

Administrator's Update for 9/8/10
By Raymond J. Sandrock, Interim County Administrator

As our fiscal year comes to a close we have two public hearings scheduled this month to finalize the budget: Wednesday, Sept. 15 and then the final budget public hearing on Wednesday Sept. 29. Both meetings will be start at 5:01 p.m. and will be held in the County Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room #119, Port Charlotte. The meetings will also be televised live on CCTV-20 and available through live streaming on our website www.CharlotteCountyFL.com.

Last week a public workshop was held in Englewood to discuss the J.M. Berlin/Rotary Skate Park. Commissioner Skidmore, Assistant County Administrator Kelly Shoemaker and Community Services Director John Jackson attended the workshop. Citizens of all ages attended, including children and young adults who use the park. From the discussion a working group of volunteers was formed, which will gather ideas and work towards solutions to the various issues of the skate park. A follow-up meeting with the public will be scheduled later this year.

Commissioner Robert Skidmore, Commissioner Bob Starr and I attended a public meeting last week at Tringali Recreation Center to meet with the residents of Manasota Key regarding proposed revisions to the Manasota Key zoning overlay. Approximately 150 people attended the presentation where Building and Growth Management staff explained proposed revisions in the 32-page document. The newly appointed advisory committee as well as several residents asked for time to work through some of the outstanding issues, including revising the overlay language to reflect the intent of the Community Plan accepted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2004. The upcoming public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Board and the Board of County Commissioners have been postponed to allow time for the advisory committee to collaborate with Manasota Key residents and staff to further improve the proposed revisions.

Our Building and Growth Management Department has received over 150 registrations for the new Abandoned and Vacant Property registration program. The goal of the program is to ensure that abandoned properties are properly maintained by either the owners or the mortgage holders. Registration is on a 12-month basis and the fee is \$150 per property.

Also new is the Lien Relief Program, started on Sept. 1, 2010. A property owner whose property is encumbered with a Code Enforcement Lien is invited to participate in the program. The program aims to encourage property owners to bring properties into compliance with County codes. More information on the Lien Relief Program and the Abandoned and Vacant Property program can be found

at www.CharlotteCountyFL/BCS.com or by contacting the Building and Growth Management Department at 941.743.1201.

The Economic Development Tax Exemption Referendum was approved by Charlotte County voters at the polls on Tuesday, August 24. This exemption is a welcome tool for our Economic Development Office to use when competing for companies interested in relocation or expansion. The Tax Exemption Ordinance became effective on Aug. 25, 2010, authorizing the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to grant economic development ad valorem tax exemptions to qualifying businesses. To receive an exemption, a company must first meet the threshold criteria listed in the County's Ordinance, and submit an application to be considered by the BCC at a public hearing where public input will be taken. The BCC will determine whether to grant an exemption, as well as the percentage and length of time of the exemption. Each exemption is granted by a separate ordinance.

The Piper Road Project continues with over 1,000 linear feet of sewer force main and associated valves installed. The recently installed box culvert has been connected to storm drain. Roadway lighting conduit installation has begun with over 1,900 linear feet of conduit installed, and 2,000 linear feet of ground was prepped for an 8-foot wide sidewalk.

The Charlotte County 4-H Youth Council hosted the 4-H Achievement Night in late August at the Charlotte County East Port Environmental Campus. Youth Leaders developed and conducted the program which recognized 32 4-H members for their accomplishments throughout the 4-H year that ended August 31. A new year of programs begins Sept. 1. To participate in 4-H and register for one of their programs contact Extension Services at 764.4345.