

Executive Summary
Estero Council of Community Leaders Meeting
January 11, 2013

District 76 Representative Ray Rodrigues Speaks to ECCL

State Representative Ray Rodrigues has already initiated two of the six bills he is permitted to file as a freshman representative.

The first bill will put into law the fact that the public has the right for limited comment at government meetings. It was recently determined that the Sunshine Statutes do not ensure this right.

The second bill would allow Florida military families stationed around the world the opportunity to cast their votes for state, county or municipal races. Currently, their vote is only counted for federal races.

Issues he sees coming up during the next legislative session: Budget, Election Reform, Ethics Reform, Higher Education Reform, Gaming, Gun Control and the Affordable Care Act.

Rep. Rodrigues also stated he is a strong proponent of local control.

Bonita Springs Report

The Hon. Steve McIntosh reported that Bonita Springs is looking at a number of infrastructure changes, including connecting Shangri-La Road to Imperial Parkway, and 7 miles of unpaved roads will be improved. A new city park, including a dog park, will open soon off of East Terry Street, and a new kayak launch is under construction at US41, just south of the Imperial River Bridge.

Communications

Two news releases were issued this month: Rep. Rodrigues to Speak to the ECCL and Estero Concert Series: Music of Beethoven and Mozart.

An Executive Summary of the December ECCL meeting was emailed to the membership. The Executive Summary is designed to be a tool to communicate information about the various projects the ECCL is involved with and to create a better understanding of the organization. The Board of Directors' goal is that all ECCL representatives will forward this information to their boards and members of their communities.

Environment

Florida Farms Development (FFD) will go before the Lee County Hearing Examiner on January 16 for up to six days of testimony. FFD, located on the south side of East Corkscrew Road, is proposing to mine this property for 50 years with more than 2500 two-way truck trips daily. Phil Douglas provided talking points for those interested in testifying against this proposed mine.

The “Martini Glass” Parcel will probably go before the Lee County Hearing Examiner in March. Oakbrook Properties is requesting that the right-of-way for a flyover be vacated, allowing for up to 200 residential units on that property.

Only five communities have endorsed the campaign for the Florida Water and Land Legacy amendment to date. This important amendment would provide state funding to protect our drinking water supplies, beaches and shores, fish and wildlife habitat, and restore the Everglades. It would require that 33% of the existing document tax (doc stamps) revenue be earmarked for environmental programs for the next 20 year. One million signatures are needed to get this amendment on the November 2014 ballot. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Phil Douglas at pdindy@comcast.net.

Community Planning

Owners of the Bonita Grande Mine have a zoning application pending. Located in Bonita Springs directly below the Edison Farms property, they are proposing to develop more than 3,000 housing units. Transportation is a concern as there is little access to this property and there may also be a proposal to extend CR 951 to accommodate this new development.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has awarded a grant for \$15,000 to Lee County to analyze options and develop a strategy for the Research & Enterprise Diamond. The proposed “Diamond” is located near the airport and the Florida Gulf Coast University.

Government Relations

Hospital Committee – The Executive Committee met with Lee Memorial Health Systems’ (LMHS) management and expressed their disappointment with LMHS’ lack of progress on improving medical care, especially emergency care, in South Lee County. LMHS committed to provide ECCL with a current report on competitive medical organizations to enhance medical care in South Lee County, especially as it relates to emergency medical care.

Next meeting: Friday, February 8, 10 a.m. – 12 noon, Estero Community Park.