

SpringLake BREEZE

Florida... the way it should be!



Assessments and Fees Set for FY 2020

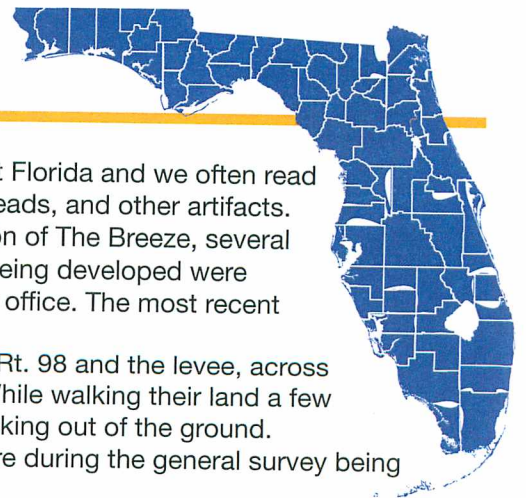
One of the most frequently asked questions we get at the District relates to assessments and fees. Unlike the taxes you pay thru the County, which are based on the value of your home and known as ad-valorem taxes, the District has non ad-valorem taxes known as assessments. Simply put, the cost to operate and provide services to the District thru the General Fund is divided by the number of taxable units, which for FY 2020 is 3,674. The General Fund consists of general government expenses, drainage, parks, streetlights, and mosquito control. The General Fund budget for FY 2020 is \$1,093,435.

The water department, wastewater department, and lot mowing are in what are called Enterprise Funds. Only users of these services pay fees. The total budgets for these funds for FY 2020 amounts to \$1,269,996.

Despite the many projects and activities that have occurred in the District over the last 7 years, assessments have decreased in the General Fund. In 2013 landowners paid an annual assessment of \$312.27 per unit; from 2014 thru 2018 \$299; and 2019 was \$293.61. **The assessment for FY 2020 has been approved by the Board at \$293.76, a 15-cent increase!**

Water usage rates have stayed the same, \$3.10 up to 5,999 gallons and slight increases for usage above that amount. The monthly base rate is now \$22, up from \$20. Residential wastewater rates are now \$74.60 monthly base charge for up to 2,500 gallons of water, and \$1.41 per 100 gallons after the base usage. Increased rates are the result of the construction of the new wastewater treatment plant. Village One streetlights are \$4.84 per month and \$3.77 per month for the other Villages. Mosquito spraying is \$1.66 a month for Village One and \$1.29 for the other Villages.

All assessments, rates, and fees can be found on the District Web Site at www.springlakefl.com



History Uncovered

We know that there is a lot of history throughout Florida and we often read about people finding old Indian canoes, arrowheads, and other artifacts. This past summer, and pictured in the last edition of The Breeze, several arrowheads found when Spring Lake was first being developed were donated to the District and are on display in our office. The most recent discovery must stay where it is!!

The Paul-Hus family owns land at the corner of Rt. 98 and the levee, across from Thunder Road and north of the highway. While walking their land a few months ago they discovered a piece of pipe sticking out of the ground. It was a survey pipe from 1928 that was put there during the general survey being conducted in the whole state.

It is illegal to remove a stake and as the picture shows, the fine back then was \$250, which equals \$3,650 today!



Engineer's Annual Report

(The complete 20-page report can be viewed at the District web site or the District Office)

As your District Engineer, I am pleased to provide the District with the 2018-19 Annual Report regarding the status of the "works of the District." This report is intended to update the District regarding the major projects and activities affecting Spring Lake, and to inform the Board of Supervisors of potential identified deficiencies requiring action.

The 2028-2019 fiscal year has been, and continues to be, a productive year with respect to District infrastructure improvements, proactive planning, grant submittals, and overall progress. The District continues to improve and expand the infrastructure, permits are in compliance, and no major deficiencies have been identified.

The District has completed numerous projects and are in the process of beginning new projects that will greatly impact the works of the District thru added assets and positive impacts. These projects, for the most part, are being accomplished through grant funding, legislative appropriations, zero interest 30-year loans, and private investments. The Board, Staff, and team of professionals work diligently to make progress on current and future planned projects to position the District for future growth, added reliability to the infrastructure, and potential for future commercial growth and increased property values. The District is in the process of upgrading and expanding sewer capacity and service to the existing system, including service to the US 98 commercial corridor with added new reliable and efficient treatment capacity. The District added additional water treatment, storage, and pumping capacity by acquiring a second water plant that was once used by the abandoned power plant adjacent to the Airport lands. Water service has expanded to the south side of US 98 at the west end of the District at the intersection of 98 and Madrid Drive. The new Stormwater Treatment Area (ECO Park) adds additional stormwater quality treatment and added flood protection as exhibited during Hurricane Irma.

