

## 2023 OFFICERS:

President Lori Moore  
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Treasurer Josh Philpott, AICP  
Secretary Kristine Smale

## 2023 GOVERNORS:

Richard Akin  
Matt Caldwell  
Art Castellanos, AIA  
Janet Davis, CCIM  
Phil Fischler, CCIM  
Zannon Garza  
Ryan Shute  
Past President Kent Poli

## BOARDROOM REPORT

### News from recent REIS board meetings

#### Monthly Programs:

The **March 14th luncheon** will look at the goals and challenges for Lee County, with Brian Hamman, chair of Lee County Board of County Commissioners. The luncheon is sponsored by [LSI Companies](#).

Hurricane recovery and the economic outlook will be addressed by John Talmage, director of Lee County Office of Economic Development, at the **April 11th luncheon**, sponsored by [Maxwell Hendry Simmons](#).

Sponsorships for 2023 luncheons are very limited so please contact [Janet Davis](#) if you're interested.

#### Horizon Council:

The February 28th Annual Meeting of the Horizon Council, Horizon Foundation, and Lee County Economic Development Office features a review of 2022 and outlook for the business community. The public is welcome, admission is free, and registration is required at the [Horizon website](#).

#### Reception for Lee County Commissioners:

This popular event for REIS members and the newly elected Lee County commissioners is rescheduled for April 6th. Sponsored by [Edison National Bank](#) and [Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt](#). The event is exclusively for REIS members and their guests. Invitations will be sent this month.

#### Membership:

Memberships expired December 31st but you may still be able to renew by logging in on the [REIS website](#). Annual dues are \$150 per person, based on the calendar year.

#### Scholarship Program:

The REIS Scholarship Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization that enables individuals and businesses to make tax-deductible donations in support of scholarships. Learn how you can participate and support the REIS scholarship program on the [REIS webpage](#).

#### Website Advertising:

There are currently 2 banner ad spaces available on the home page of the REIS website. Contact Bill Burdette, [info@reis-swfl.org](mailto:info@reis-swfl.org) for details.

## 2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION BEGINS

The Florida Legislature convenes March 7th with the Southwest Florida delegation bearing significant influence. Kathleen Passidomo of Naples is the current Senate president, with Senator Jonathan Martin on the Appropriations and Community Affairs Committees. Senator Ben Albritton is the majority leader and serves on Appropriations and Tax and Finance Committees.

Representative Michael Grant is the majority leader in the House of Representatives, while Bob Rommel is chair of the Commerce Committee and serves on Appropriations Committee. Jenna Persons-Mulicka is chair of the Local Administration, Federal Affairs & Special Districts Subcommittee, with Kaylee Tuck as vice chair. Lauren Melo is vice chair of the Regulatory Reform and Economic Development Subcommittee and is on the Commerce Committee with Mike Giallombardo. Spencer Roach is on the Ways and Means Committee and Adam Botana is on the Infrastructure Strategies Committee.

Business groups are pressing their priorities, including tort reform, workforce housing, and long-term infrastructure investment. Environmental groups are also advocating for housing trust funds, as well as policies to contend with sea level rise and develop sustainable communities.

## BONITA SPRINGS PLAN UPDATE

The Bonita Springs Local Planning Agency has received [draft recommendations](#) for the Evaluation and Appraisal Review (EAR) of the Comprehensive Plan from its consultants at Florida Gulf Coast University. In addition to the proposed amendments, the document includes extensive data on the City's demographics, infrastructure and land uses. The timeline and workshop reports for the review process are available at the [City's EAR website](#).

## I-75 IMPROVEMENTS CONSIDERED

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is finalizing the South Corridor Master Plan, from exit 101 / SR 951 in Collier County to exit 143 / Bayshore Road in Lee County, and may include interchange improvements and additional lanes. The vast majority of the South Corridor is planned to be an 8 to 10 lane highway. FDOT welcomes public input and has provided project information and interactive map on the [Southwest Connect I-75 South Corridor](#)

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## AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCENTIVES

The "Live Local Act" (SB 102), now advancing through committees in the Florida Legislature, would ease local zoning restrictions on residential developments that include significant portions of affordable housing and offer tax exemptions to landlords who offer some of their units below market-rate. The bill would also provide substantial funding for state affordable housing programs, including the Sadowski Trust Fund. At the same time, it would prohibit local governments from controlling rents.

## MARKET INTELLIGENCE

### ULI Signature Collier County Event

ULI Southwest Florida District event on March 9th will highlight the Gateway Triangle Area with Debra Forester, Community Redevelopment Director. [swflorida.uli.org](http://swflorida.uli.org)

### Market Trends of Southwest Florida

Annual presentation on March 14th in Fort Myers by local real estate experts analyzing market trends and providing insights and predictions. Randy Thibaut, ALC, Denny Grimes, and Justin Thibaut, CCIM, are the featured presenters. [markettrendsswfl.com/](http://markettrendsswfl.com/)

**Regional Economic Indicator Report** is published each month by the Regional Economic Research Institute (RERI) at Florida Gulf Coast University and is posted on the [REIS Resources webpage](#).

## WELCOME NEW REIS MEMBERS

**Sharon Woodberry**, economic and business development officer for the City of Cape Coral, has a long career as an economic development director.

**Kenton Beal**, certified wetland environmental specialist, is a land representative with Environmental Resource Solutions. He has extensive experience in mitigation.

**Paul Copeland** is a risk management consultant with Insurance Office of America.

## REIS BOARD MEMBER HONORED

Dan Adams, outgoing member of the 2021-2022 REIS Board of Governors was recognized for his exemplary service at the REIS February luncheon by 2023 President Lori Moore.



## SW FLORIDA BUDGET REQUESTS

With the 2023 Legislative Session about to begin, lawmakers have already filed over \$6 billion in budget requests for local projects. Southwest Florida's legislators led the way, requesting \$179 million for a State Road 31 project, \$93 million for a State Road 78 project, \$51.7 million for permanent repairs to the Sanibel Causeway, \$50 million to restore Lee County's working waterfront, \$25 million to replace Fort Myers Beach Town Hall, \$18 million to renourish Sanibel Islands beaches, and \$17 million to make Sanibel Island's sewer system meet resiliency standards. The 2023-2024 state budget is expected to surpass \$110 billion.

## REIS SCHOLARSHIPS FUNDED

The 26th annual Paul Sands Memorial Slaw Dog Invitational golf tournament donated \$29,500 for the Paul Sands Memorial - REIS Scholarship program at Florida Gulf Coast University. Learn more about the REIS scholarship program and how you can participate by visiting the [REIS webpage](#).



REIS President Lori Moore with tournament director Lisa Sands, REIS Scholarship Chair Bev Larson, and FGCU professor Shelton Weeks.

## FLORIDA POPULATION FORECAST

The [Demographic Estimating Conference](#) met in February to adopt a new population forecast for Florida, reflecting recent demographic and economic-related data and trends. For the five-year period beginning April 1, 2023, population growth over the prior year is expected to average 304,311 net new residents per year (834 per day), representing a compound growth rate of 1.33%. These increases are comparable to adding a city the size of Orlando every year.

## GULF COAST 75 LOGISTICS CENTER

Construction is underway on Florida Gulf Coast Logistics Center at Enterprise Charlotte Airpark in Punta Gorda. Dakota Premium Hardwoods, a national lumber distributor, will be the first tenant and is expected to open in August. The Center will offer 378,000 sq. ft. of spec space for manufacturing and distribution.

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