

Charlotte County Weekly Department Highlights

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Community Services

Administration

Charlotte County Community Services held three public workshops for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The workshops, led by Weiler Engineering and Tindale Oliver, provided the public with an update on the development of the master plan, as well as solicit input regarding park standards and service levels.

Charlotte Sports Park

The Charlotte Stone Crabs are in the middle of a 7 game home stance. Attendance so far has been: 5/18 – 402; 5/19 – 1332; 5/20 – 230.

The Charlotte Sports Park hosted the Prostyle Baseball Tournament on Saturday, 5/16 and Sunday 5/17 with a weekend attendance of over 600.

Upcoming Events: The Charlotte Stone Crabs are home from 5/18 – 5/24. There will be a Fireworks Night on 5/23. The Charlotte Sports Park will host the Perfect Games Tournament on Saturday, 5/23 and Sunday 5/24.

Harold Avenue Recreation Center

Last week the Harold Avenue Recreation Center Staff was busy preparing for the Basketball Skills Evaluations that were held at the center Thursday through Saturday. Under the leadership of Edwidge Chery, league coordinator of Harold Avenue's Youth Basketball League, 276 of this year's participants were led through 45 minutes of basketball drills. The Youth Basketball League is open to area youth between the ages of 5 and 17 years old. This season's total registration is 356 participants breaking last season's record of 309 participants. The league consists of 10 regular season games followed by a postseason tournament for youth ages 9 and older. Regularly scheduled practices are scheduled to begin May 19 with the Preseason Jamboree being held on Saturday, May 30 beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Port Charlotte Beach Recreation and Pool

The week started off with a bowling league banquet on Monday. There were 54 people that attended. We finished the week with two large weddings. The wedding on Saturday had 140 guests attend. The Wedding on Sunday had 110 guests.

For the week of 5/13 through 5/19 Port Charlotte Beach Pool had 282 paid admissions, was visited by 49 pass holders and had 60 water aerobics participants. In addition, staff conducted 2 private swim lesson series.

South County Regional Park and Pool

For the week of 5/13 through 5/19, South County Pool Regional Park Pool had 199 paid admissions, was visited by 121 pass holders and had 66 water aerobics participants. The Charlotte County Blue Fins held 7 swim practices resulting in approximately 420 "splashes". Learn to Swim Spring session 3 continued with 8 classes and 35 participants.

Extension Services

- Newspaper Article for May 18 – "As orange as orange can get"
- Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance Training – May 18
- MG Training – "Ants" and "Weeds" – May 19
- Spring Lakes Workshop preparation meeting – May 19 – CCU
- Room Prep for County Review – May 20
- County Program Review
- MG Training – "Plant (vegetable) Propagation" – Dr. Monica Ozores-Hampton, SWFREC, Immokalee
- County Program Review – Preliminary Report

- Pick up Booklets - City of Punta Gorda – “Parks That Teach”

Natural Resources and Parks

The Natural Resources Land Management staff was very busy as always. Various activities include the treatment of exotic/invasive flora, trail maintenance and training for certifications as well as other activities.

Summer has jumped past spring and come in early. The temperature is rising and with it comes summer storms. The first of these intense storms have been felt in the recent weeks with heavy downpours, up to 3 inches, and high winds. The local floras are adapted to this subtropical weather and readily recover from these events but storm damage is always a possibility and after high winds trail maintenance is often necessary. This week staff spent a significant amount of time evaluating trail conditions and clearing downed vegetation. In addition to storm damage Matt Bondi discovered some vandalism damage at Tippecanoe I Environmental Park. Some individuals used the trails to operate ATVs and caused substantial damage to the bridges at the property. As a result the county will be spending some time repairing the damage and funds replacing the damaged bridge material. The Sheriff’s department was called and an incident report filed.

In an effort to provide excellent service and stay proficient with the tools at our disposal county staff have taken the opportunity to complete some online review of tutorials for ArcMap. ArcMap is a valuable tool used by Natural Resources staff regularly. Using ArcMap land managers can create maps and aerial pictures that detail the density, location and treatment history of each property and management unit. Land managers also utilize this tool to create maps for mechanical treatment units and priorities as well as maps for fire management. Using ArcMap we can track the presence over time of listed species and easily create maps in coordination with grant reporting/monitoring responsibilities.

