

Executive Summary  
Estero Council of Community Leaders Meeting  
December 12, 2014

**Upcoming Legislative Session  
District 76 Rep. Ray Rodrigues**



The new Senate President and Senate Speaker have both stated their goal is a statewide water policy; however, no specific details are available yet. Water quality has been on the agenda due to problems associated with Lake Okeechobee and the deterioration of springs in north Florida.

Another issue to be addressed will be expanding opportunities for children with disabilities. During the last two sessions, educational opportunities for special needs children from K-12 were addressed. This session, efforts will be made to expand opportunities to post-secondary children.

The state is projected to have a surplus again this year, so the debate between the House and the Senate will be what to do with that surplus.

**Estero Fire Rescue – Chief Scott Vanderbrook**

The EFR toy drive collected 300 donations for 35 families this year. The eight new firefighters are on shift now which makes it possible to have the rescue truck back in service at Station 42 on US41, which is the busiest station.

Estero Fire Rescue was awarded a Class 2 Public Protection Classification rating by the Insurance Services Office, which went into effect on December 1. This rating helps lower the fire insurance rates for Estero's commercial businesses and homeowners.

**Finance Director – Bob Lienesch**

The ECCL received \$11,000 in contributions to the Defense, Planning & Referendum fund this month: Breckenridge contributed \$5,000, Grandezza \$5,000 and Riverwoods Plantation \$1,000. The budgeted goal for the incorporation effort was \$90,000; with the additional contributions, the ECCL has collected almost \$100,000.

## **Update on Incorporation – Chairman Nick Batos**

Everyone who uses the vote by mail ballots, and have previously had the ballots sent to a northern address, will need to check with the Supervisor of Elections to make sure the ballots are sent to the address where they will be residing in March. Contact: Sharon Harrington at [sharrington@leeelections.com](mailto:sharrington@leeelections.com) or call 533-8683.

The Estero charter calls for the four candidates receiving the most votes to get a four-year term and the other three candidates receiving fewer votes, a two-year term; this sets up a staggered election going forward. A state statute specifies that a candidate who runs unopposed will not appear on the ballot. The Supervisor of Elections is going to contact the Florida Attorney General to get an opinion regarding this conflict.

Forums for the candidates will be conducted on Saturday morning, January 31, and Tuesday evening, February 3 at the Living Waters Church, 22100 S. Tamiami Trail. Times will be announced soon. The church can accommodate 850 people and has state of the art equipment which will be used to videotape the forums. Thanks to Wayne Smith for helping to make these arrangements with the church. The videos will be accessible on Estero Today until the election.

The ECCL slate of officers will be emailed to members in advance of the January 9, 2015, meeting. This year there will be a number of potential changes in March, so there will be another election at that time.

## **Chairman Emeritus – Don Eslick**

Two years ago, consultants were hired to help determine how the remaining commercial properties in Estero should be developed. The consultants conducted three community meetings describing what they believe the market will support in the development of the Village Center (Corkscrew and US41 area) and the Healthcare Village (south Coconut Point). The final report and recommendations are expected before the end of the year.

Collier's International offered to develop a marketing plan for Estero's commercial properties. As part of that, Sabal Tree was hired to research all the vacant commercial properties. They are now going to talk with all of these land owners and will have a report completed after the first of the year. This information will be helpful to any investor or developer interested in purchasing or developing these properties. Collier's International can use this report to market these properties around the world.

In November, Lee Memorial Health System's (LMHS) board of directors approved a \$140 million, 172,000 square foot "destination of distinction," just south of Coconut Road. LMHS is now hiring architects, engineers and planners and recruiting other medical providers. Construction is anticipated to begin late next year.

Construction on the Coconut Point American House senior facility will start this month, immediately south of the LMHS site. It will include 194 units of independent living and memory care.

