



## **IRWA Chapter 26 Winter Symposium: Agenda**

### **February 24th, 2023 Tampa, Florida “Hotel Tampa Riverwalk” (8 CEU’s awarded)**

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8:00-9:00am **Breakfast and Networking**

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9:00-9:05am **Opening Remarks – Mark Mendez, IRWA Chapter 26 President**

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9:05-9:45am **Sophia O’Keefe, Director, Infrastructure Public Engagement- Duke Energy “Osprey New 230-kV Transmission Line Project: Proactive Public Engagement & Environmental Justice”**



Sophia O’Keefe is Director, Infrastructure Public Engagement for Duke Energy. Duke Energy provides energy services to approximately 8 million customers in six states including Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. In her role, Sophia oversees stakeholder engagement efforts for all transmission, customer delivery, renewable and new generation projects in Florida. Her team works to proactively engage internal and external stakeholders to inform communities and address community questions and concerns from project inception through restoration. The goal is to collaborate with communities in building large infrastructure projects and incorporating that feedback into project execution. Sophia has been with Duke Energy for 22 years and has served in several roles over her career in the energy industry. She has held roles in Government & Community Relations, Transmission & Distribution Services, Project Controls and Resource & Project Management. Prior to joining Duke Energy, she worked in the healthcare and tourism industries in marketing, communications and public relations.

Sophia and her husband love to travel both within the United States and internationally. She enjoys staying active by playing pickleball and spending time with her friends and family, including her 26 amazing nieces and nephews.

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9:45-10:25am **Katie Hudson, Director of Right of Way & Utility- Bowman “Electric Distribution Storm Hardening”**



Katie Hudson is a Director of ROW & Utility and a Principal at Bowman. She has extensive experience in hiring, training, and leading teams for high volume right-of-way projects and programs. Currently, she leads teams throughout Florida working with electric utility providers on fast-paced acquisitions for long-term storm hardening programs, among other projects. Prior to developing the Southeast ROW market for Bowman, Katie led a right-of-way technician group and provided project management in the northern Virginia area for transportation projects.

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10:25-10:40am

**Break**

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10:40-11:15am

**David Bell, SR/WA, Director-Contract Land Staff** “The Collision of I.I.J.A (INFRASTRUCTURE BILL) and a Reduced Workforce in the Right of Way Industry”



David has over 29 years in the Right of Way profession having completed projects in both the transportation and electric utility industries. He began his career with Florida Department of Transportation where he received extensive training on the acquisition of land rights on public projects. He has been an active member of Alabama Chapter 24 of the International Right of Way Association since 1999 earning his SR/WA in 2001. He has served in all chapter leadership positions and currently serves on the International Finance Committee, International Investment Committee, and Region 6 Representative to the International Public Agency Committee. David joined Contract Land Staff in 2019 and currently serves as Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer - Public Infrastructure Sector for the CLS Family of Companies.

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11:15-12:00pm

**Randall (Randy) Rex, MAI, Senior Managing Director of Cushman & Wakefield Regional, Inc.** “Dispute and Litigation Support”



Randall L. Rex is Senior Managing Director of Cushman & Wakefield Regional, Inc. for the firm’s Valuation & Advisory (V&A) group. Mr. Rex is also a member of the Dispute and Litigation Support Group. Mr. Rex’s current responsibilities include valuation and consultation on real estate and litigation valuation. He has been in the real estate profession since 1981 and joined Cushman & Wakefield in 2022.

Mr. Rex has completed appraisal reports throughout the United States and Caribbean for individuals, attorneys, institutional investors, lending institutions and various federal, state, and local governmental agencies for valuation and consulting assignments that include commercial properties, industrial properties, office buildings, multifamily housing, golf courses, mobile home parks, appraisal reviews and special purpose properties.

Mr. Rex has an active litigation valuation and consulting expertise. His trial experience includes cases involving condemnation, inverse condemnation, Burt Harris Act, construction defects, deficiency valuations, partnership disputes, among others. He has been retained by both plaintiff and defendant attorneys.

Mr. Rex also has a significant amount of experience as a Court Appointed Receiver throughout Florida. He has managed a number of assets including but not limited to resort town home communities, retail commercial shopping centers, office buildings, residential communities and special use properties.

Over the years, Mr. Rex has developed several residential communities in the Orlando Area. Those include Maitland Club, Lake Adair Place and River Oaks Landing. Additionally, he is active in Real Estate Brokerage and sales.

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12:00-1:00pm

**Lunch and networking**

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1:00-1:30pm

**Gwendolyn “Gwen” W. Myers, Hillsborough County Commissioner “It’s About the People”**



Commissioner Gwen Myers is a native and lifelong resident of Hillsborough County. She was elected to the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), District 3 November 2020 and re-elected November 2022 to serve her constituents for four more years. She serves as the Vice Chair of the BOCC and has long been an advocate for improving transportation, affordable housing, and health care in the county. Commissioner Myers utilizes the theme, **“It’s About the People”**. Commissioner Myers has a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration/Accounting from Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University (FAMU). She is married to Randolph T. Myers, Sr. and has one adult stepson. Since sworn into office, Commissioner Myers continues to work hard fulfilling her campaign promise, **“It’s About the People”**.

