

2023 OFFICERS:

President Lori Moore
Vice President Justin Thibaut, CCIM
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:

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](#).

The **May 9th luncheon** feature a review of the 2023 Florida Legislative Session. The luncheon is sponsored by [Midland 1031](#).

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

Horizon Council:

The General Membership Meeting will be March 24th. The Council is a public-private organization that advises the Lee County Board of County Commissioners on economic development policy. The Real Estate Investment Society (REIS) is a member of the Council and is represented by 2022 President Kent Poli.

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](#). There is no charge for the event which is exclusively for REIS members and their guests. If you are a current member and have not received an invitation, please notify us via [email](#).

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 is 1 banner ad space available on the home page of the REIS website. Contact Bill Burdette, [info@reis-swfl.org](#) for details.

REIS COMMISSIONERS RECEPTION

The Real Estate Investment Society (REIS) will honor the Lee County Board of County Commissioners at a reception on April 6th, hosted by Edison National Bank and Henderson Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A. The festive bi-annual event provides an opportunity for REIS members to become acquainted with elected officials in a relaxed, social atmosphere. The reception is exclusively for REIS members and their guests.

SECTION 1031 EXCHANGES AT RISK

The federal budget proposal for 2023 calls for "closing the like-kind exchange loophole" that allows for deferring capital gains taxes. The same proposal was included last year and failed to pass Congress. It would cap the deferral of gain on like-kind real estate exchanges to an aggregate of \$500,000 per taxpayer or \$1 million for married couples filing jointly. Any gains in excess of the cap would be recognized in the year of the exchange. A coalition of real estate groups is advocating to retain the IRS Section 1031 provision as an important investment tool. More information is available from the [Federation of Exchange Accommodators \(FEA\)](#).

REIS 2023 LEADERSHIP TEAM



The Real Estate Investment Society announces the 2023 officers and board of governors.

Front row, from left: Treasurer Josh Philpott; Secretary Kristine Smale; President Lori Moore; and Scholarship Chair Bev Larson. *Back row, from left:* Governors Art Castellanos; Matt Caldwell; Phil Fischler; Janet Davis; Ryan Shute; Zannon Garza; and Richard Akin. Vice President Justin Thibaut and 2022 President Kent Poli are not pictured.

BEV LARSON, CCIM

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US 41 - BONITA BEACH RD PROJECT

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is holding an Alternatives Public Workshop on the Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study of the US 41– Bonita Beach Road intersection. The Study will evaluate the need for improvements and projected demand with feedback from the public. A live, online workshop will take place April 3rd, followed by an in-person workshop April 4th. Details are on the City of Bonita Springs [project website](#) and all materials may be reviewed on the [FDOT project website](#).

CLEWISTON WATERFRONT PLAN

City of Clewiston is considering development concepts for a [Master Waterfront Plan](#) on the shore of Lake Okeechobee. The Plan includes public and private property in the downtown area and its purpose is to improve access to the water and support economic development. Concepts are now open for public comment and the Commission will review and select one on April 10th, to be adopted at a public hearing May 15th.

SWFL PLANNING SYMPOSIUM

A Symposium for professional planners, design professionals, plan commissioners, and other interested parties will take place May 12th at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center in Punta Gorda. The Symposium is presented by the Promised Lands Section of the American Planning Association (APA) Florida Chapter and the Florida Planning and Zoning Association (FPZA) Calusa Chapter.

WELCOME NEW REIS MEMBERS

Taylor Bolt is an environmental and land use attorney with Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt.

Joe Bonora, Catalyst Asset Management, develops multi-family projects on the Gulf Coast and is a popular speaker on development trends.

Michelle Rice is a senior sales and digital marketing executive with CoStar Group, with a background in retail and commercial properties.

Colby Haugness is first vice president of investments with Marcus & Millichap, bearing experience in sale-leaseback financing and NNN assets.

Jonathan Santiago is director of marketing and business development with Sutter Roofing Company, commercial roofing and sheet metal contractor.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES TO WATCH

The 2023 Florida Legislative regular session is underway and key issues for the business community include:

Affordable Housing - The Senate passed the "Live Local Act" (SB 102) to increase the money that goes into the Sadowski Trust Fund by adding a portion of the revenue from online sales taxes. It is now awaiting action by the House of Representatives. The legislation is supported by the Florida Association of Realtors.

Economic Development - Enterprise Florida, the state's business-recruitment agency, is again facing elimination as a proposed House bill (HB 5) would transfer the agency's funding, currently \$13 million, to the Department of Economic Opportunity. The state also has a Job Growth Grant Fund to provide funds for job training programs and regional infrastructure. The Governor has proposed increasing the budget for that Fund from \$50 million to \$100 million.

Water Quality - Bills in both houses (HB 1197, SB 1240) would prohibit local governments from regulating water quality, pollution control (including local fertilizer ordinances), and wetlands. Regulation would become the responsibility of state agencies.

Land Development - Proposed bills (HB 671, HB 383) seek to reduce the time limits that local building departments have to respond to permit applications and requested zoning changes, variances and development orders. Other bills (HB 359, SB 540) would allow prevailing parties to collect attorney fees and costs in court challenges to small scale development amendments to land use plans.

Tax Relief - The Senate Finance and Tax Committee has approved more than \$70 million in proposed tax breaks that will likely be part of budget negotiations. A proposal (SB 288) providing 20-30% tax credits for rehabilitating historic structures also passed the committee.

Farmland Sales - The Senate Judiciary Committee has advanced a bill (SB 264) that would restrict the sale of agricultural land within 20 miles of military bases to entities tied to certain countries, including China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, and Syria.

Flood Disclosures - Bills filed in both houses (HB 759, SB 1720) would require sellers of residential or commercial property to disclose flood information prior to executing a contract.

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