

Administrator's Update for 7/17/09

By Roger Baltz

Charlotte County has a unique relationship with the Peace River – Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (the Authority). Our County receives well over 90% of our water through the Authority which treats the water after it is pulled from the Peace River. Our County, along with Sarasota County, Manatee County, and DeSoto County are members of the Authority and we abide by a master water supply contract which was negotiated and signed by all the parties. One of the most significant projects which the Authority has been working on for many years has been improvements to the treatment plant and the building of a water reservoir to hold 6 billion gallons of water. Charlotte County will pay roughly 27% of the local member match required for this multi-million dollar project. The project is called the Regional Expansion Project (REP).

The REP, many years in the planning stages, has recently been completed. The new reservoir was substantially complete on June 25 and began water storage shortly thereafter. The water in the reservoir will be stored (up to 6 billion gallons) for periods of peak demand.

Our Mosquito Control Division sprayed its first aerial Adulticide mission on July 1st, using the County helicopter. Mosquito Control identified an opportunity to perform aerial Adulticide spraying in-house using a County owned helicopter which was out-fitted with spray boom and spray nozzles. We anticipate a savings by performing this service with County equipment and County personnel versus using an outside contractor.

Keep Charlotte Beautiful conducted the annual Great American Cleanup. From March through May 2,795 volunteers participated in 8,848 hours of community cleanup. More than 126,743 pounds of litter, debris and horticultural waste was removed.

Mobile concessions are now available at Englewood and Port Charlotte Beaches five days a week. The mobile concessions offer hot dogs, drinks, and other items for the convenience of beach goers from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm at Englewood Beach and 11:00 am to 4:00 pm at Port Charlotte Beach, weather permitting. The concessions are operated by independent contractors for Charlotte County.

The Harold Avenue and South County Summer Safari camps are in full swing. Campers spent two great days at Englewood Beach last Avenue on Thursday with a combined total of 134 children who enjoyed plenty of 4-5 foot waves, sunshine, and hot dogs both days. The campers were monitored by camp, recreation, and aquatic staff creating a safe and well organized program.

Our Real Estate Services staff is moving forward with actions needed for possible consent to be granted to Babcock Ranch to establish FPL electrical

power and access easements over the land occupied by Fire Station no. 9. This fire station is located on land leased to the County by Babcock Ranch. The proposed easements are related to the establishment of the solar power plant and the transmission of power related to the plant.

In our Building and Construction Services Department (BCS) our single family permit numbers have rebounded with 24 new permits issued in June compared to 12 in May. Our number of new single family permits is still very low compared to historical data, but we consider an increase to be positive news.

Our Economic Development Office is receiving employee assistance through the Summer Youth Employment Program sponsored by the Career and Service Centers of Southwest Florida. This program is funded through the Career and Service Center and is at no cost to the County. Two students will be assisting in July and August.

Our County Fire / EMS Public Education Division worked with the Police Athletic League presenting the Tobacco Program in North County and West County. Activities have taken place at Murdock Middle and LA Ainger Middle School. This program demonstrates to teens and pre-teens the dangers of tobacco use.