

## **Administrator's Update for 1/8/10**

### **By Roger Baltz**

County Department Directors, our Assistant Administrators, and I have begun employee roundtable meetings. These meetings will continue for the next several weeks and are intended to focus on our "open for business" concepts, operational issues, the coming budget cycle, and also provide an additional communication opportunity for County employees to ask questions on topics of concern.

### **Economic Development Efforts**

Our Economic Development Office (EDO) has completed the six-month pilot program "Southwest Florida Jobs Retain, Expand, Create" sponsored by the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board. Components of the program included developing a database of existing targeted businesses, developing collateral that highlighted services and programs for businesses, and meeting one-on-one with businesses. A total of 31 businesses met with our EDO staff and County Commissioner Robert Skidmore. The goal of the program was to introduce area businesses to existing resources and to identify issues and concerns that can be addressed in the future.

### **Solid Waste Goals and Programs**

Our Solid Waste Resources division announced that Charlotte County's recycling rate for 2008 is officially at 36 percent. The 36 percent recycling rate is an increase from the prior year's 29 percent rate. This achievement can be attributed to the continued efforts and support of recycling by Charlotte County's residents and businesses. Charlotte County solid waste disposal tonnages have experienced a decline over the last several years in response to the downturn in the economy. Fortunately, recycling tonnages have not seen the same decline during this period of time. The result is an increase in the recycling percentage based on total solid waste generated in the County.

Members of the Solid Waste Resource staff attended Waste Management's "Waste Watch Program" kick-off meeting. Waste Management drivers have received training on what to look for, how to react, and how to report any incidents. The program helps protect the safety of Charlotte County by having Waste Management drivers alert local emergency services on suspicious activity.

### **MPO**

Our Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board elected a new slate of officers for 2010: Chair – County Commissioner Richard Loftus; Vice Chair – Charlotte County Airport Authority Commissioner Don Lee; Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) Representative – County Commissioner Tricia Duffy; and MPOAC Alternate – City of Punta Gorda Councilmember Larry Friedman. County Commissioner Bob Starr was re-elected as the Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB) Chair.

## **Energy Audit**

Our Facilities staff has begun an energy audit of all county facilities that have a threshold amount of energy use. Of the County's 260-plus structures, there are approximately 70 that will be involved in the initial audit. The audit began with the stadium complex and will work through the remaining facilities in the next few months. We anticipate that a range of reduction options will be identified including operational and behavioral based strategies. This is part of our efforts to attain a 15% reduction in energy usage over the next three years.

## **Public Safety**

Our 2-1-1 Division, in collaboration with the United Way Volunteer Way, invited youths and their families for a tour of the Charlotte County Public Safety building to learn about our Charlotte 2-1-1 program. The participants were shown how to obtain financial assistance in Charlotte County and also discussed which agencies are in need of donations or volunteers. A demonstration was also given on how to access the 2-1-1 website for additional resources and information.

Captain Eastman of our Charlotte County Fire/EMS Training division visited Lemon Bay High School to speak at the Exploration of Human Services class. During this visit Captain Eastman described the responsibilities of a paramedic and explained what kind of training is needed to become a paramedic. This is a timely subject, with many people choosing medical career paths during this changing economy.

## **Giving and Receiving**

Our Human Services department staff delivered 85 bags of food to low income seniors and provided 42 bags of food for needy families to agencies located at the Family Services Center. The food came from generous donations of individuals and community agencies, clubs and organizations.

Our Human Services department's Family Services Center hosted the Miami Dolphins alumni players Tony Drayton and Lamar Thomas, two current cheerleaders and staff last month. The visit was a part of the Miami Dolphins' community outreach into southwest Florida. Twenty-eight children that attend the Boys and Girls Club at the Family Services Center enjoyed the special visit.