

Commission to discuss Utilities administration building

By Hector Flores

At its Tuesday meeting, the Charlotte County Commission will be presented with a report on the status of the Utilities Department building at the East Port Environmental Campus on Harborview Road. The building was substantially damaged by Hurricane Ian and suffered additional damage from hurricanes Helene and Milton.

The building sustained damage to its exterior walls and HVAC equipment. Water intrusion damaged most of the interior, including ceilings, walls, flooring and electrical systems. The building's existing elevation is 1.7 feet below the required elevation established after the original building was constructed in 2001.

Facilities Management staff will be requesting direction from the board about how it wants to proceed with the building. The estimated replacement cost is \$17.3 million. The demolition cost is \$260,000. The building was insured and qualifies for FEMA reimbursement funding that is currently under review.

Utilities staff and employees of other departments and agencies that shared office space in the building have been moved to other county facilities. A customer service office is located in Room B109 of the Charlotte County Administration Center at 18500 Murdock Circle in Port Charlotte. The hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sales Tax Update

The commission also will be presented with an update on the status of projects funded by the 2020 local option sales tax.

Phase 2 of the Family Services Center in Port Charlotte was completed and opened in February 2024. A number of projects are currently under construction, including the sheriff's administration center and District 4 office and training center, and the supervisor of elections warehouse (funded by the 2014 sales tax referendum revenues).

Demolition of the Port Charlotte Beach Park recreation center and pool have been completed and design is underway. Also in the design phase are G.C. Herring Park improvements, William R. Gaines Jr. Veterans Memorial Park Phase 2, Fire Station 3, 6 and 17. The next projects to go into the design phase are a replacement of the South County Annex in Punta Gorda and the sheriff's District 2 building. Design for the Public Safety Department's radio management warehouse is still to be determined.

The meeting will be broadcast live on CC-TV (Comcast channel 20-97) and livestreamed on the county's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/charlottecountyflorida. It will also be livestreamed on the county's YouTube page, www.youtube.com/CCTVCharlotteCountyFL.

and the Charlotte County channel on Roku. The agenda, including presentation materials, is available online at www.charlottecountyfl.gov/agendas.

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