Along with these activities the treatment of exotics continues and is ongoing. This week exotic flora was treated on Amberjack, Oyster Creek, Rotunda, Tippecanoe II and Peace River Preserve. Exotics treated include Brazilian pepper and Lygodium. Staff treats these and other exotics regularly and often as part of permit compliance, management responsibilities and preservation of our native flora and fauna. Exotic/invasive flora and fauna are direct threats to our vulnerable native species as they often come to us without the natural controls found in their native habitats. Many of these exotics evolved in a climate very similar to our subtropical climate but many thousands of miles away. In their native ranges these exotics are not impactful and can in some cases be endangered. One such species is the iguana. In central and south America the iguana is often endangered and has been hunted to dangerously low levels as a source of food. Here in SW Florida the iguana has almost no predators and only a very few adventurous people seeing it as a source of food. As a result of few predators the iguana has spread through much of the county. Many don’t see a problem with that but few realize the iguana will readily take gopher tortoise burrows as shelter and are not amenable to sharing shelter as is the gopher tortoise.

Facilities Construction & Maintenance

Repairs and Maintenance

Charlotte County Jail inmates on work release status while being monitored by Facilities staff have been pressure washing and applying sealer paint to the exterior walls at Jail building, which is a substantial savings.

Operations

With the recent storms we identified window and roof leaks at some of our facilities. We are now making repairs before the upcoming storm season. The difficulty can be finding the exact entry point. Water often travels from the entry spot thru walls, ducts, beams, and insulation to another distant point before it is visible or detected. On occasion leaks may not be noticed until a day or two after the storm. Small cracks in roof membrane, caulking, and building envelopes can be good entry points for water to enter. Some leaks only occur during driving rain or from a certain angle. These are just some situations which are often difficult to duplicate and make investigating the leak penetration source a challenge. When we have successfully traced a leak to its point of origin, we begin necessary repair actions to prevent it from happening again. These repairs are

extremely important to the overall condition of the building and may need to be repeated until building is completely sealed.

Project Management

Anger Park Pier, Parking and Drainage: The As-Built drawings have been approved. The park will be opened after the additional rip rap is added and the cut phone cable is repaired.

El Jobean Fishing Pier: Revised draft plans have been completed and have been reviewed

Harbour Heights Drainage, Parking and Court Improvements: The first lift of asphalt for all parking, roads and courts has been completed.

Fire Station #10: the bid package for the fire sprinklers has been completed by purchasing and the project has been advertised for construction bids.

Human Services

Human Services published its first annual 2014 - A Year in Review report. Real People, Real Stories, Real Investment provides information on the services provided by the Department and also provides testimony from real people receiving services and the impact on their lives and the community. The report can be accessed through a link on the Human Services home page.

Public Works

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

Burnt Store Road (Phase III) Widening – Construction consists of widening Burnt Store Road, between the Lee County Line and a point north of Zemel Road, 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. Construction is projected to be complete in September 2015. Construction Contract: Gibbs & Register, Construction Schedule: 03/10/2014 – 09/10/2015

Traffic Advisory: PUNTA GORDA, Fla. (May 13, 2015): Please be advised that through traffic on Burnt Store Road has been shifted to the newly constructed travel lanes from Zemel Road south to the Lee County line. Travelers entering Burnt Store Road from the west side must yield to construction traffic before they reach the new stop signs located at the intersections of the new travel lanes. New pavement stripes and construction barrels are in place to help guide motorist through the construction area. Motorists are urged to observe and obey the posted construction zone speed limits. The Public Works Department reminds motorists to remain alert at all times and to exercise caution when traveling in the vicinity of construction zones.

- The excavation of all ponds is complete. Grading and sodding of swales continues.
- Work is progressing on the box culverts at the Clark Canal. Work is scheduled to begin at the box culvert at the Bear Branch Creek now that traffic has been shifted to the new east side lanes. The west side of the box culverts will be constructed in the upcoming months.
- Installation of drainage pipes and utilities continues. Approximately 97% of the utility pipe and 83% of the drainage pipework has been installed.
- Over 85% of the sidewalk sub grade has been installed on the northbound side. Concrete installation for the sidewalk is 80% complete on the northbound side and 20% complete on the southbound side.
- The contractor completed 75% of the stabilizer/base on the northbound travel lanes and 9% on the southbound travel lanes. The first and second course of asphalt has been paved on the northbound lanes - and another 1,500 feet of asphalt has been paved on the southbound lanes.
- Crews are installing street lighting and IT conduit on the east side of the project. FPL pole relocation and new electrical wire is complete. FPL crews have removed the old poles.
- Traffic has shifted to the east side of new roadway and the speed limit is reduced to 35 miles per hour. The entire project length is a NO PASSING zone; extreme caution should be used when traveling in this area.

Edgewater Drive Widening Phase Two – This project will widen Edgewater Drive, between Harbor Boulevard and Midway Boulevard, to a four-lane arterial roadway designed to better serve the central portion of the County and accommodate anticipated traffic growth. The project will include replacing three bridges (West Spring Lake Waterway, East Spring Lake Waterway, and Sunrise Waterway) and improve five intersections, four of which will be roundabouts. Improvements include a raised median, curb and gutter, sidewalks/bike lanes, and landscaping. This project includes Construction, Engineering and Inspection (CEI) services to ensure compliance with federal rules and requirements. The Board of County Commissioners approved the CEI contract with Southwest Engineering & Design on Nov. 12, 2014. Construction Contract: Owen-Ames-Kimball, Construction schedule: 01/05/2015 – 2/5/2017.

Southwest Engineering & Design launched a website that provides construction updates, roadway information, boater information, and the status of the parks around the construction area. Citizens may sign up to receive future construction updates via email notification at www.GoEP2.com

Lauzon Street is closed from Sheeley Street to Lakeview Avenue for the duration of project.

Edgewater Drive is closed to thru traffic. Local traffic only, including resident access, mail, school buses, resident deliveries and emergency services. Please check detour map for access routes.

West Spring Lake Bridge, East Spring Lake Bridge and Sunrise Waterway Bridge closed to vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

May 20, 2015 - Sheeley Street is closing between Edgewater Drive and Lauzon Avenue Wed., May 20 at 8 a.m. through Saturday, May 23 at 4 p.m. Follow detour signs to Midway Boulevard.

Winchester Boulevard South Extension – This project includes the construction of a new four-lane connector from Placida Road to the Charlotte/Sarasota County line, with a direct connection to I-75 via River Road within Sarasota County. The Florida Department of Transportation approved the final plans for intersection improvements at SR 776/Winchester Boulevard North. Intersection improvements include a right turn lane and traffic signalization improvements; this work has been added to the project. Construction Contract: ZEP Construction, Construction Schedule: 11/25/2013 – Summer 2015

Upon completion, Winchester Boulevard will be a direct connector from Placida Road to I-75 via River Road in Sarasota County. Construction is projected to be complete in late summer of 2015.

The Public Works Department reminds motorists to remain alert at all times and to exercise caution when traveling through construction zones.

- The Contractor finished grading the base material for the new northbound and southbound lanes for the entire length of the project.
- The new sidewalk and curbing on SR 776 is complete.
- ADA mats for the sidewalk is nearing completion.
- Storm drainage and utility installations are 100% complete.
- The installation of street lights and poles is 100% complete.
- The SR 776 intersection gravity wall is complete.
- Weather permitting, the final lift of asphalt is projected to be complete by May 22, 2015.
- Signalization at CR 775 and SR 776 is in the final stages of completion.

Projects in Design or Negotiation

Edgewater Drive Bridge Repair at Elkcam Waterway - This project includes engineering services to inspect and evaluate the current condition of each wall at the Edgewater Drive Bridge (014074) over the Elkcam Waterway near Cousley Drive and determine the most cost effective method of repair. Design Contract: CES/American Engineering, Design/Permitting Schedule: through 8/27/2015, Procurement Process: September 2015, Projected Start of Construction: Late 2015

The design firm submitted a Wall Rehabilitation Report to the County on April 24, 2015; staff is currently reviewing the report.

Sidewalks – Harbour Heights - This project consists of constructing approximately 2.75 miles of 5' wide sidewalks within the Harbour Heights MSBU District. Sidewalks are proposed along the following six (6) roadways: Sunnybrook Road (from triangle at Broadpoint Dr. to Peace River Dr.), Peace River Drive (from Sunnybrook Rd. to San Marino Dr.), San Marino Drive (from Broadpoint Dr. to Peace River Dr.), Broadpoint Drive (from Voyageur Dr. to Washington St.), Sulstone Drive (from Sunnybrook Rd. south to end), Voyageur Drive (from Broadpoint Dr. to end). Design Contract: Charlotte Engineering, Design/Permitting: 6/27/14 – April 2015, Procurement: TBD, Construction: TBD

The 100% design plans were reviewed and returned to the Design Engineer; the bid set of design plans are in progress. Contract documents are assembled and under review.

Utilities are now being added to the contract. Upon receipt of utility plans, this project package will be submitted to the Purchasing Department.

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. Design Contract: Johnson Engineering, Design/Permitting Schedule: 01/06/2014 – 10/01/2014, Procurement Process: Spring 2015, Projected Start of Construction: Fall 2015

Final construction plans and specifications were received on February 3, 2015. The bid package is in the Purchasing Department undergoing specification review.

Coastal Projects

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. Design Contract: Stantec, Design/Permitting Schedule: 12/17/2013 – Spring 2015, Procurement Process: Spring 2015, Projected Construction: Summer 2015 through late 2015

Staff reviewed the bid specifications and the Consultant made final revisions; limited vegetation trimming, for line of sight/navigation, was added to the contract.

This project is tied to the Countywide Dredge Permit and the permit renewal is still pending from Army Corps of Engineers, (ACOE) therefore this project has been delayed.

Staff has been in constant communication with the ACOE and has been advised that this project may fit under the programmatic biological opinion that is being completed by National Marines Fishery Service (NMFS) which may facilitate permitting.

County and ACOE staff answered a Request for Additional Information from the National Marines Fishery Service which indicates that this project is now under active review by NMFS.

Manasota Key North Beach Erosion Study – Public Works Engineering requested Letters of Interest (RLI) from the Library of Engineering Firms to complete a Regional Beach Erosion Study (BES) on the north end of Manasota Key, from R monument 1 to R monument 15, upon the request of citizens affected by critical beach erosion. Upon completion of the study, this information could be used to develop funding strategies and further the project into permitting. Design Contract: Coastal Engineering, Design/Permitting Schedule: Summer 2015 – Late 2015

The erosion study shall include the following:

- a) Beach Profile Surveys
- b) Erosion Analysis
- c) Sand Volume Analysis
- d) Conceptual Restoration Plans
- e) Natural Resource Surveys
- f) Develop Funding Approaches and Strategies to Mitigate Total Cost

- g) Participate in Stakeholder Meetings
- h) Provide Potential Cost Estimates
- i) Provide Permit Feasibility Analysis

Coastal Engineering Consultants of Naples, FL will provide services to complete the erosion study which is scheduled to commence in the summer of 2015.

Staff met with County Legal Services to review options for funding this project through a Municipal Services Benefit Unit.

Manchester Waterway Bathymetric Survey – The Manchester Waterway MSBU Advisory Committee requested that a bathymetric survey be conducted within the canals of the Manchester Waterway MSBU. The results of the bathymetric survey will be used to determine the scope of work needed to dredge the canal system to a depth of -4ft measured at MLW landward of the Bridge and -5ft MLW elsewhere. Design Contract: DMK Associates, Design/Permitting Schedule: May - July 2015

Public Works Engineering staff is working with the Purchasing Department to secure survey services through a work assignment with DMK Associates of Englewood, FL. The bathymetric survey is expected to commence in May 2015.

Stump Pass 10 Year Beach and Inlet Management Plan – 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. Design Contract: Coastal Engineering, Design/Permitting Schedule: 04/16/2012 – July 2015, Procurement Process: Summer 2015, Projected Start of Construction: November 2015

After reviewing the proposed alternatives, the Florida Park Service prefers a rock terminal groin sited as far south as practicable. Coastal Engineering Consultants (CEC) completed a project modeling study to determine how far south it can be placed to minimize impacts. The results were 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.

CEC submitted draft t-groin plans to FDEP in response to a Request for Additional Information (RAI.) The FDEP issued a second RAI to which the CEC and County staff have prepared a response including: minor drawing edits, minor changes to the biological monitoring program, formal public noticing, erosion control line process for sand placement, and terminal groin installation on the Stump Pass Beach State Park.

The ACOE submitted permit documents to the State Historic Preservation Office for review of potential impacts to historical and cultural resources. It is noted that the consulting team included a marine archaeologist who assisted with the design elements to avoid such impacts.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service agency is working on a new Biological Opinion (BO) for this Project. It is noted that the Red Knot was recently listed on the threatened and endangered species list, thus a new BO will have to review the project for migratory birds including Piping Plover and Red Knot as well as sea turtles.

The County is actively working to renew the original project easements, specific to beach front property owners, for temporary construction and related access needs. Further, the County is seeking additional temporary construction easements from beachfront property owners outside of the original project limits from the State Park Beach to the County Park Beach on Manasota Key; approximately 80% of the easements have been obtained.

County Staff and CEC held a telephone application conference with the ACOE; the project may change slightly to allow additional fill to be placed behind the structure to provide for quicker impoundment of the groin. To date, the changes are viewed as favorable by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The 2015 scope of services has been approved to continue the program.

