

## **GASPARILLA ISLAND BRIDGE AUTHORITY ORGANIZATION & MISSION**

**MISSION:** To maintain safe and efficient traffic flow at all times through the Toll Booths, along the causeway and along the Intracoastal water way. To make fair and balanced decisions which impact a diverse group of stakeholders including owners, travelers, local businesses and employees.

**HISTORY:** The Boca Grande Swing Bridge and causeway is located in southwest Charlotte County near Placida. It is the only land link from Charlotte County to the three barrier islands known as: North, Cole and Gasparilla Island. All three bridges and the causeway are owned by the Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority. The fixed bridges were completed in 2013 and the swing bridge was completed in 2015. Posted vessel clearance is 22 ½ feet.

**THE BRIDGE AUTHORITY:** The State of Florida Independent Special District, known as the Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority (GIBA) was created by Special Act 96-507 of the Florida Legislature, further amended in 1997, codified in 2000, with subsequent changes in 2012. The GIBA is run by a Board of 5 elected Supervisors and 4 appointed Supervisors who meet quarterly. Daily bridge/causeway operations are managed by Executive Director, Kathy Banson-Verrico. The GIBA Special District includes all voters within the geographic area from the CR 775/Causeway intersection (Charlotte County), south along the Boca Grande Causeway past North & Cole Islands to Gasparilla Island's village of Boca Grande (Lee County).

**BRIDGE OPENINGS:** The Boca Grande "Swing Bridge" spans the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Openings are set by U.S. Coast Guard waterway rules. Coast Guard regulations require the Boca Grande Swing Bridge to open for vessel traffic: (A) Days: via "Timed Openings," each 30 minutes 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM & on weekdays & holidays: each 15 minutes; and (B) Nights: "On Request" 6:00 PM - 7:00 AM.

**BRIDGE TENDER:** On duty 24 hours a day. They provide wind speed & direction or relay vessel emergencies to the Coast Guard. Communications: **Phone:** 941-697-2271 ext. 5 or **VHF Channel:** 9/16.

**VEHICLE TOLLS:** All GIBA operating revenues are generated via user tolls. No tax dollars are used. Passenger vehicles and pick up trucks pay \$6.00 for a round trip to the island. Commercial trucks, buses, and heavy equipment pay \$5.50/axle. Toll passes are available to the public.

**SWING BRIDGE WEIGHT LIMIT:** All large commercial vehicles must weigh before crossing the bridge. The maximum gross vehicle weight is 40 Tons (80,000 pounds). The weigh scale is open weekdays only, Monday to Friday, from 5:45 AM to 5:45 PM. Large vehicles arriving outside of the posted hours will not be accommodated.

**ROAD SYSTEM MAINTENANCE:** The Gasparilla Island Bridge Authority maintains three (3) bridges: the swing bridge and two concrete bridges, plus 2.5 miles of single lane causeway, designated as Charlotte County/State Road 771. As one travels south on GIBA's Causeway toward Boca Grande, Charlotte County maintains the next .8 miles of CR 771. The final leg of CR 771 is another 3 miles located on Gasparilla Island, which is maintained by Lee County. The roadway lies within the GIBA Special District. No taxpayer Federal, State or County taxes are used to pay for the GIBA roads and bridges. Tolls collected are the only source of revenue to maintain GIBA roads and bridges.

**STATE AGENCY – TAX EXEMPT STATUS: Florida Tax Exempt Certificate # 18-00-022368-51C**

**For Further Information Please Contact:**

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