

## **Public Works Receives National Accreditation**

By Hector Flores

The Charlotte County Public Works Department received notification last week it had earned accreditation by the American Public Works Association.

In a letter announcing the designation, the APWA stated, "Congratulations to you and each member of your agency for the excellent work in completing the self-assessment process. We trust you have found great benefits and that each member of your department will continue to feel a sense of pride at having achieved this distinction."

Public Works Director John Elias said, "This news comes after many years of hard work by the Public Works team. This accreditation affirms that Charlotte County operates at the highest level and benchmarks our practices against organizations throughout the country. I could not be more proud of our Public Works team and the way we deliver exceptional services."

The accreditation process is a rigorous review of an agency's policies and practices with the goal of formalizing and documenting them. As part of the assessment, policies or practices not seen as meeting industry best practices are revised and implemented.

Accreditation brings many benefits to the department and the county beyond the initial achievement. It's a team-building and staff development process that must carry forward to retain accreditation, which requires renewal every four years. It improves internal communication and documentation of duties and responsibilities. It delivers improved operational performance when workflows or processes are brought up to industry standards. It demonstrates that the countywide organization is committed to a culture of continuous improvement.

Charlotte County pursues departmental and individual certifications and accreditations to ensure we are delivering service at the highest level using the most accepted methods and procedures in the relevant fields, whether it is road construction or maintenance, recreational services and programs, emergency medical services, procurement, utilities, accounting and the dozens of other functions we perform.

Congratulations to the entire Public Works team and the colleagues from other departments that supported them in this effort.

### **Johnson scholarship**

Lindsey Johnson, a project manager for Charlotte County Public Works, was awarded the Raymond C. Sittig Scholarship at the Florida City/County Managers Association annual conference.

Johnson recently earned a master's degree in public administration from Florida Gulf Coast University. She joined the county in 2016 as a capital road projects manager.

The scholarship was initiated in 2014 in memory of Raymond C. Sittig, long-time executive director of the Florida League of Cities. Sittig served as the FLC executive director for 25 years before joining the Florida City/County Managers Association as administrator in 1978.

As part of her master's degree work, Johnson conducted a case study on the county administration's crisis management while navigating the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking at her future in public service, Lindsey said, "My long-term goal is to become one of those leaders that genuinely makes the world a better place, one community at a time, while inspiring others."

Congratulations to Lindsey on her accomplishment and recognition.

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