

Estero Council of Community Leaders (ECCL)  
Minutes of the 59<sup>th</sup> Monthly Meeting  
December 14, 2007  
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
Estero Community Park

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eslick at 1:00 p.m. at the Estero Community Park. A quorum was present.

Forty-one people were in attendance representing 19 communities and one community wide organizations. Six guests were also present.

**Guests were introduced.**

**Minutes**

Minutes of all prior meetings are available online at [www.esterofl.org](http://www.esterofl.org). The minutes of the November meeting were approved as presented.

**Treasurer's Report**

Chris Smith reported income of \$400 in dues received this month, \$140 in expenses to Papyrus, our website provider, leaving a balance of \$4,862. 96. The Foundation earned \$121.89 in interest this month and has a balance of \$30,826.99 in its account. Chris thanked those communities that had paid their 2008 dues. The Treasurer's report was approved as presented.

**Announcements**

New FEMA maps may be accessed at [www.lee-county.com/dcd/fema.htm](http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/fema.htm). Secondly, Jane McNew will be installed as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee of the MPO.

**Agenda Items**

**Bonita and ECCL meeting**

**Coconut Road/I-74 interchange**

John Spear, Councilman-elect of the Bonita City Council, spoke on the subject of the Coconut Road interchange with I-75. Mr. Spear was a proponent of the interchange. At a September meeting the MPO put the interchange on hold. Commissioner Ray Judah had a meeting with Mr. Eslick, Mr. Spear Nancy Keefer of the Bonita Chamber of Commerce and others and proposed they work together to keep the \$10 million in south Lee County. The second meeting involved the Expressway Authority, FDOT and Lee DOT as well as the ECCP, the Bonita Chamber and Mr. Spear. In order to get the Expressway Authority beyond the talking stage, an Investment Grade Traffic and Revenue Study needs to be done in order to determine the feasibility, cost of ten laning I-75 etc. Mr. Spear is happy to have all the participants back "on the same page". Nancy Keefer applauded and agreed with Mr. Spear's report.

**Expressway Authority I-75**

Amy Davies, Consultant, spoke about the current progress of the Expressway Authority. Chris Cella, also an Expressway Authority consultant, spoke about the public involvement in the encouragement of the expressway. She would like to attend local homeowner meetings and present a power point presentation which lasts about twenty minutes with time left for questions. Information about this may be accessed at [www.swfea.net](http://www.swfea.net), click on Express Toll lanes and you can schedule an appointment with Chris. Mr. Eslick pointed out that Estero and Bonita Springs are interested in this project, because the traffic is the heaviest in this section of I-75. The Corkscrew and Bonita Beach road interchanges will not be improved for twenty years under the present plans, but if the toll way becomes a fact, monies from those tolls will be used to improve these two interchanges. This is one reason why tolling I-75 is important to south Lee County. The Investment Grade Traffic and Revenue Study is a tool to help the revenue bond companies, the rating agencies, the letter of credit writing banks to add their security to those bonds and encourage the sale of these bonds without any governmental security.

### **SWFWMD**

Scotty Wood from West Bay reported on the adoption of Phase III sprinkling limitation by the South Florida Water Board. Mr. Wood reported that this water restriction negatively impacts the fragile economy of southwest Florida in excessively limiting the water available to golf courses during the dry season. The golf course superintendents understand the importance of Phase III, however, the formula being used is one that is designed for the climate in Arizona. Arizona gets its rain in the winter, whereas, Florida gets its rain in the summer and fall. As a result, these restrictions are inappropriate to Florida. The end result is the bad effect on tourism, real estate and the local economy. Mr. Wood pointed out that golf courses consume only 2.2 percent of the total water used. The word needs to get to Tallahassee. A meeting with the superintendents, an ECCL representative and Charles Dauray, our representative on the SFWMD may give the problem some attention.

