

Board Considers Golf Course Purchase

Over the past few months there have been numerous stories, rumors, and actual allegations against the Board and Manager relevant to the purchase of the Spring Lake Golf Resort as an option for the Updated Water Control Plan. As the timetable below will indicate, the updated water control plan process started over three years ago and has taken much time, money, and planning. During the entire process, the Board was taking the consistent government direction of determining the construction projects and their costs, and securing long term bonds (30 years) to finance the endeavor. This strategy takes the full financial burden off of residents currently in a community and spreading it out over the lifetime of the infrastructure projects. It wasn't until a December Board Workshop that the Supervisors began to discuss the golf course option, which was presented to them in a formal intent to sell letter from golf course owner Mike Tellschow.

There remain many unanswered questions relative to this option being looked at by the Board of Supervisors. One fact remains that is not an option; the Spring Lake Improvement District must implement the updated water control plan. The Board is committed to pursuing as many options as possible to fund the construction costs and complete the water control plan.

The reprinted article from the February, 2008 *Breeze*



A meeting was held at Craig A. Smith Engineering in Pompano to review water control plan costs associated with a golf course purchase. Left to right is surveyor Bob Keener; engineers Matt Harold and Bill Tonto; CAS President Gene Schriener; SLID Advisor Craig Wrathell; and SLID Board Chairman Leon Van.

describes the in-depth study that had to be conducted, and the process being used to meet our statutory requirements.

Any resident who has any questions or concerns can

discuss them with any Supervisor, come to the District Office and meet with the Manager, or attend any Board meetings and request time on the agenda under public comments.

Timetable Of Events

Nov. 2005	SFWMD Engineer Angela Hendrickson informs former District Manager Bob Aquilina that Spring Lake is in violation of its original permit as a result of not completing the original Plan of Reclamation from 1976. District informed that a Consent Order would NOT be sent as long as an updated plan is conducted	Mar. 26, 2007	Meeting to update SFWMD with Engineers Angela Hendrickson and Kelly Cranford, the District Manager and the District Engineer		concerns to be addressed with the Water Control Plan
March 2006	After consultation with District Engineer and discussions at Board meetings the District Manager, Board Chairman, and Engineer meet in Okeechobee with SFWMD personnel to discuss the updated water control plan process	June 2, 2007	Board settles litigation on pump station discharge of water	Sept. 10, 2008	Water Control Plan and Bond process update presented to Board by consultants
August 2006	Several months of preparation leads to the start of the updated water control plan by Craig A. Smith Engineering with a budget of \$230,000 approved by the Board. Extensive study includes preparing survey base maps, surveying 60 acres of canals, conducting preliminary engineering, and establishing a system evaluation	July 11, 2007	CAS update to Board on status of Water Control Plan	Oct. 8, 2008	Public Hearing and Workshop on Water Control Plan by Gene Schriener, District Engineer, and Bond finances by District Advisor Craig Wrathell. Chairman Leon Van reports to the Board he spoke to golf course owner Mike Tellschow about deeding ponds and other areas to SLID; ownership by SLID suggested by Tellschow
Sept. 5, 2006	Tropical Storm Ernesto causes major flooding	Jan. 8, 2008	Public Hearing on Water Control Plan presented by CAS staff and President, Gene Schriener. Revisions discussed and adjustments made	Nov. 12, 2008	All final concerns raised by SFWMD have been satisfied, and responses were discussed with the Board. Board Chairman asks District Manager to prepare a briefing on a golf course option and schedule a workshop for the December meeting
Jan. 10, 2007	Board Workshop to review the status of the water control plan being conducted by CAS engineers	Feb. Issue	<i>The Breeze</i> has a cover story on the complete Water Control Plan	Nov. 14, 2008	Intent to sell letter is sent to the Board by Mike Tellschow
		April 9, 2008	Final Water Control Plan presented to the Board	Dec. Issue	<i>The Breeze</i> Board News section updates residents
		June 18, 2008	Public Hearing process reviewed by the Board for the Water Control Plan and Assessment Methodology to be completed by Craig Wrathell & Associates. Attorney Terry Lewis retained as Bond Counsel	Dec. 10, 2008	Land Acquisition Workshop conducted by the Board to discuss the purchase of the golf course as an OPTION for the water control plan. Board instructs Attorney Nielander to prepare intent to purchase agreement so the
		June Issue	<i>The Breeze</i> Board News section updates residents		
		July 16, 2008	Public Hearing on Water Control Plan and Bond process. Golf course owner Mike Tellschow attends and announces he is listing the golf course with a national real estate company from Michigan		
		July Issue	<i>The Breeze</i> Board News section updates residents		
		Sept. 5, 2008	SFWMD informs District of remaining		

Timetable Of Events on page 3

Workshop Notice

The Spring Lake Supervisors announce a Board Workshop and meeting on **Wed., March 18, 3 p.m.** at the **Community Center**. This is an open, public meeting for anyone interested in attending. The workshop will focus on the updated water control plan; various funding options; and the golf course land acquisition option. Presenters will be Craig Wrathell, District Advisor, Wrathell, Hunt, and Associates; Gary Ritter, Director, SFWMD Okeechobee District office; Gene Schriener, President, Craig A. Smith Engineers; and William Nielander, District Attorney. The regular Board meeting will follow the workshop. This date replaces the original meeting date of March 11.

