



Civic Chatline

Cape Coral Civic Association; founded March 1962.
CCCA pre-dates the city and is Cape Coral's oldest civic organization.



Volume X Issue IX

Happy Thanksgiving

November 2007

This Month at Civic, Nov. 27, Crime Prevention of SWFL

With the holidays rapidly approaching, your board of directors has arranged to bring to our members a program that focuses on Crime Prevention, personal public safety and awareness.

Mr. Louis Piche' of SWFL Crime Prevention will be our featured speaker for a lively discussion on this topic. Civic has it on good authority that this program has been well received by numerous homeowner groups, churches and social clubs.

We have also invited our Police Chief Rob Petrovich, our Lee County Sheriff Mike Scott, who will have a representative attend, and our Code enforcement Director Frank Cassidy to participate in the program. Since we should be "well protected" for the evening we are encouraging all of you to invite your friends and neighbors to attend. :-)

John C. Hinks Memorial Sign at Eco Park

Thanks to Don and Nancy Hinks and their generosity, our city now has a beautiful Welcome Home Memorial sign that honors our returning veterans home from military service or home on leave. Since the sign is electronic, soldiers names can be displayed on the sign that is located under the "Field of Honor." The medallions from the five military branches are located below the electronic message board.



The idea of the monument was initiated two years ago by Council woman Alex LePera.. The sign will only be used to honor veterans or to provide information in an emergency. Any service member family can let the city know when their loved one has returned.

Civic 2008 Dues, Due

It's getting to be that time of year again folks. If you paid your dues in the past two months, or from now through the rests of the year, your dues will paid through all of 2008.

Avoid the last minute rush, dues are still only \$15.00/year/family. Please show your support for your Civic Association.

Also, all Civic members with e-mail please send us you e-mail so that our records are accurate and we can better serve you in the future. CCCivic Assn@aol.com

Also at Civic this month, Congratulations Newly Elected Council members

On Nov. 6, 2007, 22.9% (some 15,191) of Cape's voters went to the polls and elected five new city council members who will sit as our policy makers and legislators beginning on Nov. 19. This is the first time since the inception of the city that there were this many "new faces" to occupy the council dais At one time. Undoubtedly this will create significant change in the dynamics on city council.

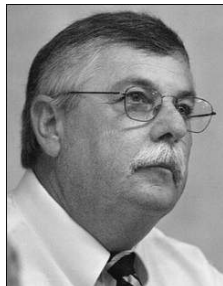
Civic has invited our newly elected council members to be part of our November 27 General Meeting so that we may formally congratulate each of them and wish them well in their endeavors to work on behalf of the citizens of Cape Coral.

Although Civic does not endorse political candidates, we can acknowledge the fact that two of our newly elected council members, Pete Brandt and Bill Deile, are also members of our CC Civic Association. They join a long list of Civic members who have served on city council.

Civic is also proud of the fact that there were quite a few members who took their Civic duty to heart and ran for elective office including: Gloria Baron, Debbie Crockett, David Drake, and Lynn Rosko. We know and realize that the process is difficult, costly and comes at a great deal of personal sacrifice, few rewards and sometimes very little thanks. So on behalf of Civic we congratulate and thank all who ran for office.

Congratulations Council Members

Dist.1: Jim Burch Dist. 2 Pete Brandt Dist. 3 Bill Deile



Dist. 5 Eric Grill

Dist. 7 Dr. Derrick Donnell





Politics in Paradise

A look at bureaucrats and elected officials

Thank you for your service

The Cape Coral Civic Association would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to those who have served on our city council for the past 9 years and are now departing due to term limits, Richard Stevens, A.J. Boyd, and Alex LePera. We also extend our appreciation to the appointed members Tom Hair and Chris Berardi who were unsuccessful in their election bids.



Who is he trying to kid?

According to a guest editorial in the news media the mayor wants to reduce the UEP impact fees by some \$2400. However, he doesn't mention where or how the revenue shortfall, estimated at about 179 million dollars, as a result of this fee reduction will be made up or by whom. In his guest opinion that appeared in the news media this is what he said; "...to deliver this necessity of life at the lowest possible cost, **regardless of how it is paid for or which resident is paying.**" He also said; "An ancillary benefit to a reduction in impact fees is it may enable just a few more retired couples, families, and others who wish to build a home here to financially have the ability to do so." Is the mayor trying to subsidize the home building industry?



