

# Charlotte County Weekly Department Highlights

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## Community Services

### Charlotte Sports Park

This is the sixth year that the Charlotte Sports Park will host Spring Training for the Tampa Bay Rays. The report dates for the 2014 Season are as follows: Feb. 14 - pitchers and catchers, Feb. 20 - full squad

Ripken Baseball will be hosting open National Anthem auditions for the 2014 Rays Spring Training and Stone Crabs season on Friday, Feb. 7, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., and again on Saturday, Feb. 8 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

### Harold Avenue Recreation

Dribble that ball down the court and Score – Team- Score! Week 9 of the Winter Youth Basketball League was completed on Sunday. The Warriors, of the 15-17 age brackets, are the only undefeated team in this highly competitive league. With one week remaining in the regular season it is still anybody's game. The Youth Basketball League is open to area youth between the ages of 5 and 17 years old. The league consists of 10 regular season games and a post season tournament. League practice hours are held inside of the Harold Avenue Recreation Center Gymnasium from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights. Games are held on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Sundays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. In other news, Participation continues to increase in the programs offered at Harold Avenue Recreation Center.

### Port Charlotte Beach and Recreation

At PCB here on 1/30/14 we had the Charlotte Promenaders (70) Saturday 2/1/14 we had a Sweet Sixteen Party of 70 and finally Sunday we had a Birthday Party with a total of 50.

Looking ahead we have the Annual Charlotte Harbor Regatta 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th with an expected attendance in the 100's. Thursday night The Promenaders will be here and Friday night the much anticipated Regatta Dinner will be from 6-10:30 p.m. with an expected attendance over 225.

Port Charlotte Beach Pool had 151 paid admissions, was visited by 46 pass holders and had 53 water aerobics participants.

### South County Regional Park

Staff is preparing for the 2nd Annual Pickleball Midnight Marathon on March 1st. Approximately 60 players are expected to register for the event that goes from Noon-Midnight.

For the week of 1-26-14 through 2-1-14 South County Regional Park Pool had 41 paid admissions and was visited by 96 pass holders. The swim team held eight practices, with attendance of approx. 250. On Saturday Feb. 1, the Bluefins held a swim meet; the attendance was approx. 200 swimmers, coaches and spectators.

### Oyster Creek Regional Pool

For the week of 1-29 through 2-4-14, Oyster Creek Regional Park Pool had 108 paid admissions, was visited by 101 pass holders and had 103 water aerobics participants. The Charlotte County Blue Fins held 5 swim practices resulting in approximately 100 splashes". The Lifeguard Instructor course concluded with 5 students successfully completing the course and earning certification.

### Extension Services

- Charlotte County Fair – January 31st to February 9th – 4-H Activities
- Newspaper Article for February 3rd – "Summer squash in the spring"
- Managers Meeting – Mid-County Library – February 3rd – 1 to 3 pm
- Parkside Tree Canopy Restoration Committee - Cultural Center President's Room – 8:30 am – February 4th
- Site Visit - 512 Edmund, Punta Gorda – February 4th – 10:30 am
- Plant Clinic Luncheon – 12 noon to 2 pm – Feb. 5 – Extension Office

- State Fair - Attend the "Fresh from Florida Breakfast" and represent Charlotte County Extension at the opening of the 2014 Florida State Fair on Feb. 6. In honor of the 100th Anniversary of the U.S. Extension Service, Commissioner Putnam is sponsoring a resolution commemorating the anniversary at 9 a.m.
- Landscape Gardening Series – "New Bug in Town" – Dr. Doug Caldwell - 9:30 to 11:30 am – February 7th

**Libraries and Historical Center**

Popular Author Tim Dorsey will be at the Mid-County Regional Library on Tuesday, Feb.18 at 4:00pm. This is a free event as part of a Florida Humanities Grant. Tim Dorsey is a Florida Author whose novels capture the outrageous and funny sides to Florida living. This program is part of a four part series on Florida Literature.

**Facilities Construction & Maintenance**

**Repairs and Maintenance**

Replacement of Septic System at Fire Station #5 on Notre Dame Blvd started on schedule on 01/16/2014. The Fire Station is now operating with the new system in place; additionally the storm water drainage diverter was installed. New sod will be scheduled upon completion of inspections and final grading. The PVC pipes for site drainage and erosion remediation at Medical Examiners facility on Paulson Drive have been installed; back fill and installation of concrete collars for bubbler boxes is being effected with final grade and sod to follow.

