



Civic Chatline

Be Aware! Be Alert! Be Informed!
Founded in March 1962, CCCA is the Cape's oldest civic organization



Volume X Issue IX

Remember September 11

September 2009

Candidates Forum Last Month at Civic

Once again Civic can take pride in providing yet another successful candidates forum on August 25. We want to thank the candidates for their participation and the approximately 230 members and guests who attended the meeting. It was nice to see the Yacht Club Main Ballroom filled that way.



We want to thank our moderator who did a wonderful job of keeping the candidates on point in answering the questions. Also we also want to thank the members who sent in questions to be considered.

Of course with any event there will always be some who will complain as one non member did in the news media saying the questions were "ridiculous." Perhaps a reason for the comment was because some difficult questions were asked of the candidates who at times couldn't provide accurate answers. Anyone who has ever been to a Civic candidate forum, knows full well, Civic does not ask softball questions. If an answer given is inaccurate Civic will correct the information. This is what the Organizational Purpose of Civic is about. Providing the public with accurate information.



Also we would like to mention the baked goods, refreshments that were provided by the all of the candidates who attended the meeting. Civic donates whatever is left over to our city employees and fire fighters at the downtown fire station.



On October 27, Civic will do the next candidate forum which we have traditionally labeled as Survivor's Night. It is held for those emerging out of the primary and for those not in the primary election. We also want to thank Civic member Charlie Meyer for donating his 50-50 winnings to Civic, Thank you Charlie.

Primary Election Results

Mayor	Votes	%	Dist. 6	Votes	%
> Burch	2,276	28.33	Antos	1,305	16.82
Butler	1,185	14.76	> Cataldi	2,882	37.14
Lovejoy	499	5.21	> McGrail	3,573	46.04
Pizzolongo	227	2.83			
> Sullivan	3,846	47.87			

The top two vote getters in race will face each other in the General Election, Nov. 3. Less than 10% of Cape's registered voters went to the polls Sept. 15. **What a disgrace!**

This month at Civic September 22, Future of Cardio-Vascular Services at CC Hospital

At Civic this month the keynote speaker will be Dr. Stephen Brown, LMHS Board Member Dist. 1. Dr. Brown will present a Power Point entitled; "The Future of Cardio-Vascular Services at Cape Coral Hospital".



Over the past few years Civic has expressed its concern with the lack of a cardiac program at the Cape Coral Hospital for our heart and stroke patients needing emergent care. As Civic was informed last March by Chief Bill Van Helden, EMS will no longer transport STEMI (S-T Elevation Myocardial Infarct) or stroke patients to Cape Coral Hospital. Instead they will go directly to Gulf Coast or Health Park. The American Heart Association standard for D2B (Door to Balloon time) for PTCA to open a clogged artery is 90 minutes or less. At that time LMHS web page indicates they achieved this benchmark only 69% of the time from July 07 through June 08 while the state and national average is 78%.



We will be very interested in hearing if these numbers have been improved.

Chief Administrative Officer at Cape Coral Hospital and Gulf Coast M.C., Mr. Doug Lockett and System Director of Public Affairs Karen Krieger, will accompany Steve and will be participating in the forum.

FY 2009-2010 Final Budget Hearing

The final Public Input on the FY 2009-2010 budget will be heard on Wednesday, Sept. 23 at 5:05 p.m. This will be the after the Civic meeting

On Aug. 8, council set the initial mill rate at 8.82 mills. A General Fund operating budget of \$116.4 million was given to the City Manager by the council back in March. It is this millage rate that our TRIM notices use to provide notification of 2010 taxes. The final Trim notice will be mailed after the final budget hearing on the 23rd.

By law, the City Manager is compelled to submit a balanced budget, which he did when he came back with a corresponding millage rate of 7.7759 in his proposed budget.

At the first public hearing, Sept. 9, the tentative millage and the budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year was set by council at a rate of 8.3113, down from 8.8241. Council members Bill Deile and Pete Brandt voted against the 8.3113 millage rate but only Brant voted against the tentative 2009-10 overall budget of \$408,877,961.

If the millage rate levied is more than the roll-back rate of 7.2068 it would be considered a tax increase. The roll back rate is the millage needed to produce the same operating fund revenue as in the previous year.



Politics in Paradise

A look at bureaucrats and elected officials

SW 6-7 Another Flip Flop

News-Press, Aug. 31. "Councilman Tim Day also has no plans to change his yes vote. "We got to get it done," he said. "it is silly to put people through anymore of this tumultuous stuff. He still considers a 72 percent increase for rate payers too high. "As quickly as we can bring more people on line (in the assessment area), we can bring it down," he said."



Later that day the council member changed his previous Yes vote on July 20, to a Nay. This issue has been going on now for more than a year, when Feichthaler was still mayor. On June 9th, 2008 council voted 4-4 on a vote to continue with SW 6-7. The Nay votes were Brandt, Day, Deile and Feichthaler who was the swing vote. We are a year later and still no resolve to the UEP for the last 6300 properties south of PI Road. Their action will negatively impact some 53,000 utility customers.

As a result it has been reported the average household utility bill will go up 92.5 percent over the next five years. But even with the SW 6-7 project going forward, utility rates would still have gone up 72.3 percent over five years. With the stoppage the UEP, water and sewer rates are expected to jump 30 percent next year. The cost of irrigation will stay the same, meaning an average household bill will go from \$81.97 per month to \$103.70 per month starting Oct. 1. That same bill will be \$158 per month in 2014 with no utility expansion and \$141 with the expansion in SW 6-7.