Who's Who?

The Improvement District is managed by a Board of Supervisors, a full-time staff and advisors. Here are the people in charge of SLID:

Board Of Supervisors:

Leon Van	Chairman
Marsi Benson	Vice Chairperson
Brian Acker	Secretary
Ken Poe	
Bill Lawens	

District Staff:

Joe DeCerbo	District Manager
Diane Angell	Administrative Assistant
	Water Department Supervisor
Randy Nelson	District Foreman
Gladys Eaglen	Utilities Administrative Assistant

Field Staff:

John Laiosa	James Hicks	Brian Patrick
JR Clarke	Robert Hicks	Buddy Heinley
Bill Maine	Corey Jones	

District Advisors:

William Nielander	Attorney
Gene Schriener	Craig A. Smith Engineering
Craig Wrathell	Financial and Management
Bruce Stratton	Accounting and Auditing

To contact the District Office, call 655-1715, e-mail at slid115@embarqmail.com, or visit our Web site at www.springlakeimprovement.com. The offices and drive-up window area open daily from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and closed on weekends. There is a mail drop for depositing water bills just to the left of the main entrance.

Important Phone Numbers

Emergency 911

Spring Lake Improvement District	655-1715
SLID After Hours	655-0615
Spring Lake Property Association	655-2230
Ambulance and Sheriff	385-5111
Sheriff Dispatch	402-7200
Highlands County Emergency Center	385-1112
Lorida Fire Department	655-0122
Desoto City Forestry Division	655-6407
Animal Control	655-6475
Florida Game and Wildlife	800-282-8002
Reliable Sanitation	385-0817
Auto and Boat Registration	402-6685
Comcast Cable	385-2578
Drivers License Facility	386-6053
Progress Energy	800-700-8744
Lorida Post Office	655-1321
Sebring Post Office	382-0578
Embarq	800-339-1811
Voter Registration	402-6655
School Board	471-5555
Hunting and Fishing License	402-6685
Hammock State Park	386-6094
Highlands Regional Medical Center	385-6101
Florida Hospital	314-4466

Legal Notice

Notice Of Meetings

The Board of Supervisors of the Spring Lake Improvement District will hold their meetings at the District Office, 115 Spring Lake Blvd., Sebring. The meetings will be held the second Wednesday of each month, beginning at 3 p.m.

Any person requiring special accommodations at these meetings because of a disability or physical impairment should contact the District Office at (863) 655-1715 at least five calendar days prior to the meeting. Meetings may be continued at a later date and time, which will be announced at the meeting.

Each person who decides to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at the meeting is advised that that person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, including the testimony and evidence upon which such appeal is to be based.

Engineering Study To Greatly Impact Spring Lake

This article is a reprint from the February 2008 issue of The Breeze

When Spring Lake was first being developed, much of the land was too wet for construction. The Westinghouse Corporation first led the efforts to "reclaim" land and make it suitable for construction. The phrase Plan of Reclamation comes from the strategy to literally drain water from land it would normally sit on, and pumps it to another area. The series of canals in Spring Lake all flow to the pump station that sends water to Arbuckle Creek. It has been 37 years since that original process started, and it was time to review all aspects of the original plan. The Breeze will continue to update residents regarding this program on a monthly basis.

Based on Chapter 298 of the Florida Statutes, the Spring Lake Improvement District is required to update the State on the status of their drainage and water control plan. When the District was created in 1971 an original Plan of Reclamation provided for water control structures and storm drainage of the higher lands of the District, and provided water conservation, storage, and water quality components throughout the community. The plan, 37 years old, needed to be updated.

The SLID Board of Supervisors selected and engaged Craig A. Smith and Associates (CAS) to act as District Engineer and update the original Plan of Reclamation from November of 1971. The Board selected CAS based on the rules and procedures for selecting engineering services as outlined in the Florida Statutes. The original Master Storm Water Management Plan was developed, prepared, and adopted by SLID in 1971 and was submitted to the Highlands County Circuit Court and also submitted to the South Florida Water Management District. The Plan was slightly amended in January 1996, which revised the District boundary to include Village VIII and to no longer have assessments in areas not receiving drainage or other services, Villages IX and X, at this time.

