

Charlotte County update for 3/4/20

Reflections on a rewarding career of service

By Ray Sandrock, Charlotte County administrator

I wanted to take this week's article to discuss my tenure with Charlotte County and how lucky I feel to have been part of this great organization. I began my career as a fiscal supervisor in the Public Works Department. It was so great to work in a department where I could understand the day-to-day operations and how the community was impacted by the services provided.

From Public Works, I moved to the budget office and eventually was promoted to budget director. This work was so challenging as we dealt with the aftermath of Hurricane Charley. It was then that I understood the heart of our community. Neighbors helping neighbors, businesses rebuilding, neighboring counties coming in to assist.

Our next challenge was the Great Recession of 2008. Over several years we eliminated 400 positions and cut the budget by more than \$100 million. Level of services were cut to only the necessities. We learned some hard lessons which led to creating a fiscal stabilization reserve as well as being extremely conservative in dealing with future budgets.

In 2010, I was appointed county administrator and have been fortunate to have met and worked with so many fantastic people. As the economy has improved we have been able to rebuild staff morale and to recognize them as our most important asset. We are providing new training programs for them, along with new opportunities to recognize their successes.

Strategic planning is extremely important to our County Commission and our organization is committed to achieving its goals. Every employee understands how their work addresses the board's goals.

Soon after I became county administrator, I promoted Hector Flores to administration as a business analyst. I had worked with Hector in budget for about 10 years and knew of his high-quality work and integrity. Over the past 10 years, Hector has worked hard in administration and been promoted several times, most recently by the Commission as county administrator effective March 6, 2020.

Hector will provide a seamless transition and reinforce the culture that has been created as well as our focus on customer service. Hector has formed an impressive administration team. There are 10 departments that report to administration and they are led by directors who do outstanding work. The future is promising for Charlotte County from a leadership perspective.

I want to thank the board, the community partners and the hundreds of staff I have had the pleasure to know and enjoy their friendships.

Ray Sandrock is the Charlotte County administrator. Readers may reach him at Raymond.Sandrock@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.