

Charlotte County update for 3/16/16

Workshops address 20-year infrastructure, maintenance

By Raymond Sandrock, Charlotte County administrator

Commissioners held a pair of workshops this week to review maintenance plans for the county's bridges and canals. The board also discussed sidewalks and the Family Services Center sales tax project at Monday's workshop. During Tuesday's workshop, the board looked at utilities system repair and replacement plans and funding options for transportation capital projects and maintenance.

The county owns and maintains 141 bridges and miles of navigable and non-navigable canals. While none of the bridges have structural deficiencies, periodic maintenance is required to extend their life expectancy. Navigable canal maintenance is largely funded through taxing units that levy assessments on property owners along canals. For non-navigable canals, dredging and vegetation control is needed to prevent blockage of stormwater drainage that could be funded through the neighborhoods' street and drainage taxing units.

Additional sidewalks near schools will be required under a law passed by the Legislature. In the future the board will need to identify nearly \$6 million to pay for the sidewalks, which were not funded by the legislation.

The Family Services Center discussion was a further review of the sales tax project, which identified various alternatives to renovating the Gibraltar Drive facility. Staff will be further exploring the programs at the center and the board will discuss the issue — and other sales tax projects — at its April 12 meeting.

The workshops were part of a continuing review of long-term infrastructure costs. The review fulfills one of the board's strategic goals to develop a 20-year capital schedule and identify funding.

Library meeting

An informational and feedback workshop for the South County Library and Archive is scheduled for 4 p.m., Thursday, at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, Myakka River Meeting Room, 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda.

If you are unable to attend this workshop, the materials presented and an opportunity to provide feedback will be available online at www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov. Click Feedback-South County Library in the Hot Topics list on the left. It will be available after the workshop through 5 p.m., March 24.

McGuire Park

An informational presentation about the McGuire Park master plan and Phase I renovations is scheduled for 5:30 p.m., Thursday in the Centennial Hall of the Cultural Center of Charlotte County at 2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte.

Project designers will share information and planning materials with attendees and answer questions about the park renovations, including design and construction timetables. For information, call 941.743.1392.

East egg hunts

The Easter Bunny will make an appearance at the 4th annual adaptive Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday at Bayshore Live Oak Park on Bayshore Drive in Charlotte Harbor. This hunt is egg hunts for infants, toddlers and children with special needs. There will be arts and crafts, games, storytelling and more. Pre-registration is required. To register, call Danielle at 941.627.1074.

The traditional Easter Egg Hunt for children of all ages is scheduled for 9 a.m. to noon, March 26 at the North Charlotte Regional Park soccer fields on O'Donnell Boulevard in Murdock. Egg hunt start times are based on age groups and begin at 10 a.m. for 0-3-years-olds. Additional age groups will begin every half-hour. For information, call 941.625.7529

Ray Sandroock is the Charlotte County administrator. Readers may reach him at raymond.sandroock@charlottecountyfl.gov.