

Administrator's Update for 8/18/10
By Raymond J. Sandrock, Interim County Administrator

At the Board of County Commissioner's regular meeting last week I was appointed as the interim County Administrator. As we move through this period of transition, I have asked County staff to focus on providing superior customer service and identifying efficiencies within our organization. In this intermediary period, we need to not just maintain but increase our momentum to provide public service beyond expectations.

We have received a check for \$21,600 from BP for mitigation advertising expenses. The check was in response to our claim that we submitted to BP for \$56,563 requesting reimbursement of expenses incurred from April through June 2010 due to the Deepwater Horizon Platform Explosion and Oil Spill. The claim was for lost tourism bed tax, tourist mitigation advertising expense to counter bad publicity, and staff time invested in proactive planning, preparation and public information. This check represents the first reimbursement received on account of this claim. The funds have been placed into our Tourism fund.

Our Growth Management Concurrency Manager Jim Fendrick recently hosted a Brown Bag Lunch Discussion regarding the Medical District Revitalization. The meeting was held at the Charlotte County Cultural Center on Aaron Street in Port Charlotte and targeted affected business owners and commercial land owners in the district. County representatives discussed the most recent thinking about the revitalization of the medical district and the surrounding area. Staff presented the current status of the project and solicited ideas to improve the area. There will be a separate meeting in the near future for residents and residential property owners.

The first Sustainability Team Educational Forum was held last week. Julia Galofre from our Building Construction Services department organized the event which was free and open to the public. The subject of this first meeting was "Alternative Travel Options" and how they can help us save money, be healthier and be more sustainable. Lauren Lane, Commuter Services Outreach Coordinator, met with us to customize a transportation solution that will be effective and tailored to Charlotte County's employees and citizen's specific needs.

A two-day telephone sales blitz was held in late July to encourage event and meeting planners to hold meetings in Charlotte Harbor & the Gulf Islands. Sales professionals from the Charlotte Harbor Visitor and Convention Bureau, the SMG-managed Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, local hotels, chambers of commerce, elected officials and a local meeting planner participated. The Visitor and Convention Bureau and Event Center staff have begun following up on the nearly 100 leads generated from more than 240 industry professionals and prospective event planners who were contacted about

holding their meetings and events in Charlotte County. The leads not only serve the Event & Conference Center, but introduced potential new business for area hotels as well. Charlotte County Commissioner Robert Skidmore and City of Punta Gorda Mayor Harvey Goldberg assisted in the effort by calling numerous meeting professionals.

Our Charlotte County Fire/EMS department now offers a Safe Sitter Program. This medically-accurate program teaches 11 to 13 year olds how to be safe, nurturing babysitters. Dr. Patricia Keener, a Pediatrician in Indiana, developed the Safe Sitter Program in 1980. The goal of the Safe Sitter Program is to reduce the number of avoidable and unintentional deaths among children being cared for by babysitters. Students get hands-on practice in basic lifesaving techniques so they are prepared to act in a crisis. They learn basic development as well as the business aspects of babysitting. To enroll or for more details call 941.833.5600.