**Operations**

Palm Trees were trimmed at the Administration Complex this past week. The service began early morning on Thursday and by the time most of the employees returned to work around 8:00am the contractor had completed the job. They were out of the complex before it became an operational issue or safety hazard.

Carpet replacement at the Justice Center is beginning within the next week . The two story building where the Clerk of Court offices are located will be the first to have the carpets replaced. This project phase, the first of three phases, is scheduled and should be complete within 3 months. It is a large undertaking to accomplish this because removal of the existing carpets under and around the existing furniture and then scraping up the old glue is difficult at best. The process of placing new carpet in its place will be done by jacking up furniture and/or moving the furniture in and out of the affected areas. This all takes place after normal business hours to not disrupt any services performed by the Clerk's office.

**Project Management**

The Board of County Commissioners awarded a contract for 21 major site improvements. The goal when completed is improved handicap accessibility to County facilities and programs. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires local governments to engage in an ongoing program of enhancing accessibility to their citizens. These improvements range from simple paved parking spaces and walkways to ramps.

Mid-County Library gazebo has been dismantled for refurbishing and relocating to the South County Regional Park to serve the needs of a very active radio-controlled boat club.

**Human Services**

Human Services, Transit and Charlotte County- Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) have been working with Tindale –Oliver consulting firm on the 10 Transit Development Plan. Public Workshops have now been scheduled and will be held the week of March 3rd at four locations around Charlotte County to gain public input on suggested Transit options. The public is encouraged to attend one of the workshops:

March 4, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Cultural Center, 2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte

March 4, 4 to 6 p.m. at Mid-County Regional Library Conference Room, 2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd. Port Charlotte

March 5, 4 to 6 p.m. Charlotte County Events & Conference Center, 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda

March 6, 4 to 6 p.m. Englewood Library, 3450 North Access Road, Englewood

Senior Services Division has released its 2013 outcomes report for the Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida (aka Senior Choices of Southwest Florida). Of particular merit was that Charlotte County achieved 100% of its 97% goal to serve adult protective services referrals within 72 hours. These are high risk referrals received from the Department of Elder Affairs' Adult Abuse call registry for seniors threatened with abuse, neglect or exploitation. Way to go case management staff!

## **Public Works**

### **Active Construction Projects** (may affect vehicular/boater/pedestrian traffic patterns)

**Dredging - Northwest Port Charlotte Waterways** – This project will facilitate safe navigation by providing new access channels into the waterway system connecting to the Myakka River navigation channel. This is a new channel, over one mile long, that extends and connects three waterways to the Myakka River channel. This project consists of design, engineering, permitting and construction of the new channel.

The contractor is dredging the Cheshire/Apollo connector channels. Heavy rain conditions over the summer and early winter tides hampered progress. Due to the recent severe cold fronts the contractor has been limited in their ability to dredge. The contractor is preparing to mobilize additional equipment to the project to accelerate completion and requested additional time added to the contract.

**Dredging – Suncoast Waterway** – This project is designed to facilitate safe navigation within the Suncoast Waterway system by removing 18,000 cubic yards of silted material. The contractor completed most of the upland portion of the dredging and continues with the outside and the northeastern portions however early winter tides have hampered progress. As of Jan. 14, 2014 the contractor has approximately 2,000 feet of work remaining in the new access channel. Due to recent severe cold fronts, the contractor was limited in the ability to dredge and requested additional time added to the contract. After a review process was completed, the request for additional time was submitted on their behalf.

**Sidewalks - Rotonda Boulevards East & North** - Three sidewalks are being funded through the Rotonda MSBU. Sidewalks will be installed from Parade Circle to Rotonda Circle on Rotonda Boulevard East, Rotonda Boulevard North and Rotonda Boulevard West.

Work completed on the Rotonda Boulevard North sidewalk includes: over 1,150 linear feet of sidewalk has been poured, five driveways (two of which are brick paver driveways) have been replaced, over 2,000 feet of swale has been graded and over 240 linear feet of storm drain has been installed. Sod work began the last week of January 2014.

