sans' legacy will live on in the community he loved and served so well.

Newsletter Editor Note: As referenced in the memoriam above, Sans was a key supporter, member and friend to our Surfcoast Chapter and the planning community in general. As our first chapter President after we reinstituted back in 2009, I could call always depend on Sans for advice and assistance with our activities. It was with great sadness when I heard of his passing, and that sentiment is shared by our Chapter Board as well.

PLANNER PROFILE

The FPZA Surfcoast Chapter Introduces: Emilio O'Brien, Senior Planner with the City of Daytona Beach

Give us a little background on where you are from, and how you arrived here. I was born at Halifax Hospital and raised in Daytona Beach. After earning a degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Florida Atlantic University (FAU), I recognized Volusia County's growth potential and returned to the area. I immediately launched my career as a planner with Zev Cohen & Associates.

Tell us about your family. My parents have lived in Daytona Beach for over thirty years. My brother, Austin, serves as the Agency Director at CoAdvantage in Birmingham, Alabama. My mom is a librarian/media specialist with Volusia County Schools, while my dad, an entrepreneur, is a CPA with nearly 30 years of experience in the marketing industry.



How did you become a Planner? My architecture professor explained a typical development project, with architects at the bottom, followed by general contractors, with the developers at the top. That made me think of a planning elective I took, and I wanted to be part of the bigger picture. Without hesitation, I switched gears and began my journey as an urban planner.

What response do people give when you tell them you are a planner? When I tell people I'm a planner, their knee-jerk reaction is to ask questions that go beyond an elevator speech, because planning is dynamic, and often requires further explanation.

What improvements would you like to see in the community you live and work? I want to see more educated individuals who grew up in the area stay and contribute to the community, reversing the brain drain and inspiring future generations to start their journey locally. By fostering quality development, we can shift the focus from simply living to truly thriving in the area.

What are your hobbies and how do you enjoy spending your free time? My hobbies include working out, riding my bike, fishing, landscaping around my house, going to Orlando Magic games, and spending time with my dog, Bronny.

What is your favorite part of your job? My role with the City of Daytona Beach enables me to work alongside other planners, contributing to the City's growth and development to help build a better community.

What is the least favorite part of your job? Having spent most of my career in the private sector, I enjoy being part of the design process. As a reviewer, though, part of my job is to critique others' designs. At times, I'm tempted to dive into AutoCAD and design the project myself, but I know that's not practical.

What are the goals you hope to attain in your planning career? As a Daytona Beach native, my goal is to activate the City and reduce its reliance on cars. I also aim to assist in planning Bright Line and SunRail stations, as well as the transit-oriented development that follows. Yes, it's all very aspirational, but what is planning without a vision?

SURFCOAST MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

Kayla Burney. Kayla has moved onto the private sector as a Sustainability Coordinator with Partner Engineering and Science, Inc. after formerly serving as a Planner with the City of DeBary. Best wishes with your new position

Christopher Carson. A big Surfcoast Chapter welcome to Christopher who is now a Senior Planner with the Planning Division for the City of DeLand. Christopher was formerly with the City of Lake Mary.

Laura Costa. Laura was promoted to Planner I from her previous position as a Zoning Technician with the Growth and Resource Department of Volusia County. Congratulations are in order!

Rebekah Cottle. Rebekah is now a Senior Planner with Zev Cohen after serving as a Planner II with the Volusia County Department of Growth and Resource Department. She recently became an officer with the Surfcoast Chapter as our Secretary. Good luck with you new position and thank you for stepping up to serve on the Board!

Michael Lopez. Michael is the newest Senior Planner with the City of DeBary after formerly serving as a Senior Planner with the City of Lake Mary. Welcome to our Surfcoast Chapter!

Kim Reading. Congratulations to Kim who was recently promoted to the position of Land Development Manager with the Growth and Resource Department of Volusia County. Kim was formerly a Planner III with the Department. Way to go!

Kelly Tucker. Kelly is now a Planner I after her promotion from her former position as an Office assistant with the Growth and Resource Management Department of Volusia County. A big Surfcoast Shout Out to Kelly!

