

Charlotte County Weekly Department Highlights

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Administration/PIO

Port Charlotte and the Charlotte Sports Park were voted as "Best Spring Training City" for the USA Today and 10Best lists, with more votes than the other 19 spring training cities selected to run for the award. Find results and more info on the 10Best list online at www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-spring-training-facility.

Community Services

Charlotte Sports Park

The Charlotte Sports Park hosted the following Tampa Bay Rays Spring Training home games (attendance is noted in parenthesis): Thursday, March 20 – Minnesota Twins (4,045); Friday, March 21 – Toronto Blue Jays (4,991); Saturday, March 22 – Baltimore Orioles (5,023).

Harold Avenue Recreation

There is an art form "taking root" at Harold Avenue Recreation Center. The Ichiban Bonsai Kai Club welcomes you to come out and experience the "art of nature" at its very best. The Bonsai Club meets on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in one of the Center's classrooms. No experience is necessary. Come comfortably dressed and prepared to create your very own master piece utilizing specialized pruning, potting, and wiring techniques. In other news, participation in the programs offered at Harold Avenue Recreation Center continues to show an increase in interest.

Port Charlotte Beach and Recreation

Port Charlotte Beach Pool had 371 paid admissions, was visited by 86 pass holders and had 156 water aerobics participants.

The Tropical Sunset Cocktail Party was on Saturday March 22nd at the Port Charlotte Beach Pool. Everyone had a good time enjoying the beautiful evening, food and music. This was the fifth year of the cocktail party and our biggest one yet, a total of 113 tickets were sold. Once again we want to thank Portside Tavern for providing the cash bar.

Sunday 3/23/2014, The San Antonio Catholic Church had a Church Luncheon. There was plenty of good food and fun and laughter, with 180+ to enjoy.

South County Regional Park

For the week of 3-16-14 through 3-22-14 South County Regional Park Pool had 232 paid admissions, 25 water aerobics participants and was visited by 116 pass holders. The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Dive team used the dive well for 7 hours of training on Friday March 21st. The Bluefin's held eight practices with approximately 400 swimmers.

Oyster Creek Regional Pool

For the week of 3-19 through 3-25-14, Oyster Creek Regional Park Pool had 398 paid admissions, was visited by 142 pass holders and had 131 water aerobics participants. The Charlotte County Blue Fins held 5 swim practices resulting in approximately 100 "splashes".

Extension Services

Newspaper Article for March 24 – "Maybe mangos"

County Extension Director Poly Com Meeting – March 24

2014 Master Gardener Training "Woody Ornamentals"- March 25

Master Gardener Radio Show – March 25 – WCCF -1580

Community Roadway Beautification – 41 – Patch Planting Site Visit – March 25
Green Industries Best Management Practices – March 26
Government Academy - Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center – March 26
2014 Master Gardener Training – “Florida-Friendly Landscaping™” – Tom Becker – March 27
2nd Health & Wellness Fair - Sterling House, 550 Rotonda Blvd West – Venomous Creatures Booth – March 27
Extension Staff Meeting – March 27
Florida Master Naturalist Program Training - Uplands - Inverts I & II

Human Services

David Donohew was doing a claim for a WWII veteran and his spouse when he found out that the son was a Vietnam Veteran Prisoner of War. He and his co-pilot were shot down over Vietnam and taken prisoner. The son had never filed a claim through the VA nor enrolled in the VA Health Care System. David set him up to see a Service Officer in Albuquerque, New Mexico upon his return there later this week.

Charlotte County Veteran Services paid a fond farewell to Mel Yoshimura, our PTSD Counselor and partner from the Sarasota Veterans Center on his retirement. A small reception (18 people) with a few members of his PTSD group, County Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch, as well as Veterans Services presented Mel with a keepsake and enjoyed a cake together. Mel has helped many Charlotte County veterans as an intricate part of our team. Mel attended 7 of the 9 Stand-downs, attended many of our events (outreach) and he will be greatly missed.

