

FORT MYERS BOARD OF TRADE

THE OPERATING MEDIUM OF
PROGRESSIVE PUBLIC SENTIMENT IN
FORT MYERS AND LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA

B. E. TINSTMAN, PRESIDENT WM. JEFFCOTT, TREASURER
L. G. BIGGERS, SECRETARY

May 30 '18
11:41 PM

Capt J. F. Jaudou
Major City

My Dear Campitor:

As an officer of a competing line
I once more present myself to the
Tamiawi Highway Commissioners.

When the order came "to work or
fight" I liked it so much that I
promptly decided to do both. Hence

I salute thee as the Sect. Seminal
Trail Association, Headquarters - Ft Myers.

Enclosing a clipping of Today's Press
of an article, which was not written
by me but by Mr. Graham of the
Graham Shriver Co and which he is

2/ FORT MYERS BOARD OF TRADE

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President and he is also an owner
of thousands of acres in Tps 49-34
as well as in 49-33 and in other townships
along the route. Senate document
89 gives an excellent description of ^{the Sem. trail} ~~it~~ ✓
and there is a wagon road leading to
within a short distance from the Tam.
Highway junction at the Dade and Lee Co.
line, and the "Seminoe Trail" Christened by
you truly has a quite interesting
history which I shall print in
the local papers in a day or two.
If I do say it myself, I think the
S. Trail a ~~good~~ cute idea if for no
other reason than that all factions in
this burg unite on it.

B. E. Tinstman Pres Board of Trade
was elected President, A H Billingham,
Retiro, Treasurer and F. E. Harrison Sect
and Pub man, which will be announced in tomorrow's
P.M.

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Among other officers and members
are:

F. W. Perry Representative

H. E. Heiteman.

Geo Dunham

Geo Hutton

A. L. White C. E.

Graham and Shrieves

A. L. Kimmel C. E.

K. B. Harvey and numerous others.

E. E. Goodus Co. Com. to Latelle

wanted to use County funds on the
proposition which I refused - no parties
wanted.

C. P. Staley Co. Com Ft. Myers. Appointed
by the Gov. to fill W. H. Fowler's unexpired
term is strong for the Seem Trail, in
fact every I know is in favor of it.

Fowler resigned 4 weeks ago, you know.
for which we are ~~so~~ very thankful.

34

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County Comm. Phillips of the Alva
is nuts on it. He knows the back country
like a book. You see the Sem. Trail
will in a way open the whole Lee Co
and I have a cute little idea, another
one, which will work very advantageously
in the interest of Chevalier and the
Hapkins Tract.

Thinking about Chevalier reminds me
of a little ditty. Try it on your piano
Here it is: "Chevalier"

"Hush little grove yard -

"Don't you cry

"You'll be city

"Bye and bye"

Am also enclosing a copy of an
article which will appear in the
Sunday Paper, Tampa & Jay.
Read it and let me know what you
think of it.

(5)

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And mark this. — I am going
to whoop this Sem Trail prop.
up to beat the band.

The public here is now convinced
that this isolation idea has been
a costly one and through politicians
they have wasted \$675,000 on right
aways only.

with connections made with
Miami via the Seminole Trail &
the Tamiami Trail in Dade Co
the State Co will have to rush to
Lee Co line in self defence, Co.
Com. Staley thinks, and we all believe
that it will greatly help to rush &
stimulate the completion of the
Tamiami Highway in this Co.

(6)

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Land Oas That have sold
land and held out the promise
that the Tam. Highway would
be completed in Jan. 1919 will
no doubt like to aid this noble
Cause and Land Co's in Lee
Co will no doubt be glad
to see the public get a closer
inspection of their holdings.
Anyway every little bit helps
and for a general all around
"Lands across the 'glades' and
leads to I think that big visioned
people in Lee and Dade Co
should promptly unite in
rushing the Tamiami Highway by
the Serenade Trail to the junction point

7

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and this in Some way
Keep faith with the public
Besides this is one way of
getting ahead of the upper
route.

I am quietly betting on your
supporting the Seminole Trail
proposition from the beginning
and I believe it will come
back to you handsomely.

With best regards to Mrs J
Capt. Cook I am

Very truly yours

F. E. Harrison

How about those ~~pictures~~ you promised?

Fort Myers May 30 1918
"Special"

That several links in the Tamiami Highway will not be completed in January, 1919, as per schedule is well known to many on the west coast, but the public in general is still of the belief that the season 1918-19 will see the cross-state highway from Miami- Fort Myers to Tampa completed. The deferred completion of certain sections of the west coast Tamiami Highway to sometime in the uncertain future will greatly disappoint the public, but whether the delay is due to lack of finance, labor, public spirit or "on account of the war" the fact remains that with the present conditions prevailing indications are that the Lee County part of the Highway cannot be finished by the time agreed upon, and furthermore, that after the rainy season is over, there will hardly be any more of the Tamiami Highway left in Lee County than the right of way along the route.