As part of the Engineer's duties with the District I attended staff and Board meetings, site project meetings, and regulatory agency meetings as requested by the District. We continue to solicit numerous agencies for grant opportunities for infrastructure and are in frequent communication with your District Manager. We continue to appreciate the relationship we have with the Spring Lake Improvement District.



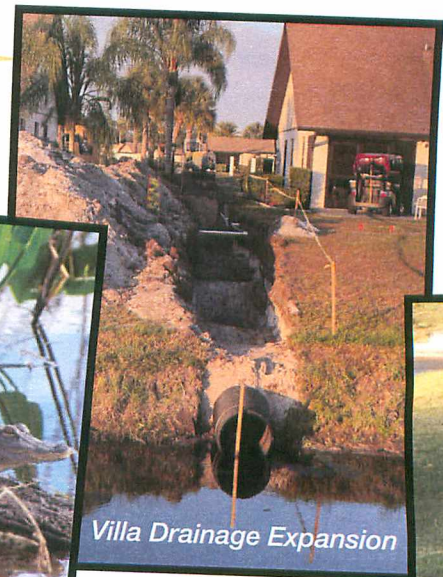
Gene Schriener, President, Craig A. Smith & Associates, Boca Raton, Florida



Expanding Bark Park



Eco Park Inhabitants



Villa Drainage Expansion



Bobcat gets a

New Developments Planned

The **Signature H** Group is now managing the Golf Resort and will be fully closing on the entire properties by months end. While full details of their plans have not been officially announced, along with a re-design of the golf course, improvements to the clubhouse are also planned. Several projects will include apartments, condo's, smaller type homes, and a town center, to name a few. We are all anxious for Signature H to unveil their plans and help change the look of Spring Lake, especially in the Rt. 98 corridor.

Village X, located between Arbuckle Creek and the Gator Shack, has been purchased and plans have been completed for over 200 RV sites. The District is working with the new owners to develop better access to Arbuckle Creek Park; the road to the Park is a District right of way thru the property.

Just to the east of the large cross at the Presbyterian Church will be a climate controlled **self-storage** facility with 24-hour access, camera's, and fence security. Plans are to open in 2020.

Contractor Frank Mooney and **Zephyr Homes** has been building new houses throughout the District for the last several years, and there is no stopping his progress. He currently has another five homes underway, and it seems each week another one starts!

Golf View Villas has had no expansion in seven years, despite the fact all the roads and infrastructure are in place. The development is east of Duane Palmer, between Kenwood and Concord; it backs up to the golf course. The owners are currently working with their Engineer to lay out a revised site plan that can accommodate up to several hundred units.

Perrone Construction of Sarasota owns 12 acres at the corner of Floral and Rt. 98, going to the west.



They are currently evaluating the best use options they have for that land, especially with the new sewer lines being extended to their property.

Where Can You Fish?

The Board of Supervisors approved a Resolution in June of 2016 that contains provisions for fishing in Spring Lake. Spring Lake residents may fish in all District Parks: Arbuckle Creek; ECO; Village I; Russ Ankrom; and Pine Breeze/Community Center.

Residents and guests who live on a canal or pond may fish on waterways behind or otherwise contiguous to their property. Residents of various homeowner's associations may fish on said Associations properties if allowed by the association, that are contiguous to the canal. Fishing is restricted to rod and reel or cane poles; no nets.



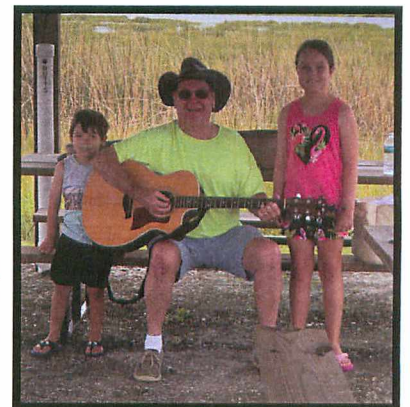
Non-residents of Spring Lake fishing anywhere in Spring Lake other than the ECO Park, or residents or their guests fishing behind properties not owned by the resident, would be considered a trespass.

Parks Continue To Be Popular

There isn't a day or night that goes by you won't see people and pets at the ECO Park and the Bark Park. The ECO Park has recovered from the damage created to the banks by Hurricane Irma and the Gentry Memorial is close to completion at that site.