*PSA issued 01/08/14, expires May 2014: Sidewalk construction along Rotonda Boulevards North and East, from Rotonda Circle to Parade Circle, began on Monday January 6, 2014 and is expected to continue through May 2014. Traffic patterns will shift due to intermittent lane closures throughout the duration of this project. There will be signs, message boards, and flagmen as needed and citizens are urged to use caution when moving through in this area.*

### **Construction Projects in Design or Negotiation**

**Sidewalks – Burnt Store Lakes** - The South Burnt Store MSBU Committee requested sidewalks within the Burnt Store Lakes subdivision. This project will design and construct approximately 1.5 miles of sidewalks on Vincent Avenue from Boca Vista Road to Burnt Store Road and on Saragossa Lane from Cape Horn Boulevard to Burnt Store Road. A work order was issued to Banks Engineering to complete the design of approximately 1.5 miles of sidewalks in Burnt Store Lakes. The MSBU met with Banks Engineering on Feb. 4, 2014, to kick off the project. 30% plans are expected to be delivered by the beginning of March 2014.

**Sidewalks - South Gulf Cove** – The South Gulf Cove MSBU Committee requested approximately 17 miles of multi-use pathways within the South Gulf Cove subdivision. Phase One includes the design and construction of approximately 2.7 miles of off-street pathways on Ingraham Boulevard from Gasparilla Road to Calumet Boulevard and on Calumet Boulevard from Ingraham Boulevard to St. Paul Drive. A work order has been issued to Johnson Engineering to complete the design of approximately 2.7 miles of multi-use pathways in the South Gulf Cove MSBU. MSBU members met with Johnson Engineering on Jan. 30, 2014, to kick off the project. 30% plans are expected to be delivered by the second week of March 2014.

## **Coastal Projects**

**Alligator Creek Maintenance Dredging c390502** – The MSBU Committee requested that engineering services be sought to engineer, permit, construct and manage the removal of silt to existing permitted conditions and pursue seeking permits to increase the depth of the access/main channel to -6 feet Mean Low Water (MLW). If maintained to existing conditions (-5 feet MLW), the approximate volume of material to be removed is about 3,000 cubic yards.

The Army Corps of Engineer (ACOE) permits expire March 2014; reauthorization of project permits should be complete in February 2014. Plans and specifications are complete pending any revised permit language required by agencies. Coastal Engineering is in the process of completing the engineering and permitting process for this project; permits, plans and specifications are anticipated mid-February 2014. The permit application is under review prior to submission to the permitting agency. Construction is projected to begin in the summer of 2014.

**Alligator Creek -6 Feet Dredging c391302** – The Alligator Creek Waterway MSBU Committee requested that the County design and apply for a permit to dredge the navigable waterways within the Alligator Creek MSBU to a depth of -6 feet MLW. It is anticipated that a significant amount of time may be required to negotiate with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to issue permits for the dredging within the Alligator Creek to more than a depth of -5 feet MLW, which is the depth for the current permit.

Natural resource investigations are complete - no impact to sea grasses, hard bottom or oysters exists. The geotechnical study is complete. Rock was located however no continuous rock is exposed at the surface. No rock shelf exists containing soft corals or other hard bottom habitats. The permit application is being finalized; the permit plans and exhibits are complete pending professional engineer signature and seal. The permit application is expected to be submitted in February 2014. Continued contact with permitting agencies is positive.

**Buena Vista Grassy Point Waterway Maintenance Dredging** - Maintenance dredging provides continued safe navigation for citizens who utilize the waterways. This project provides for engineering, design and permitting to dredge the lateral channels and 500 feet into the interior canals to determine the amount of material needed to be removed to restore safe navigation. A Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) has been submitted to begin the process of obtaining engineering support to accomplish this project. County staff will review and rank the submittals upon receipt.

**Harbor Heights Waterway Maintenance Dredging** - This project consists of maintenance dredging existing man-made canals and access channels to their permitted conditions to restore safe navigation within the waterway system. The Consultant is in the process of gathering survey and permitting data. This phase should be complete in March with submittal to the permitting agencies in late March 2014.

**Manchester Waterway Maintenance Dredging** - Maintenance dredging will be conducted to provide safe navigation for the citizens who utilize the waterways. This project is split between the Ackerman and Manchester Waterways; most of the maintenance dredging will be conducted within the access channel (Ackerman Waterway) with the remainder taking place within the Manchester Waterway.

An FDEP permit has been issued, however the ACOE permit is still pending. The consultant and County staff have both been in contact with ACOE to try to resolve the permitting delays. The National Marine Fisheries Service reviewed the project and it is pending signature; upon receipt of signature, the ACOE will be free to issue their permit. The bid package is prepared to go to the Purchasing Department for review in preparation for bid solicitation.