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1:30-2:05pm

**Pete Waldman, Esq., Partner- WSHCB Law “Analyzing Eminent Domain Cases”**



Pete Waldman represents private property owners and businesses in eminent domain, inverse condemnation, and real property valuation litigation, as well as the development, implementation, and execution of capital improvement programs and projects.

Pete is a former Assistant General Counsel for the Florida Department of Transportation. In that role, he litigated multi-million dollar damage cases, served as lead counsel in a variety of jury trials, bench trials, and mediations, and collaborated with Department officials, committees, and staff on all aspects of property acquisition. Pete gained an overall perspective of the policies and procedures surrounding property acquisition and its related components of valuation, engineering, land planning, business damages, relocation and marketing.

Now, Pete represents private property owners and businesses in all aspects of eminent domain, pre-suit property acquisition and real property litigation. He handles property acquisition matters initiated by the state, federal, local and regional governments. Pete also represents governmental entities and utilities in eminent domain, property acquisition, project design and engineering matters, and has assisted municipalities with the development of right of way programs.



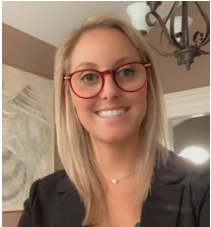
Pete has a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning and uses his planning expertise in litigating land use and real property cases on behalf of both private sector and public sector clients.

Prior to becoming an attorney, Pete served four years in the United States Marine Corps.

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2:05-2:45pm

**Sara Boggs and Florence Green, "Planning Your Next Really Big Move"**



**Sara Boggs, RWP, R/W-RAC, FDOT State Relocation Manager**

Sarah has worked at the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for eight years. She began as a R/W trainee and graduated from the FDOT Training Program in 2016. Since then, Sarah has worked in various roles as an agent, project manager, and acquisition & relocation administrator. She is a certified Right of Way Professional (RWP) and Relocation Professional (R/W-RAC) and currently serves as FDOT State Relocation Assistance Program Manager.



**Florence Green, SR/WA, R/W-RAC, ATKINS**

Florence has been in the Right of Way Industry for 29 + years. She began her Right of Way career as a R/W trainee and has worked in various roles as District Relocation Administrator, Project Manager, Program Manager to Deputy Real Estate Manager. She is a certified Senior Right of Way Professional (SR/WA), Senior Relocation Professional (R/W-RAC), and Instructor for the International Right of Way Association (IRWA) She has served in various roles with the IRWA in South Florida as Secretary, Education Chair, Vice President and President. Florence was the recipient of the AASHTO recognition for Excellence in Leadership.

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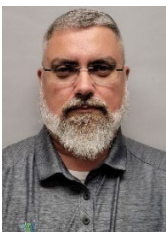
2:45-3:00pm

**Afternoon break**

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3:00-3:20pm

**Christopher Bernardo, Manager-National Site Development, PeakNet, LLC/Duke Energy  
"Collocations and Small Cell Attachments in Right of Way"**



Based in St. Petersburg, Florida, Christopher oversees the land development of new tower construction, the acquisition of easements and land rights in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky. Christopher also helps to facilitate the development of small cell attachments on Duke Energy owned streetlights and distribution poles.

Christopher has been in the wireless industry since 2003 and with PeakNet since 2011.

3:20-4:00pm

**Wade Brown and Wendi McAleese, Facing the Storm: The Effects of Hurricane Ian on Infrastructure Projects**



**D Wade Brown, SR/WA, R/W-RAC, R/W-NAC, President, American Acquisition Group**

Mr. Brown is the Principal Owner and CEO for American Acquisition Group, responsible for oversight of all fiscal and production operations, since 2004. He has 30 years of experience in the right of way/ eminent domain field and is qualified as an Acquisition/Relocation Project Manager under the Uniform Act for Departments of Transportation in multiple states, as well as local municipalities throughout Florida, Alabama and North Carolina. He is a licensed Real Estate Broker in Florida, Texas, Alabama and North Carolina, State Certified General Real Estate Appraiser in the States of Florida and North Carolina, and qualified as an expert witness in Florida Circuit Courts for appraisal and acquisition. Mr. Brown is a senior member of the IRWA, certified in Relocation Assistance and Negotiation Acquisitions. He has served the IRWA since the mid-1990's in the positions of two campaigns as Chapter 26 President, and as the Region 6 Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Brown is also a founding member and former Chair of the national Right of Way Consultants Council.



**Wendi McAleese, President and Senior Title Examiner, American Government Service Corporation**

Wendi has over 25 years of experience in title review and closings, specializing in right-of-way research and government transactions. Wendi has handled title services for the recovery efforts in Louisiana as the result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as the New York Rising program in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Wendi is a licensed Title Agent and licensed Real Estate Agent and has recently been appointed as a Consumer Member of the Florida Board of Professional Surveyors and Mappers. Wendi has been active in the IRWA for over 15 years, acting as President of Florida Sunshine Chapter 26 and presenting at Chapter, Regional and International Conferences. She is also a member of the Right-of-Way Consultants Council.

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**Closing Remarks – Mark Mendez, IRWA Chapter 26 President**

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