

1 VILLAGE OF ESTERO, FLORIDA

2
3 RESOLUTION NO. 2015 - 43

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5 A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF THE
6 VILLAGE OF ESTERO, FLORIDA, TO ENDORSE THE
7 CREATION OF THE ESTERO HISTORIC PRESERVATION
8 CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE; DETERMINATION
9 THAT THE ESTERO HISTORIC PRESERVATION CITIZENS
10 ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS NOT AN ADVISORY BOARD TO
11 THE VILLAGE COUNCIL; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE
12 DATE.
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14 WHEREAS, the Village of Estero, Florida (the "Village"), understands the educational,
15 cultural, and economic importance of historical sites in the Village of Estero; and
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17 WHEREAS, the Village wants to foster pride in the legacy of beauty and achievements
18 of the past by promoting the use of sites of historical and cultural significance as places for
19 education, pleasure and the welfare of the citizens of the Village of Estero; and
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21 WHEREAS, the Village endorses the creation of the Estero Historic Preservation
22 Citizens Advisory Committee formed by interested Estero citizens and members of the following
23 groups:
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25 Estero Historical Society
26 Happehatchee Center
27 Koreshan State Historic Site
28 College of Life Foundation
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30 NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Village Council of the Village of Estero,
31 Florida:
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33 SECTION ONE. The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein
34 by this reference.
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36 SECTION TWO. The Village Council supports the creation of the Estero Historic
37 Preservation Citizens Advisory Committee.
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39 SECTION THREE. While the Village Council supports the creation of the Estero
40 Historic Preservation Citizens Advisory Committee, and welcomes comments and suggestions
41 from the Committee, the Committee is not an advisory board to the council.
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43 SECTION FOUR. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.
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47 **ADOPTED BY THE VILLAGE COUNCIL** of the Village of Estero, Florida this
48 _____ day of July, 2015.

49
50 Attest:

VILLAGE OF ESTERO, FLORIDA

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52 By: _____
53 Kathy Hall, MMC, Village Clerk

By: _____
Nicholas Batos, Mayor

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55 Reviewed for legal sufficiency:

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57 By: _____
58 Burt Saunders, Esq., Village Attorney

Estero Historic Preservation Advisory Committee
Presentation
June 24, 2015
Katy Errington

The majority of us in Estero have come from **someplace** else. Our roots were established **somewhere** else. Now we are in Estero and there are elements surrounding us of our **new** history. And for those of us who call Estero home, we have an obligation to support and restore for future generations what has been the **old** history of our **newly incorporated** Village of Estero.

Recently several groups of Estero residents invited me to various meetings for the purpose of asking the Village Council to do something about creating additional ways to preserve Estero's heritage.

I was asked the question: "**If we don't come to Council for direction about preserving our history: "Where do we go? And, if we don't come to you... Who?"**"

My purpose today is to bring to the Village Council a proposal for establishing an Estero Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.

In the Estero Community Plan, One of the most important Objectives is, 19.7 regarding **Public Participation**. It reads: **We need to ensure the public has meaningful and appropriate opportunities to participate in and comment upon development in around the Estero community.**

Since this is a workshop, no voting will be taking place today.

Burt Saunders, our council attorney, will explain later why the decision is being made to develop, at this time, an Estero Historic Preservation Advisory Committee rather than an Estero Historic Preservation Board.

The first sentence of the Estero Community Plan states that there is a need to establish a community that embraces its historic heritage and protects the environment.

Estero is rich in history. 2,000 years ago, 50,000 Calusahatchee Native Americans called this area home. The Estero River played a major role in the Calusahatchee's daily lives.

The first settler in Estero was Gustav Damkohler over 100 years ago who chose this area because of the Estero River and its access to Estero Bay. Next came Cyrus Teed, the founder of the Koreshan Unity Church. The area is now known as Koreshan State Historic Site and is on the National Registry of Historic Landmarks. Again, the Estero River played a major role in the lives of the people who settled here.