**South Gulf Cove Turn Basin** – The South Gulf Cove Waterway Committee requests to permit a turn basin outside the lock complex to aid boaters in holding position while the lock is in use. From outside the lock, the only existing location for vessels with any substantial size and draft to hold position is in the channel. Due to the channel width, this poses a potential hazard notably during high winds or seas. The creation of a turn basin will aid boaters by providing sufficient space to hold position until the lock is free of other vessels.

Preliminary plans have been reviewed and commented on. Meetings with the permitting agencies were productive and the permit application is nearing completion. A new location has been reviewed and accepted as the spoil disposal site. This location will substantially reduce the cost of hauling material. The permit application was submitted to the regulatory agencies and is still under review by the ACOE. The FDEP permit has been issued.

**Stump Pass Monitoring & Maintenance Dredging** – This project provides for continued monitoring, as required by permitting, for dredging Stump Pass that re-established the 1980 channel alignment and provided for re-nourishment of critically eroded beaches. Maintenance dredging of Stump Pass and beach re-nourishment will be conducted approximately every three years. An engineered structure will be installed at Stump Pass to improve program performance. In the permitting process, an Adaptive Management Plan Strategy will be employed to provide options for modifications to structure(s) placed with initial construction, or installation of additional structures in the future, in response to beach and inlet management activities and storm erosion impacts.

After reviewing the proposed alternatives, the Florida Park Service prefers a rock terminal groin sited as far south as practicable. Coastal Engineering Consultants completed a project modeling study to determine how far south it can be placed to minimize impacts. The results have been provided to the State agencies responsible for review and comment. The result of this modeling showed that reducing the height of the structure by 1.5 feet did not affect the performance and decreased any negative impacts downstream of the structure. However, the State Park Service did not choose this as their desired configuration. They asked for a design that would increase the amount of sand placement upstream of the structure, but the modeling showed that this would be more costly and could have negative impacts on the down drift beaches and the pass itself. Additional stakeholder meetings may be necessary to further define the project. Permit plans and the project description have been reviewed. The Consultant is in the process of compiling the initial permit submittal.

## **Drainage Projects**

**Charlotte Harbor Watershed Management - Stormwater Structures Phase 2** - This project shall follow Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) guidelines consistent with the District's Watershed Management Program. Three components are proposed: Topographic Information, Watershed Evaluation and a Watershed Management Plan. The Watershed Management Plan developed includes the installation of stormwater structures on Church Street and Bayshore Road (BMP 6) and Harper Avenue (BMP 29) as Phase 1 of this project, which is complete. Phase 2 is located on Central Ave near Oakley Street (BMP25), near Church Street (BMP26) and near Main Street (BMP42).

This project was funded in FY07 & FY08 through a Cooperative Funding Agreement with SWFWMD to develop a Watershed Management Plan for the Charlotte Harbor CRA. SWFWMD provided \$250,000 to complete and manage Phases 1 & 2. Staff is negotiating scope and fee for Phase 2.

**Stormwater Control Structure Replacement - Niagara Waterway at Quasar NIA 5.09** - This project provides for the design, permitting and construction of a stormwater control structure under Quasar Boulevard at the Niagara Waterway. As a result of the Stormwater Master Plan that was completed in 1998, it was determined that many of the existing water control structures were either undersized or had deteriorated since the 1960's when they were originally built. This particular structure will be properly sized and upgraded from two 48" metal pipes with a 44' weir to two 48" concrete pipes with a 20' weir.

The plans and permit application were submitted to SWFWMD on January 15, 2014 for approval. Johnson Engineering is working on the 90% plans and is expected to submit them to the County for review by the end of February 2014. Construction is funded in Fiscal Year 2015.

#### **Maintenance & Operations** (Week of January 27 - 31, 2014)

- Slow week due to rain.
- Roadway shoulder repairs were completed on Harborview Road near Date Street.
- A flail mower was used to cut 123,000 cubic yards of vegetation within the County Rights-of-Way in the Midway Boulevard and Beacon Drive area.
- An outfall crew installed/converted four swaled intersections to pipe, but only paved one due to rain conditions in Northwest Port Charlotte.
- The pipe & catch basin was cleaned out behind field five at the Charlotte Sports Park.
- 20 debris removal work orders were completed using the grapple truck throughout the County.