The Bark Park area is expanding to include some ponds for fishing and the start of a walking trail that will one day connect to the ECO Park. District staff is doing the land clearing and pond expansion. Thanks to the Pawsitively Dog Club pets have all kinds of activities planned for them, and they are constantly coming up with new ideas to make the park even more attractive.

The Community Center is booked most weekends, and there are numerous weekday events as well. The Shelter has become very popular and there have been a number of parties and get togethers there on a regular basis.



Safety Award

Safety procedures and training are meant to protect our workers in their daily tasks. Additionally, it can create financial rewards in both cash and lower workmen's compensation costs. Thru our carrier, Public Risk Underwriters of Florida, we have received \$11,213.51 in the last several years for the various safety programs that we initiated and conducted for our employees. Public Risk offers this competitive incentive program to all of its clients, and the District applies annually for the grants.

Public Risk representative Pam Hancock presented this most recent check in the amount of \$3,538.25, after the September Board Meeting, to Board Chairman Gary Behrendt and District Administrator Diane Angell.



SLID Board Changes

There are five elected officials that make up the Spring Lake Improvement District Board of Supervisors. Three of these officials are considered Landowner Supervisors and are elected on a one acre, one vote basis for three years. The other two are popularly elected every four years at the voting polls.

The Board has recently accepted the resignations of two very hard-working Landowner Supervisors who are both moving back to Indiana to be closer to family; Leon Van and Gary Behrendt.

Leon Van was on the Board from 2001 thru 2012, and again from 2015 thru his resignation this past summer. He served numerous roles and was the Chairman for several terms. Gary Behrendt joined the Board in 2011, also served numerous roles, and was elected Chairman just last year.

Kay Gorham has been appointed to fill the term of Leon Van, which expires in November 2022. Behrendt's term, thru November 2021, will be filled at the November 13 Landowners meeting at the District Office starting at 10:00 a.m. Interested candidates should submit their resumes prior to the meeting.

The District residents, Board, and Staff sincerely thank both men for their service to Spring Lake and wish them the very best of luck in the years ahead; they will be missed.

State and National Recognition

The District has received recognition for the work it has accomplished building the Storm Water Treatment Area and ECO Park.

Storm Water Solutions is a National Publication that acknowledges creative and productive projects throughout the country. Spring Lake's Storm Water Treatment Area, more commonly known as the ECO Park, was listed in their SWS magazine as one of the year's outstanding National storm water and erosion control projects. What made this article even more rewarding was the fact that the District did not apply or submit any information. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, who assisted the District financially with the project, submitted it as a premier project in the State of Florida. FDEP continues to use our project as a model for others to use, and recently FDEP has challenged other communities to develop Parks around their treatment areas, like our ECO Park, and are offering grants to do so.

Closer to home, the Florida Storm Water Association, headquartered in Tallahassee, recognizes projects at their Annual Conference. At this year's Conference held in Sanibel and attended by over 500 participants, the Spring Lake Improvement District received the 2019 Outstanding Achievement Award for its Storm Water Treatment Area/ECO Park. The Award was presented in recognition of innovative accomplishments and outstanding commitment to stormwater management practices benefiting the environment and local citizenry. FSA Executive Director Danielle Hopkins presented the award to District Manager Joe DeCerbo.



FDEP Approves \$462,000

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, at its Fall meeting, approved the funding of a water projects scope of work thru its State Revolving Fund loan program. These funds are like the ones used for the STA and sewer plant projects and come with 0% interest over 30 years. This program gives communities the opportunity to complete projects they normally would not have the reserve funds to start, and over the course of 30 years pay the funds back at a cost the community can manage.

These funds are for the development of a Conceptual Water Utility Plan that includes:

- Electrical upgrades, new generator, and new controls for the main Water Plant
- The complete upgrading and rehabilitation of the recently purchased Water Plant #2 at the site of the old power plant by the airport.
- Installation of a water distribution system to Pinedale Estates
- Water main improvements to “loop” the water system on the south side of Rt. 98
- Installation of a water distribution system to Village 10 (between fish camp/Gator shack)

This plan is being developed by our District Engineering Firm, Craig A. Smith & Associates, and should be completed by the Spring. The District will then go back to SRF at its June 2020 meeting to ask for the approximately \$4 million needed for these projects.

