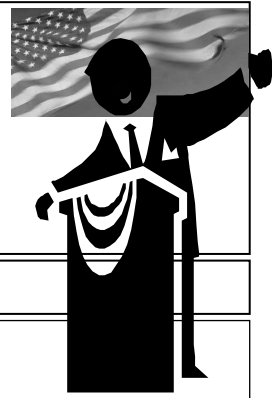




Civic Chatline



A publication of CC Civic Association intended for the education and enjoyment of its members

Volume IX Issue VI

VOTE!

Aug. 2006

Lee County Commissioner and Lee County School Board Candidates Forum at Civic this month Aug. 22

This month Civic will feature candidates who are seeking election to the Lee County Commission and Lee County School Board on **Sept. 5. Although this is a primary election candidates will be elected to office where there are only two people running for the same seat.** In the Dist. 2 Commission race, St. Cerny or Bigelow both Republicans will face David (I) in the Nov. elections.

All incumbents are seeking reelection. Since Commissioner John Albion is seeking State Rep. District 73 office he has created an open seat on the Commission to fill his remaining two years. Since there is no Democrat or write-in candidates for County Commissioner the primary election will be open to all voters, no matter what your party affiliation may be. Since Lee County School Board elections are non-partisan all voters will have an opportunity to vote for school board candidates. Also remember in elections for commissioner and school board you vote for all seats and not just by district. These are county wide elections. In other words we get to vote for everyone!

Lee County FY 2006-2007 Budget is approximately \$2 Billion This amount represents an overall increase of approximately 12% over last year however, the operating budget has increased approximately 15%.

On Sept. 5, Lee County School Board elections will include Districts 1, 4 and 5. All seats have opposition and since school board elections are non-partisan, all voters will be able to vote for school board candidates no matter what district or political party registration.

The Lee County School District FY 2006-2007 budget as proposed is \$1.55 Billion. The budget is about 15 percent higher than last year for the 80,000 students in LC Schools. This amounts to an expenditure of over \$19,000.00 per student. LC Schools is the third fastest growing district in the state. The public school tax mill rate is expected to drop slightly, from \$8.136 per \$1,000 to \$7.012 per \$1,000 of value for the new fiscal year, however don't expect to pay less in taxes since any drop in millage is more than made up by property value increases. The LC School tax represents approximately 38% of your total property tax bill.

Candidates for Lee County School Board

Lee County Commission Candidates District 2



Doug St. Cerny



Brian Bigelow



Gerard David

District 4

District 5



Tammy Hall



Andy Coy



Jim Mathisen



Frank Mann

District 1



Robert Chilmonik



Simone Bynoe



Mary Fischer

District 4

Steven Teuber



Walter Booth

District 5

Elinor Scricea



Sheridan Chester



Politics in Paradise

A look at bureaucrats and elected officials

Academic Village Plan Denied Again

The above headline and the following excerpts were in the News-Press Aug. 13. "Water district cites wetlands as one issue of Del Prado land. This is the second time the water district has objected to the city's plans to build a **charter high school** and several college campuses on the 182-acre property off Del Prado Boulevard and Kismet Parkway in northeast Cape Coral. "There are wetlands issues — a number of issues — contained in that document," Saxena said. "The idea is that they are expecting a response that will appropriately address the issues."

CC City Run Charter Schools Enrollment

- Oasis Charter Elementary: 596 pupils enrolled (580 capacity)
- Christa McAuliffe Charter Elementary: 493 pupils enrolled (580 capacity)
- Oasis Charter Middle: 305 pupils enrolled (660 capacity)

Council member attempts to grill CM

On July 24 Council member Rosado provided us with his version of the 'Spanish Inquisition' when he had CM sworn in during a council meeting to answer questions about the utilities and audits under sworn testimony. There was an obvious problem with what Rosado was attempting. First, he read questions with great difficulty, so it seemed obvious someone gave him a list of questions to ask. The other problem was Rosado looked awfully foolish due to his lack of knowledge relative to some of "his" questions when he couldn't provide any further clarification of what he asked.



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Setting a New Precedent?

On a 5-3 vote on Aug. 14, city council approved a request that allows for single family 500 sq. ft. dwelling units, no garage, no front or side set backs and a provision that will allow for one day rentals which violates the existing LUDRs including, city codes that requires a one week minimum rental in residential zoning.

It appears that some members on council are more concerned with the 'project' than they are with 'regulations.' Some council members voiced concern that they were in fact being asked to "break the law" if they granted approval.

Can it be that those who voted for this new "standard" are actually visionaries and see this precedent as the city's answer to providing for Cape's affordable housing needs? Will this be a trend that will be coming soon to your neighborhood?

Congratulations Representative Kottkamp



Civic member and Cape Coral's own Dist. 74 State Rep. Jeff Kottkamp, was unopposed for reelection so, Jeff will serve another two years at which time he will be term limited out of his current office.



