

SpringLake BREEZE

Florida... the way it should be!



Chairman's Message, Brian Acker

The Board adopted the District budget for the next fiscal year at the September meeting. The assessment for the next fiscal year is \$291.86 per unit, a reduction of \$20.41 per unit from last year. The Board wishes to thank the District staff for their hard work in developing a budget that meets the needs of the District and minimizes the impact on District taxpayers.

The Board entered into a cooperative agreement with South Highlands Investment Corporation, the owners of the golf course, to correct drainage issues that impact roads in the south Duane Palmer area. The agreement addresses storm water storage and retention requirements consistent with water quality standards set by the State of Florida. The parties to this agreement believe it is beneficial to the entire community.

The groundbreaking for the construction of the District's storm water storage treatment area is October 31st. This project, north of the pump station, is the first of a series of major projects that the District plans on initiating over the next few years towards completing the Water Control Plan. Funding for this project was through a Florida Department of Environmental Protection grant and a legislative appropriation. This project in conjunction with others will help to reduce pollutants in Florida waters. The District storm water system takes runoff from not only the golf course and residential areas of the District but also from the Sebring Regional Airport and Industrial Park, and Route 98.

The Board has directed District staff to explore additional funding opportunities to reduce the impact on District taxpayers. On October 3rd I will be addressing the local Legislative Delegation to thank them for their assistance in obtaining last year's appropriation and requesting an appropriation to fund the renovation of the District's pump station which is 40 years old.

SAVE THE DATE - Friday, October 31, 2014, 3:00 p.m.

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONIES

The District will formally kick-off the Million Dollar Storm Water Treatment Area Project that is being funded by the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection and a Legislative Appropriation. State Senator Denise Grimsley and State Representative Cary Pigman will be joined by other invited dignitaries for the event. There will be a short and informal program at the site, followed by a reception at the District Office. The site is located on Duane Palmer Blvd., between the pump station and the Blue Heron Community. There will be District staff in that area to direct you to the site. Everyone is welcome to come. If you need further information call the District Office at 655-1715.



Tax Assessment LOWERED!



The Spring Lake Improvement District Board of Supervisors lowered non-ad valorem assessments for fiscal year 2015 to a rate that is less than taxes paid in 2009!

The Board conducted Budget discussions and reviews starting in April, and after several drafts were prepared, held a Public Hearing on August 13th prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting. With a few adjustments after the Hearing, a final budget was presented to the Board and approved at the September 10th meeting.

The complete budget can be reviewed on the District web site at www.springlakefl.com or copies are available at the District office.

Historical View of Assessments: Fiscal Years begin October 1 and go thru September 30.

2006	\$284.80	2009	\$293.21	2012	\$304.78
2007	\$266.45	2010	\$302.83	2013	\$312.27
2008	\$272.84	2011	\$303.91	2014	\$291.86

The District has a history of operating effectively, efficiently, and economically. A Management Company oversaw the operations of the District from 1972 until 2007, when the first on-site District Manager was hired. Administrative costs in the 2006 budget included the Management Company, a Superintendent, accountant, recording secretary, administrator, and assistant administrator. The total cost for those positions came to \$192,245. The FY '14 budget for Administrative costs came to \$197,095; less than \$6,000 over an 8 year period!

Compared to other units of government in our area we do NOT have: a personal secretary for the Manager; a full time assistant; a receptionist; a Board secretary; a grant writer; or a PR and marketing person. Our staff remains effective, efficient, and economical.



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

October 31, 2014

Mr. Joe DeCerbo
District Manager
Spring Lake Improvement District
115 Spring Lake Boulevard
Sebring, Florida 33876

Dear Mr. DeCerbo:

Congratulations to you, the Board of Supervisors, and the staff of the Spring Lake Improvement District for securing both state and federal financial cooperation to help build your stormwater treatment area.

I know how long and hard you have worked to design and develop the project plan, as well as secure federal and state partnerships resulting in the first such grants in your more than 40-year history. Your diligence and commitment have paid off. You are on your way to building a critical stormwater storage and treatment system that will improve water quality from Arbuckle Creek and Lake Istokpoga in your neighborhood, all the way to Lake Okeechobee.

As evidenced by your actions, water quality is a priority for all Floridians and the 100 million visitors who come every year to enjoy our remarkable rivers, lakes, springs, and estuaries. When it is finished, the project you begin here today will significantly improve the Lake Okeechobee watershed every year. Thank you for helping preserve Florida's treasured natural resources for future generations to enjoy for years to come.

Please know that I will continue to support your project however possible. Keep up the great work!

Sincerely,

Rick Scott
Governor

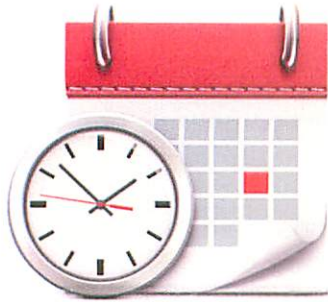


Water Line Repairs

Over the last few years you have seen our water crews fixing a number of water line breaks that have affected service in several areas, especially Country Club Villas. These breaks are a result of pipes that were installed years ago by the developer and have not withstood normal wear. The District is installing pipes and valves that meet appropriate standards to ensure these problems are reduced in the years ahead. As the District finds unsatisfactory installation of pipes and valves the repairs will continue to be made at no additional cost to the homeowner; funds come from the Utility Enterprise Repair and Replacement accounts.

