

Charlotte County update for 4/20/16

Public hearings set for charter review amendments

By Ray Sandrock, Charlotte County Administrator

The Charter Review Commission will hold three public hearings on its recommended revisions to the county charter. The first meeting is scheduled for 5 p.m., April 27 in Room B106 of the Charlotte County Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte. Two additional meetings will be schedule for later this year.

The charter is the governing document for the county, laying out the commission/administrator form of government and rules and procedures under which officials operate. A Charter Review Commission convenes every six years to review the charter and recommend amendments, which must be approved by voters.

The commission has voted to recommend four changes to the charter:

- Reduction of percentage of electors needed to initiate county ordinances.
- Deletion of restriction of reestablishment of MSTU/MSBU advisory boards created by petition of electors.
- Annual report of MSTU/MSBU advisory boards.
- Creating term limits for Charter Review Commission members.

For information about the proposed changes or the Charlotte Review Commission, go to www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/boards-committees/CHRC or call 941-743-4909. Copies of the proposed changes are also available at the security desk at the administration center or at county libraries.

Social media

As part of our ongoing public outreach efforts, a new social media page has been added to the County website, www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov. Click on Social Media at the top of the page or click the social media icons in the left-hand menu and you will see recent posts and feeds from all our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts. Clicking on each post will take you to the platform, where you can sign in to your account or sign up for one. Don't forget to like, follow or subscribe to keep up to date on our latest online outreach.

Ribbon-cutting

A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for 9:30 a.m., April 27 to mark the completion of the expansion and upgrading of the East Port Water Reclamation Facility located at 3100 Loveland Boulevard in Port Charlotte.

This \$12.5 million construction project completes Stage 1 improvements, which include major facilities such as a 2 MGD aerobic digester, supernatant pump station and truck transfer station. The project also involved enhancements to the entire water reclamation facility, including two

electrical buildings, and the rehabilitation, replacement and expansion to the entire water reclamation treatment facility.

Turtle monitoring

Charlotte County hosted the annual Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Sea Turtle Monitors training workshop on April 13. Approximately 250 people attended, including regional county government staff, officials from the FWC and the Department of Environmental Protection and members of sea turtle and shorebird monitoring groups.

Sea turtle nesting season begins, May 1 and runs through Oct. 31. Sea turtle monitors inspect county beaches each day to look for signs of nests and hatches. Sea turtle nests are federally protected under the Endangered Species Act and both state and local laws restrict activity that would impact the nests and hatchlings, including tampering with the nest and the use of lighting near beaches.

For more information about sea turtle season, go to www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/CommunityServices and click Natural Resources.

Tourism marketing

Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau staff met with members of the Cincinnati media to pitch story ideas about Charlotte County as a vacation destination. Allegiant Air offers regular, nonstop service between Punta Gorda Airport and Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport, making it easier and more affordable for visitors to vacation in Southwest Florida. The response was positive and may result in visits by some of these writers so they can provide a first-hand experience to their readers.

Ray Sandrock is the Charlotte County administrator. Readers may reach him at Raymond.Sandrock@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.