## **Environment Director – Phil Douglas**

Amendment 1 polled at 80% prior to election, so there was not any political opposition to this amendment. When the legislative session begins, residents need to communicate with the Lee

County Legislative Delegation letting them know they need to follow the dictates of this amendment, which was passed by 78% of the people statewide. If residents don't follow this process carefully, these funds could be diverted. You may email the delegation by going to <http://www.leelegislation.com/contact.html>.

Residents may sign up to receive updates about Amendment 1 from the Florida Land and Legacy by going to [campaign@floridawaterandlandlegacy.org](mailto:campaign@floridawaterandlandlegacy.org).

### **Transportation Director – Jim Boesch**

Collier County has been monitoring the trucks traveling Corkscrew and Alico Roads carrying sand for their beach re-nourishment project. Three sand truck contracts were canceled as a result because they disregarded the speed limit and/or the recommended route.

At the recent Bike/Walk meeting, it was noted that the Estero Parkway sidewalks have reached a number 1 priority. The price is estimated to be \$900,000; \$300,000 for the sidewalks and \$600,000 for crossing the railroad tracks. However, there are no funds to pay for the sidewalks. Residents along Estero Parkway need to get involved in a petition drive for this project.

Trucks traveling Estero Parkway to the Walmart construction site were reported to be speeding. 24 hours after contacting the Lee County Sheriff's office, 14 speeding tickets and warnings were handed out to drivers traveling this route.

A new transportation issue which needs to be addressed is the back-up of traffic at the light at the school on Corkscrew Road.

There will be a Transportation Committee meeting in January. Anyone interested in joining the committee should contact Jim Boesch at [jimboesch@embargmail.com](mailto:jimboesch@embargmail.com).

### **Governmental Affairs Director – Howard Levitan**

Estero is in a transition period with Lee County with respect to land use, zoning and planning. Following the successful election for Estero's incorporation, the County is no longer allowed to take action on variances and deviations from the land development code. However, they are obligated to continue to implement all the other features of the land development process, which means they can move development projects forward through March 17, when the new Village Council takes over.

The Village Council will need to change the existing land development process to give Estero the kind of protection it needs for quality development. The Estero Community Planning Panel and Estero Design Review Committee are currently voluntary boards with no real power. The Council will need to empower these groups to ensure that future developments in Estero meet the desired quality standards.

On Wednesday, December 17, the Estero Design Review Committee will have a public hearing of the design of the Lock-Up Storage at Halfway Creek, just outside the gates of Fountain Lakes. There is an example of that building is on US41, just north of Bonita Beach Road. Residents need to attend these meetings to express their opinion about developers' designs.

The Estero Grande property is being recommended for approval by the Lee County Hearing Examiner. The Lee County Board of Commissioners will review this recommendation at 9:30 a.m., January 7, 2015. Residents should show their support for Estero by attending this meeting; however, only those who spoke before the Hearing Examiner will be allowed to speak.

#### **Community Planning Director – Roger Strelow**

The Transition Book for the Village Council is fully underway. The materials on finances, administration and staffing, and communications are complete. Materials are underway to codify the Estero Community Planning Panel and Estero Design Review Committee into a Local Planning Agency that would have a legal authority, if enacted by the Village Council. Drafts of other transition ordinances are expected to be completed next week. Interlocal agreements will allow for a continuation of services from the County.

#### **Communications Director – Marilyn Edwards**

The Estero Today website has all available information regarding the upcoming Village of Estero election under [Incorporation Information](http://esterotoday.com/) at <http://esterotoday.com/>. This includes photos and background information provided by 10 of the 11 candidates running for Village Council and three different Estero district maps.

Some of the information on the website is easier to access and read when using a desktop, laptop or tablet, rather than a mobile phone, due to the amount of content. Continue to check back to this site for updated information, including times for the candidate forums.

Next meeting: **Friday, January 9, 2015**, at the **Estero Community Park**, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd. Guest Speakers will be **Lee County Commissioner Larry Kiker**, **County Manager Roger Desjarlais**, and **County Attorney Richard Wesch**.

**Marilyn Edwards**  
**Communications Director**