Public Safety

For the 3rd consecutive year, Animal Control Officer Kurt Truran participated in National Reading Day at East Elementary School in Punta Gorda. He spent the day there speaking to the entire 2nd grade class. The children were educated on dog bite prevention, pet safety, and responsible pet ownership.

Public Works

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

Burnt Store Road Phase III Construction – Construction consists of widening Burnt Store Road, between the Lee County Line and a point north of Zemel Road, from a two-lane undivided rural typical section to a four-lane divided suburban typical section including stormwater management, drainage improvements, street lighting, 6' sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, utility relocations and additions.

The contractor is mobilizing personnel and equipment to the project site. The excavation and removal of 22 gopher tortoises is complete. Surveyors are on-site delineating the project limits, and crews are installing two feet high erosion control barriers along the rights-of-ways. The contractor began clearing for the first stormwater pond. Construction is projected to be complete in Sept. 2015.

PSA issued 3/24/14: Construction has begun on the 4-laning of Burnt Store Road Phase 3 from the Lee County Line to north of Zemel Road. Expect to see construction warning signs going up, survey work, installation of the 2' high erosion control black plastic screens along the right-of-ways, removal of all obstructions within the right-of-way, including trees, shrubs, brush, buildings, landscaping, signs, etc. Soon after the rights-of-ways are cleared, the contractor will start to install all the new utility lines along the east side of the new roadway. During the construction period there will be heavy equipment, construction vehicles, supplies, workers and other construction activities adjacent to the traffic on Burnt Store Road. Some of the activities will require blocking of traffic for short periods of time. Travelers are urged to drive with caution in this area.

Harborview Road Bridge Replacement – This project is to design and construct a replacement Bridge over the DeSoto Canal on Harborview Road approximately 0.35 miles east of Rio de Janeiro Avenue. The new Bridge will be constructed with a precast concrete deck and a temporary bridge with related structures. Construction is projected to be complete in the fall of 2014.

The temporary bridge is in place across the DeSoto Canal and traffic has been routed onto the temporary

bridge. A progress meeting was held Jan. 15, 2014; a representative of the school board attended and was very pleased with the safety of the children traveling to school through this construction zone.

Feb 24 - March 10, 2014: All production piles are installed and the sheet pile installation is underway.

March 24, 2014: All sheet piles are complete and the contractor is forming up the pile cap on the east side.

PSA issued 11/14/13: Construction of a new Bridge on Harborview/Sunnybrook Road, between DeSoto Drive and Discovery Drive, will begin on Nov. 18, 2013. Variable message boards are in place to notify the public that stop signs will be installed on Sunnybrook Road at the intersection of Highlands Road on Nov. 19, 2013. The contractor will begin with the construction of a temporary road and a temporary Bridge to divert traffic for the demolition of the existing Bridge. The school zone is being extended to the east of Highlands Road and the speed limit is being reduced in the construction area to 15 miles per hour for the safety of the traveling public and school children. Please exercise extreme caution while traveling through this area.

U.S. 41 Microtunnels / Weirs – This project involves engineering and permitting for the directional drilling of culverts under U.S. 41 at the Fordham, Elkcam, and Pompano Waterways, replacement of culverts at the North and South U.S. 41 Access Roads, within the Pompano Waterway, replacement of a stand-alone weir across the Elkcam Waterway, north of the U.S. 41 Access Road, and replacement of a stand-alone weir across the Fordham Waterway, north of the U.S. 41 Access Road. The U.S. 41 Access Roads at the Pompano Waterway were closed to traffic the week of Jan. 6, 2014.

Week ending March 22, 2014: The Microtunnel launch pit and receiving pit are now complete. Huxted Tunneling will start the Microtunnel under U.S. 41 this week at the Pompano Waterway. Zep Construction continues with the placement of 60" reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) under the southbound Access Road and is constructing the new weir on the northbound side. Zep Construction will be mobilizing equipment to the Elkcam Waterway to begin the preparation procedures for Huxted Tunneling.