### **County DR/GR Planning Progress Report**

Please look at the summary of the Spikowski report on the DR/GR. You may read it at [www.spikowski.com/GreenerLee.pdf](http://www.spikowski.com/GreenerLee.pdf). There is a moratorium on new mining applications until September 10, 2008. The County has chosen Dover Kohl and Partners, urban planners to consult with them on planning the DR/GR. In addition a Tampa firm will do water analysis of the DR/GR area. A County Stakeholders Committee has been formed and Mr. Eslick is part of that committee. Three co-chairpersons were elected at the last meeting; Dennis Gilkey, representing some of the large DR/GR land-owners, Brenda Brooks from CREW and Cullum Hasty from Bonita Springs. These meetings are open to the public; they are usually held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 1:30 in the County Community Development building in Fort Myers.

### **Mining in the DR/GR**

Nick Batos reported that the Wellfield Protection Ordinance applicable to wellfields located in the DR/GR was approved by the Lee County commissioners. In addition the BOCC instructed county staff to conduct research in support of further improvements in

the Ordinance. The Lee county website includes maps of the County well-fields, where our water comes from. This may be accessed at [www.lee-county.com/dcd/ComprehensivePlanning/SELeeCounty.htm](http://www.lee-county.com/dcd/ComprehensivePlanning/SELeeCounty.htm).

### **Strategic Aggregate Study and Task Force meeting, December 18-20/Tampa**

Several Lee County people have been invited to attend this meeting and talk about the DR/GR and the mining aspects of that area. Jack Meeker, Nick Batos and Don Eslick will be attending, plus Lee County representatives. The original invitation to speak was tendered to Kevin Hill of the Corkscrew Rural Residents. Mr. Eslick brought up a statement prepared by The Conservancy of Southwest Florida which we should consider signing on to. The sole focus of the Strategic Aggregate Task Force has been assuring an adequate supply of hard rock to FDOT for the building of roads without looking at the other implications of those decisions, i.e., taking the decision away from the County where they would also consider the water, environmental, traffic, and neighbors that would be impacted. Our message is just that; these decisions ought to be made locally in cooperation with FDOT. The motion was made to accept and adopt this statement and send representatives to this meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Halfway Creek**

Bill Hillemeier reported on efforts by the communities fronting on Halfway Creek to gain the support of Lee County and the SFWMD to fund removal of the obstruction located between Fountain Lakes and Marsh Landing. Both governmental entities are committed to funding this project. The Florida legislature needs to approve of the Water District money during the upcoming legislative session.

### **Estero Community Improvement Foundation (ECIF)**

Dan Dronkers reported that he has met with the Bonita Community Foundation (BCF) and that when they (BCF) expand their board, they may be including additional members from Estero. It seems they have similar goals that we can achieve together. At the January 18 meeting, the ECIF will have some "things to sell" and Dan hoped members would bring their checkbooks. The Spirit of the Gulf concert will be March 14 at Estero High School. Tickets will be \$20. License plate frames will be for sale. A wine tasting is in the planning stage. A representative from the BCF spoke about regional interests of both organizations and communities.

### **January 29<sup>th</sup> Presidential Preference Primary**

In order to vote in this primary, one must be registered by December 31, 2007. Directions can be found at [www.leeelections.com/voterreg](http://www.leeelections.com/voterreg). Mr. Eslick encouraged the ECCL members to inform their residents about procedures for getting registered. Absentee and early voting can be accessed at [www.leeelections.com/absballot.pdg](http://www.leeelections.com/absballot.pdg). Precinct #132 which includes all of the Brooks will have a new voting location which is the Estero Community Park. Precinct #165 will be voting at the First Assembly South on River Ranch Road. Nick Batos announced a presentation to be given on the Property Tax Change Referenda for January 7<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. at Shadow Wood. All of this information is

included in the recent Estero Development Report which can be accessed at [www.esterofl.org](http://www.esterofl.org).