Matt West. Matt is now with the City of Deltona as a Planning Manager after serving as the Planning Director with the Lassiter Transportation Group. Matt was previously selected as the 2019 Surfcoast Chapter Member of the Year. Best wishes with your new position and thank you for all your support!

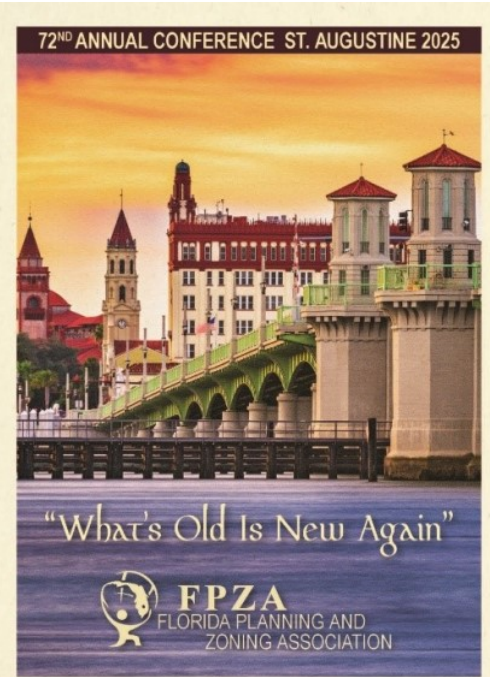
2025 FPZA State Conference Update

By Helen LaValley, Professional Development Officer

We hope to see you at this year's State Conference being held in historic St. Augustine from June 4th through the 6th at the Casa Monica Resort. Come experience the history of the City!

This year's theme is **"What's Old is New Again"**. Think about the planning profession and how planning concepts or development trends come back around or are renewed. Sometimes the answers to current challenges can be found by revisiting the past. The session topics will explore the intersection of preservation with historic modern planning.

The Conference Committee is finalizing the sessions and scheduling informative and vibrant discussions about relevant and timely topics. Confirmed topics include AI in Planning, Historic Preservation, Small Town Planning, Economy in Motion, Legislative Updates, and Understanding and Applying the Creative Process to your Career. The sessions will provide our planners and colleagues with CM credits including Law, Ethics, Historic Preservation, Professional Development, and Sustainability & Resiliency. There are a few more spots open, so submit your proposals soon by downloading the application at www.fpza.org/news-and-events/annual-conference/. The deadline to submit has been extended to April 18th.



We want to thank our sponsors for their continued support of FPZA. We certainly have and appreciate our sponsors and members that actively support and participate in our events. To those who would like to participate as a sponsor for this year's conference please see the flyer and application on pages 12-13.

The State Board is in the final stages of conference planning! The 'welcome reception' will be hosted on Wednesday evening at the hotel with an offsite reception on Thursday at the White Room. We have secured Mr. Jason King as our keynote speaker. He will give the keynote at our Thursday, June 5th, lunch. Mr. King is the author of several books including *The Climate Planner* and his most recent, *The Equity Planner*. Finally, the prestigious State Awards luncheon is on Friday. The conference committee is accepting award nominations until April 18th. I know there are outstanding plans, projects, and people who deserve recognition, so send in your nomination. See the following pages 10-11 for more information for submitting your nomination.



Casa Monica Resort and Spa
Conference Location in St. Augustine

The mobile tours include a relaxing Wednesday afternoon train ride through St. Augustine with a focus on historic preservation. The Thursday mobile tours will highlight Flagler College and the Lightner Museum with a walking tour in the morning. The afternoon mobile tour will be a guided tour of St. Augustine Lighthouse and if you are up to it – a climb to the top of the Lighthouse!

Come and enjoy! There will definitely be something for everyone! We believe the historic setting of St. Augustine is ideal for promoting accessible and walkable amenities. As the conference information is updated and becomes available you can visit www.fpza.org for more details.



2025 PLANNING AWARDS

DEADLINE: April 18, 2025

It's time again for the Florida Planning and Zoning Awards! The FPZA Awards recognize outstanding land development and public/private sector planning statewide. For several decades, the awards program has been the centerpiece of FPZA's acknowledgment and promotion of best practices in planning throughout Florida.

