

Republican Club of Southwest Florida

October 05, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Lions Club of Bonita Springs, FL

Meeting Called to Order: President Bill Ribble called the meeting to order at 6:00

Invocation: Secretary Larry Fiesel

Pledge of Allegiance: Vice-President Fred Forbes

Officers Present: President Bill Ribble, Vice-President Fred Forbes, Secretary Larry Fiesel, Treasurer Jim Sido, Directors Joanne Ribble, Carolyn Forbes

Recognition of Elected Officials: Lee County Commissioner Ray Sandelli, Bonita Springs Deputy Mayor Fred Forbes, Bonita Springs Council Member Nigel Fullick, Estero Vice Mayor Joanne Ribble, Estero Council Members Larry Fiesel, Rafael Lopez, Lori Fayhee, George Zalucki, Jim Ward

Recognition of Sponsor: Engel & Volkers - Jim and Ellen Hollars

Approval of September 07, 2023 Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve by Bob Pritt, Seconded by Brandon Miller. Motion was unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: September, 2023

Income: September 2023

September 11, 2023	Check	Ray Sandelli	\$ 100.00
September 25, 2023	Cash	LoDuca & Farrar	\$ 100.00

Total **\$ 200.00**

Disbursements: September 2023

September 01, 2023	Debit	Recurring Wix.com	\$ 12.00
September 15, 2023	Check 142	Lions Club of Bonita	\$ 150.00
September 19, 2023	Debit	Miklas Social	\$ 385.00

Total **\$ 547.00**

Summary:

Beginning Balance	\$ 3,118.29
Income	\$ 200.00
Disbursements	\$ 547.00
Ending Balance	\$ 2,771.29

Business Savings Account **\$ 467.49**

Approval of September, 2023 Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve by Fran Mainella. Seconded by Nancy Sido. Motion was unanimously approved.

Order of Business & Introduction of Guest Speaker: Matt Caldwell, Lee County Property Appraiser & Republican Committeeman



Matt Caldwell is a 7th generation Florida native, whose family came to Micanopy in 1826. Matt was born in Gainesville but grew up in Lee County where he met his wife, Yvonne. They live there today, where they raise their daughter, Ava. In his private life, Matt enjoys the outdoor lifestyle that Florida offers: fishing, golfing, kayaking, hunting, and camping, to name a few. He is a deacon in his local church, and spends time as a small businessman focused on his timber and cattle operation.

After attending local schools in Lee County, Matt received his Associate's Degree from Edison College and his Bachelor of Arts in History from Florida Gulf Coast University. He is currently pursuing a Master's of Science in Geomatics from the University of Florida.

While an undergraduate, he began his career as a real estate appraiser, ultimately joining the firm of Maxwell, Hendry, Simmons in 2004, where he remains of counsel. He has attained the highest state certification in his field and is qualified as an expert witness in multiple state and federal courts.

Matt was a member of the Florida House of Representatives from 2010-2018, serving on and chairing several committees including: tax policy, redistricting, insurance & banking, agriculture & natural resources/public lands, transportation & infrastructure, local, federal, & military affairs, and oversight of government operations, such as pensions & elections. He is proud to have sponsored, and have the Governor sign into law, dozens of bills, including those related to agriculture, natural resources, public safety, cannabis reform, medical care, criminal justice reform, pensions, and term limits, among others. He also served on the Board of the Assembly of State Legislatures, a national organization focused on the implications of Article V of the US Constitution. In 2018, Matt was the Republican nominee for Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

From 2019-2020, Matt was also a partner at TM Strategic Consulting, focused on political consulting, where he remains of counsel, as well.

In 2020, Matt was elected to serve as the Lee County Property Appraiser, following the retirement of 40-year incumbent Ken Wilkinson. As the author of numerous Constitutional Amendments, including Save

Our Homes, Working Waterfronts, and Portability, Ken set a standard of excellence for public service. Matt is proud to continue Ken's legacy as an advocate for the taxpayer; using the platform as a Constitutional Officer to support good government at the local, state, and federal levels.

Outside of serving in elected office, Matt volunteered for appointment to various governmental committees regarding financial oversight, audits, land use and transportation, as well as Everglades restoration as a member of the Lake Okeechobee Water Resources Advisory Committee from 2006 – 2008, the constitutional review of the Lee County Charter in 2008, and the OPPAGA Local Government Efficiency Task Force in 2021. Matt is a current board member and past chairman of the FGCU Center for Agribusiness Advisory Committee and also serves on the board of the Florida Association of Property Appraisers, Florida State Parks Foundation, and the Richloam Museum.

- There are 67 property appraiser offices in Florida, one per county
- Appraise properties for tax purposes but do not collect taxes
- Three leg stool: Clerk of Courts, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser
- Have 200 positions in the office, \$1.6M budget
- Second place in Florida in cost effectiveness in cost per parcel (Washington County is Number 1)
- January 01 is value date for appraisals
- 550,000 properties in Lee County
- Appeals of tax bill are filed with County Clerk of Courts, 4,000 appeals filed this year, 2-3,000 per average year
- Properties are appraised each year, inspected every 5-years
- Hurricane Ian affected approximately 100,000 properties at various levels
- Call 239.533.6100 for individual property tax information
- Trim Notice provides all taxing information, current proposed rate vs. previous year
- Property values were up 6-1/2% in Lee County, -35% in Sanibel, -45% in Ft Myers Beach
- Ft Myers Beach tax rolls should recover quickly
- Homestead has legal property protections

New Business: None

Announcements: August 26th Carolyn and Fred Forbes hosted a "Letter Addressing Campaign" at the Hunter's Ridge Club House. Members Phyllis Bonfield, Mary Ellen Rain, Jim Sido, Nancy Walls, Joanne and Bill Ribble joined the Forbes in the addressing of letters and donation of the stamps for the 340 letters addressed.

Announcements: GOP Senator Rick Scott Veterans Event, Saturday November 11 and the Estero Veterans Day event at the Estero Park, 11:00

Campaign Candidate Introductions:

Doris Cortese, VP Conservative Leadership Caucus

Denise Carlin, candidate for Lee County School Superintendent

Bill Ribble, Candidate for The Lee County School Board District 3 Seat

Next Meeting: November 02, 2023, Lee County Commissioner Kevin Ruane

Meeting Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Rafael Lopez, seconded by Ray Sandelli. Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm.

