Contract battle continues over Sandridge

FORT PIERCE, Fla. — A bitter contract bidding battle last February involving the \$1.95 million expansion of Sandridge Golf Course has exploded into federal grand jury deliberations in the local U.S. District Courthouse.

Jurors reportedly heard evidence involving Indian River County Commissioner Doug Scurlock, one of the commissioners who voted to award the project to Guettler & Sons, a Fort Pierce contracting firm.

Another bidder on the project claims Scurlock had previous business ties with Guettler.

Prince Contracting Co. of Palmetto, the apparent project low bidder, is suing Scurlock, Guettler

and the County Commission over the vote, claiming Scurlock had a conflict of interest

Federal agents have been questioning witnesses and serving subpoenas in an attempt to collect evidence of possible corruption by "one or more" Indian River County officials.

Scurlock in mid-April resigned as chairman of the Land Acquisition Advisory Committee, the Finance Advisory Committee and the Solid Waste Disposal District.

Guettler firm president Phillip Guettler twice has appeared before the grand jury. Representatives of other firms with alleged or proven ties to Scurlock also have testified.

Judge rules safety net stays

PLANO, Tex. — The 20-foot safety net Catharine and Joseph Mansour erected to stem the flow

of stray golf balls into their yard and home may stay, State DistrictJudgeJohnRoach has ruled.

Errant tee shots from the eighth hole at Chase Oaks Golf Club have shattered several windows at the

Mansour home. The city termed the protective screen a fence, which exceeded the eight-foot high limit. Judge Roach ruled that a variance in one instance "was not contrary to the public interest."

Neighbors of the Mansours in the same line of fire are exploring similar safeguards.

Because the parfive doglegs to the right, some players try to cut the corner.

The Mansour home is a "hazard" fancied sluggers think they can carry. Too many fall short.

City ponders future of course

SARASOTA, Fla. — "Fairways cross fairways, the layout is basically screwy," said Sarasota Mayor Jack Gurney of the American Course, part of the municipal Bobby Jones Golf Complex and renovated in1988 for \$1.8 million.

City Commissioner Nora Patterson put it more strongly. "We just got taken to the cleaners. The project was badly done and a waste of money."

The city considered a claim against Prince Contracting, but concluded it did not have sufficient evidence to proceed.

The renovation saddled the golf complex with debt payments of about \$200,000 a year.

Since renovation, losses have ranged from \$21,706 to \$216,175 a year, Gurney said. Course options now range from leasing it to a private entity to "doing nothing."

Frenchman's Bend on the legal mend

MONROE, La. — Investors Bishop Johnston and Mary Ann Johnston of Monroe and Larry Jones of Sterlington plan to revive the luxurious Frenchman's Bend development which ran afoul of lawsuits in the 1980s.

Additional investors will be sought for further development, which could include an Arnold Palmer golf course, clubhouse, recreational facilities, a lake, more lots and a bridge across the Bayou DeSiard north of Monroe to provide access to U. S. 165.

Planners approve Hunter's layout

PASO ROBLES, Calif. — The county Planning Commission has unanimously approved a golfcourse on Highway 46 east of this city.

Environmentalists will appeal the decision to the Board of Supervisors, claiming the course will cause destruction of many plants, particularly blue oaks.

The commission recommended that it monitor oaks preservation during course development. Ken Hunter proposes to build the course.

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