The Estero Community Plan, Policy 19.6.5: States that we should be: Consistent with the Lee Plan parks, recreation, and open space element, integrate the Koreshan State Historic Site into the fabric of the community by collaborating with the appropriate agencies such as the state of Florida to improve the area's landscaping, enhance pedestrian and bicycle access, historic resources and structures, and community park program and activities.

To integrate the Koreshan State Historic Site into the fabric of the community will happen by collaborating with the appropriate agencies, such as: Florida State Park officials, College of Life Foundation, Estero Bay Aquatic State Park, Mound Key, Audubon Society, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Estero Historical Society, Koreshan Unity Foundation, plus user groups and advisory groups. I know this, because I inquired with the Florida State Parks' officials and was told that this is one way it could be done.

Policy 19.5.3: Support the long-term protection of Estero's environment and natural resources by working with local, regional, state, and national agencies and organizations to identify and preserve natural resources and the environment

This policy works well with the Happehatchee Center located on the northeast side of Corkscrew Road near the corner of US 41. I understand that the late Ellen Peterson refused millions of dollars when it was offered to her to buy this land. The five acres and a Girl Scout house on the property are designated as a Lee County Historic Resource. At the rear of the property is an old swinging bridge that goes over the Estero River. It is

difficult to believe that this unique and tranquil retreat exists in almost the heart of Estero and not many people know about it.

The Estero Community Plan Policy 19.2.1 (F): States that there is a need to improve access to all the community's blueways—particularly the Estero River—Greenway Trails, other open spaces.

When the Estero Community Plan was written the Estero River was classified as one of Florida's Outstanding Waters. It is no longer on the list. It is shown as an impaired waterway. This creates a problem for improving access to it.

According to the Estero Community Plan, **Policy 19.1.5:** We need to Identify, protect and promote historic resources and facilities such as those related to Koreshan Park, Old Estero area, and the Estero Community Park.

The Estero Historical Society located in the Estero Community Park has given uncounted hours of volunteer service toward the Historic Preservation of Estero's founding families, documents, pictures, etc. The members are

working towards restoring another building (one of two) and this time it is a schoolhouse that once was an integral part of Old Estero.

It is remarkable what the Estero Historical Society has managed to accomplish in such a short period of time. Many thanks to the late Mimi Straub and those of you who continue the work she started.

Burt Saunders and I met with Charles Duray, Chairman of the Board for the College of Life. It is people like Charles Duray who have the insight and energy to be strong supporters to protecting and advancing what made Estero, Estero.

As Village Councilors, we have a huge commitment in our roles of helping to shape Estero's future. We have a voluminous amount of history here. It needs to be preserved in such a way that visitors locally, nationally and internationally will continue to come and be intrigued and fascinated about this unique village in Florida. Our newest employer, Hertz, announced that their new headquarters is designed to protect the environment by going green. What a wonderful example this company has set!

I am a strong advocate for protecting the environment, water and wildlife habitat and for protecting nature through trees, plants, shrubs, botanical and butterfly gardens. There are many who would love to walk the ancient paths along the banks of the Estero River to Estero Bay.

The Village of Estero Council has taken over the governance of this community at a time when it seems development is at a peak ...only 6% of land in Estero is undeveloped. Let's do everything possible to protect the areas that are supposed to be protected. The Estero River is a major priority. Without the Estero River, we've lost the core of our heritage.

We have 37 beautiful gated communities. The only problem is no one can see or visit them unless they live behind the gates. Many visitors come to Estero because of its beauty. Preservation of nature is needed outside the gated communities. It shows we care and it's good for business!

We have been extremely busy forming a new government in the past three months. Now before time gets away from us and before every parcel of

land is developed, we need to try and protect what we can of the natural beauty, environment and history that we have.

To summarize:

- I am asking council to give approval for a public supported Estero Historic Preservation Advisory Committee to be created, as soon as possible.
- Special invitations to join the Estero Historic Preservation Committee should go to the historic entities that have been involved for many years preserving Estero's past: Such as,
 - Estero Historical Society
 - The Happehatchee Center
 - Koreshan State Historic Site
 - The College of Life Foundation
 - And to the general Estero public
- And work with agencies to protect the Estero River. It is a precious asset to Estero and to southwest Florida.

Thank you.