

Pine Island Community Council
February 21, 2008
Press Release

Earlier this month, serious discussions began regarding the need for a community wide Council to hear and carry the will of the Pine Island Community regarding all matters of governmental interaction between the citizenry of the Pine Island Community and the seated governmental authorities of Lee County. It is recognized in history that the regions making up the Pine Island Community are, in fact, preeminent to central Lee County and have carried a uniqueness of character setting the community apart from the remainder of Lee County.

In recent years, Lee County has adopted various codes and ordinances that regulate a wide variety of public and private activities throughout Lee County inclusive of the Pine Island Community. As the culture that embodies the lifestyle of the Pine Island Community has never been completely in sync with the remainder of Lee County, many codes and ordinances have not been enforced over the years and the agencies have been forced to evolve to become "complaint driven" attempting to enforce many codes only when individual complaints arise.

Lee County has adopted the Pine Island Plan largely resulting from the efforts of the Greater Pine Island Civic Association and that Plan was intended to preserve the natural and rural setting of Pine Island but has fallen short of providing a comprehensive Community Plan. While the efforts of the GPICA are noteworthy with regard to their individual goals, for the Community to modify and shape rules and regulations that govern daily life in an ongoing fashion, there must be representation that provides for a demographically structured cross section of the entire Community not drawing only from a single special interest group.

The primary seated members of the Pine Island Community Council are to be drawn from Bokeelia, Island Center, Matlacha, Pineland, Saint James City and the Pine Island Chamber of Commerce. The various Civic Associations and Chamber have been asked to appoint a member now and maintain an appointed seat in future years. The BCA, MCA and SJCCA along with an anticipated appointee from the Chamber of Commerce to be made at their next board meeting now make up the founding members. While initial discussions were held inclusive of a seat being afforded the Greater Pine Island Civic Association to carry the special interest voice of that association forward, they have formally declined to participate in the new island wide organization. Respective of their wishes, they have been dropped from the organizational plan.

Over the next two weeks, preliminary Constitution and Bylaws will be drafted along with a mechanism for reviewing applications for and selecting seated members from Pineland and Island Center. Representatives must be property owners and reside in their district for a minimum of 9 months annually. The Pineland representative will be selected from the Pineland zip code area and, the Island Center representative will be selected from the region between Marina Road and Stringfellow Street on the North to Berkshire Road and Pelican Inlet on the South. Interested candidates are asked to mail a letter outlining their desire to serve and attesting to their residency and property ownership. Please send applications to: Pine Island Community Council, 5280 Doug Taylor Circle, Saint James City, FL 33956. Actual selection will be made in a public and properly advertised meeting to be announced in the upcoming weeks.

Pine Island Community Council
Michael Dreikorn, Bokeelia
Bill Stoelker, Matlacha
Bob Elder, Saint James City