FPZA encourages members to submit award applications. Projects must have been approved or completed during the last calendar year (2024). The categories are as follows:

1. **Outstanding Development/Design Excellence:** Newly planned, designed, or built "brick and mortar" projects that demonstrate superior form and function.
2. **Outstanding Redevelopment:** Reuse of a site, facility or structure.
3. **Outstanding Study/Plan:** Reports, studies, plans, documents, planning analysis, etc.
4. **Infrastructure:** Plans or projects that skillfully blend facilities or services into the community.
5. **Innovation:** Project or development that is unusual or ahead of its time.
6. **Education:** Plans or efforts that effectively promote planning and zoning best practices.
7. **Grassroots/Non-Profit Initiative:** Recognizes a nonprofit or neighborhood organization that has furthered the quality of life through the planning process within its community, such as: new or redevelopment, infrastructure, outreach, cultural events, education, health, festivals, tourism, and environmental.
8. **Sustainability:** Plans or projects that improve on and harmonize with the natural environment and reduce energy costs.
9. **Outstanding Elected Official:** Local, state or federal elected official who champions sound planning practices and accomplishes positive gains in areas of smart growth, environmental preservation, sustainable development, or equity planning.
10. **Outstanding Journalist:** Journalist who effectively and accurately puts forth information about planning and zoning issues to the public.
11. **Outstanding FPZA Chapter:** The chapter that increases or maintains their membership, achieves FPZA goals, and provides quality programs for its chapter members.
12. **George W. Simons, Jr. Award:** Candidate must be a current member of FPZA; evaluation is based upon the person's work and efforts over time, rather than just for the past year; and evaluation will also be based upon work directed towards the stated purposes, mission and goals of FPZA.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each award entry must state how the development, study, project, design, innovation, chapter or person meets one or more of the following purposes of FPZA:

- To promote cooperation among official planning and zoning boards and commissions, civic bodies, citizens, technicians and students interested in planning and zoning in Florida.
- To cultivate and stimulate interest in planning and zoning in the State of Florida.
- To encourage the observance of sound planning and zoning practices.
- To furnish information, advice and assistance to its members and provide a medium to exchange information, advice and assistance among them.
- To engage in research and issue publications on planning and zoning and related matters.
- To promote education concerning matters related to planning and zoning.



2025 PLANNING AWARDS

DEADLINE: April 18, 2025

In addition, each award entry will be judged based upon the following criteria:

Background: History or context within which the project is significant; indication of expenditure of time, type of personnel, budget, population and size of jurisdiction.

Innovativeness: Use of an original concept or refinement of an existing technique or procedure.

Effectiveness: Project/strategy impact on the subject matter.

Implementation: Project/Strategy method or application to the subject matter; adaptability to changing conditions; and consideration of and solution to practical constraints.

Comprehensiveness: Scope and consideration of project/strategy in relationship to all aspects of the subject matter.

Clarity: Clearness of the award entry application.

SUBMITTAL PROCEDURES

- A cover letter that states the name of the nomination, the award that is sought, the name of the recipient(s), and the name, phone number, address and email of the applicant.
- A brief summary to be used for ceremony purposes, if selected. (100 words or less)
- A brief description of the nomination for the award relevant to the award category. (500 words or less)
- A narrative of the nomination which clearly demonstrates the evaluation criteria, as outlined on page one (1) of this "Call for Entries" (1,000 words or less).
- Applicable images and graphics representing the projects, in JPEG or PDF format.
- Letter(s) of recommendation.
- Nomination submittal packages on CD preferred but not required.

Submit nominations to: FPZA Administrator via email –info@fpza.org

NOTE: For the Outstanding Journalist and Chapter Awards, in lieu of the above submittal procedures, only a one (1) page statement in support of the nominee is required, while further supporting information is encouraged.

NOTE: For the George W. Simons, Jr. Award, the nomination application must be submitted by an FPZA member with a statement by FPZA member(s), however; additional endorsements included in the application may be from non-members.

The FPZA Awards Committee reserves the right to reclassify the category for any submittal.

Award recipients will be announced at the Awards Ceremony scheduled for Friday, June 6, 2025.



