

## **Pine Island Community Council Founding Principles**

The Pine Island Community is one of diverse and eclectic origins that include the ancient history of the Calusa Indian Civilization, evolving through the years with the arrival of Anglo-Saxon Americans through to present day where it has become a community of a widely varied cultural mix. Throughout the ages, the communities surrounding Matlacha Pass west to the waters of Pine Island Sound have flourished by the rich resource of the surrounding waters while enjoying the natural protection from the forces of nature that the outer barrier islands have afforded.

Throughout the majority of the Pine Island Community's history, the people of the area largely governed themselves and while there have certainly been times of unrest, the community has endured in a predominant spirit of harmony. In modern times, the fishing industry was thought to have become too advanced threatening the stability of the surrounding waters and restrictions were put into place. It was thought construction threatened the shoreline and more governing rules arrived. Building and development codes were drafted and, over time, the most recent chapter of evolution has been that of government by Lee County from afar. While this may seem to have been developing for many years, in truth, it has occurred mainly over the past 50 and the most significant impact has been over the past 10. This is a very short chapter in the rich history of the Pine Island Community.

It should have been realized many years earlier but now must be recognized that Lee County covers a vast geographical area of inland communities and peoples such that a continuance of blanket government may well threaten the Pine Island Community's individuality which could then threaten the loss of its very character. The citizenry has come to question the prudence of blanket government by the State of Florida and Lee County, both of which the Pine Island Community is proud to be a part of, but has come to recognize, in order to carry forward the identity of the Community, it must be the people of the Pine Island Community who do so, for it is the people of the Pine Island Community who have done so and flourished for many years prior to the settling of the remainder of Lee County or the State of Florida.

It is critical to understand that the Pine Island Community was not carved out of a waste land by modern technology but it has evolved over the centuries at the hand of the various peoples who called it home. It is surely known that modern day development will continue but it must be recognized that it has been the variety of peoples actually inhabiting the Pine Island Community over the generations that have made it what both residents and visitors alike have come to love and it is the people inhabiting the Pine Island Community who are and will continue to be best suited to guide the future evolution for generations to come. These traditions of self determination must continue if the Pine Island Community itself is to continue to flourish through future generations.

It is the Community's rich history of self-reliance that requires and demands the formation of the Pine Island Community Council.