

June 19, 2018

A meeting of the Corkscrew Island Neighborhood Association (CINA) took place at the Corkscrew Sanctuary meeting room on Tuesday, June 19, 2018. Twelve members were in attendance, plus a guest speaker, Elroy Ricardo, from North Collier Fire, Elroy Ricardo. President Bill McDaniel moderated.

1) Pledge of Allegiance

President Bill McDaniel opened the meeting at 7 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2) Approval of February Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting on February 20, 2018, were sent by email earlier, and a few copies were passed around at the meeting. The minutes were approved and seconded unanimously. The April meeting was cancelled since the Golden Gate Estates civic association was holding a meeting on the same night with multiple speakers planned.

3) Mulch Fire Report by North Collier Fire Control, Elroy Ricardo

Elroy Ricardo, standing in for Fire Chief Jamie Cunningham, reported that the mulch fire that has plagued the area for months is still burning, but the owner plans to move his operation out of the area. His lease is up on October. Even with all the rain the fire is still burning underground. While this is unbelievable, a video shows water being pumped in but the water evaporates before it reaches, it's so hot. But everything is contained now. There is a little haze in the atmosphere but very little smoke. It started with internal combustion from piles of mulch that were up to 40 ft. high which caused the internal combustion. The heavy load on top kept adding fuel to the fire underneath, so they broke the piles up and spread them around. The new owner of the property has different aspirations. They won't allow another mulching operation there. The business was originally permitted for a nursery with a conditional use, but the operation became 100% mulch. Then they lied, saying they were certified as a debris center but they weren't. The owners were stacking the debris in back where it couldn't be seen. This caught fire. They lost all their equipment in the fire because it was parked out back near the debris. It was bad smoke because the fire was a mixture of tires and debris of all kinds of things. The question was asked who is legally responsible? Bill responded that legal responsibility is complicated. It's five layers deep. The business owner leased the land and if he files bankruptcy, then it will be the landowner's responsibility. The owner of the mulch business is a candidate for governor, Mr. Green. Meanwhile, the fire department had their hands full because there were multiple fires all at the same time, Picayune and Big Cypress among them.

4) MSTU for Private Roads

President Bill McDaniel presented a report on a new ordinance that he has been working on for repairing and maintaining private roads. It is called a Municipal Service Taxing Unit, or MSTU. He has been personally working on it as County Commissioner for our district, where there are a number of private roads that go bad in rainy season. The County can't use federal funds on private roads. Jim Colletta, our former commissioner, got tired of answering phone calls from residents on gravel roads complaining during rainy season. Bill has been working on this ordinance for some time now. He presented it to the Commissioners once already, but it was rejected. He has been working hard on the wording and, with his assistants, has come up with new language for the ordinance. The key words are "for emergency vehicles only". The funding can be acquired if it is for emergency vehicles only. It's an MSTU for private roads to help "emergency vehicles only" use the road. Then we can get funding for private roads. It's a pro-active plan instead of re-active. He gave neighbor Lynn Radi who suffered a medical emergency but the Fire Department could not reach him on Fawn Lane. Bill explained that we have only been able to repair roads after a problem takes place.

Bill did everything he could to get the road fixed afterwards. After a 15-inch rain, then Hurricane Irma, then another fifteen inch rain, a road by the name Blue Sage went into a canal. It cost \$12,000/mile to pave it. Rock Road's MSTU (very close to us) has been in existence for 8 years. Keeping Rock Road repaired is costing only \$2000/mile to maintain under this plan, vs \$12,000/mile to repair a road after it goes bad. Bill said he has worded the ordinance to be as transparent as possible. All it takes is for the fire department to say, "I might not be able to get down that road." If your road starts to fail, send it to me, and I'll it to the Fire Department and they'll send it to AIMS (Ames Issue Management System) and it starts. The commissioners are off for 60 days in the summer but when we come back we will present the budget. A discussion on the cost to each resident followed, if an MSTU were to be implemented. Bill said, This ordinance we're talking about will cost half a mil for those facing the road or roads accessing it. Legislature says one mil but I'm going to try to keep it to half a mil. There are 105 miles of private roads in the county. We're not going to take anybody's land. We're not going to pave the road, we're just going to repair it. It will build up a solid foundation doing it on a pro-active basis. By doing a little repair each year, little by little the road will get better over time. He gave examples of private roads, for example Rookery Lane is a private road. But Collier Company who owns Oil Well Road can opt out of an MSTU because they repair their own roads. The question was asked, what makes a road passable? Bill answered, It is left up to the first responders. Will it be built to fire truck standard? Or ambulance standard? All minimum level emergency vehicles. Emergency vehicles are in three categories - Sheriff, Fire or Ambulance. John asked about hot holes to which Bill responded, "Let's get the ordinance passed first. We're only generating \$80,000 a year so we'll fix only the worse." John stated: "Our property is worth \$250,000, so this ordinance is a good idea. President Bill said, Jim Colletta started CINA to take on this issue of private road repair. It's been an arduous journey I've been on trying to get this simple issue passed. This is a true safety and health issue. In Golden Gate Estates there are 65 roads that are still gravel. Golden Gates Civic Association started it. (A word-for-word transcript of the MSTU presentation is posted in "NEWS", click NEWS on the menu.)

5) Other Business - Bears

President Bill McDaniel brought attention to some promotional items he passed around on the growing bear population in Florida, to help in the recognition and education of bears. Mike Orlando of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) gave a presentation at a County Commissioner's meeting recently. Bill, as a hunter, spoke about seeing bears on his own property in the Corkscrew neighborhood, and the fact that we humans have to modify our behavior to get along with the bears, since bears can't be expected to adjust their behavior for us. We have moved into their habitat. To get along with bears, the number one item is to keep trash barrels firmly locked against bears because feeding them brings them back again and again. They can smell food up to a mile away. Feeding a bear makes him dangerous and must be shot. One sticker said, "A fed bear is a dead bear." Another bumper sticker says: "Stash that trash, scare that bear". Also being given out is a coloring book for kids which tells how to face down a bear by not running because it triggers the instinct to chase, but by waving arms and yelling "Go away bear." The bear population is growing. They are migrating into residential areas looking for food. Advocates don't want to shoot bears. There are bear resistant trash barrels costing \$200, that may be forced onto residents if they continue to be lazy and put their trash out at night instead of in the morning, which gives the bears all night to smell them and find them. Go to www.myfwc.com/ for some of these items, or for more education or to make a report.

Adjourned at 8:15 pm.