

BOARDROOM REPORT

News from recent REIS board meetings

REIS Scholarship Foundation: Contributions for 2007 scholarship awards are now being accepted. Donation information is on the web site or by contacting Scholarship Committee Chairman Tom Woodyard, 239.425.6012.

Membership: The 2007 roster is full and the directory is in production. Members are encouraged to review their contact information in the online directory, at www.reis-swfl.org and notify Bill Burdette (bill@burdetteinc.com) of updates or corrections.

Committee Chairs Appointed:

Luncheon Programs: Chair Steve Hartsell & Paul Sands
Luncheon Sponsors: Chair Paul Sands
Membership: Chair Kevin M. Fitzgerald
Scholarship: Chair Tom Woodyard & Walter Serbon
Newsletter: Chair Russ Ringland & Bill Burdette
Social: Co-Chairs Cody Vaughan-Birch & Kim Donnelly
Education: Chair Eric Lahaie
Governmental: Co-Chairs Steve Hartsell & Mary Gibbs
Pledge/Invocation: Chair Russ Ringland

REIS members are encouraged to participate on these committees and may contact the chairpersons for more information.

Administration: Sharon Heston and Ann Lefever will continue to manage meeting registrations and check-in. Bill Burdette, of Burdette Marketing, will continue to manage membership information and marketing. Julie Mathis, of Mathis, Jessen & Company CPAs, will manage accounting and taxes for REIS. GetNetSmart continues to host the web site. Special thanks is extended to Old Florida Bank for hosting the monthly board meetings.

GET IN THE EXPRESS LANE

Increased membership and great programs have drawn record attendance to recent REIS luncheon meetings. Prepay for your luncheon, pick up your badge at the Express Table, and avoid the crowd at registration.

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THE LATEST TRANSPORTATION NEWS

March 13— Mike Rippe, FDOT Director of Transportation Development will address REIS luncheon meeting with latest on highway improvements, proposed new corridors, alternative modes, and funding options.

April 10—Robert Ball, Director of Lee County Port Authority, will discuss expansion plans for both airports and related business opportunities.

LEE DEVELOPMENT REGS MAY CHANGE

Proposed changes to Lee County Land Development Regulations are now under committee review, with public hearings tentatively slated for May. An Affordable Housing Methodology, including a "linkage fee," is also being developed by Lee County. REIS will closely monitor both issues and keep members informed of regulations that may affect business.

AIRPORT SETS PASSENGER RECORD

Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) accommodated more than 7.6 million passengers during 2006, making it the busiest year in the airport's 23-year history. Passenger traffic for the year was up about 1.7 percent compared to 2005. Nationwide, traffic was down 0.5 percent for the year. 725,909 passengers traveled through the airport in December, a 7.7 percent increase compared to December 2005, making it the busiest December on record. December's passenger traffic was up more than 9.9 percent from November.

MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

Sponsorship of REIS luncheons provides prominent personal exposure to the leaders in the real estate investment and development community. \$350 sponsorship includes your logo on 450 mailed meeting notices, representation in press announcements and on the REIS website, opportunity to present displays and distribute brochures at the luncheon, in addition to a personal presentation. Information: Paul Sands, (239) 489-3303.

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TRACK BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

Many building and real estate activity forecasts are based on building permit activity for new homes and commercial buildings. You can monitor permitting trends yourself with these sources:

Bonita Springs, Fort Myers Beach, and unincorporated Lee County permits: Lee County Dept. of Community Development, www.leegov.com/dcd

Lee County permits, including all municipalities: Lee County Economic Development Office, "Economic Indicator Reports," www.leecountybusiness.com

Charlotte County's monthly permit reports for commercial and residential are at www.pureeconomics.org

Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, Glades, and Sarasota Counties permits: Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, <http://swfrpc.org/views>

National, state, regional or custom reports:

- Hanley Wood Market Intelligence: 239.437.9959, www.meyersgroup.com or www.hanleywood.com
- Fishkind & Associates: www.fishkind.com

CONSERVATION LAND TAX LAW

A recent law provides generous tax deductions to land owners who enter into irrevocable conservation easements on their properties. The provision was passed by Congress last August as a section of the H.R. 4 pension reform law.

Qualifying landowners may offset up to 100% of adjusted gross income through donations of the easements. In addition, the taxpayer may deduct 50% of the value of the donation in any year. The rule's carry-forward period for using the deduction is 15 years.

The law sunsets at the end of 2007, if not renewed.

WELCOME NEW REIS MEMBERS:

Rafael R. Perez, G'Vitale International Realty, LLC
Jason Campagnolo, The Camp Team, Inc.
Julie G'Vitale, G'Vitale International Realty, LLC
Robert Mintz, Gates, D'Alessandro & Woodyard, LLC
Shelley Cary, Red Diamond Realty, Inc.

Bruce Hepp, First Florida Ranches, LLC
Todd Rinehart, First American Bank
Stephanie L. Hough, BRPH - Architects - Engineers
Michael Banson, Homes for America Holdings, Inc.
Jodi Joseph, Morris-DePew Associates, Inc.

Jay McGregor, Florida Gulf Bank
John Reingardt, Florida Gulf Bank
Eric S. Grindley, Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt
Dave Wallace, Premier Commercial Properties
Melissa L. Sharnsky, Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt

Jim Kane, TIB Bank
Tracy Pace, Fidelity National Title
James Oriol, Toll Brothers
Ray Higdon, RLH Holdings, LLC
Michael Munn, Pretium Commercial Group

Alan D. Esparza, A & R Architects, P.A.
Paul J. Eckenrode, Merrill Lynch & Co.
Matt Simmons, Maxwell & Hendry Valuation Services
Shawn Stoneburner, Cushman & Wakefield
Roy F. Hyman

D. Thomas Sibbio, Alliance Design Group
Rod Benson, Lennar Homes
Jason Besse, Ryland Homes
Geoff Campbell, Lennar Homes
Bill Blevins, Wachovia Bank

NEW AIRPORT COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Bob Janes has been elected chair of the Lee County Board of Port Commissioners and Janet Watermeier has been elected chair of the Lee County Port Authority Airports Special Management Committee.



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