2025 FPZA State Conference Sponsorship Tiers

Blackbeard \$5,000

- Two full conference registrations
- Exhibitors' booth space
- XL logo on all promo material
- Full-page ad in FPZA Newsletter



Captain Kidd \$2,500

- One full conference registration
- Exhibitors' booth space
- Large logo on all promo material
- 1/2- page ad in FPZA Newsletter



Anne Bonny \$1,000

- Exhibitors' booth space
- Medium logo on all promo material
- 1/4- page ad in FPZA Newsletter



Calico Jack \$500

- Small logo on all promo material
- Business card-size ad in FPZA Newsletter



Black Bart \$250

- Small logo on all promo material




On behalf of the Florida Planning & Zoning Association, I am pleased to invite you to share in the goals of our organization to promote and encourage observance of sound planning and zoning practices in our state through sponsorship of the 2025 State Conference. This year's theme is ***"What's Old is New Again!"***.

This year's conference will be held June 4th through June 6th at the Casa Monica Resort in the heart of historic St. Augustine.

The annual FPZA State Conference brings together planning professionals from various disciplines, including public and private sector planners, developers, attorneys, elected officials, engineers, citizens, environmentalists, and design professionals. We are working to ensure the 2025 conference provides an opportunity to advertise and network with public and private land planning professionals around the state, as well as, provide outstanding educational sessions while supporting FPZA.

Your sponsorship is also an opportunity to promote your company's name and recognition through the State Conference, FPZA activities, the Overview newsletter, and the awards program. Your conference sponsorship is used to defray the cost of registration and encourage student participation at minimal or no cost. Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please contact me directly at (386) 212-1942 or email: colleen@ldrgdaytona.com with any questions.

Respectfully,

Colleen Miles

Conference Sponsorship Committee Chair



FPZA

FLORIDA PLANNING AND
ZONING ASSOCIATION

72nd ANNUAL FPZA STATE CONFERENCE

SPONSORSHIP TIERS

June 4 – 6, 2025 Casa Monica Resort. St. Augustine, FL

What's Old is New Again

The Florida Planning and Zoning Association thanks you for considering sponsorship of this event. Sponsorships can be paid on-line at www.fpza.org. Or you may make checks payable to the: Florida Planning and Zoning Association and mail this form with payment to:

FPZA
Attn. VP of Finance
2014 Edgewater Drive, #150
Orlando, FL 32804

Please ensure sufficient time for inclusion in the print advertisements by mailing or paying on-line before: **April 18, 2025**. Please note that sponsorship logos received after this date may not be included in conference material, however, will be included in the Association's Overview Newsletter.

Digital media used for print and promotional materials must be sent in high resolution JPG format by email to: info@fpza.org.

Name _____

Organization's Name _____

Mailing address _____

Phone _____

Contact Email _____

Website _____

Please check the sponsorship box that applies:

☐ \$5,000 Blackbeard

☐ \$2,500 Captain Kid

☐ \$1,000 Anne Bonny

☐ \$500 Calico Jack

☐ \$250 Black Bart

(or) **Pay On-Line at:**
www.fpza.org

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Scott Ashley
Past FPZA Surfcoast
President



The Surfcoast Chapter of FPZA promotes cooperation among official planning and zoning boards or commissions, civic bodies, citizens, technicians and students interested in planning and zoning throughout Volusia County.

SURFCOAST CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2025

Michael Hanson, AICP * President
Merylene Thomas * Vice President
Rebekah Cottle * Secretary
Becky Mendez, AICP * Treasurer
John G. Thomson, AICP Retired * Newsletter Editor
Helen LaValley * Professional Development Officer
Colleen Miles * Immediate Past President

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Scott Ashley, AICP
Danalee Petyk, AICP
Patty Rippey, AICP
Joseph Ruiz

CHAPTER STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael Hanson, AICP
Colleen Miles
Helen LaValley

~ ~ ~ ~



Treasurer's Report

Becky Mendez, AICP

Fiscal Year 2025 started January 1, 2025, with a beginning balance of \$5,860.87. The ending balance as of March 31, 2025, was \$6,733.99, which included \$1,062.50 in revenue and \$189.38 in expenses.