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Travis Merrick	Past President Bev Larson, CCIM

BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

Luncheon Programs:

The July 9th luncheon will feature a presentation by Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno on changing strategies for public safety. Sponsored by [Alico ITEC Park](#).

New business programs at Florida Gulf Coast University will be topic of the August 13th luncheon, sponsored by [LandQwest Commercial Property Management](#).

REIS welcomes your program suggestions. Please share your ideas with [Mary Gentile](#), 239-275-4922, ext. 235. If you would like to lead the invocation and pledge at a luncheon, please contact [Tim Hancock](#), 239-649-4040.

Sponsorships:

Contact [Austin Turner](#), 239-344-1178, for information and availability of opportunities to sponsor REIS events.

Scholarship Program:

FGCU and the REIS Board of Governors will be reviewing scholarship applications in the coming weeks to determine scholarships to be awarded for the fall term. Donations are sought to fund the awards. Information on the program and a donation form are on the [REIS webpage](#).

Real Estate Symposium:

The popular annual event presented by REIS and the Lutgert College of Business at FGCU will be September 19th at The Club at Grandezza. The program will focus on strategies for coastal development, redevelopment, and resiliency.

Social Events and Member Relations:

The Committee - [Jason Brewer](#), [Travis Merrick](#), and [Gordon Glover](#), is scouting locations and planning the November 14th annual party and welcomes your ideas.

Membership:

A limited number of memberships are currently available. Information and [membership application](#) are on the website. Contact [Bill Burdette](#) if you have questions.

WETLANDS CHANGES TRANSMITTED

The Lee County Board of County Commissioners approved transmittal of an amendment (CPA1029-00001) to the Lee Plan that will authorize Lee County to issue Development Orders for non-residential uses in the wetlands category where impacts are authorized by a State agency. The amendment has been transmitted to the State for review and will be scheduled for a public adoption hearing when it is returned with comments or recommendations. The proposed amendment and staff report are available for review on the REIS website:

[Resources - Reports & Documents](#).

FLOOD INSURANCE EXTENDED

On May 30th, Congress approved a 2-week extension of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which was due to expire on May 31st. On June 4th, Congress approved an extension through September 30th, the 12th temporary extension in the past 2 years. Congressional committees continue to work on proposals to reform the program in order to achieve sustainability and support long-term reauthorization of NFIP.

BUSINESS RENT TAX REDUCED

Governor DeSantis signed into law House Bill 7123, which includes a 0.2% reduction to the state tax on commercial leases, known as the business rent tax (BRT). Effective January 1st, 2020, the new state tax rate on commercial leases will be 5.5%, down from its original 6% in 2017.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVES

The City of Cape Coral resolved to extend the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program, which provides funding for the local housing assistance program. The City Council also approved a resolution making 10 city-owned properties available for affordable housing. The properties will be donated to partner organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and the Cape Coral Housing Development Corporation. Both measures faced opposition from Cape Coral residents who cited fear of diminished property value and increased crime and traffic.

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LEGISLATION PENDING APPROVAL

The Florida Legislature passed several real estate related bills that are pending action by Governor DeSantis:

Local Planning: House Bill 7103 addresses challenges to the consistency of local comprehensive plan amendments and would make the losing party responsible for the prevailing party's legal fees. The bill would also allow local governments to waive impact fees for affordable housing. Environmental groups have called for the Governor to veto the bill on grounds that it will deter citizen challenges to development decisions.

Impact fees: House Bill 207 prohibits local governments from charging impact fees until a building permit is issued. It also revises minimum requirements for adoption of impact fees by specified government agencies and exempts water and sewer connection fees from Florida Impact Fee Act.

Open and Expired Building Permits: House Bill 447 provides requirements related to open and expired permits, permit requirements, closing of permits, amendment of Florida Building Code, applicability & notice requirements.

Wetlands Mitigation: House Bill 0521 authorizes a local government to allow permittee-responsible mitigation on lands purchased and owned by a local government for conservation purposes under certain circumstances; requiring such mitigation.

Comprehensive Plan Amendments: House Bill 6017 removes acreage limitations applying to small-scale comprehensive plan amendments.

Inland Highways: Senate Bill 7068 authorizes 3 new state toll roads. The Heartland Parkway would connect Collier County with communities through the center of Florida; the Suncoast Parkway north of Tampa would be extended to Georgia and the Turnpike would be extended to connect the Parkway with I-75.

Legal Documents: House Bill 409 authorizes online notarizations of legal documents.

Property Owner Bill of Rights: House Bill 1159 requires every county property appraiser office to provide the "Property Owner Bill of Rights" on its website.

LET'S TALK ABOUT MINES

A public forum on limerock mining and proposed changes to Lee County's Comprehensive Plan will be presented by the Estero Republican Club at 6 p.m. on June 27th at the Estero Recreation Center. The Village of Estero's position will be delivered by Estero Council member Nick Batos and Lee County's stance will be represented by County Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass. Lee County Commissioners transmitted the proposed amendment to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity in April and are awaiting comments or approval.

The program will also feature a review of the State Legislative Session by Representative Ray Rodriguez.

SW FLORIDA MARKET TRENDS

The annual mid-year snapshot of real estate market data and insight will be presented by REIS members Randy Thibaut and Justin Thibaut on August 13th in Estero.

www.MarketTrends2019.com

REIS MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

REIS member **Charles Whittington** is a director of the Collier County Bar Foundation and president of the Young Lawyers Section of the Collier County Bar Association.

REIS member **Carlos Kelly** has been named chairman of the IMAG History & Science Center's Board of Directors. He is also a board member of the Chamber of Southwest Florida and Uncommon Friends Foundation.

REIS member **Patrick Neale** has received the Collier County Bar Foundation Service Award.

REIS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Please join in welcoming our newest members:

Robert Fowler, CGC, LEED AP, is president of Fowler Construction and Development. He is also a Realtor and former member of the REIS Board of Governors.

Ody Leon is the marketing coordinator with Target Roofing & Sheet Metal.

Eibert Zeigler is with EZEZ Business Network, based in Cape Coral.

Membership information is on the REIS website.



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