

Administrator's Update for 3/17/10

By Roger Baltz

Staff members from our Building Construction Services (BCS) Department, Growth Management, Utilities, and myself attended the monthly meeting of the Building Industry Oversight Committee (BIOC). This Committee meets monthly to provide input and review and discuss issues involving our community related to our BCS operations.

Transportation

Approaches for the new bridge on Aqui Esta Drive are under construction, as is raising the roadway between the bridge and Magdalena Street. The contractor has committed to ensuring the raised roadway and bridge will be completed before the beginning of the 2010 Hurricane Season.

Support for Small Businesses

Recently our Economic Development Office (EDO) met with the Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce and the Englewood-Cape Haze Area Chamber of Commerce to discuss and facilitate improvements on the business retention and expansion program the EDO is developing. Last year, the EDO participated in a pilot business retention program as part of the Southwest Florida region's initiatives to help bring Floridians back to work, and is now forming our own program. If small businesses are looking to train employees or need assistance in the area of permitting, the Charlotte County EDO is available for support.

Information for Roofing Contractors

Our Building Construction Services Department hosted an educational meeting for all contractors doing roofing work. The goal of the event was to inform the public of recent changes to the Florida Building Code and confirm permitting requirements in Charlotte County. The information was presented by our Senior Roofing Inspector to over 30 local roofing contractors.

Public Safety Grant

Our County Fire/EMS Department received notice that the State of Florida, Department of the Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, has awarded our yearly Grant of \$29,635 to be used to enhance our medical services. This can be used for future training equipment and/or new advance equipment on our units.

Ultra-High-Speed Internet

Our Economic Development Office is asking for support to help Charlotte County be part of a test program that offers ultra-high-speed Internet fiber service. Google has

launched a “Fiber for Communities” program in which it will be testing its ultra-high-speed broadband network in a small number of communities in the U.S. This service could deliver Internet speeds more than 100 times faster than typical connections, via 1 gigabit per second fiber-to-the-home connections. To be considered as a test community, residents and businesses need to fill out Google’s online survey. Interest can be expressed by visiting FloridaEDO.com and clicking the link for Google Ultra High Speed Internet to fill out a survey.

Donation

Our Port Charlotte Public Library dedicated a new mural in the youth area of the library on March 12. The mural, by artist Donovan Evans, is a gift from the Friends of the Library.

Great American Cleanup

Keep Charlotte Beautiful (KCB) participated in the Great American Cleanup sponsored by Keep America Beautiful on March 6. This was the tenth year we participated and had one of the largest turnouts ever thanks to the incentive offered by Disney, which offered a free theme park ticket to participants of the Great American Cleanup. More than 700 people participated in the Disney Day cleanup donating more than 3,000 volunteer hours in which and approximately 8,000 pounds of garbage was picked up.

Housing Review

Our Charlotte County Human Services Housing Division recently underwent the annual monitoring review of its State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program. First Housing Corporation, on behalf of Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC), was on site to monitor Charlotte County’s compliance of the SHIP program. The review monitored administrative and management operations, annual reports, financial management, regulatory reduction activities and specific program activities for SHIP expenditures for the funding years 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09. Charlotte County scored a 100% on this review, receiving a total of 360 maximum points.

Bring Your Meeting Home

At the March 9 Board of County Commissioners regular meeting, our Tourism Director Becky Bovell recognized John Wildeman as a Charlotte Harbor Ambassador. Mr. Wildeman was presented with a deed for an acre-foot of Charlotte Harbor for bringing the successful inaugural Harborside Banjo Bash to Charlotte County.