SLID contracted with CAS in 2006 to perform an update to the original plan and more specifically the tasks contained within the contract included the following:

- Establish control surveys and base maps using aerial photography
- Existing lakes and canals will be located and flow patterns determined
- Drainage structures located and data provided on location, size, elevations
- Site visits to evaluate the existing system vs. the original planned design
- Develop flood routing through each basin based on the original plan
- Prepare a report on the condition of the storm water system
- Compare existing conditions with the designed original Plan
- Provide recommendations and cost estimates for the future

Existing Conditions

The basic concept of the water control plan for the areas north of U.S. Highway 98 is to provide a system of lakes, canals, and culverts to drain from west to east by gravity, to the pump station, and discharging into Arbuckle. The areas south of U.S. Highway 98 is gravity flow into Lake Istokpoga.

The District constructed approximately 16 miles of canals and approximately 36 miles of roads, which are maintained by the County. There are approximately 27 sub drainage basins in the north pumped portion with varying elevations with a high of 60 feet in the west (towards Annett

Bus garage) to 37 feet in the east. The portion of the District south of Rt. 98 is regulated by Lake Istokpoga, with maintained water levels between 37.5 and 39.5 feet determined by SFWMD. The northern portion is controlled by a 260,000 gallons per minute pump station with two electric drive pumps and two diesel driven pumps.

Proposed Identified Improvements

- Replacement of six control structures entering the District from outside drainage sources that comes from the Airport area and highway runoff
- Existing canal, lake, and pond refurbishment; it is estimated that there is 1.2 feet of accumulation above design that has to be removed from the bottom
- Excavation of new canals, lakes, and ponds not previously excavated but identified in the original plan. This will provide additional storage and flood protection
- Pump station renovation
- Correction of localized flooding issues where identified
- Culvert replacement where required

Administrative Recommendations

- Approve and adopt the updated plan of reclamation according to State Statute
- Submit updated plan to Highlands County Circuit Court in accordance with the requirements of Florida Statute Chapter 298
- Submit plan to SFWMD for comment and approval
- Implement updated plan recommendations
- Establish a Technical Review Committee for all future submittals to the District that may impact the "works of the District." This would include new developments.
- Develop a minimum design standards and specifications manual
- Develop and execute agreements with all entities and/or property owners discharging water into the District (i.e. the Airport)

Next Steps

CAS and Associates President, Gene Schriener, made a power point presentation to the Board of Supervisors on Wednesday, January 9, 2008, during a regularly scheduled Board meeting. At the conclusion of his report, most of which has been described in this article, Supervisors were given hard copies of the Draft report that is over 100 pages. The Draft contains all the background information that went into the process and recommendations offered by CAS. Climatology, rainfall, topography, soil, vegetation, wildlife, existing facilities, right of ways, planned improvements, and numerous maps and exhibits are also part of the Draft.

The Board will be reviewing the Draft and compiling their questions for the next Board meeting, at which time a motion will be made to accept the report and begin the process of implementation. The Board will also be discussing and prioritizing other Capital Improvement Programs that need to be implemented in the community and combined with the Revised Plan of Reclamation.

When the Board has approved the Reclamation Plan and the Capital Improvement Program public meetings and presentations will be made. Additionally, this newspaper will continue to update residents on a monthly basis, and our District web site will also highlight both projects.

A copy of the full Draft report is available for review at the District Office. The power point presentation that was made by CAS can be made available on disc. All of the information presented to the Board of Supervisors at the January meeting is in the public domain and available. Additionally, you can schedule a meeting with the District Manager to discuss any questions you may have.

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Revised Water Rates, Fees And Policies

Background: When the Board conducted a public hearing in March of '08 a number of rates and fees were revised for the first time since 2001. During the course of deliberations it was suggested that the District turn to the Florida Rural Water Association, for future guidance and support. A meeting with the organization resulted in their willingness to conduct several on-site visits to inspect our water operations; assess future operating and capital needs; inspect our wells; and make recommendations to the Board. These studies were done **at no cost to the District** from July thru November of '08, and the results and recommendations were presented to the Board at a public hearing on Thurs., January 15 at the District office. Tom Gustafson made the presentation prepared by FRWA. Moises Villalpando, groundwater specialist, participated in the meeting and will have an additional update for the Board in several months. Moises is



working on groundwater and wellhead protection for the future.

