

REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT SOCIETY

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2015 GOVERNORS:

Bob Bassett	Mark Morris
Alexis Crespo	John Nicola
Mary Gentile	Peter Rossi
Bill Morris	Past President Sean Ellis, Esq.

BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

Luncheon Programs:

Mayor Nick Batos of the Village of Estero will address the April luncheon, sponsored by [Pepitone Properties Corp.](#)

The May luncheon will feature a review of the Legislative Session by Representative Dane Eagle, sponsored by [Waldrop Engineering](#).

The June 9th luncheon will be sponsored by [Busey Bank](#) and the July 14th luncheon by [GFA International](#).

REIS welcomes your suggestions on programs and speakers you would like to see at the luncheons. Please share your ideas with [Amanda Brock](#), 239.344.1269.

Luncheon and Event Sponsorships:

Sponsorships of 2015 REIS luncheons are being reserved quickly. Contact Chairman [Peter Rossi](#), 239.514.4100 for availability and details. Prime sponsorships are also available for the fall workshop and annual social event.

Educational Workshop:

The annual workshop is tentatively planned for September 11th at FGCU. Title sponsor will be [Roetzel & Andress](#). Anyone interested in participating or sponsoring is encouraged to contact Education Committee Chairs [Alexis Crespo](#), [John Nicola](#), and [Mary Gentile](#).

Member Relations & Social Events:

Member Relations and Social Event Committee Chairs [Bev Larson](#) and [Peter Rossi](#) are planning a surprise new venue for this year's gala event. Contact Bev or Peter to help or to sponsor this popular gathering.

Plans are also underway for a post-season mixer with other Southwest Florida real estate and development organizations. Watch the REIS website for details.

Scholarship:

Co-chairs Mark Morris and Bob Bassett are seeking contributions to fund scholarships to be awarded this fall. Information and donation form are on the [REIS web page](#).

REAL ESTATE LEADERS CONVENE

The American Real Estate Society (ARES) holds its annual meeting at Sanibel Harbour Marriott April 15-18. Over 400 university professors, industry researchers and practicing professionals from around the world will present research papers and attend panel discussions in the largest real estate research gathering in the world. The conference is chaired by Professor William Hardin of Florida International University, assisted by REIS member Professor Shelton Weeks of Florida Gulf Coast University. Information on the conference is on the [ARES website](#).

SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

All day event with vendor showcase and panel discussions on Environment/Conservation, STEM, and Economic Development. April 30th at Harborside Event Center in Fort Myers. Details at [www.SWFLSustainability.com](#)

COMMERCIAL LEASE TAX

As Florida's legislators advance bills (SB 140, HB 101) to phase out sales taxes on commercial property leases, a broad consortium of commercial real estate organizations assert that the taxes slow economic development, hamper job creation, impair competition for corporate relocations to Florida, and subject businesses to disproportionate regulatory burdens. They are calling for a letter writing campaign to [Governor Scott](#) to support the tax relief.

BILL MORRIS JOINS REIS BOARD

The Real Estate Investment Society (REIS) announces the appointment of Bill Morris to the Board of Governors. Bill Morris, PE, LEED AP, is a principal in Morris-Depew Associates. He will fulfill the term of Nikole Wesley, who relocated to South Carolina.

REIS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Please join in welcoming our new members:

Ray Atkinson, Wright Construction Group
Brian Chapman, State Insurance Agency

Membership details and application are on [REIS website](#).



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GROWTH MANAGEMENT

A regional overview of development patterns and growth management issues will be presented by the Southwest Florida Chapter of Urban Land Institute (ULI).

April 17: Future of Development in Lee County

May 15: Future of Development in Charlotte County

All presentations will be at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Details available at www.swflorida.uli.org.

NEW BUILDING CODE IN EFFECT

Florida's 2013 Building Code became effective the first of this year. A "Building Code Boot Camp" will provide training on advanced building code, accessibility and energy code rules. The free training session is presented by AIA Florida Southwest, Florida Home Builders Association, and state agencies April 21st in Estero. Register online at LearnFloridaBuildingCodes.com

FLOOD INSURANCE SURCHARGE

Surcharges on flood insurance policies begin April 1st. The annual surcharge for a primary residence is \$25 and the surcharge for non-primary residences, commercial buildings, and condominium building associations is \$250. The surcharges apply to all policies, including preferred risk policies for properties not in special flood hazard areas. The maximum deductible available increases to \$10,000 on April 1st also. The surcharges are part of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

LAND USE SYMPOSIUM

The 2nd Annual Land Use Symposium, "Everything You Wanted to Know About Florida Planning and Zoning - A Symposium for Plan Commissioners and Professionals," will be May 8th in Port Charlotte. Presented by the Promised Lands Section of APA (American Planning Association) at the Charlotte County Administration Building. Details to be posted soon on the REIS website.

LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

REIS joins the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to present a panel discussion to assess what happened in the 2015 Legislative Session and how it affects our industry. The panel includes state legislators and experts in development planning and legal issues and takes place May 20th. Details to be posted soon on the REIS website.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION REPORT

Commercial Lease Tax (SB 140, HB 101):

A bill to reduce Florida's 6% sales tax on commercial leases passed the Senate Finance & Tax Committee March 23rd with unanimous support. The bill is now in the Appropriations Committee. The comparable House bill, HB 101, is in Finance & Tax Committee.

Water Management:

Comprehensive water policy bills (HB 7003, SB 918) focus on improving and protecting water quality for springs and Lake Okeechobee. House bill passed 106-9, Senate bill in Environmental Preservation & Conservation Committee. The Senate bill includes stricter guidelines and deadlines for protecting springs and creates an advisory council to recommend water projects for funding to the Legislature.

Private Property Rights (HB 383):

Addresses settlement agreements between private entities and government, creates cause of action for damages from unconstitutional takings, and authorizes awards. Filed by Civil Justice Subcommittee, now in Local Government Affairs Subcommittee.

Enterprise Zones (SB 392):

Revises Florida Enterprise Zone Act and conditions for designating an Enterprise Zone. In committees to review.

Plan Amendments (SB 832):

Clarifies requirements for plan amendments to an adopted sector plan and revises regulations regarding mitigation. Community Affairs Committee is reviewing.

Regional Planning Councils (SB 484, HB 873):

Florida's 11 regional planning councils would be eliminated, with much of their authority transferring to local governments. Bills are advancing through committees.

Growth Management (SB 562, HB 933):

The "development of regional impact" (DRI) review process for major projects would be eliminated. Passed Senate Community Affairs and Transportation Committees, now in Rules Committee.

Flood Insurance (CS/HB 895):

Authorizes flexible flood insurance. Appropriations Committee approved, now in Regulatory Affairs Committee.

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