



## ECCL meeting report

Aug. 12, 2016

(Included with this report are [minutes](#) from the recent Transportation Committee meeting.)

**Guests:** Included State Representative Matt Hudson

**San Carlos Fire District:** Public Education Specialist Alexis Rothring gave the report:

- The department planned to give a hurricane preparation seminar for the residents of Belle Lago on Wednesday, Aug. 17 at 6:15 p.m.
- On Sept. 21, a CPR/AED class will be held. The cost is \$35 per person. Anyone interested can sign up at [sancarlosfire.org](http://sancarlosfire.org).
- The department received 322 calls in July 2016, which represents 12 percent more calls than in July 2015.

**Estero Fire District:** Chief Scott Vanderbrook gave the report:

- The Estero Fire District's budget process is under way and the tax rate is expected to go down since the property values in the district have gone up.
- The Estero Fire District will provide some futuristic healthcare services in conjunction with capabilities being built into Lee Memorial's Health Care Village, Vanderbrook reported.

In a short ceremony, the Estero Fire Rescue District, Chief Scott Vanderbrook and staff were honored by the ECCL with a plaque to thank them for their outstanding service to the Village of Estero.



**The Village Council Report:** Mayor Nick Batos reported the following:

- The Village Council is “deep into” preparing the village budget for 2016-17. The new fiscal year begins Oct. 1. The council is also preparing its first Capital Improvement Plan.
- The village is negotiating a new Inter-Local Agreement with Lee County for the broad array of services that the Village is currently purchasing from the County. Mayor Batos renewed the council’s pledge that all of the services the village purchases from the County will be performed with an improvement in service, at a lower cost.
- The village will review and establish the ad valorem property tax rate for 2017. This rate will be finalized during the final public hearing on September 21 at 5 pm in the Village Council chambers.
- Mayor Batos said that the village council is engaged in carrying on the Village Center plan started by the ECCL in 2012, by focusing on planning for the future of the village while keeping in mind the village’s Comprehensive Plan (Estero Community Plan).
- The village will soon be contracting for a comprehensive traffic study that includes not only roadway capacity but also the intersections and community access roads. The necessary traffic counting will take place during the upcoming “season.”
- A flood management study will be undertaken and the village will determine responsible parties for the system at the places where problems are found to exist.
- Southwest Florida’s water quality continues to be a concern. At the next council meeting, votes will be taken on resolutions and letters to be sent to our representatives in Washington urging them to support bills that will improve water quality funding allocations for Florida and enable water to be moved south of Lake Okeechobee and into the Everglades rather than to the Caloosahatchee River, thus improving our water quality.

- The village has begun live streaming its meetings. They can be seen at [www.estero-fl.gov](http://www.estero-fl.gov). The village needs some volunteers to support this effort. The required commitment should be only about one day a month.

Three seats on the Village Council will be up for election in March 2017. The councilors who ran unopposed in the last election now occupy these seats. They are: Districts 1 (Bill Ribble), 2 (Howard Levitan) and 6 (Nick Batos). The rest of the council – Donald Brown, District 3; Katy Errington, District 4; Jim Boesch, District 5; and Jim Wilson, District 7 – have 4-year terms terminating in March 2019.

**DRGR Development Proposals and the Conservation 20/20 Referendum:** Environmental Director Pete Cangialosi gave a report that can be viewed [here](#) regarding mining projects proposed in the DR/GR east of Estero and north of Corkscrew Road. He identified two applications – Troyer Brothers and Old Corkscrew Plantation – that have been made to Community Development-Lee County to authorize mining in areas not currently located in the Future Limerock Mining Overlay of the DR/GR. In addition there are several intensive housing developments being proposed for the southern part of the DRGR along Corkscrew Road.

Mr. Cangialosi also gave a short presentation (which can be viewed [here](#)) regarding the need to support continuation of the Conservation 20/20 program in a referendum to be voted on at the November general election. He emphasized how ECCL representatives can obtain electronic versions of informational flyers about the merits of the program for dissemination to individual HOA's found on the website of "Yes on Conservation 20/20" and also how donations can be made to that organization to assist with community education on the program. Mr. Cangialosi also briefly discussed the proposed Florida Solar Amendment (Amendment 4) that is on the August 30<sup>th</sup> Primary Election ballot. That discussion can be viewed [here](#).