PSA issued 1/23/14: The sidewalk along the U.S. 41 Access Road between Gardner Drive and Conway Boulevard (US 41 Southbound side) is closed to pedestrian traffic in conjunction with the U.S. 41 Stormwater Structures - Microtunneling Project. While the US 41 Access Roads are closed only at the Pompano Waterway, the pedestrian sidewalk must be closed from traffic light to traffic light. Pedestrians should seek alternate routes as "No Trespassing" signs are posted at this location; pedestrians are not allowed to travel through this construction zone.

Construction Projects in Design or Negotiation

C.R. 771 (Gasparilla Road) Widening – The purpose of this project is to widen C.R. 771 (Gasparilla Road) to a four-lane divided roadway, from S.R. 776 to the vicinity of Rotonda Boulevard East. The project will include the installation of sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

Halfacre Construction submitted the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) to Charlotte County staff for review and obtained pricing from additional contractors to modify the GMP. A meeting will be held to discuss and finalize the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) within the next week. The Charlotte County Real Estate Services Department is currently working on Right of Way acquisitions which must be acquired prior to construction for utility relocations. This project is on schedule. Construction is projected to begin in the summer of 2014.

GPC Bridge Rehab – Sheehan Blvd Over Yale Waterway – This project will rehabilitate the existing Bridge on Sheehan Boulevard over the Yale Waterway. The existing Bridge was built in 1968 therefore the Bridge deck and rails are substandard. Sales Tax Funds will supplement MSBU Funds allowing for the inclusion of sidewalks on both sides of the Bridge. The rehabilitation will widen the structure to accommodate sidewalks, replace the bridge deck and install a barrier wall.

100% design plans have been received and are under review. Upon completion of review by County staff, the plans will be submitted to the Purchasing Department in preparation for bid solicitation. The proposed design includes sidewalks on both sides of the Bridge and allows the bridge to be a segment of the horizontal curve, maximizing the bridge deck area. Construction is projected to begin in the summer of 2014.

Parkside - Harbor Boulevard Improvements (U.S. 41 to Olean Boulevard) Phase 2 – The Road Feasibility and Traffic Study (Phase 1) is complete on Harbor Blvd. from U.S. 41 to Olean Blvd. Phase 2 design includes roadway improvements consisting of a four lane divided roadway with a 16' – 20' raised

median that will provide for safer turning movements, 8' – 10' multi use paths on both sides, landscaping, decorative lighting, wayfinding and a gateway feature. Utility improvements are included in this project.

The design team is preparing options including gateway features, lighting, access management, landscaping and amenities to present to the Board of County Commissioners at a workshop on April 15, 2014. Design is projected to be completed in late 2014.

Placida Road - The original scope of this project was to widen Placida Road from a two to a four lane divided roadway from Cape Haze Drive to the Boca Grande Causeway with curb and gutter, sidewalks, and bike facilities. The BCC decided to postpone road widening and redesign the project to incorporate safety improvements. It was also decided to advance the sidewalk/multi-use trail portion of Phase 2 to be worked concurrently with Phase 1.

Phase 1 - Rotonda Blvd. West to Cape Haze Drive – Safety improvements include: a 2.9 mile bicycle-pedestrian path from Rotonda Boulevard West to Cape Haze Drive, intersection improvements at Lemon Bay Golf Course, Bantry Bay, Cape Haze Drive and Panama Drive and resurfacing of Placida Road from Rotonda Boulevard West to the Boca Grande Causeway. Giffels-Webster is working on 60% plans and coordinating with other utilities to identify and resolve conflicts in the corridor.

Tom Adam's Bridge – Phase 2 of the Tom Adams Bridge Rehabilitation will replace the tender house, electrical, and mechanical equipment. The proposed tender house will provide visibility of traffic and pedestrians approaching the structure when the bridge is being opened or closed. Currently, the bridge tender's view is obstructed. Design consultants are preparing construction plans and permit applications.

