



Executive Summary
Estero Council of Community Leaders Meeting
July 11, 2014

Membership Report -- Linda Tecco-Roach

ECCL Members and Alternate Members each received a draft document for the “Roles and Responsibilities of ECCL Members and Alternate Members”. Input was received and incorporated in the document, which will be posted on www.EsteroToday.com. Included in the responsibilities is communicating to the homeowners’ association and the community residents information provided by the ECCL regarding community concerns, upcoming elections and the incorporation of Estero.

Estero Fire Rescue -- Chief, Scott Vanderbrook

The EFR budget workshop will be Wednesday, July 16, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. The meeting, which is open to the public, will cover what the anticipated costs will be for the coming year. Increased staffing and an additional station on East Corkscrew Road will be discussed. Jack Lienesch is running unopposed for Fire Commissioner.

State Representative Ray Rodrigues

The one thing legislators are required to do by constitution is pass a balanced budget; this was completed before the end of the 60-day session. The amount of money the state has in reserves was also increased. This ranked the state at an S&P rating of AAA, one of only 13 states to have the highest S&P rating. In addition, the state’s debt was reduced for the third time this year.

The Estero Incorporation Bill took up quite a bit of time. Half of all incorporation efforts fail; of the half that do succeed, only one-quarter of those succeed in the first year that they are introduced. If the referendum passes, the Village of Estero will be incorporated on December 31, and a new Village Council will be elected in the spring.

40,000 acres in Lee, Collier and Hendry counties have been purchased for the purpose of fracking, which is permitted in Florida. During the last two sessions, Rep. Rodrigues introduced a bill that would require a registry with the Dept. of Environmental Protection of all of the chemicals being used in fracking so that the state of Florida would know exactly what chemicals were put into the ground. He plans to pursue this again in the next session.

Director Emeritus – Don Eslick

During August and September there will be a series of community meetings to educate everyone on the status of the development in Estero's commercial corridors and the vacant properties in those corridors and to discuss how best to regulate the development of those areas. Both the land owners and the public will be invited to these meetings.

Lee Memorial Health System has contracted with a nationally-recognized consulting firm, Navigant Consulting Services, to conduct a 3 month study that will identify the unmet health care needs of the community and how satisfying those needs can be met through the development of a "medical village" on and around the 30 acres owned by Lee Memorial, south of Coconut Point. The ECCL leadership has made it clear to LMHS that this effort needs to include a 24/7 ER. The consultants should be in Estero soon and will meet with some of the land owners, fire chief and others.

The Primary Election is on August 26. Primary elections are often the final election as all of the county board members are Republicans. It's important that the residents of Estero register to vote and, if not in Florida, they and others may vote by mail. All of the information is available on www.EsteroToday.com.

Governmental Affairs Director – Howard Levitan

The Estero Community Plan was completed after 4 years of work. It was approved by the Local Planning Agency, and the Board of County Commissioners has agreed to transmit it to the state. The process should be completed by September or October so that it can be in place at the time of the November election. As part of this process, regulations need to be developed to govern the plan. Work is currently being conducted on Phase I.

Environment Director – Phil Douglas

The Florida Water and Land Legacy, Amendment #1, needs a 60% favorable vote to pass. It will dedicate 1/3 of the state's doc stamp revenue for water and land conservation for the next 20 years. On August 5, the BoCC will have the opportunity to vote on a resolution of support for Amendment #1.

The biggest threat to our community's water supply is mining. The BoCC established Map 14 to confine all mining to Allico Road. The Florida Farms Development (FFD) has notified the BoCC that they are prepared to file a \$39 million Bert Harris lawsuit; that is their projected loss from not being able to mine their land. The ECCL and Conservancy of Southwest Florida have met with each of the commissioners in support of fighting any such lawsuits.

Estero residents need to inform the County Commissioners that they value the Conservation 2020 program and want this program to continue. A 2020 position paper is being drafted and will be presented publicly soon.

Transportation Director – Jim Boesch

Carmon Monroy, director of the Southwest Florida's Dept. of Transportation (FDOT), has indicated that the projected traffic congestion associated with Williams Road and US41, and Corkscrew Road and I-75, discussed at the recent Transportation Committee meeting, are being actively reviewed.

Work on the right turn lane on Estero Parkway started on July 10 and should be completed before season starts.

Walmart has pulled their planting permits, so work should be starting soon. There will be a rear entrance on Estero Parkway, just past Osprey Cove. There is a problem for pedestrians and bikers, as the sidewalks are not contiguous. Bill Williams and Jim Boesch will be appearing before the Bike/Walk Committee on July 16 to address this problem. They have already spoken with the BoCC regarding this issue. In order for this project to be successful, a supporting resolution will be required from each community on Estero Parkway.

Community Planning – Roger Strelow

If the incorporation referendum passes, the Village Council will take office in March. There will be a shift of many responsibilities from the County to this newly elected government. However, many of the services that the council will need to provide can be contracted with the County. The ECCL has formed a number of committees to prepare options for the new council to consider including finance, staffing, transportation, and communications, among others. A former city manager also is advising the group on the search for a city manager.

Next meeting: Friday, September 12, 2014, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Estero Community Park.

For more information about the ECCL, go to www.EsteroToday.com.

Marilyn Edwards, ECCL Communications Director