

October, 2014 Coconut Telegraph

The **Little Gasparilla Property Owners Association** met on October 4th. The next meeting will be on Saturday, December 6 at 10AM at the Placida Beach Clubhouse

The Board of Directors of **Little Gasparilla Island Fire and Rescue** met on October 11th. The next meeting will be on Saturday, November 22 at 9AM at the Firehouse, 9540 Jolly Roger Trail.

The **LGI Advisory Committee** did not meet this month.

At the LGPOA meeting---

Membership stands at 294, more than half of LGI homeowners.

The **LGPOA website** (www.lgpoa.org) is up to date with current Coconut Telegraphs and other information about island issues.

Navigation: The number 2 red marker on the south channel to LGI went missing and has been replaced by the county.

New islander Chris Stonebridge has agreed to head up the **Social Committee** and is working on some fun events for island get-togethers.

The annual **Labor Day Weekend Fishing Tournament** produced lots of winners and lots of fun. See the website for photos and a list of winners.

Docks: LGPOA sent a postcard to all island property owners advising them that they must take affirmative steps to get their dock permitted under the LGI Dock Bill passed by the Florida legislature in June. As a result, many homeowners have applied for and received their permit (called a Letter of Consent) from the DEP. Everyone reported that the process was smooth and easy. Again, see our website for information about who must have a permit and how to apply. Dock committee member Tom McCoy suggested that community dock users wanting to form associations might get together with others wanting to form associations and jointly hire an attorney

Water: Again, at the meeting there was much discussion about Jack Boyer's Little Gasparilla Water Utility. As was reported previously, Jack will bring Charlotte County water to LGI via a subaqueous pipeline and he plans to lay pipe to those parts of the island that he does not already serve. He plans to ask Charlotte County to enforce its mandatory connection ordinance and require all homeowners to connect to his water system. There are three separate issues at play here:

1. The Florida Public Service Commission sets rates that utilities may charge. The PSC had initially set a rate of \$93 per month meter fee, but thanks to the efforts of islanders and the Florida Office of Public Counsel, those fees have been lowered to approximately \$62 per month. These fees will fully fund the subaqueous pipeline. In other words, Jack does not need new customers to go through with his plan.
2. The Charlotte County Legal Department has issued an opinion stating that the mandatory connection ordinance as it is written does apply to LGI, so the ordinance would have to be amended to change that. The attorneys had no objection to an amendment, saying that it is a policy decision for the Commission.

3. Because of this legal opinion, unconnected islanders must now attempt to persuade the County Commissioners to amend the mandatory connection ordinance exempting those on LGI who have their own water systems. If the commission refuses to amend the ordinance, the only recourse for those opposed to connection is to go to court.

Environmental Committee: Feral Cats are still a multiplying problem on LGI. If you have seen a feral cat and would be willing to try to trap it, Animal Control will lend a trap at no cost. You must bring the cat in the trap to the mainland, and Animal Control will take it to the animal shelter at no cost to you. If you would like to borrow a trap, call Lt. Brian Jones at Charlotte County Animal Control: 941-833-5686 or 833-5690.

Turtle and nesting bird seasons have ended. Thanks to all islanders and guests who have taken in their beach furniture and kept lights off the beach at night.

High Speed Internet: Tom Braakman, from Placida Beach, has been in contact with Comcast. He is attempting to get them to bring their services to LGI. David Haynes is working on this also. The Telegraph will keep you updated on progress.

The Great American Cleanup will be held in March next year. This is a great way to keep our island beautiful and get unwanted items easily to a dumpster. A volunteer is needed to head up this effort. If you are willing, here is a link to the website where you can see what is involved and sign up:

<http://www.keepcharlottebeautiful.org/GACInfosheet.html>

Little Gasparilla Island Fire and Rescue is in the process of strategic planning for its future. At its August 19 meeting the Board formed a group to plan the firehouse building. The building planning group has gotten a topographical survey of LGIFR's lot and is working with Suncoast Architects to develop a concept for the firehouse. At the October 11 meeting, Chief Demeter gave a report about personnel. He reported that one professional is not enough to effectively fight fires or handle a serious medical emergency and strongly recommended staffing with two professionals at all times. This staffing, with the addition of the 4 islanders who are undergoing training to be firefighters, will be considered safe and adequate by the state Fire Marshall. The next meeting of the Board, which will be held on November 22, will focus on the proper equipment needed to adequately fight fires and respond to medical emergencies on LGI. When all reports are in, the Board and the Chief will develop a budget to fund these operations and will bring it to the islanders. As always, all LGI property owners are members of LGIFR and are welcome to provide input and comments.

The **LGI Chapel** holds services from 10:30 to 11:15AM each Sunday. The services are non-denominational, dress is casual, and all are welcome.