BOCC names new County Manager

The Lee County Commission has decided to suspend the county manager search to give interim manager Karen



Hawes and commissioners a week to meet and discuss salary and what her mission would be as county manager. Originally from Pittsburgh, Hawes has worked for the county since 1985. She started as a budget analyst before holding positions such as Human Services fiscal manager and deputy county manager. Hawes is seeking a salary of \$170K, considerably less than Stillwel was getting.

We only wish the BOCC could have announced its intent prior to spending the money for a national search.

Civic Boosters

Bronze- \$25

L. Fekety (in memory of Bill)

R. Hickey

J. Longo (plus kitchen donations)

T. Devers

J. McCormick

N. Tomacelli

A. Vitale

M. Doherty

Silver - \$50

T. Farina

R. LePera

R. Pistone

Gold - \$100

F. Perry

This area reserved for future boosters



May President's message August 2009

Dear Members & Friends –

The Candidate Forum held on August 25 had a wonderful turnout and I hope you were able to attend. It is gratifying to know there are so many people interested in hearing the candidates and wanting to cast an "educated" ballot in this important City election. I would like to, once again, thank Alex LePera for moderating the forum and agreeing to moderate the upcoming "Survivors Night" forum in October as well.

The Civic Executive Board is preparing questions they would like to have the candidates answer during the "Survivors Night" forum and want your questions as well. Time permitting, there will be an open mike for questions from the floor, but we would like you to send us your questions in advance, if possible. This will enable us to have a variety of questions and avoid duplication. Questions can be sent to CapeCoralCivic@yahoo.com.

As I'm sure many of you are aware the SW 6/7 project remains OFF at the present time. The FY 2009-2010 budget has been the subject of the latest meeting and it seems the millage rate for Cape Coral will be set at \$8.31. The City may be going to a 4 day work week, should this happen many believe the final mill rate will be below 8 mills. The final budget hearing will be heard on Sept. 23 at which time council will vote on the final millage rate.

Most of you have received your TRIM notices by now and are aware of the tax increases for your property, in spite of the plummeting value of the property. As of today's paper (Sep 11) the Ft. Myers/Cape Coral area is number 9 in the country for foreclosures, with the Orlando area being number 8. Hopefully, our economy can recover from all of this in the not to distance future. We hope you all voted in the Primary on September 15.

This month our keynote speaker will be Dr. Steve Brown, Lee Memorial Health System, District 1. We are looking forward to hearing his presentation and, hopefully, finding out the plans for the Cape Coral Hospital. We are also hoping to learn when heart care and other specialties will be available for our residents in Cape Coral. Be thinking of the questions you would like to ask Dr. Brown at that meeting.

On October 27, we will once again focus on the Cape Coral City elections with a candidate forum "Survivors Night," for the candidates who will be on the Nov. 3 ballot. The meeting format will be the same as the Candidate Forum held last month. So make sure you have the questions you would like the candidates to answer and send them to us at the above e-mail address.

I'm looking forward to seeing each of you at the meeting on Tuesday, September 22, 2009!

Sincerely,

Treva M. Devers, President

"The Association is for the betterment of Cape Coral"



Frequently Asked Questions relating to your 2009 Notice of Proposed Property Taxes

1. Why did my taxes go up when the assessed value went down?

The proposed overall tax rate (millage) for 2009, which is set by taxing authorities, is higher than the 2008 tax rate. The taxing authorities that set the tax rates include the City of Cape Coral, Lee County School Board, Lee County itself and several other taxing authorities identified on the property appraiser TRIM Notice.

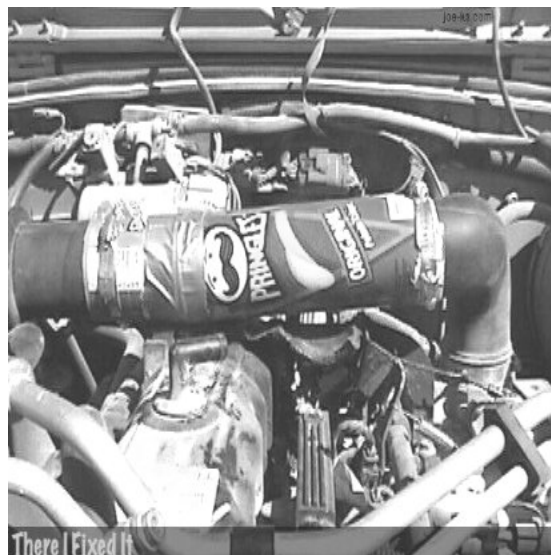
2. Why did my assessed value and the proposed taxes go up if the market value on my property went down?

There are two primary reasons that some property owners may see an increase in proposed taxes even if the market value of the property decreased:

- **First, the proposed overall tax rate (millage) for 2009, which is set by taxing authorities, is higher than the 2008 tax rate.**
- **The second reason is that if the assessed value of homesteaded property is less than the market value, it will continue to increase. This is called the "Recapture Rule."**

So even if the market value on your home decreased, the assessed value – by law – must continue to increase until the market value reaches it. Due to the "Save our Homes" law, homesteaded property cannot increase annually more than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 3% - whichever is less. As a result, many long-time property owners have large differentials between their market and assessed values.

There I Fixed it!



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Cape Coral Civic Association

P.O. Box 152171

Cape Coral, FL 33915 - 2171

Next General Meeting: Tues. Sept. 22 @ 7 p.m. CC Yacht Club

Chatline is a publication of the Civic Assn. and intended solely for the education and enjoyment of its members
Civic Web Page: <http://www.capecoralcivicassociation.org>

2009-10 CCCA Board of Directors

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Vice President:	Tony Farina
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Treasurer:	Rillie Hickey
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