**DR/GR Concerns:** Chairman Don Eslick added that a coalition of environmental and civic groups that worked together to oppose several Corkscrew Road mining projects has reassembled, met with Lee County planning officials, and will continue to monitor the mines' application process. The membership unanimously authorized ECCL directors to closely monitor and inform membership of the progress of these applications through the county's planning process.

**Upcoming Development Hearings: Community** Planning Director Jim Tatoes reported on the Via Coconut Urban Place and Athenian Charter School development that will soon be seeking approval by the village. The Via Coconut Urban Place development is a large rental housing development in the Village Center area while the Athenian American Charter School is located

just south of that property on part of the undeveloped land in the Estero Community Park. See maps and information [here](#).

**Rental housing status:** Planning Director Jim Tatoes and Chairman Don Eslick summarized the status of rental housing projects in the village and just outside its boundaries. Although a Market researcher originally hired by the ECCL found that Estero would need rental and senior housing in 2012, when the study was completed, many Estero residents are concerned that the number of units already approved (many by Lee County before Estero was incorporated) and now under construction may be excessive. The most recent Estero Development Report includes this information. See that [here](#).

**Village Center speakers and champions:** Chairman Don Eslick told the group that he has organized a speaker's panel of about 20 people who are knowledgeable about the plans and ongoing negotiation with developers about the proposed Estero Village Center. They are expected to testify at meetings, representing Estero residents who want to ensure that a Village Center consistent with the plans and regulations adopted by the Village Council becomes a reality. Anyone interested in being a part of the speaker's panel is welcome to join the group by contacting Mr. Eslick. There is a second group of people who responded favorably to an invitation to become Village Center Champions. These 225 people will be kept informed of the details of each Village Center development as they come up for review so they can provide input as well.

A staff report on the next Village Center development, Via Coconut Urban Place, is expected to become available to the public on Aug. 16. So the speaker's panel will meet Aug. 18 after members are able to read the report.

In answer to a question about the development approval process, Planning Director Jim Tatoes offered to draw up a diagram to be posted on ECCL's web site and/or distributed to persons on ECCL's emailing list.

**Transportation Director** Bob King updated the group on the Transportation Committee's recent activities.

- Upcoming speakers at transportation committee meetings will include Village Manager Steve Sarkozy, Councilman Jim Wilson, the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Don Scott, and roundabout expert Michael Wallwork.
- Mr. King asked for and received unanimous support by voice vote for a letter to go to the Village Council and Village Manager requesting a reduction in the speed limit on Estero Parkway between US 41 and Three Oaks Parkway from 45 mph to 35 mph until

the necessary improvements have been made. Problems with this roadway, which is the county's responsibility, include a need for repaving and addition of sidewalks in spaces where they are missing.

- Developer Cameratta Companies is making progress toward installation of a traffic signal at the entrance to Bella Terra. It looks as if that will be approved for construction by April 2017.
- The next Transportation Committee meeting is Aug. 18 and will feature LeeTran director Steve Myers.

**Announcements:**

- Doug Beck invited all to support and participate in the first Jeff Sommer Day on Labor Day weekend. This is to commemorate the beloved Estero High School Cross Country Coach who died last year. The Village Council has pronounced the first Saturday in September as Jeff Sommer Day. That morning, a cross-country race will take place between teams around the site. A scholarship drive is being set up. The high school stadium will be rededicated in his name on the night before.
- The League of Women Voters of Lee County has compiled a guide to upcoming elections and it is available online at [www.lwvlee.org](http://www.lwvlee.org).
- A group of Estero community leaders has met and interviewed local candidates running in the August 30<sup>th</sup> Primary Election. Its recommendations are available on the ECCL website, [here](#).
- A meeting under the auspices of the Blue Zones wellness project will be held Aug. 18 from 8 am to 2 pm at Bonita Springs City Hall. The purpose is to educate the community about what “walkable communities” means and how to enhance community health through the program. All interested people are invited.