### **The Annexation/Incorporation Committee Report**

John Goodrich reported that prior to the November 29 the Committee met and agreed upon a statement that would be presented to the Legislative Delegation Meeting. John also spoke at the joint meeting of the ECCL and the Bonita Springs City Council on November 30. The City of Bonita Springs is not going to give up their legal right to the two mile buffer, but at this time, they have no interest in annexing that buffer area. It was agreed that, when necessary, discussions would continue between the two entities. John Reuhl suggested that this Committee remain active. He stated that the [www.voteestero.com](http://www.voteestero.com) website is up and running, however, the feasibility study is not yet complete. Mr. Eslick clarified that we all understand that Vote Estero is a separate organization from the ECCL and that both will respond and react to one another as items develop.

### **US 41-Corkscrew Road to San Carlos Park**

Chris Smith reported that he testified to the legislative delegation on November 29 regarding moving up the time table for the widening to six lanes of US 41 from Corkscrew Road to San Carlos Park. It is presently scheduled for 2010-2011. The two reasons that are delaying the schedule is money and the required retention pond. Chris recommended that the project be split in two at Estero Parkway, relieving the northern portion from the search for the retention pond site. The purpose of this is that Wal-Mart may, under certain circumstances lend the monies to pay for the job so that they may begin construction of their store at Estero Parkway and US 41. With the completion of the Estero Flyover in 2009, huge traffic influxes influence this situation. The need for a stoplight at this intersection was also brought up by Chris. It was noted that this project was projected to cost \$17 million a few years ago and is now up to an estimated \$32 million. The ridiculous part of it is that presumably the state is looking for the cheapest way to get the property for the retention pond while costs grow and grow.

### **ECCL Organizational & Membership Issues**

Don Brown, of Belle Lago is being changed from the alternate to community representative and leaving a vacancy for the alternate. Frank Howe has shown interest in the ECCL from this community and it was suggested that he be contacted for this position. Fred Moore and his wife were in attendance from Cypress Bend. The ECCL spoke to 80-100 residents of Cypress Bend recently and welcomes representation from their community. Kim McClaren from Eldorado Acres has been in touch with the ECCL, but she works and is looking for a representative from her community. Barbara Taefi from Pelican Landing is a new alternate representative and in Pelican Sound, John Goodrich is the member and Paul Soscia the alternate. Rapallo will be turned over in January 2008 from the developer. They will be searching for new representatives. These changes regarding Don Brown and the change at Pelican Sound were put to a vote and were accepted by the membership.

A link put on each community's website announcing that the EDR report is available each month was discussed as a good idea to reach even more people. Resident's reading

the Estero Development Report educates the public for further participation in community issues.

Nick Batos gave out the website [www.brooksconcernedcitizens.com](http://www.brooksconcernedcitizens.com) which is an open website where you can register and then read about current Estero issues. This website also enables anyone to sign on to inform public officials by e-mail of your opinion on “pertinent to the community” subjects. You will find a sample e-mail which you can change to your preference and then e-mail to the decision-making individuals.

#### **Meeting with President Bradshaw of FGCU-January 17**

Sam Levy needs to know who will attend by January 10. The Conservancy and the Wildlife Federation will also be in attendance. One purpose of the meeting is to have the university be interactive with the community and also influence their land use decisions in environmentally sensitive areas.

#### **Health Care Forum, March 8 at the Coconut Hyatt Resort**

Sam Levy reported that the lobby area and grand ballroom at the Hyatt will be available for use on Saturday, March 8 in the morning. It is hoped that representatives from Lee Memorial and NCH will give presentations about their services in the south Lee County community. The Urgent Care centers would also be asked to participate. Mike Riley will be leaving the Bonita Health Care facility as their CEO and become the head of Strategic Planning for NCH.

#### **Estero Fire Rescue**

Barbara Akins announced a meeting date, January 15, at the Three Oaks Community Center where the three fire departments, San Carlos, Estero and Bonita Springs will present a white paper about their possible merger. This meeting is open to the public and will begin at 7 p.m.

#### **Fertilizer Ordinance**

Nick Batos reported on the December 4<sup>th</sup> hearing and stated that the BOCC did not vote on the issue, but pushed it back to staff to come back with a more stringent ordinance.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. at the Estero Community Park.

Respectfully submitted,  
Faie Saunders, Secretary

