

Administrator's Update for 6/24/15
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

Last week I attended the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) Annual Conference, held this year in Ponte Vedra Beach. The Charlotte County Commission was well represented at award ceremonies and elections. Commission Chairman Bill Truex was presented with a Presidential Advocacy Award and earned the Advanced County Commissioner (ACC) designation. Commission Vice-Chairman Christopher Constance also earned a Presidential Advocacy Award, Torchbearer status, and was elected to the office of 2nd Vice President of the FAC Executive Committee. Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch achieved Torchbearer status and Commissioner Ken Doherty earned the ACC designation.

The ACC designation is earned by completing an advanced leadership program designed for graduates of the Certified County Commissioners (CCC) program. The ACC program is a series of three seminars that total 27 hours of course work that focuses on leadership in Florida counties. Congratulations to Commissioners Bill Truex and Ken Doherty for completing this program and earning the ACC designation.

Torchbearer status is earned by ACC graduates that continue their professional development through FAC activities. Congratulations to Commissioners Christopher Constance and Stephen R. Deutsch for earning at least 100 points through FAC educational opportunities this past year.

The Presidential Advocacy Awards are given to Florida county commissioners in recognition of exceptional efforts towards advancing the counties' legislative agenda in partnership with FAC. Congratulations to Commissioners Truex and Constance for earning the award this year. Commissioner Truex was recognized for his commitment to advancing public policy during the Legislative Session, protecting county revenues, and his help educating legislators on the impacts the proposed juvenile detention would have on counties. Commissioner Constance was recognized for his work while serving as a Vice-Chair of the Public Safety Policy Committee, on the FAC policy platform on public safety issues leading up to the 2015 Legislative Session, and for providing guidance on policy throughout the session. Congratulations to both commissioners for this major recognition.

Congratulations is also due to Commissioner Constance for being elected Second Vice President of the FAC Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. Commissioner Constance is now on track to becoming the President of this outstanding organization.

Thank you to all of the commissioners for their dedication and hard work associated with these great accomplishments.

Harbor Walk Project Phase 1

The Harbor Walk project is a multi-phase project to provide pedestrian and boater access to Charlotte Harbor on the north end of the US 41 bridge. Partially funded by the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency (CHCRA), Harbor Walk will offer continuous pedestrian access from Chester Roberts Park on the east side of US 41, under the bridge, and over to the west side of US 41. This access will connect to Bayshore Live Oak Park. In addition, the project is intended to improve boater and fishing access to the harbor.

Phase 1 is divided into three parts. Phase 1A is under construction and currently scheduled to be completed in March 2016. This phase includes necessary seawall replacements, restrooms, a small boat launch for non-motorized watercraft, parking, and a pedestrian promenade. The promenade will provide shaded areas for pedestrians, benches, and associated amenities such as lighting and refuse containers. The majority of this construction is on the east side of the northbound bridge.

The design plans for the next phase, 1B, are currently going through review and permitting with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and other agencies. Phase 1B will include the boardwalk connector under the bridges, joining the east side with the sidewalk on the west side of US 41. The low clearance under the bridges requires a boardwalk that extends out into the harbor, which will result in a unique and picturesque pedestrian feature that incorporates Charlotte Harbor into the experience. Phase 1B also includes a fishing pier and a water taxi pier. Construction on this phase is tentatively expected to begin in 2016.

The third part, phase 1C, will be funded by the 2015-2020 local option sales tax and includes an upper deck area added to the pedestrian promenade area, and a canopy feature that provides shade. Design work on this phase is in the early stages and will continue when the design for phase 1B is completed in 2016.

Updates on the progress and more details on this project can be found on the CHCRA pages and Project Status Update pages on our website, www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov.