

River Forest Lighting Advisory Committee Meeting

APPROVED

December 17th, 2009

Committee Members Present: Ron Brouckaert, Omar Sickles, Mike Edmondson, Larry Freeswick, Bob Croson, Dee Claire

Guest Speakers: Donna DeBerry, MSTBU Coordinator and Russ Reid, engineer FP&L

Guests present: Mike Schelpf, Serge Claire, John Richker, Bill and Cathy Pella, Carolyn Darga, Carol Sickles, Cloy and Lee Winkvist, Shirley and Pat Bland, Tom and Alice Totterdale, Mike and Pat Pastuch, Tom Evans, Marge Chamberlin, Irene Kolodimos, Fred Weiszmann, Nell Maxwell, Bob and Gail Beals, Bill Wiemer, Tom and Barb Lavey, Glenda Brouckaert, Dick and Beverly Foster, Joy Freeswick, June Miller, June Boyko, Dick Kennedy, Florence Pritchard, Syndee Link, Jan Croson

The meeting was called to order by Mike Edmondson at 2:05 P.M.

The premier meeting of the River Forest Lighting Advisory Committee began with a quorum present. The meeting was duly advertised. A moderate crowd attended.

New Business

1. Mike Edmondson introduced Donna DeBerry to the committee. He stated that Donna is in charge of 50 lighting districts in Fort Myers. Her role is liaison for Lee County, FP&L and River Forest. Mike stated that she had assisted him in the pursuit of River Forest street lighting. Mike also introduced Russ Reid, engineer from FP&L. Russ stated that no communication (s) should come to him or FP&L. Everything must go through the River Forest Street Lighting Committee first, then to Donna DeBerry who will then contact FP&L.
2. Election of Officers-Donna DeBerry stated that a Chairman, Co-chairman, and secretary were necessary for the quorum. She stated that the secretary must have the minutes written and signed by the Chairman on her desk no later than one week after the meeting. These minutes will be posted on the lee-county.com website under MSTBU for any to see. An election was held and Mike Edmondson was elected as Chairman, Larry Freeswick Co-Chairman, Dee Claire, secretary, and Ron Brouckaert substitute secretary.
3. MSTBU duties-Donna DeBerry stated that her role with River Forest Street Lighting Committee is to (a) establish the level of service (b) pay bills by insuring the monies from taxes are adequate (c) advisor regarding any changes, additions etc. (d) completion of budget preparation by April each year. She stated that if the monies for the current year are not used, that these monies will carry-over to the next year. These monies are kept in a separate account for River Forest Street Lighting only.
4. Ceasing of Street Lighting installation- A discussion was held regarding the delay of street lights installation. Mike Edmondson stated that in the initial plan, each pole with a transform would receive a 150 watt Cobra head light hung on a long arm pole to insure that residents of both sides of the street would benefit equally to insure safety and security. Mike stated that Fort Myers Shores street lighting consists of 100 watt bulbs. Donna DeBerry stated that most neighborhoods chose the 100 watt bulbs. She stated as soon as FP&L installed 5 of the 150 watt bulbs on River Forest and 2 on Island Road, she began receiving telephone calls from dissatisfied customers claiming the lights were excessively bright. She stated that the installation of the rest of the street lights was halted, by her, to re-confirm the consensus of the neighborhood regarding the 150watt vs. 100watt lights. A discussion was held regarding the following concerns:

Question: Why didn't we have our street lights in November like was promised? We've already been billed on our taxes.
Answer: Donna DeBerry stated that not every one pays their taxes in November, that the lights cannot be installed until the taxes are paid and the monies are in the account. She stated that the street lighting will continue regardless of which degree of lighting chosen. She also stated that as soon as they installed 5 street lights on River Forest Drive that she got 4 complaints about the degree of brightness.

Question: If we want to make any changes, will there be an additional charge?

Answer: Russ Reid stated that there will be the cost of a pole, if no available, and cost could be approximately \$800.

Question: If we chose the 100 watt bulbs, will our taxes go down?

Answer: Donna DeBerry stated yes they could go down but probably will not because it depends on the cost of fuel, etc. from FP&L. Donna clarified that Lee County does not own the street lights, they are leased and the taxes pay the bills.

Question: Can we leave those seven, 150 watt lights already installed and do the rest with 100watt bulbs?

Answer: Yes

Question: There are some areas that have dark spots. Why did you chose to put street lights on pole with transformers instead of equally positioning them? There is a dark spot across from Dick Foster's home and also in the curve on River Forest. An automobile has already crashed into the house there.

Answer: Russ Reid stated because of the cost. Donna DeBerry stated that 35 street lights have been approved and that now 36 or 37 lights are requested. She advised that the community wait until all of the approved lights are installed and then re-evaluate the need for additional lights. If additional lights are warranted, any changes or additions MUST go through the River Forest Street Lighting Committee who will in turn address the need with her. If the budget has enough money left, then, additional street light may be feasible. The River Forest Street Lighting Committee will meet no less than yearly to discuss the next years budget.

Question: Is there an additional charge to install lighting on a pole without a transformer:

Answer: No

Question: There are 3 street lights at the entry. Will we get credit when these are changed out?

Answer: Yes

5. Dissatisfied residents-Two residents stated that the lights were too bright, but that if it was the consensus of the majority that they would not object to the completion of the lighting as planned.

6. Voting on 150 vs. 100 watt street lights-A motion was made and seconded with a majority in favor of continuing with the original plan of 150 watt lights. There was 2 against.

A motion was made and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectively submitted by Dee Claire, secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Edmondson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Edmondson, Chairman