The 100% design plans have been received and reviewed. The design team is developing responses to review comments; 100% plans are projected to be resubmitted in April 2014. Permit applications were submitted to the permitting agencies and the Project Specifications and Cost Estimates have been received. The County is reviewing whether to replace or repair the approach slabs at the ends of the Bridge; the existing slabs have settled. Design is projected to be complete in spring 2014 with construction starting in summer 2014.

Drainage Projects

Little Farm Road Culverts – The scope of this project is to design, permit and construct culverts to replace the concrete swaled portion near the end of Little Farm Road. The construction plans call for sixteen (16) 6'x3' box culverts to be installed at the slough so traffic can cross without going through the water. This project includes the box culverts, headwalls, approach slabs and guardrail for this portion of the road.

This project was advertised for bid on Dec. 17, 2013 and bid opening was held Jan. 22, 2014; nine bids were received. Open bids are posted on the Purchasing Department's Web site and the lowest responsive bidder is recommended for award. The construction contract was presented to the BCC on Feb. 11, 2014, however The Commissioners wanted more information before voting on the contract. Discussions were held at the Board Workshop on Feb. 18, 2014. It is anticipated that construction will start in April 2014 and will be complete 150 days after commencement.

Stormwater Control Structure Replacement - Dorchester Waterway at Kenilworth DOR 4.89 -

This project provides for the design, permitting, and construction of a stormwater control structure under Kenilworth Boulevard at the Dorchester 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 collapsed in late November 2013. This structure will be upsized from two culverts to two 8'x10' box culverts.

The SWFWMD pre-application meeting was held January 23, 2014. Johnson Engineering completed the survey collection and the structure design. Staff is currently reviewing the 100% design plans. We are still awaiting the ACOE permit; once ACOE permit approval is received, the project will go to the Purchasing Department to start the procurement process.

PSA issued 12/3/13: Please be advised that Kenilworth Boulevard, between Porter Street and Yorkshire Road, is closed due to a roadway collapse. This section of road will remain closed for approximately 12 months or until repairs can be made.

Motorists and pedestrians are encouraged to exercise caution while traveling through this area.

Stormwater Control Structure Replacement - Sunset Waterway at Forrest Nelson Blvd SUN 3.65 – This project provides for the construction of a stormwater control structure under Forrest Nelson Boulevard, between Quesada Avenue and Corktree Circle, at the Sunset 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 replaced with three 8'x10' box culverts to increase flow capacity.

Bid opening was held January 29, 2014 and the construction contract was awarded to Quality Enterprises on Feb. 25, 2014. The pre-construction meeting was held March 12, 2014; construction is scheduled to begin May 19, 2014 and is projected to be complete in late September 2014. This is a 115 day contract.

Forrest Nelson Blvd. between Quesada Avenue and Corktree Circle will be closed during construction. Public service announcements will be published and a signed detour will be in place in advance of the road closure.

Maintenance & Operations (Week Ending March 25, 2014)

Drainage crews completed over 16,000 square feet of line and grade (drainage work) on Swiss Boulevard, Como Street, Caldwell Lane, Dobell Terrace and Tappan Zee Drive.

Drainage crews replaced 2 driveway pipes (40 linear feet) with 14 x 23 reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) on Swiss Boulevard in the Charlotte Ranchettes.

The Shoulder repair crew corrected roadway shoulders along 1.9 miles of O'Hara Drive from Briggs Circle to Midway Boulevard.

Tourism

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau, along with the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, partnered with Lee County's VCB and some of their meetings properties to co-sponsor the Tallahassee Society of Association Executives monthly power luncheon on Wednesday, March 19. This function provided the opportunity to network with and provide information to the more than 120 meeting planners, association representatives, vendors, and other suppliers in attendance. In addition, our group hosted a private lunch the previous day for four meeting planners of the Florida Bar Association, and we also visited the Florida Propane and Gas Association to meet with their meeting planner and follow up on the status of our bid to host their annual conference in 2014 and/or 2015.