Projected Permitting Schedule:

- May 2014 - June 2015: Permit processing with FDEP & USACE
- June 2015: FDEP permit
- July 2015: USACE Permit

Landscaping Projects

- Basic landscape maintenance was performed at: Manasota Key; South Gulf Cove; Grove City Park; US 17 medians in Cleveland; US 41 Revitalization Phase I; Charlotte Harbor Gateway and Melbourne Street Bridge.
- New palms, ornamental plants, and mulch were installed at the US 41 Revitalization Phase I project.

Maintenance & Operations

A total of 27 new requests were received related to brush, illegal dumping, and drainage.

Drainage line & grade:	5,500 SF in Northwest Port Charlotte 4,899 SF in Grove City 8,500 SF in Greater Port Charlotte
Small pipe install:	112 LF in Punta Gorda Non-Urban 52 LF in Northwest Port Charlotte
Small pipe repair:	2 repairs in Lemon Bay 1 repair in Gulf Cove
Menzie ditch cutting:	38,500 SF in South Charlotte Stormwater 150,000 SF in West Charlotte Stormwater 60,000 SF in Englewood East
Menzie ditch digging:	1,500 SF in South Charlotte Stormwater
Boom mower:	Cut 65,004 CY in Greater Port Charlotte Cut 7,100 CY in Punta Gorda Non-Urban
Culvert cleaning:	Cleaned 11 culverts in Greater Port Charlotte Cleaned 10 culverts in Englewood East
Trash/debris removal:	Removed 3,300 pounds of debris from the Charlotte Harbor Gateway
Shoulder repair:	Maintained 2 miles of shoulder in Road & Bridge West Maintained 0.2 miles of shoulder in Road & Bridge North
Asphalt repair:	Utilized 2.02 tons of material to repair locations throughout the County

Contracted Services

- ROW Mowing for the month of May is 75% complete in South County.
- ROW Mowing is complete in Northwest Port Charlotte; 50% of Greater Port Charlotte is complete.
- Specialty mowing is conducting its 2nd cycle of landscape maintenance and median mowing for May.
- Power shearing/brush cutting continues in Gulf Cove with approximately 50% of the budgeted area cut
- Manasota Key Drainage Flap annual maintenance. This contract was recently awarded to Florida Marine Works of Port Charlotte Florida for the annual cost of \$7,440 per year which will be four cleanings once every three months to insure the proper operation and overall condition of the flaps. The first cleaning of the drainage flaps at all three locations has been completed.

Tourism

The Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau hosted the annual tourism lunch and 2015 Charlotte County Tourism Hall of Fame earlier this month (May 15) to celebrate Charlotte County's tourism industry and ecologinomical values. **Ecologinomical (adj):** *That which protects the ecology in order to preserve the economy.* Capt. Marian Schneider, who operated Grande Tours for more than 25 years, was this year's Hall of Fame inductee. In addition to Capt. Marian, nominees for consideration of the induction were Capt. Ralph Allen, Melissa Baldwin, Kathy Burnam and John Wright. Held at the Englewood Event Center, various nature-based organizations exhibited. Jimmy Dean, Publisher of Harbor Style Magazine, served as the event's emcee and the keynote address was delivered by Sean and Brooks Paxton, internationally recognized as the Shark Brothers. Nominations were accepted and the inductee was selected by a panel of judges composed of representatives from various aspects of the regional tourism industry and each geographic area of Charlotte County. The Charlotte County Tourism Hall of Fame is located in the Charlotte County Administration Building at 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte.

In addition to members of Charlotte County's tourism industry, eight members of the media from outside the area attended the luncheon as part of a familiarization trip in the destination. Journalists were from Florida, Las Vegas, Brazil and Costa Rica including journalists from Azul airline's inflight publication and Sunseeker magazine which is Allegiant Air's inflight publication. During their visit, the Weston's wannaB inn on Manasota Key was their home base and the group experienced several ecotourism activities. These included making nature-themed clay ornaments with Garry and Margaret Albritton in Placida, a wading trip with the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, nighttime standup paddle boarding with Hooked on SUP, boat trip to Don Pedro Island State Park, tour of Stump Pass Beach State Park, visit to Palm Island Resort and guided kayak tour in Stump Pass with SUP Englewood. These familiarization trips guide journalists in developing story to then share with their readers. Editorial content generated from these types of trips assist in promoting Charlotte County as a tourism destination.