You have often heard Civic express; "In the absence of adequate impact fees the only alternative revenue sources are higher rates or higher taxes." The city defines an Impact Fee as; "**the estimated cost of providing needed improvement or additions to public infrastructure systems depleted by development.**"

Civic is happy to report that at the Nov. 19th council meeting, the mayor's proposal Ord. 137-07 to reduce impact fees failed for the lack of a second.

The mayor also failed in his attempt, Res. 79-07 to change council meetings to Wednesday among a whole litany of other changes in council rules. Seemingly this was another ill conceived resolution by the mayor who seemed to want to steam roll his positions through a newly seated council.

Votes on the Charter Amendments

NO. 1 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT RELATING TO SALARIES FOR THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL: 68% said NO

NO. 2 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENTS DELETING OBSOLETE PROVISIONS: 71% said YES

NO. 3 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT LEASE OF CITY-OWNED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY: 53% said YES

NO. 4 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT RELATING TO CITY BUDGET LINE ITEM VETO: 57% said YES. *Note: Civic questioned; "Does veto power only apply during the establishment of the budget or an any item be vetoed during the entire year?" Ans. We understand this only applies during the budget.*

NO. 5 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT ABOLISHING TERM LIMITS: 83% said NO

NO. 6 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT RELATING TO INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM PETITIONS: 62% said NO



November Message, from the board

Dear Friends and Members,

It's our duty to inform you that on Nov. 16 your board of directors accepted the resignations of Leelo Bush as president and Evan Bush as trustee. Leelo indicated their decision to resign in an e-mail on Nov. 12. We wish them both continued good success in their roles as Life Coaches.

As most of you know, our November 27 General Meeting marks the last Civic for the year. We have planned for you what we believe will be an interesting and informative evening on the topic of Crime Prevention. We have also invited our newly elected city council members to be part of the program for the evening. By that time they will have had two council meetings under their belts so we can expect to hear of all the changes that have taken hold while they have been in office....Just kidding folks. Also we have been able to convince former Council member Alex LePera to serve as our emcee for the evening. We will want to thank her for chipping in for the evening and for her service to the community.

Our first meeting next year will be held on January 22, 2008. Your board has determined that this meeting should be an organizational meeting for you the members of Civic where your input and participation will be a vital component for the future direction of the association. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed including the future direction of Civic as well as by-laws revisions that have to be approved by the members. For those of you with e-mail we would appreciate you sending us an e-mail ccivica@aol.com so that we have a proper contact from you as we begin to contemplate a virtual Civic organization that will be able to reach many more people than we can with our Chatline news letter.

Civic is also planning to contact all of the various homeowners associations for a meeting in the spring. It is Civic's hope that we will be able to revitalize an initiative that we started several years ago with an Alliance of Civic and homeowners associations.

Thanksgiving is behind us and the Christmas and New Years Holidays are ahead. The festival lights and the lighting of the Christmas tree will be held on Dec. 1 at 6 p.m. on Cape Coral Parkway in front of Wonderland Reality just east of Vincennes Blvd. We also want to take the time to wish all of you a very happy, safe and joyous holiday season.

See you at the meeting!

Ralph LePera, Vice President on behalf of the Board
Cape Coral Civic Association

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

Stop Light at Veterans & Surfside



We are happy to report that on Nov. 20 the Lee County Commissioners formally approved the signalization at Veterans and Surfside. This approval comes as a result of our city council being able to work out differences of opinions on whether or not a light was needed at this location. County traffic engineers were originally opposed to signalization at this location.

Cape Coral operates under the Council-City Manager form of Government

The City of Cape Coral operates under the Council-City Manager form of government. City council members are elected at large from seven districts. The mayor also is elected at large and is the eighth member of council. The mayor presides over council meetings. The City Council enacts ordinances and resolutions, adopts the budget, comprehensive plan and land-use regulations. The Council appoints the City Manager, City Attorney and City Auditor, as well as the members of all boards and commissions. The City Manager hires all department directors and oversees the day-to-day operations of the city.