With that melancholy outlook ^{for} to the thousands of motorists who have been promised that they could cross the State from the Atlantic to the Gulf via the Tamiami trail, and to ^{for} those who have invested in land with that promise as a basis for their investments, the prospect will be further disappointing when it is known that sometime in 1920 will be nearer the date that the Tamiami Highway will be completed to Fort Myers. Progressive public sentiment aroused and properly led may in some miraculous way accomplish the completion of the Highway before that time, but there are no signs indicating that anything as desirable as that will occur. With the upper cross-state roads, Arcadia - Okeechobee - Fort Pierce - and the

Melbourne St Cloud - Kissimmee - working towards completion and tourists routed that way, ~~and~~ with the sickening prospect of the loss of another two years of business through the failure to finish the Lee County link in the Tamiami Highway, that, together with the deep desire to see Lee County keep faith with Dade County, to prevent the breach of trust and the loss of prestige, and the growing realization of Lee County's great economic annual losses through isolation, compelled the serious investigation which is now leading to a practical solution of the problem of keeping faith with the public in connecting up with the east coast in time for the coming season.

The remarkable prosperity of the lower east coast is chiefly attributable to efficient civic organization work, unstinted intensive publicity and extensive road construction. To reach across the Glades and connect with that progressive region means a new area of development for Lee County far beyond the most sanguine expectations. On the Gulf side lies Lee County with her wonderful natural resources, her rich, deep soil, with four billion feet of pine and cypress untapped, with hundreds of thousands of acres of fine grazing land, the magnificent Caloosahatchee Bay and River, extensive Gulf coast, its Ten Thousand islands, and all this vast natural wealth and opportunities ~~lies~~ ^{is} hidden and undeveloped through isolation, absence of outlets and proper road connections with adjoining counties. Further isolation means continued economic losses, the prevention of development, the keeping out of the homeseeker, the tourist and investor, and a check in the

normal increase of land values.

From Fort Myers south and east and southeast there are a number of trails and wagon roads leading out from Immokalee to Estero, Naples-on-the-Gulf, and Marco on the southwest, to Deep Lake and Chokoloskee on the south, and to Rocky Lake, the Devil's Garden, Brown's Store, Fort Shackelford and paralleling the western edge of the Everglades down to the Tamiami Highway where it crosses the Lee and Dade County line. Some of these wagon roads were made during the Seminole war and have been used since during the hunting season by hundreds of automobile parties. This Seminole trail or military road from Fort Myers to Immokalee, Fort Shackelford can, at very little expense, and by simply corduroying soft places along the route, be put into service and used as trans-state connection pending the completion of the Tamiami Highway, thus advancing the development expected from the permanent cross-state road two years.

The route is shown on "Davis" military map as "Capt. Kerr's route, 1842", and starts at Fort Myers at an elevation of 7.68, gradually raises to 37.07 at Immokalee, (Tp. 47, R.29) the highest point on the mainland in the county. From there in an east and southeasterly direction it gradually slips to 28 and 24, at ^{Rocky} Rocky Lake (Tp. 47, R. 32) to 21 - 20 at Fort Shackelford near the western borders of the Glades, then paralleling the Everglades ^(through Tps. 48-53, R. 35 & 6.) it passes southward along the prairie and holds its elevation between 18 - 17 until it

6.50
finally slopes to ~~6700~~ feet at the juncture of the Dade and Lee County lines on the route of the Tamiami Highwa. (Tp. 53, R 35 E)

Travellers along this Seminole trail are never disappointed, as the route is a scenic one, abundant in wild animal life, prolific in vegetation, lots of fine standing timber, rich grazing land, fine cattle, wild orange groves, artesian wells, etc., and there is hardly a more picturesque and interesting route in the State of Florida. A part of this trail passes through the proposed Game Preserve covering several townships and which is a natural breeding and feeding ground for game, and its bird life is marvellous in number and plumage. Thousands of sportsmen from different parts of the United States and Canada motor along this trail every winter, and along this route it is proposed that Fort Myers connect with the Dade County part of the Tamiami Highway when it is completed in January.

The Seminole Trail Association has been organized and officers elected, with headquarters at Fort Myers. The object of the organization is the promotion of cross state traffic and the earliest possible connection with the completed part of the Dade County Tamiami Highway, and also for the advancement of roads connecting with neighboring counties. The efforts of the Association is not in conflict with any other ^{road} projects but to stimulate those already under construction. No project has hardly ever met with a more unanimous response by the public, and all those to whom the proposition has been submitted have agreed that it is practicable and necessary. Civil engi-

neers and others have offered their services gratis, land owners both in Lee and Dade County have volunteered financial assistance. A preliminary survey is under way in order to arrive at the proper amount necessary to route and make the Trail travable for all kinds of automobiles in order to make connections with Dade County by January ~~next~~ next. The material for the improvement can be found along the route and the labor is being arranged for.

When the economic advantages offered by the Seminole Trail is properly studied and understood it will be given the full force of public appreciation and little difficulty is expected in getting the project financed without much loss of time. It will cost a little to corduroy the soft spots along the Seminole trail, but it will cost vastly more in economic losses by a continual isolation, and a further loss in credit and prestige by not keeping faith with the public.

By connecting the Seminole Trail with the Tamiami Highway at the Dade and Lee County line connections can be made -

1. via La Belle with Fort Myers, Moore Haven, Palmdale, Okeechobee City and Fort Pierce and with Tampa through Arcadia, Lakeland, etc.
 2. via Alva and Olga Bridge with Punta Gorda, Arcadia, Lakeland to Tampa.
 3. via Fort Myers to Naples on the Gulf and Marco, thus connecting Miami, all the Caloosahatchee river towns and those along the Tamiami Highway to Marco, as well as towns between Fort Myers and Tampa.
- F. E. H.