

Executive Summary  
Estero Council of Community Leaders Meeting  
May 9, 2014

**Estero Fire Rescue  
Commissioner Dick Schweers**

Estero Fire Rescue (EFR) started in 1964 as an all-volunteer department. In 1976, the state divided Lee County into 17 fire districts. Estero was assigned 56 square miles, from the water's edge to the Collier County line, north to San Carlos and south to Bonita Springs, which is what it is today. In 1982, the Fire Chief became the first paid employee; in 1985, three volunteers were hired to become full-time, paid firefighters. Early Fire Board meetings were held in Pinewoods School, then later at the Methodist Church.



**Assistant Fire Chief Mark Wahlig**

There are four fire stations in Estero: George Horne/US 41, Coconut Point, Three Oaks and Stoneybrook. 48 personnel serve all three shifts, or 16 people working each shift, 10 of which are paramedics. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents about 75% of EFR calls. The same type of equipment and personnel that serve on an ambulance serve on Estero fire trucks and 75% of the time, EFR is on scene two minutes prior to an ambulance. To see Wahlig's full PPT [click here](#). For more EFR information go to <http://www.esterofire.org/>.

**Estero Community Plan  
Kathleen Ebaugh, Principal Planner, Lee County**

There have been many workshops conducted over the past four years to review the Estero Community Plan, both with members of the community as well as with smaller working groups. It is now in final draft form. There is one last small working group meeting on May 12. It will go to the Local Planning Agency on May 19 and then to the Board of County Commissioners in June. It then goes to the state for review and could be adopted by October.

## **Bill Prysi, Chairman, Estero Design Review Committee**



There are currently three overlay districts: one on US 41, one of Corkscrew Road and one on Via Coconut. The districts being proposed are the “old Estero area” with the Koreshan Historic Site being at the heart of the area with an “Old Florida,” historical architectural style; the Town Center area which would be the future core of Estero where the civic hall and mixed-use developments would be, and the medical area near the Bonita Community Health Center. Estero’s established architectural style has been Mediterranean and Old Florida; the updated Plan calls for more definitive and variety of styles, including those for large buildings. See design, landscaping and signage examples on [Prysi’s PPT](#).

## **Status of Incorporation Bill – CHAIRMAN Nick Batos**

Estero’s Incorporation Bill was passed by the House and the Senate, and went to the Governor’s office today. It should be signed shortly.

## **CHAIRMAN EMERITUS – Don Eslick**

The ECCL has been working with consultants to determine how best to use the 1,000 acres of vacant commercial land and to have these lands developed properly. On Feb. 24-27, there was a workshop where the consultants worked with Lutgert, Hertz and others to try to best utilize the Town Center area, a 350-acre property west of the Estero Community Park and centered around the intersection of Corkscrew Road and US 41. There will be a meeting next week to review the consultants’ report to determine how to proceed.

The ECCL is looking at how best to work with the developers to facilitate development of a 21<sup>st</sup> century healthcare delivery system in the area around Coconut Road and US 41 where there are 100 acres of vacant land, 30 of which are owned by Lee Memorial Health System (LMHS). LMHS has their staff working on a plan and will go to their board on June 25 with a specific proposal. The land owners in that area are being kept informed about this process.

## **ENVIRONMENT DIRECTOR – Phil Douglas**

River Hall, located in the Alva area, is fighting an attempt by developers to increase density by violating the process through an expedited mediation. If the developers are successful, Estero will be fighting the same battle as it would set a precedent for the mining industry. MOTION: A motion was made, seconded and voted upon by the membership to contribute \$500 to the River Hall Defense Fund.

Amendment 1 is going to protect Florida’s environment by dedicating funds the state legislature will not be able to divert. The Board of County Commissioners will be considering a resolution of support for this amendment on May 20. It would be helpful if there were some residents who would speak in support of this amendment.

## **COMMUNITY PLANNING – Roger Strelow**

The ECCL did a thorough investigation regarding the leveling of trees on the property at the intersection of Corkscrew Road and Three Oaks Parkway called Estero Place. Through this investigation, some needed improvements were identified in the Estero community planning process, the developer's communication about its plans and the County's approach to trees.

When the ECCL met with Neal Communities regarding this issue, they made assurances that they will have landscaping around the exterior wall by August. Neal Communities is also the developer of Villa Palmeras on Three Oaks Parkway, which is well landscaped.

## **TRANSPORTATION – Jim Boesch**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan is how roads and highway projects are planned. For the past 7 – 8 years, \$10 million had been budgeted for improvements to the I-75/Corkscrew Road interchange, in addition to improving the north and south entrances. Last year, the \$10 million for this project was removed. The MPO's Citizens Advisory Committee has been working with the Florida Department of Transportation and MPO to convince them that this project must be restored. It will go before the MPO for approval next week.

Collier County is expected to insist that the CR-951 extension be placed back into the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Don Scott, Director of the Lee County MPO will be the guest speaker next month and will be able to answer questions regarding this proposal.

## **GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS – Howard Levitan**

Public participation is being restricted by the Lee County Commissioners in their workshops; people may attend but are not allowed to speak at the workshops.

The ECCL believes strongly in public participation and developed the new [Estero Today](#) website to be interactive. Anytime readers see an item on the website they have a question about or want to comment on, they may do so. The response will appear on the website so that others may also see the answer to the question. In addition, all of the board of directors' emails and phone numbers are listed. You may access them by going to the top of the home page, clicking on About ECCL and then on Board of Directors. The ECCL also has a Facebook page for those who want to participate that way.



## **COMMUNICATIONS – Marilyn Edwards**

When there is a new development going up, transportation or road construction project, or an update on the incorporation effort, it is posted on [Estero Today](#). All of the latest articles appear on the home page, with additional articles under specific categories. The Executive Summaries and historical information can be accessed by clicking on About ECCL at the top of the home page. By clicking on Around Town, you will find information about activities within the community, such as the concerts presented by FGCU's Bower School of Music and the Estero Concert Series, as well as a history of Estero, and a listing of local websites.

**Next meeting: Friday, June 13, 2014, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Estero Fire Rescue, 21500 Three Oaks Parkway. The guest speaker will be Don Scott, Director of the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization.**

For more information about the ECCL, go to [www.EsteroToday.com](http://www.EsteroToday.com).

**Marilyn Edwards, ECCL Communications Director**