

Charlotte County update for 7/20/16

Public input welcome at MSBU public hearings

By Ray Sandrock, Charlotte County Administrator

Charlotte County aims for complete transparency and public involvement in its budget process. I encourage all taxpayers to educate themselves about the county budget and take advantage of numerous opportunities to participate.

Two such opportunities are tonight and Thursday when the County Commission holds public hearings on proposed and existing municipal services benefit units. MSBUs are taxing districts with specific boundaries set so only property owners in those districts pay for the services being provided. MSBUs can be for road maintenance, stormwater drainage, wastewater collection, canal dredging, beautification and other services.

Tonight's MSBU public hearing is set for 5:01 p.m. at the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center at 75 Taylor Road in Punta Gorda. Commissioners will discuss wastewater MSBUs proposed for San Sebastian Harbor in Punta Gorda, El Jobean, the Ackerman-Countryman area of Port Charlotte and sections of U.S. 41.

A second public hearing is scheduled for 5:01 p.m. at the Tringali Recreation Center at 3460 N. Access Road in Englewood. Commissioners will discuss proposed rates for the existing Rotonda Meadows and Villas and South Gulf Cove MSBUs.

Public input is welcome at both public hearings. To see the complete agendas, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click BCC Agendas.

Pokémon Go

The worldwide Pokémon Go craze has hit Charlotte County. Many of our parks and public facilities are prime locations to find Pokéstops, gyms and Pokémon. Our library and parks staff are busy devising new programming around the augmented reality phenomenon.

The smartphone-based scavenger hunt game fits in perfectly with our Community Services department's Get Up, Get out, Get Active theme. It's also a great way to explore the wonderful venues and facilities we offer. Look for Pokémon signs at featured locations and visit the library and parks and recreation Facebook pages for program updates.

If you're playing the game at a county facility, email us a photo and we'll share it on our social media accounts. Send photos to brian.gleason@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

Unfortunately, there have already been some accounts of players venturing into dangerous areas. Please avoid busy roads and construction sites and don't Pokémon and drive.

Certifications

Community Development Director Claire Jubb and Planner Elizabeth Nocheck passed

their American Institute of Certified Planners tests at the American Planning Association's professional institute. AICP certifies professionals in the field of urban planning and trains planners in the areas of ethics, professional development, planning education and the standards of planning practice.

Charlotte County encourages its employees to achieve professional certifications such as these to help fulfill one of its seven long-term strategic focus areas: efficient and effective government.

Awards

The Burnt Store Water Reclamation Facility was presented with the 2015 Florida Water and Pollution Control Operators Association Safety Award for Class C Wastewater Plants. Congratulations to Chief Plant Operator John Thompson and his staff. The recognition is the latest in a series of awards for the Utilities Department, which earned a National Association of Counties Achievement Award in June for its transformation initiative.

One of the greatest strengths of the department is its experienced staff. At the July 12 County Commission meeting, eight Utilities employees were recognized for completing 25 years of service to the county. That kind of institutional knowledge enables them to react quickly to problems, and more importantly, proactively prevent them to provide excellent service to our water, sewer and reclaimed water customers. I'm so proud of the dedication and skill of my colleagues.

The Public Information Office last week was notified of three awards from the National Association of County Information Officers. CC-TV Program Manager Elizabeth Billings won an award of excellence for her News You Can Use video series. CC-TV Production Specialist Todd Dunn won two meritorious awards for his Spotlights video series. One of the videos was on snipe signs, the other on reclaimed water. Congratulations to Todd and Elizabeth.

Viewers can watch those videos and more on demand on the CC-TV website. Visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click CC-TV.

Water survey

The UF/IFAS Extension Charlotte County, Horticulture and Sea Grant programs, are conducting a brief survey to evaluate county residents' water quality concerns; determine types of water quality topics residents may want to learn about and; determine how residents prefer to learn about water quality topics.

The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete and individual responses will remain completely anonymous. Survey results will help us develop educational programs that meet the greatest needs and interests expressed by survey respondents.

To take the survey, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click the Charlotte County Water Quality Survey banner.

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