FRWA Philosophy: FRWA has advocated recommendations for the long-term health of water and wastewater systems based on their years of experience. They believe the public is best served by self-sustaining enterprises adequately financed with rates based on sound engineering and economic principles. The analysis they use identifies the true costs of providing services in the long-term. Rates and

fees collected must be sufficient to maintain levels of service, cover expenses, fund capital outlays, retire debt, and support reserves (debt-service, repair and replacement, minor capital projects, infrastructure reinvestment, and emergencies).

Data Comparison Sheets: The Board was presented with various options based on the study result that projected annual expenses will be in the amount of \$467,316. The data also included customer usages, current rates and income projections, and specific recommendations from FRWA for a base fee and 1,000 gallon charges.

Establishing A Policy And Comprehensive Regulations Pertaining To Water Utilities Owned And Operated By The District: This has been a work in progress for the Board since late '07 with samples secured from a number of communities, information from FRWA, and other agencies. The Board has received and reviewed several drafts, the latest of which was presented at the November '08 Board meeting. This document, including the various forms, was adopted at the January 15, 2009 Board meeting.

The following rates and fees will go into effect March 25, 2009

Meter Costs

5/8 Meter (Standard)	\$470.00
1" Meter (Sprinkler System)	\$585.00
Over 1" Meters (Commercial)	Based on Fixtures
Backflow	\$35.00
Impact Fee	\$330.00
Tap Fee	\$275.00
Directional Jack & Bore	TBD
<i>*Contracted costs, parts, and labor</i>	
Well Permit	\$35.00
Re-place Meter Lid	\$15.00
<i>*No charge for normal wear and tear of meter boxes/lids</i>	
Re-place Meter Box	\$50.00
Tampering Fee	\$100.00
Meter Testing at Customer's Request	\$25.00
<i>*To be credited if it is determined meter defective</i>	
Water Leak Adjustment Application Fee	\$25.00
<i>*To be applied against any adjustment given</i>	

Returned Check Fees

Able to Re-deposit	\$25.00
Unable to Re-deposit	\$50.00
Lien Charge	\$30.00
<i>*County Clerk Recording Fees + Administrative Costs based upon the greater of \$30.00 or 10% of lien amount</i>	
Account Activation Fee	\$25.00
Deposit	\$100.00
<i>*Waived if owner signs up for automatic payments (ACH)</i>	
Late Payment Fee	\$5.00
<i>*added to all accounts not paid by the due date</i>	
Service Call after hours	\$40.00
Disconnect/Re-connect for NonPayment	
During Business Hours	\$25.00
After Business Hours	\$40.00

Water Rates

Base Rate	\$9.85
0 to 9,999 gallons	\$2.93 Per 1,000 gallons
10,000 to 19,999 gallons	\$3.43 Per 1,000 gallons
20,000 + gallons	\$3.62 Per 1,000 gallons

Multiple Meters: Base rate multiplied by # of Meters plus consumption used

Bits And Pieces

News And Events From Around Our Community:

- Supervisors schedule meeting and Board Workshop at the Community Center on Wed., March 18, 3 p.m. to discuss the water control plan, financial options, and the golf course land acquisition option. This meeting replaces the March 11 meeting of the Board.
- Tonya Mays from the Spring Lake Property Association announces there will be a special members meeting April 13, 7:30 p.m., at the Community Center. The meeting will be used to announce Board members and officers.
- Spring Lake resident and cancer survivor Geri Snyder is

preparing for the April 25-26 Relay for Life event. Call 866-739-5288, ext. 5802 for the **free** cancer survivor and caregiver luncheon.

- Tai Chi classes continue at the Community Center, Mondays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Yoga classes Thursdays, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m., and Bingo every Friday at 4 p.m. If you have an event and want to reserve the Community Center, call the District office at 655-1715 to see what dates are still available.
- Free Soup Suppers** are being offered at Spring Lake Presbyterian Church beginning 5:30 p.m. on March 4, 11, 18, and 25.

Timetable Of Events from page 1

Jan. '09 Issue	due diligence period can begin	<i>The Breeze</i> Board Notes section updates residents
Jan. 6-7, 2009	Public information meetings held at the Community Center with a power point presentation that reviewed this complete timetable and next steps	
Jan. 14, 2009	Board approves intent to purchase agreement for the purpose of a 60 day due diligence period	
Feb. 4, 2009	Board Chairman, District Manager, and Advisor Craig Wrathell meet at CAS Engineering office to begin developing the	

Feb. 10, 2009	Public information meeting held at the Community Center
Feb. 11, 2009	Attorney Nielander and Chairman Van report on status of the due diligence process and contacting the State Attorney General's office. Board meeting and workshop scheduled for March 18 at the community center, 3 p.m., replacing the March 11 meeting.

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