

August 19, 2014

A meeting of the Corkscrew Island Neighborhood Association (CINA) took place at the Corkscrew Sanctuary meeting room on Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at 7 pm. Fourteen people attended, plus two fire district officers from the two fire districts, Corkscrew Island and North Naples. President Bill McDaniel opened the meeting at 7 pm with the pledge of allegiance. The agenda showed three topics: Fire district merger, road maintenance update and the MSTU issue. The president started by introducing Eric Watson of Big Corkscrew Island Fire Station (BCIFS) and Orly Stoltz, North Naples Fire Chief (NN).

Fire Department Merger

Eric Watson of BCIFS (Big Corkscrew Fire District) gave a presentation first. Discussion on explosion of growth and wanting to meet the growing demands. We've had private meetings and public meetings. Corkscrew met. North Naples met. Then the chiefs met and voted to put it on the November ballot for the public vote. If yes, we all go together. If no, it goes back to the drawing board. We've been working together since February, so even if No, we can continue on. \$2.3 million will be saved in the first five years. The pension benefits through an in-house retirement plan. He explained a complex system involving contributions and repayment back. If we merge, we will go under the other retirement system. There was a discussion on millage rates. Bottom line the new district will cover both districts.

Fire Chief Orly Stoltz of North Naples Fire District, spoke next. More cost savings. We have 9 officers now. In 5 years we'll have 5. If the merger goes ahead on January 1, 2015, the \$2.3 million in savings will go back into the staff and equipment for a better level of service. We feel we can put two more stations up, too. The service goes up, taxes go down. In 5 years we stretch it out to 20 years. We hired an independent consultant, a third party, who has been accurate over the past 30 years. He came back and said, Your numbers are conservative. We have a one billion dollar valuation Fire District today. In 20 years it will be 3.5 billion. So we're comfortable with our projections.

Question: Did the North Naples Association support recommendations of your plan? Answer: There wasn't an official vote. Some of them came forward and worked with us. We listened and adjusted so that group doesn't have any more questions. The Big Corkscrew Fire Station was started in 1977. North Naples in 1961. There is cautious optimism on the whole plan. There was talk of consolidation in 2000, again in 2003, 2007, and 2009. It has been on the table a long time. The final plan is on the joint website: "<http://www.bcnmerger.com/>".

Question: Relating to salaries. Will they be harmonized? Answer: There will be a single merger, one set of employees. BCSF is about 12% less so we have to negotiate that. There will be a single union. Our North Naples contracts are 3-year contracts and BCSF has 3-year contracts. We have to harmonize these two groups. They belong to the International Association of Firefighters, wages and benefits, work 52 hours a week.

Question: How much does a fire fighter get a year? A neighbor gets \$100,000/year. Answer: An 18-year veteran gets a pretty good annual salary. We have 150 employees. Average salary, health insurance, uniforms, retirement system, 3% year service - after 25 years he makes \$100,000 gross. He'll get \$75,000 take home. Average salary for an 18-year veteran is \$125,000. Big Corkscrew take home is \$45 to \$50,000 year. Gross average \$80,000. A younger person will get \$90,000 in North Naples. The chief had to take FBI training to recognize if a house is making bombs. We have to put on scuba and mask to dive for submerged cars, and we have to train to recognize a meth lab. Were trained to be a Hazmet team.

Question: Who supervises purchase of fire trucks? Bill McDaniel interjects: It's all in the plan on the website, in detail.

Fire chief Stoltz: When BCFF calls North Naples and asks for some fire trucks because of a big fire out here in

Corkscrew, I'll send 50% out here and keep 50% back. Because if we get 100 people trapped in a high rise, its an emergency. I need to put all of my men on it.

Question: On the election, does it have to be yes from both? Answer: Yes.

Bill McDaniel said he was drafted as a volunteer to sit through all the merger meetings. There will be a new Fire District Board. One from our district, one from theirs and three more at large.

Motion: Maureen Bonness moved to approve the minutes of the last meeting. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Road Maintenance Update and MSTU Issue

Doug Wilson presented on the Road Maintenance Committee. He gave credit to Maria and Eduardo Tabraue. He summarized the improvements on the roads. Doug read the summary of costs on each road. We saved \$8614 on repairs to Fawn Lane. It would have cost \$12,150 at the commercial rate but it cost us only \$3536. We saved \$4640 on Platt Road over the commercial rate. We saved \$9,310 on Lilac Lane over the commercial rate, and \$450 on the Sanctuary Road East. The total we saved was \$23,014. So the County would spend more money and tax us for it. So we won't have an MSTU if we can avoid it. As a committee we need to recognize who will donate - hours, equipment, money. The challenge is to raise enough money to keep up with the costs.

Marie Tabraue: We arranged three trucks of gravel today to go to East Sanctuary off Friendship as far as the front of Dans house, and spread it. It cost \$300 a load and \$75 to spread. The first three roads we did was \$125 a load. So we have to pay \$975 for East Sanctuary. We have had \$300 donated, so we need \$675 more. Dan is very happy with the improvements. It was the worst road in the neighborhood, and there are people further on past Dan.

Bill McDaniel: I have an old grader so I will be able to fill in and help smooth it out.

Doug Wilson: I am set to go to the County Commissioners meeting on September 9. I intend to talk to Tim Nance's assistant, Jim Flanagan. I want to be a politically sensitive representative for CINA, but if they go too far I don't think I can resist saying, You can't do this legally! Bill says, I haven't seen any substantive proof that they have the right to put an MSTU on. The end goal is they, the County, will have to eat the \$10,000 but they won't have to do it anymore since we have a good road maintenance policy underway.

Eduardo Tabraue: Lynn Radi is not doing good, and Gracie is not doing good either.

Maria Rhinehart: There are lots of old tires dumped on the corner of Sanctuary at the bend. This is an eye sore. Somebody's dumping them. They already started dumping trash.

Bill McDaniel: If you see a car dumping trash, call 911. Dumping is illegal. What do we do with what's there? Pick it up and put it in your vehicle and take it away. Call Collier Road Maintenance. They should come and pick it up. There used to be a sign, \$500 fine for dumping. It's not there any more.

Question: Garbage truck is taking both the garbage and recycle.

Bill: knows the president of Waste Management. Doug will draft a letter and Bill will send it to the resident. That some people have seen trucks picking up both garbage and recycle barrels.

Motion: A motion was made to adjourn at 8:30 pm, second and passed.