



The ECCL Report
(Formerly titled the Executive Summary)
Summary of the Estero Council of Community Leaders Meeting
Held June 15, 2015

137th Monthly Meeting ([Agenda Attached](#))

Don Eslick, Interim Chairman of the ECCL, welcomed both members and guests to the 137th monthly meeting where he reminded everyone that the ECCL is a network of 37 communities, with a representative and alternate, who set the agenda by identifying those issues that are most important to Estero. He referenced the two important cards handed out by board members as everyone signed in at the door. One card was to be completed by anyone wishing to ask questions of the visiting Florida transportation leaders and the second card was to be completed by those who were interested in becoming a volunteer on the newly formed transportation committee.

Don introduced Howard Levitan, Vice Mayor representing the Village Council. Mr. Levitan spoke about significant development activities that are planned in Estero and the overwhelming number of housing permits that have been pulled for 2016. He encouraged the representing communities to make their voices heard by speaking to developers who visit their communities and to attend the Estero Village Planning and Zone Board (PZB) meetings that are held at the Estero Fire and Rescue located at 21500 Three Oaks Parkway located in Estero which is now serving as the temporary offices of the Village Council.

Vice Mayor Levitan was asked about the recent resolution urging the Lee County Commissioners to do a comprehensive traffic and environmental study before approving Corkscrew Farms and Wild Blue as new developments. He commented that the resolution would be address at an upcoming Village Council meeting and that additional information could be found at www.estero-fl.gov.

Don Eslick introduced the two guest speakers, Interim Director, Laura Lockwood, representing District 1 from Florida Department of Transportation (**FDOT**) and second Don Scott, Executive Director of Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Don explained why Randy Cerchie, the Lee County Transportation Director, formerly confirmed to speak at our meeting, was not in attendance. It was decided by Roger Desjarlais, Lee County Manager, that the Transportation Director should not attend as there were concerns about information possibly being communicated prematurely with regards to the interlocal agreement that articulates the responsibilities of both the County and of the Village going forward.

New Board Member Appointment

Patrick Hiltman, was nominated and subsequently approved unanimously by the board members to serve as the new **Transportation Director for the ECCL**. His first priority is to call a meeting in July of the transportation committee volunteers where they will organize goals and objectives.

Transportation Director – Pat Hiltman Biography

Graduated from the University of Toledo with a BBA in Marketing and Finance minor. Employed by United States Gypsum (USG) for 28 years. Currently the SE Regional Sales Manager for commercial roofing products. Transferred to Cincinnati in 1977 and to Ft Myers in 1981. Became a permanent resident in 2011 and moved to Copperleaf in 2012. Moving to Corkscrew Shores July 30.

Elected as a Trustee for Liberty Township Ohio, Butler County for two terms starting in 2005 (unopposed in my second run). Liberty Township is very similar to Estero in that it has a population of around 37,000 residents. It has a younger demographic, but similar issues with traffic and economic development. My core responsibilities as a Trustee were roads, fire/ems, police and the Township Cemetery. Our general fund budget was just under \$20 million per year. We added the first new publicly funded interchange (Liberty Interchange) on I-75 in Ohio in nearly 25 years. We brought Cincinnati Children's Hospital to Liberty Township and the new Steiner Mall, Liberty Town Center, a mixed use development which is similar to Coconut Point.

Guest Speakers – Florida Transportation Leaders

Laura Lockwood, Interim Director FDOT was first up to talk about the Lee Transportation Strategic Plan Workshop an informal and interactive opportunity for the public to participate in key issues to be held on June 23rd 2015 at the Lee Tran office building in Fort Myers. She commented that it is a delicate balancing act. It starts with designing and engineering the project, then come the studies, followed by the construction in the end the process could be many years before we see any results.

Don Scott, Director of the Lee County MPO, discussed prioritization of various transportation projects at the county. He also commented on funding including impact fees and gas taxes as well as state funding. He informed us that Lee County is adding an additional Estero member to MPO board so our voices will be heard. He spoke about the overall process and emphasizing the time/money that it takes to get some of these concerns and issues resolved.

The audience then proceeded with questions of both Laura and Don Scott.

Don Eslick commented that when Village Council appointed a transportation committee they subsequently learned about "sunshine laws" and the ability of committees to meet. Based on the law none of members would be able to talk to each other outside of a public meeting. The ECCL and its members continue to be strongly committed to working with the Village Council on Estero's transportation needs and concerns. We believe that the Village needs our strong and growing communications capabilities if we are to successfully compete with other communities and areas for the scarce transportation dollars now available from Federal, State and local sources.

For more information on the ECCL transportation priorities and concerns visit this link:

[ECCL Priority Concerns 2015](#)

Finance Director – Bob Lienesch

Bob Lienesch was unable to attend the monthly meeting. In his place Linda Tecco-Roach filled in with information on the reserve balances and updated us on the community members that have paid so far this year.

