

Charlotte County update for 5/5/21

County Breaks Ground on Aircraft Firefighting Training Facility

By Hector Flores

The Charlotte County Commission commemorated the beginning of construction on the aircraft rescue and firefighter training facility at the Public Safety Complex on Tuesday. The ARFF will provide a training platform for county firefighters to support the Punta Gorda Airport and can be used by agencies from around the country for training.

This project is funded by the 1% local option sales tax approved by voters in 2020. Construction on the \$7.6 million facility is scheduled to be completed this fall. For information on the training facility, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click I Want To, then Project Status Updates.

Facility operations

Charlotte County facilities will resume normal business hours and operations beginning May 10, 2021. Facility hours can be found at www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

The Utilities Department customer support center remains open by appointment-only. To schedule an appointment, call 941-764-4300.

Visitors to county facilities and users of county services are encouraged to continue to practice social distancing, frequent hand-washing, mask wearing and staying home if you are sick. Online services will continue to be offered such as permitting and parking fee payments, as will curbside pick-up at libraries and bill payment drop boxes.

Emergency training

Charlotte County Fire and EMS Public Relations Manager Todd Dunn completed the Federal Emergency Management Agency Advanced Public Information Officer training program at the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Md. in April.

Dunn serves as co-lead PIO in the county's Joint Information Center when the Emergency Operations Center is activated. He joined the county in 2014 as a television production specialist for CC-TV, the county television channel. Dunn moved to the Public Safety Department in 2018. Prior to joining the county, he was an Emmy Award-winning TV video journalist in Nashville, Tenn. and Sarasota.

Congratulations to Todd on his professional achievement and his ongoing work in the JIC to spread reliable information to residents during the pandemic.

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