President's Message Aug. 2006

Dear Members and Friends,

I want to welcome back our members from summer break. As you know our August meeting will focus on School Board and County Commission elections. It's hard to believe that it has been 4 quick years since some of these same people were last at a Civic meeting.

Speaking of the passage of time, Civic is also approaching a very important time period for our organization. In November, Civic will have elections for the officers and board members of your organization. As with all organizations your strength is only measured by the activity and involvement of the membership. So, I am asking each of you to consider running for office in your organization.

I consider myself honored and privileged to have served as your president for the past two years however, I believe it is time for someone else to bring fresh ideas and new vigor to Civic. Vice-president Sal Grosso has also indicated that he will not be seeking re-election as have Trustees Nick and Betty Roberto who have been in charge of our refreshments and setting up our meetings each month. I personally thank each of them for your many contributions to Civic. You should note that none of us are leaving Civic and we will all be available to help and support the new officers and board members.

So there will be some voids that need to be filled. Our by-laws provide that in September of an election year a nominating committee of three members to be appointed for the purpose of finding, from the membership, qualified candidates for office. All candidates must be members in good standing for 6 months, except candidates for president and vice president must be members for one year. I believe there are many qualified members capable of running Civic, which now needs your help.

For those of you with internet access, note that I have started to publish our **Scrap Book** on the Civic Blog page at www.civicchatline.blogspot.com

On a sad note, Civic recently lost one of our members, Ed Doherty, who passed away. Civic extends our deepest sympathy to his wife Michele and their family. Ed will be missed as he often contributed to our topics of discussion at our meetings.

I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting and remember to bring along a friend or two.

My Best Regards

Ralph LePera

"The Association is for the betterment of Cape Coral."

Letters to the Mayor and Council

August 10, 2006

Dear Mayor and Council;

Please be advised that the Cape Civic Association, Board of Directors acting on behalf of the Civic membership on August 9, 2006 voted unanimously to urge city council to reject any consideration that would in effect provide a "subsidy" to the assessments cost for those who are now in the UEP. While we agree the UEP costs have risen to a point of questioning affordability, we do not believe those who have already paid and continue to support the utility system should now be asked to help pay for those who will benefit and add value to their properties.

Civic urges council to continue to look for other alternatives that would help reduce assessments. These alternative methods might include minor adaptations in construction of the existing system or major changes in delivery for future UEP projects beyond the current contract boundaries. These delivery methods might include SDGS (Small Diameter Gravity Sewer) aka "Australian Sewers." This might also mean a combination of cost saving features of alternative systems be integrated with our current gravity system design.

The Civic board also asks that assessment methodologies be thoroughly examined once again for equity so that a fair portion of an assessment is paid by all and not carried by the single family property owner. Please note in Ord. 17-93 Sec. 19-38 (a) there is a "Policy statement" that we ask council to visit and review. Lastly under the same Section where it states; "All properties two acres or greater.....," be further defined and identified as well as determining if any of these provisions have or are being applied within the assessment areas.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ralph LePera, President

Cape Coral Civic Association

August 10, 2006

Dear Mayor and Council;

Please be advised that the Cape Coral Civic Association Board of Directors voted to recommend that you postpone any decision to commit Cape Coral taxpayers to a \$40,000,000 obligation (since the school has no borrowing power) to build a CC City Charter High School.

There is an obvious problem with the lack of student registration especially in the Oasis Middle School that warrants this delay. Also, you recently granted the Municipal Charter School Board Authority permission to delay payment for their obligation to repay their debt.

Another reason to delay this decision is the apparent downturn we have recently seen with the building permits. This in itself may well provide Lee County Schools with the opportunity to catch up with the needed schools for the "seats to put our children's fannies in."

Going forward with more obligations that the school board authority may not be able to meet is like giving a child dessert without them first finishing their meal.

The obvious alternative to committing the taxpayer to this \$40M obligation would be to limit the municipal charter school program to grades K-8. There is no demonstrated demand to build a high school when the K-8 grades remain unfilled.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ralph LePera, President

CC Civic Association

Cape Coral Civic Assn.
2007 SE 10th Avenue
Cape Coral, FL 33990

Remember to vote Sept. 5



Next General Meeting: Tues. Aug. 22, 7-9 p.m. CC Yacht Club

Chatline is a publication of the CC Civic Assn. and intended for the enjoyment of its members

Civic Web Page: <http://www.capecoralcivicassociation.org> Visit On-Line forum <http://civicchatline.blogspot.com>

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Dist: 2	Dick Stevens	542-1457
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Dist: 7	Mickey Rosado	458-2074

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Cape Citizen's Action Center: 574-0425
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City Web Page <http://www.capecoral.net>