Fire Station Getting Closer

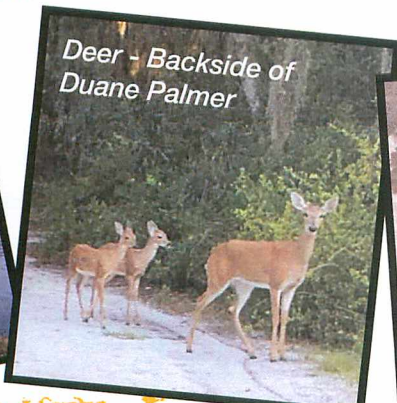
Although the Board of County Commissioners did not approve the Safety Director’s full wish list of new fire stations that included our District, plans for a future Spring Lake station are still being considered. There are many factors that come into play with a new station, and a key group of individuals came together earlier this month to start the planning process. While the station is still a few years away, we have all assumed responsibility for certain segments of the plan. The station is projected to be in the land between the Airport and Spring Lake, north of Floral Drive. A station closer to our community significantly reduces homeowner insurance costs, not to mention the saving of lives and houses due to the proximity of the station.



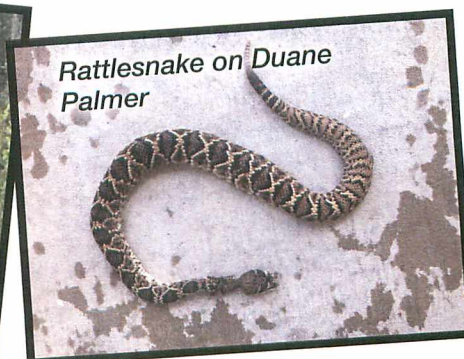
Pictured L to R: Ben Dunn, County Planning Director; County Commissioner and Spring Lake resident Don Elwell; Wayne Estes, Executive Director of the Sebring Racetrack; County Administrator Randy Vosburg; District Manager Joe DeCerbo; Mike Willingham, Airport Executive Director; and Mark Bashoor, County Public Safety Director



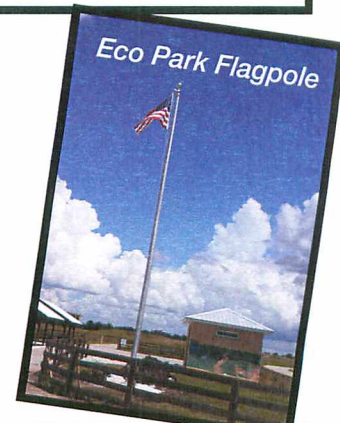
Great Blue Heron



Deer - Backside of Duane Palmer



Rattlesnake on Duane Palmer



Eco Park Flagpole

SPRING LAKE

IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

115 Spring Lake Blvd.
Sebring, FL 33876
863.655.1715 phone
863.655.4430 fax

Bits and Pieces

- Mosquito spraying teams have been out on a regular basis, and residents have been sending in work orders almost daily. We are doing the best we can, there are simply a lot of them around and they are mostly coming across the Lake from the south.
- As the Holidays approach, consider donating to the Water Angel Fund and help a needy resident pay their water bill.
- Water leaking from your toilet tank can cost you money on your utility bill and can cause damage to your floor. PRO TIP: use red food coloring in the water tank; check an hour later. If its pink, or a lighter color, you have a bad flapper.
- The Rt. 98 expansion project is still active with the Department of Transportation, and engineers have been contracted to start laying out the four-lane plan that goes from Rt. 27 east to Elliott Road. It will be at least five more years before you will notice any real movement by DOT from a construction standpoint
- It will be here sooner than we think. The 50th Anniversary of Spring Lake's creation will occur in 2021. Plans need to start now for an active celebration, and we are looking for volunteers to make this happen. Contact the District Office if you are interested.
- While use of the community center requires a reservation and deposit, use of the Shelter at Pine Breeze Park, the Shelters at the ECO Park, and the Shelter at the Bark Park are first come first serve.
- Spring Lake is in Congressional District 17, State Senate District 26, State Representative District 55, and Voter Precinct 20
- Our web site transition continues to be a work in progress, and we are almost ready to start e-mail blasts again. We have been using Spring Lake Neighbor, the SLPA, and the golf course e-mail systems to get out important messages. Thank you for your patience
- At the October Board meeting, District Supervisors unanimously approved First Southern Bank as the financial institution we will now be working with. The transition will take 2-3 months, but will not inconvenience any of our residents.

District Meeting and Holiday Schedule

Here are the remaining 2019 Board Meetings and holidays to be observed. The Holiday schedule coincides with Highlands County, and our offices will be closed.

BOARD MEETINGS:

November 13 (Landowners Meeting); December 11
All 2020 meetings are the second Wednesday of each month at the District Office, 10:30 a.m.

HOLIDAYS:

Veterans Day	Monday, November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 28
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 29
Christmas Eve	Tuesday, December 24
Christmas Day	Wednesday, December 25
New Years Day	Wednesday, January 1

