

Charlotte County update for 6/8/16

County weathers Tropical Storm Colin impacts

By Raymond Sandrock, Charlotte County Administrator

Charlotte County staff closely monitored Tropical Storm Colin before, during and after it made landfall in the Big Bend area of the state. While the county was not in the storm warning area, heavy rain, strong winds and high surf generated by the storm created potentially dangerous conditions, especially in coastal and flood-prone areas throughout Monday.

Department staff responded to service calls as they came in, primarily issues related to standing water and coastal erosion. Now that the storm has passed, it is important for residents to know that standing water in swales is a common and expected result of many days of heavy rain. Over time the water will percolate into the ground as designed. That said, there is understandable concern about this ponding providing breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Our Mosquito Control staff are continuing to spray insecticide, covering 3,053 acres the last week of May. Staff has also been responding to service requests and setting monitoring traps to guide future treatment decisions.

Tropical Storm Colin served as a strong reminder of the need for everyone to be prepared as we move deeper into hurricane season. That means knowing your home's storm zone, having a disaster plan and staying aware of potential threats. There is a wealth of preparedness information on the Office of Emergency Management website at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/Emergency. Be safe and be prepared.

Sign code

On June 1, 2016, Community Development Department staff held a public roundtable workshop regarding changes to the county's current sign code. The meeting was well attended by citizens, business owners and other professionals. The kickoff meeting will help staff know what stakeholders want and don't want to see. Staff will be preparing a draft document for the next meeting to be held in a few weeks. At least three stakeholder meetings will be scheduled on this subject, to be followed by public hearings prior to a County Commission vote on the new sign code.

To provide your input, take our online sign code survey. Go to www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click on the survey banner at the top of the page. The survey will be open through June 30.

Pioneer Trail

Construction has begun on Phase 3 of the Cape Haze Pioneer Trail project, located along the historic Charlotte Harbor and Northern Railroad easement on the Cape Haze peninsula. This project will include a new south end entrance to the park, a new restroom facility and additional parking. Phase 3 will connect and complete the paved 8.5-mile long trail. This is a beautiful historic trail along a natural wildlife area. This park is dog-friendly and features the McCall Section House and the Placida Bunk House, both of which are more than 100 years old.

Boxing tournament

The Sugar Bert Boxing Title Belt National Qualifier Tournament is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center in Punta Gorda.

This prestigious amateur boxing tournament is expected to bring hundreds of boxers, coaches, family, friends and fans to Charlotte County, filling hotels rooms and restaurants and delivering a sizable economic impact in the region.

Recruiting sporting events is a key element of our tourism development strategy, especially at non-peak times. By partnering with organizations such as Sugar Bert Boxing and the Charlotte Harbor Boxing Club, the tourism bureau maximizes its limited marketing budget and staff while exploiting the many sports venues in our park inventory.

We encourage local boxing fans to support this event. For information and tickets, visit www.SugarBertBoxingPromotions.com/punta-gorda.

Live Oak Point

Commissioners, county staff, contractors, members of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency, community members and I attended a ribbon-cutting June 2 to commemorate the opening of Live Oak Point in Charlotte Harbor. Clear blue skies and a gentle breeze provided perfect accents to this beautiful new waterfront park, the first phase of the Charlotte Harbor Gateway project that will eventually include a harborwalk connecting to Bayshore Live Oak Park.

Live Oak Point was a partnership between the Florida Department of Transportation, the West Coast Inland Navigation District, the Boater Improvement Fund, Charlotte County, and the Charlotte Harbor CRA.

The park features an 8-foot wide concrete sidewalk from the Barron Collier Bridge north to Melbourne Street, a bathroom, benches, a landscaped pedestrian promenade, tree wells with accent lighting, architectural handrails, grassy open space and two shaded seating areas. More than 60 paved parking spaces will provide plenty of parking for bridge walkers and anglers and a small boat launch provides direct water access for kayaker and sailors.

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