Closing Comments - Interim Chairman Emeritus – Don Eslick

Don Eslick, in his closing comments, explained once again the opportunity to volunteer as a member of the ECCL Transportation Committee. He requested that the cards, that were handed out, be turned in to Linda Tecco Roach after the close of the meeting who would in turn give them to Pat Hiltman, ECCL Transportation Director, who then will follow up with those who are interested. If you missed the meeting and would like to volunteer on the newly formed transportation committee you can do so by contacting Pat at Philtman@USG.com.

Don thanked the Florida transportation leaders for taking the time to attend our meeting and updating everyone on current issues facing Estero.

Healthcare Village Update –Lee Memorial Seeks Architects and Construction Managers for the Coconut Point Healthcare Village

As we go to press Lee Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) had received responses from 45 architectural and contract management firms to their Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) for the design and the construction of their diversified Healthcare Village in the south end of Coconut Point.

Suzanne Bradach, Lee Memorial's Director of Special Projects and of this project, brought the members of the ECCL up to date on their plans for the development of this most important south Lee County facility. She outlined the following steps in the development process:

- July 16th...the last day for firms to respond to the RFQ
- August 10th....the selection committee will recommend the 3 best architectural firms and the 3 best Construction Management firms
- August 26th...the interviews of the leading firms will be completed
- September...the Lee Memorial Board will select the preferred architectural and contract management firms
- October...The Lee Memorial Board approves the contracts with the selected architectural and construction management firms

Once these steps have been completed the design of the Coconut Point Healthcare Village will be underway at substantial expense to Lee Memorial. Under Suzanne Bradach's leadership this facility is staying on schedule with construction expected to begin in early 2017 and occupancy about 15 months later.

Bradach also reported that the Florida House had passed legislation eliminating the "Certificate of Need" that currently is required in order to build a new hospital. In addition the Florida House was considering legislation that would create 72-hour recovery care centers. The Florida Senate considered neither bill during the just completed Special Session.

Bradach also clarified that the Gulf Coast Medical Center, reported by NBC 2 to be one of the 50 hospitals with the highest mark-ups, is a hospital in Panama City, Florida, not the Lee Memorial Hospital on Daniels Parkway.

Environmental Director Report – Pete Cangialosi

Edison Farms Site Report

The following organizations signed on to the May 26, 2015 letter from Brad Cornell of Audubon Florida – Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary to Lee County Commissioners:

Wildcat Run, Pelican Sound Golf and River Club, Audubon of SW Florida, Responsible Growth Management Coalition, Defenders of Wildlife Federation, Conservancy of SW Florida, Audubon of the West Everglades, The Preserve at Corkscrew, Grandezza, Bella Terra, Spring Run, ECCL, Rapallo, and Shadow Wood, and Marsh Landing.

The letter urged the county to monitor the progress of ongoing legal proceedings regarding the foreclosure of the Edison Farms site and determination of the rightful property ownership. In addition, the commissioners were encouraged to formulate a plan to be well situated to acquire the property as part of the Conservation 2020 program when the legal proceedings are completed.

Site 536 Nominations to the Conservation 2020 Program

The Board of County Commissioners decided this past weekend to defer further consideration of Site 536 until an August Board meeting. Reason was for county staff to provide more information about the water quality, restoration, and asking price aspects of this parcel. ECCL will monitor progress of this site in the program and keep membership informed and will likely ask for members to voice their opinions again regarding the acquisition at a time closer to that meeting.

Amendment 1 Funding

News organizations were reporting that on the previous night, Florida legislators reached a deal on how much money should be spent conserving land. However, the final amount was considered by environmental organizations as much too low in light of what the amendment authorized and the large plurality of Florida voters who passed the measure. ECCL will evaluate spending levels as more information becomes available.

Corkscrew Farms

The Board of County Commissioners Comprehensive Plan transmittal hearing is set for this Wednesday June 17 at 9:30 AM in which the BOCC will decide whether to forward the Comprehensive Plan Amendment enabling the proposed Corkscrew Farms development to proceed towards planning and construction.

Density Reduction/Groundwater Resources (DRGR) Considerations

Don Eslick explained that the County's new comprehensive plan overlay process enabling planning for residential developments within one mile north and south of Corkscrew Road in the DRGR area is contrary to the intended purpose of why the DRGR was initially put in place, namely groundwater protection and surface water control. He asked for authorization from the present membership to devote the next ECCL meeting to examining the County's overlay tool and how it impacts the goals of the DRGR and what actions or positions ECCL should take the best benefit residents of Estero regarding this issue. Membership approved the measure by a show of hands.

Important Notes and Reminders

Don reminded the audience representatives to review the fact sheet about ECCL on the website (www.EsteroToday.com) and distribute the information within their various communities.

ECCL - Next meeting: **10 a.m., Friday, July 24th, 2015**, at the **Estero Community Park**, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd. For more information, click on this link www.EsteroToday.com

Barbara Saxton
ECCL Communications Director