

## **The Federation of Greater Baton Rouge Civic Associations held its membership meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2015.**

The Federation represents Homeowner's Associations (HOA's) throughout the Greater Baton Rouge area. The meeting was conducted by Nancy Curry, President of the Federation. The speakers were; Scott Shean, Lake Sherwood Acres HOA and Clifford Grout, 1<sup>st</sup> VP FGBRCA.

Scott Shean gave a presentation on "A Review of Options for Gating Lake Sherwood Acres".

Lake Sherwood Acres is a deed restricted subdivision established in 1974. It has 313 lots, a 30 acre lake, clubhouse, pool and tennis courts and a very active volunteer HOA. Lake Sherwood has 4 entrances; two on Sherwood Forest Blvd. and two on Coursey Blvd. The study was precipitated by a number of requests from residents over the years as a way to reduce crime which really isn't much of a problem other than unlocked vehicle entry being the single biggest issue.

The major problem is cut through traffic for motorists trying to avoid the intersection of Sherwood Forest and Coursey.

The first consideration was a fully gated community. Three issues became very apparent.

1. Cost - infrastructure of roads and drainage become the responsibility of the subdivision as well as the operation and maintenance of the gates.
2. Closure of a dedicated public road - must be approved by the Metro Council and would be a long and difficult process. Additionally, there might be legal challenges to closing a public road.
3. Resident approval - Need 75%-100% for a change in the General Plan of Development.

Also considered was partial gating as an alternative where only two of the entrances would be gated thereby preventing some cut through traffic.

1. Costs - minimized because of avoiding taking over roads and drainage maintenance. Also, it would reduce gate costs
2. Road Closure - still an issue and Metro Council approval might be easier. Legal Challenges would still remain.
3. Resident Approval - would be simplified.

### **Conclusion**

1. There would be considerable time, effort and cost with either option.

2. It is questionable whether the benefits would outweigh the operating and maintenance problems.

3. There is a likelihood of unwinnable legal challenges.

The Lake Sherwood Board therefore decided it was not a desirable solution for the subdivision.

Mr. Shean concluded by answering questions from the membership. A copy of the full report will be available on the Federation website.

Clifford Grout made a presentation on how to research legislative bills - "State House Rocks". He emphasized that this is a fiscal session and mostly financial issues are dealt with. The main website for research is [www.legis.la.gov/legis/home.aspx](http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/home.aspx). From here bills can be researched by House or Senate number, Author, Committee, Summary and Bill text. Search words can be entered to assist in the search. Some typical search words for HOA's might be neighborhood, Crime, Crime Prevention, District, and Subdivision.

Mr. Grout answered questions from the membership.

The Federation meets the second Thursday of each month at the BREC Tennis Center at 7505 Independence Blvd. The next meeting will be on May 14, 2015. Single-family homeowner associations are invited to join. Please contact Nancy Curry, President at 925-1674 to join or attend a meeting.



Photo: left to right: Clifford Grout - 1st VP FGBRCA; Nancy Curry President FGBRCA; Scott Shean - Lake Sherwood Acres . Photo provided by Don Frattini: 225-291-5295.