#### **Other Projects**

**Electric Runs to Rotonda West Bridges** – The Rotonda MSBU Committee requested the installation of an electric power system for five Bridges that cross the Rotonda River. Locations are: Rotonda Boulevard East, Rotonda Boulevard West, Rotonda Boulevard North, Cape Haze Drive and Rebel Court.

Construction bids were opened on December 11, 2013. A recommendation to award this contract to Wright Construction Group was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on January 28, 2014. A pre-construction meeting is being scheduled with the contractor to issue a notice to proceed. Construction is projected to be complete 90 calendar days after commencement.

**Manasota Key Community Plan Design** – The Manasota Key MSTU Committee requested the development of a Community Plan including, but not limited to, sidewalks, bike paths, crosswalks and lighting. The first phase of this project consisted of a conceptual master plan completed by Weiler Engineering in December 2013. Phase 2 is the design of construction ready plans consisting of the top priorities as identified by the MSTU Committee.

The Manasota Key Community Plan was presented to the MSTU Committee on December 11, 2014. The MSTU Committee requested that staff move forward with designing sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping as well as street light replacements on Gulf Boulevard and the redesign of the commercial area to allow for additional parking and stormwater redesign. Additionally, the committee requested some mid-block crossings be installed and that all crosswalks be stamped asphalt. A Request for Proposals for Phase 2 Design is under review in the Purchasing Department and will be out by February 21, 2014.

**Murdock Village** - The Murdock Village Community Redevelopment Area is an 879 acre future redevelopment tract located in mid Charlotte County. Murdock Village is to be redeveloped and revitalized as a community focal point through the implementation of the Murdock Village Community Redevelopment Plan and the creation of the resultant mixed-use community and Town Center, through the establishment of one or more public/private partnerships.

The County is seeking concept plan approval from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) for the Murdock Village Community Redevelopment Plan as it pertains to stormwater management design and environmental concepts. Under the new Statewide Stormwater Environmental Resource Permit Rule 62-330.055 F.A.C., a redevelopment Concept Approval Permit is available for the Murdock Village Community Redevelopment Area that will provide Charlotte County with an assurance that during the duration of the permit (20 years), the stormwater management design and environmental concepts, upon which the Conceptual Approval Permit is based, will meet applicable rule criteria for issuance of permits by SWFWMD for subsequent phases of the project. The Conceptual Approval Permit application was submitted to the District on January 30, 2014 and is currently under review.

**Rotonda West Entry Features** – This project will provide new signs at five (5) locations throughout the community. Signs will include landscaping and lighting. Funding is provided from assessments in the Rotonda West Street and Drainage Unit.

Construction bids were opened on December 11, 2013. A recommendation to award this contract to Keesling Construction, Inc. was approved by the Board of County Commissioners on January 28, 2014. A pre-construction meeting is being scheduled with the contractor to issue a notice to proceed. Construction is projected to be complete 120 calendar days after commencement.

### **Paving Projects**

**2014 County Paving Program** - This program provides for the resurfacing of roads in Greater Port Charlotte and the Road & Bridge Districts. 2014 paving maps area available on the public Web site.

The contract was awarded to Ajax Paving Inc. at the Board of County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday January 14, 2014. The pre-construction meeting was held Thursday, January 23, 2014 in the Purchasing Department conference room and work is scheduled to commence the week of February 17, 2014.

### **Tourism**

The Boston Globe recently published an article about Placida called, "Placida, a slice of old Florida," and included The Fishery Restaurant, Albritton Gallery and the Hatch Gallery. The article is the result of the Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau hosting the writer in December and assisting in her itinerary planning. The paper's weekday circulation is 253,371 with 86,566 digital subscribers:  
<http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/travel/2014/02/01/the-tip-placida-slice-old-florida/8iA1R2FrHJy3XhGswbuDVM/story.html>

The article reinforces what we know about the value in conducting media familiarization trips. We will continue to work with members of the tourism industry to host journalists on individual and group media trips in an effort to gain earned editorial coverage in print, broadcast and electronic formats with the goal of increasing visitors into Charlotte County. Through hosting familiarization trips journalists are acquainted with the area's tourism amenities and often result in thousands of dollars in editorial coverage. These trips provide journalists with an opportunity to share stories about the destination with their readers.