

Letter: Shell game played by Indian River County Commissioners on boat ramp issue

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To quote Ronald Reagan — "There you go again." On March 10 the Indian River County Commission discussed the fate of the Oslo Boat Ramp expansion. Will this issue never die?

In October, the commissioners voted 3-2 to table the issue for three to five years. Opponents believed that meant all work on the project would therefore be postponed.

Apparently, the word "tabled" was more nuanced than residents realized. As a result of a Freedom of Information Act request by the Everglades Law Center, we learned the county was proceeding with its permit application with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

At the March 10 meeting, County Administrator Joseph Baird stated he instructed his staff to continue the application following the October vote to table the project because the process had begun before that meeting, and had cost \$5,000 to apply.

The issue before the commission March 10 was to decide whether to withdraw the permit application, thereby living up to the good-faith understanding of residents who thought the process was stopped.

Just before this issue was discussed March 10, Commissioner Bob Solari read several inspirational passages about why citizens no longer have faith in their elected officials. In a vote of great irony, despite the pleas from citizens to withdraw the application, the commissioners voted 3-2 to continue the application process.

At least commissioners Joseph Flescher and Tim Zorc voted for withdrawal, showing that they understand the issue.

I think the loss of the \$5,000 application fee would have been a small price to pay to retain the good faith of those citizens who continue to believe in the concept of representative government.

Commissioners, do you really wonder why residents no longer trust that public officials will make the decisions favored by the majority?

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