SPRING LAKE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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



Meeting and Holiday Schedule

The Spring Lake Improvement District Board of Supervisors regularly meets on the second Wednesday of each month: November 12 (also the Landowners Meeting); December 10; January 14, 2015; February 11; March 11; April 8; May 13; June 10; July 8; August 12 (also Public Hearing on the budget); September 9.

Holiday Schedule Remainder of FY '14 thru 2015

Veterans Day	Monday, November 10, 2014
Thanksgiving	Thursday, November 27
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 28
Christmas Day	Thursday, December 25
Day after Christmas	Friday, December 26

New Year's Day	Thursday, January 1, 2015
Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday	Monday, Jan 19
Presidents Day	Monday, February 16
Good Friday	Friday, April 3
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25
Independence Day (observed)	Friday, July 3
Labor Day	Monday, September 7
Columbus Day	Monday, October 12
Veteran's Day	Wednesday, November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 27
Day before Christmas	Thursday, December 24
Christmas Day	Friday, December 25

Bits and Pieces

- The District has received personal letters from Senator Nelson, Congressman Rooney, and Governor Scott on both the District of the Year Award and our Storm Water Project.
- The Spring Lake Improvement District has an information page on FACEBOOK. Now you can keep up to date with meetings, forms, due dates, and ongoing projects by simply "liking" our page. Go to FACEBOOK or type in the link www.facebook.com/springlakeimprovementdistrict
- The next time you see those cups, beer and pop cans, paper, and other trash, keep this in mind. It is costing our taxpayers \$12,612 per year to clean up after the litterbugs. This includes staff, equipment, gas, insurance, and supplies. It is a sad commentary.
- The Spring Lake Property Association will be sponsoring the Annual Community Picnic at the Community Center and Pine Breeze Park. The event will take place on Saturday, October 25th from 11-3. If you would like to volunteer to help, contact Mary at 414-8827. This picnic has grown each and every year and the community owes its thanks to the SLPA.
- The District Board of Supervisors is currently soliciting firms to be our Auditors. A legal notice was published and a number of firms identified. The Board plans to have an Auditor in place by the December Board meeting. This is a very important aspect of District operations as it ensures residents that their taxes are being spent appropriately and legally.
- Residents may visit our Public Records Room and peruse a number of documents that are available for review. These include, but are not limited to: Grant applications; Water Plant Operations; Public Water Supply Data; Board Minutes; Financial Reports; and many other items. You do not have to schedule any appointment; simply come into the District Office and ask.
- The Department of Environmental Protection has informed the District that a dredging permit for Arbuckle Creek, next to our District Park, will NOT be issued. A number of people have noted the buildup of sand and the potential danger. DEP stated that "Arbuckle Creek is not considered a navigable stream and people use it at their own risk."
- The Friends of Istokpoga publish a most informative newsletter about the Lake. If you would like to find out more, you can go to their web site at www.istokpoga.org
- Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Booklets are available at the District Office. Along with the budget the booklets contain explanations, pictures, charts, and graphs that thoroughly explain the budget. Copies are limited; booklets are free on a first come first serve basis.

Little Free Library ---

Can you name a library that has no card, no fees, no fines, and no operating hours; a library that is open 24/7? In its most basic form, the Little Free Library is a box full of books where anyone can stop by and pick up a book and bring back another to share. The program is designed to help people recycle their gently used books and to discover new favorites.



In Highlands County the program started in the Golf Hammock subdivision and is expected to expand to other parts of the County, including Spring Lake. Mary Myers, Director of the Highlands County Library System will supply the books to initially stock the kiosks and then restock them as needed. The weatherproof containers, or kiosks, will be built with scrap materials from various construction projects and be of little or no cost.

The motto of the Little Free Library is "Take a book, Return a book" and since there is no librarian and no late fees, if you decide to keep the book, that's OK too. Initiated in 2010 there are now over 15,000 spread out over 62 countries. The concept was a creation of Rick Brooks and Todd Bol of Wisconsin in honor of their mothers, who were teachers and avid book readers.

Spring Lake Property Association President Alan Harnack approached the District with the idea and it will be located in the area in front of the tennis courts where the large District map and newspaper containers are. If you would like to assist Alan please contact the property association at 655-2230. Sam Heede is working on the program as well.

Golf Course and District Agreement ---

It is with great satisfaction that we are working closely with the new operators of the Spring Lake Golf Resort. The South Highlands Investment Corporation legal counsel has drawn up an agreement for access authorization that will allow the District, in partnership with the County, to establish new drainage easements, clean out existing ponds and swales, provide retention and storage of storm water, and relieve the flooding issues on South Duane Palmer Blvd.

District Engineer Gene Schriener is working with County Engineer Ramon Gavarette and County Road and Bridge Director Kyle Green in developing the surveys and construction tasks. The District will be able to perform a large percentage of the work with its own staff and equipment, but the County will be providing equipment with larger reach to clean out several of the severely overgrown ponds. It is hoped that this is the first of several projects that will enhance the water control plan of the District, and drastically improve the aesthetics of the golf course. Many of you may remember what the overgrown pond looked like along Rt. 98 and how it looks now that District staff cleaned it out. The same is true of the drainage easement as you enter the golf course on Clubhouse Lane; it is like night and day compared to what it was.

The District's water control plan has always included the potential of using the golf course ponds and swales. They provide much needed retention and storage and impact water quality. The District will have drainage easements to whatever areas we maintain, and ownership of the property remains with South Highlands. This is a win-win for both the District and the Golf Resort and we applaud the cooperation and efforts of The South Highlands Investment Corporation. These pictures show what the various golf course projects will result in:

