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BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

Luncheon Programs:

John B. Jung, Jr., head of BB&T Capital Markets, will discuss "Jump-starting the US Economy" at the March 10th luncheon meeting, sponsored by [Roetzel & Andress](#).

The first mayor 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](#).

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](#).

Annual Social Event:

Member Relations and Social Event Committee Chairs [Bev Larson](#) and [Peter Rossi](#) are making plans to top last year's gala event. Contact Bev or Peter if you'd like to help or wish to sponsor this popular gathering.

Horizon Council:

Sean Ellis, REIS representative on the Council, reports the Industry Appreciation Event will be September 18th.

Scholarship:

Co-chairs Mark Morris and Bob Bassett are working to expand scholarship opportunities to more students.

LEE IMPACT FEE RATE NOW 45%

On March 3rd Lee County Commissioners plan adopted an impact fee collection rate of 45% for roads, parks and schools, effective March 16th. Fees are now assessed at 20% but that discount rate is due to expire March 13th. Permit applications submitted by that date and issued by Sept. 11th will be entitled to the discount rate. This applies only to construction in unincorporated areas. The 45% rate will be applied for the next three years to residential and commercial construction.

INNOVATION HUB PROJECT BEGINS

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) has started construction on its Emergent Technologies Institute, a 6.5 acre research-and-development complex located off Alico Road. The complex is projected to cost \$12.5 million, including design, construction and furnishings, and was funded through appropriation by the State of Florida. The project is the first in the 241 acre [Innovation Hub](#) research and technology park between Southwest Florida International Airport and FGCU.

ESTERO GOVERNMENT FORMS

The new Village of Estero elected its first council March 3rd, including Nick Batos, Howard Levitan, Bill Ribble, Jim Boesch, Don Brown, Katy Errington, and Jim Wilson. The first council meeting will be March 17th, where the Council will elect the mayor. Growth management has been a focal point in forming the municipality and is expected to be a priority of the new government. The Estero mayor has been invited to address the REIS April 14th luncheon and provide insight.

LEE REVISING CONSERVATION PLAN

Lee County is considering revisions to the ordinance that governs the "20/20" conservation program. Proposed changes involve use of designated management funds for water quality projects, funding management through the County's general fund each year, and allocating all tax revenues to the general fund unless the acquisition fund for conservation land falls below a minimum balance.



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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).

March 20: *Future of Development in Collier County*

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.

BROWNFIELD SYMPOSIUM

"Economic enrichment through redevelopment" is the theme of this year's daylong event in Fort Myers. Panel discussion and presentations will cover environmental, legal, insurance, development, and government initiatives. Free to public. Register at Florida DEP website.

MARKET OUTLOOK 2015

Annual forum presents unique analyses of economic trends by keynote speaker David E. Altig, Executive Vice President and Director of Research at the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta; Douglas G. Duncan, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist at Fannie Mae in Washington; and Gary Jackson, Director of FGCU's Regional Economic Research Institute at the Lutgert College of Business. Presented by Christensen Financial, Inc. and Lutgert College of Business at Florida Gulf Coast University. Reserve tickets at MBASWF.org

CAPITAL MARKETS REPORT

The annual Mortgage Bankers Association conference held in February revealed a market awash in capital. The outlook for market segments has been summarized in a brief report that may be reviewed on REIS website.

REIS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Please join in welcoming our new members:

Heather Wentworth, Crown Roofing

William R. Brown, IberiaBank

Roger Yates, Sky Enterprises of SW Florida, LLC

Russell Budd, PBS Contractors

Melody Landry, Fort Myers Realty & Property Management

Membership details and application are on REIS website.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION REPORT

Commercial Lease Tax (SB 140):

A bill to reduce Florida's 6% sales tax on commercial leases passed the Community Affairs Committee March 4th with unanimous support. The bill will next be heard by the Finance and Tax Committee. Gov. Scott proposed the tax cut last year but it was tabled by the Legislature. The Governor did not include the cut in this year's budget proposal in favor of tax cuts for cell phones and satellite communications.

Water Management:

A rash of bills involve water policy and spending mandated by last year's Amendment 1, which provides an estimated \$757 million toward water and conservation projects. Comprehensive water policy bills (HB 7003, SB 918) focus on improving and protecting water quality for springs and Lake Okechobee. The House bill has passed 106-9 and now goes to the Senate.

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):

Would revise and extend the Florida Enterprise Zone Act. Revises the conditions for designating an Enterprise Zone. Referred to committees to review.

Plan Amendments (SB 832):

Would require that plan amendments to an adopted sector plan follow a state-coordinated review process, establishing that this section is intended to promote development of a long-term vision for conservation, development, and agriculture. Referred to committees.

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.

Growth Management (SB 562, HB 933):

The "development of individual impact" (DRI) review process for major projects would be eliminated.

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