

Executive Summary
Estero Council of Community Leaders Meeting
October 10, 2014

Incorporation Presentation
Nick Batos, ECCL Chairman
John Goodrich, Incorporation Committee Chairman



Nick Batos (left) and John Goodrich respond to questions from about 100 Estero residents in attendance at the October ECCL meeting.

Many people have asked why incorporate now? About 18 months ago, changes started to occur, both with the political environment in Fort Myers as well as the annexation efforts initiated by Bonita Springs. These changes would certainly affect Estero's ability to control future development as well as its ability to incorporate at a later date. It was determined that incorporation would be the only way for Estero to control its own destiny.

The advantages of incorporation are home rule provided by Estero residents, preserving the established high-quality development standards, building public participation and keeping more tax dollars in Estero. The ECCL's feasibility study shows that, at the current tax rate, the Village of Estero will generate a surplus. Estero's tax base is the third largest in Lee County due to the large amount of commercial and high-end residential properties

It will be a Council-Manager form of government. Seven Council members from seven geographical districts will be elected Village-wide by all Estero voters. The Council will hire a Manager and appoint a Village attorney. There will be a total of six employees ([see entire power point presentation](#)).

The last public Incorporation Workshop will be held at **6 p.m., Thursday, October 16**, at the Estero Recreation Center.

Finance Director – Bob Lienesch

Approximately \$83,000 has been collected for the incorporation budget over the last two years; this is \$7,000 less than the projected required amount. A number of communities have

contributed generously to the referendum campaign but there are some communities which have still not contributed this year. The ECCL will be contacting those communities.

Estero Fire Rescue -- Chief, Scott Vanderbrook

Estero Fire Rescue provides the services of changing out batteries if they are too high for residents to reach. Flu shots are being provided at the main fire station again this year. There will be 8 new firefighters starting on Monday, Oct. 13; five are replacing firefighter positions which were not filled during the recession. EFR is also preparing for any possibility of an outbreak of Ebola.

Chairman Emeritus – Don Eslick

Estero has about 16,500 acres of land; over 15,500 acres have been developed. The remaining vacant properties have been zoned for about 7 ½ million square feet of commercial property. These are highly visible properties which need to be developed in a market which has changed dramatically since the recession. There have been two public meetings to date to learn how the residents of Estero want these properties developed. The next public meeting will be held at **6 p.m., Thursday, November 13**, at the **Estero Fire Rescue** district headquarters on Three Oaks Parkway.

On November 6, the Lee Memorial Health System (LMHS) Board will decide how to implement their consultants' recommendations regarding LMHS's proposed "healthcare neighborhood" adjacent to the Bonita Community Health Center. There are two developments virtually approved in that area. One is a 200+ unit assisted living facility, with a memory care component. Another development further north on the west side of US41 will include a 54-bed memory unit. Physicians Regional also has a facility in this area, so the "healthcare neighborhood" is taking shape.

Environment Director – Phil Douglas

Amendment #1, Land and Water Conservation amendment, requires a 60% vote. People need to support this amendment to protect the future of the state of Florida.

On Oct. 14, there are two wetland forums being conducted; one in Collier County and one in Lee County. There will be speakers from NOAA, FGCU, EPA and the Conservancy of Southwest Florida. The first forum is at 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Conservancy; the second forum will be at 6:30 – 8 p.m. at the Harborside Event Center, downtown Ft. Myers.

Transportation Director – Jim Boesch

There is a Transportation subcommittee working on the light at Williams Road. It is the committee's position there will need to be turn lights going north and south from Williams Road onto US41, on both sides of the street once the Hertz headquarters is occupied. A meeting will be held next week with Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass, a former policeman, to get his recommendations.

There was a joint meeting of the Lee and Collier County MPO's Citizens Advisory Committees regarding CR951, which currently runs from south Collier County north to Immokolee Road. Collier County wants to extend CR951 through Bonita Springs, north to Alico Road, through the

Density Reduction/Groundwater Resource area (where 80% of Lee County's drinking supply comes from). Both committees are recommending this should not happen.

Collier County's beach re-nourishment project will continue, using 400 trucks per day for 30 days. Lee County Commissioners worked with Collier County on agreements to keep the sand trucks off the residential portion of Corkscrew Road, instead traveling the Alico Road extension to I-75.

Community Planning – Roger Strelow

The [Estero Community Plan](#), part of Lee County's Comprehensive Plan, is now finalized and legal. It is available on the ECCL website under the [Community Planning](#) section at www.EsteroToday.com.

The Transition Committee is working on some of the major issues the new village council will have to work on almost immediately, if the incorporation referendum passes. The Committee is considering options and recommendations to provide to the proposed council candidates. The council candidates will have this information available to them so they can determine their stance during the campaign process.

Inaugural Christmas Tree Lighting -- Linda Horn

The Estero United Methodist Church will conduct Estero's inaugural Christmas tree lighting event at **5:30 p.m., Friday, November 28**, on the church grounds at Broadway and US 41. The Estero High School Jazz band will start at 5 p.m. A 14-foot podocarpus tree will be planted and decorated with 65 sets of colored lights. Mr. & Mrs. Santa will arrive via an Estero fire truck, and punch and cookies will be served by the Estero Rotary Club. Donations are being accepted.

ECCL Chairman – Nick Batos

The ECCL is looking for volunteers to serve on the 2015 ECCL Board of Directors. Please let Nick Batos, mrnbjr@aol.com, know if you would be interested in serving.

Next meeting: Friday, November 14, 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