

## *Town of Orchid*

The Town of Orchid was established in 1965 in order to create a separate municipality that would be self-governing and would allow legal separation from certain aspects of the County system such as County zoning, law enforcement and certain County taxes. Because of the Town's incorporation, it derives both power and responsibilities from the Florida Legislative Code.

A Town Council consisting of five Councilmembers who are elected by the Town's registered voters governs the Town. The Town Council not only conducts the normal business of the Town, but also has the responsibility to carefully plan for the future in order to insure the stability, attractiveness and long-term viability of the Town and to protect the interests of its inhabitants

Functions performed by the Town/Town Staff/Town Council for or on behalf of Orchid residents and/or property owners – The Town:

1. Allows "home rule authority" – this means that the residents of the Town, through the decisions made by the Town Council, control their own destiny in regard to establishment and maintenance of various municipal standards including, but not limited to, zoning, code enforcement, preservation and conservation. This authority also allows the Town to opt out of County ordinances that are in conflict with the Town's goals and objectives.
2. Determines zoning:
  - a. For residential properties – this includes lot sizes, setbacks, building heights and sizes, and density.
  - b. For commercial properties – lot size, building height and size, setbacks, parking, lighting, landscaping, etc. The Town's Code, which was created by the Orchid Town Council with considerable input from residents, is very restrictive compared to the County Code.
3. Determines validity of variance requests and plat planning proposals.
4. Oversees and enforces the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Issues all building permits.
6. Verifies business licenses and insurance of contractors.
7. Performs building inspections.
8. Issues Certificates of Occupancy.
9. Sets the ad valorem tax rate, which currently saves the property owners a significant amount of money in taxes per million dollars of assessed value (their taxes would be that much higher if they lived in the unincorporated County).
10. Repairs and maintains all street lights on roadways.
11. Negotiates franchise agreements that provide garbage and recycling pick-up services.

12. Is responsible for all public safety within the Town, either directly or through inter-local agreements with the County and State.
13. Is responsible, in conjunction with the County and State Emergency Operations Centers, for keeping Orchid residents informed about emergency situations.
14. Issues access stickers, on a yearly basis, to all registered contractors.
15. Members of the Town Council and/or the Town Staff are the designated representatives at meetings of County committees.
16. Is the legal entity that receives monies from the County and/or State including monies for lighting, and gas tax, the ½ cent sales tax, the local communication service tax monies, etc.
17. Is legally entitled to FEMA monies when a disaster occurs. We received such monies after Hurricanes Jeanne and Frances.
18. Collects all impact fees imposed by the County and the School Board.
19. Represents the Town residents at all County Zoning meetings that affect us.
20. Notarizes documents.
21. Is able to receive grant monies for coastal management and emergencies.

The past and current Town Council Members and the Town Staff have worked hard, and will continue to do so, to insure that Orchid is found to be a premier town, not only on the Treasure Coast, but also anywhere in the United States. The Town's goal is to reflect the desires of the residents in high quality forward-thinking yet cost-effective programs and advancements.