On Saturday Nov. 17, David Plazas, The News-Press Community Conversation Editor, wrote the following which was contained in an editorial in the Cape Life Section about the new city council: “During the campaign, the candidates were not too specific about their thoughts on City Manager Terry Stewart's future, but this is certainly one topic they should discuss. Is he the right person for the job? Council members may agree that he is, but they should analyze his performance and see if their goals are consistent with his.” For the benefit of Mr. Plaza the following is offered:

Q: What is the council-manager form of government?

A: The council-manager form is the system of local government that combines the strong political leadership of elected officials in the form of a council or other governing body, with the strong managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. The form establishes a representative system where all power is concentrated in the elected council and where the council hires a professionally trained manager to oversee the delivery of public services. In council-manager government, council members are the leaders and policy makers elected to represent various segments of the community and to concentrate on policy issues that are responsive to citizens' needs and wishes. The manager is appointed by council to carry out policy and ensure that the entire community is being served. If the manager is not responsive to the council's wishes, the council has authority to terminate the manager at any time. In that sense, a manager's responsiveness is tested daily.

Q: What is the City Council's role?

A: The council is the legislative body; its members are the community's decision makers. Power is centralized in the elected council, which approves the budget and determines the tax rate, for example. The council also focuses on the community's goals, major projects, and such long-term considerations as community growth, land use development, capital improvement plans, capital financing, and strategic planning. The council hires a professional manager to carry out the administrative responsibilities and supervises the manager's performance:

Q: What is the City Manager's function?

A: The manager is hired to serve the council and the community and to bring to the local government the benefits of training and experience in administering local government projects and programs on behalf of the governing body. The manager prepares a budget for the council's consideration; recruits, hires, and supervises the government's staff; serves as the council's chief adviser; and carries out the council's policies. Council members and citizens count on the manager to provide complete and objective information, pros and cons of alternatives, and long-term consequences.

Q: What is the role of the Mayor?

A: Mayors in council-manager communities are key political leaders and policy developers. In the case of the council, the mayor is responsible for soliciting citizen views in forming these policies and interpreting them to the public. The mayor presides at council meetings, serves as a spokesperson for the community, facilitates communication and understanding between elected and appointed officials, assists the council in setting goals and advocating policy decisions, and serves as a promoter and defender of the community. In addition, the mayor serves as a key representative in intergovernmental relations. The mayor, council, and manager constitute a policy-development and management team.

Q: Does the City Manager participate in determining city policy?

A: The manager makes policy recommendations to the council, but the council may or may not adopt them and may modify the recommendations. The manager is bound by whatever action the council takes.

Q: Are all council-manager governments structured the same way?

A: No. One of its most attractive features is that the council-manager form is adaptable to local conditions and preferences. For example, some communities have councils that are elected at large while other councils are elected by district. Some local governments have mayors who are elected by the voters at large; others are elected by their colleagues on the council.

Q: Is this form of government used only in certain kinds of cities?

A: No. In fact, it is not restricted to cities. It is used by counties too. Currently, 3,625 cities operate under this form. Additionally, 529 counties indicate that they operate under the county administrator form. They vary greatly in size and characteristics, including independent cities, center cities, suburbs, and counties.

Q: How many Americans live in communities that operate under council-manager form of government?

A: More than 75.5 million.

Q: Is the form popular in large communities?

A: Yes. Out of 199 cities with greater than 100,000 citizens, 112 use this form of government. Some examples are Phoenix; Santa Ana; San Diego; Dallas; Cincinnati; San Antonio; Kansas City, Missouri; and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Conclusions: Since the City of Cape Coral operates under a council/city manager form of government. It matters not if the council's goals are consistent with the city manager's goals. What matters is whether or not the City Manager is performing to the goals established by the city council. It is the city council that sets policy not the city manager.

Civic Chatline



Be Aware! Be Alert! Be Informed!

Cape Coral Civic Association

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Happy Holidays from Civic

Next General Meeting: Tues. Nov. 27 @ 7 p.m. CC Yacht Club

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

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

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Dist: 6 Tim Day
Dist: 7 Derrick Donnell

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