



PRESERVING THE PUBLIC TRUST

An Annual Report to the Community

ROGER D. EATON
Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller



FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED
SEPTEMBER 30, 2020
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA
350 E. Marion Ave. Punta Gorda, FL 33950 • 941.505.4716 • CharlotteClerk.com

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MESSAGE FROM ROGER D. EATON, YOUR CLERK AND COUNTY COMPTROLLER



2020 was trying, difficult, and stressful for our entire community, including your Clerk's office. COVID tested our office in ways we could have only imagined. Despite these unprecedented challenges, the Clerk's office staff met them with flying colors by immediately instituting safety precautions and tech-savvy solutions which remain in place to this day. These safety precautions and technology solutions allowed our office to not skip a beat in 2020 despite every challenge thrown at us by COVID.

While COVID dominated 2020, I continued honoring my long-standing promise to constantly innovate your Clerk's office so that it provides better services at less cost to our taxpayers. We focused on bringing self-help and easy to use online legal forms to our citizens. Visitors to our website can now complete and file legal forms for new and existing cases, right from the comfort of their own home.

We started accepting wireless transfers of both deposits and payments for Foreclosure and Tax Deed online auctions. Our technology staff specialists worked with our court partners to implement the E-Notify program, which sends electronic and text notifications court reminders to all parties in a litigated court case. We opened customer satisfaction survey kiosks in 2019, to monitor the level of our service and learn how we could improve. For the year 2020, we achieved an overall satisfaction rate of 98.98%. We also instituted some thoughtful citizen suggestions!

For the fourth straight year your Clerk's office reduced its budget, this year by 4.35%. As a result, your Clerk's office returned \$434,032 in budget funds to the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners, despite staff health care costs rising by 5% and rising Florida Retirement System (FRS) rates. Since I took office in 2017, your Clerk's office has returned over \$1.5 million to the Board of County Commissioners in taxpayer funds. Excellent staff and cutting-edge technology systems bring about efficiency, which in turn saves taxpayer funds.

The Comptroller Division of your Clerk's office manages all investments for Charlotte County funds. Our financial team ensures the safety, liquidity, and profitability of all county investments. This past fiscal year, at its highest point we managed a Charlotte County investment portfolio of \$627 million, which earned \$5.9 million for the year. Since I took office in 2017, over \$29.2 million has been earned on investments controlled by your Clerk's office.

For my fourth consecutive year, your Clerk's office was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment for our Comptroller's office and staff.

Not only does your Clerk's Office serve the citizens of Charlotte County, but we also actively support our local community. Despite COVID, we raised funds and donations for the Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies, the United Way of Charlotte County, the Boys and Girls Club of Charlotte County and created new programs with the Animal Welfare League such as Roger's Rescue and Eaton's Eats, which help adopt animals by waiving adoption costs. Our office and staff also provided holiday season gifts through the Guardian Ad Litem program to over 40 Charlotte County families in need. For more information about our office and to access all of our new features, please visit us at CharlotteClerk.com.

Sincerely,

HONORABLE, ROGER D. EATON
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND COUNTY COMPTROLLER

ABOUT THIS REPORT

“Preserving the Public Trust” is an overview of the finances of Charlotte County’s government which includes the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller, Sheriff, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser and Supervisor of Elections.

ABOUT THE PAFR

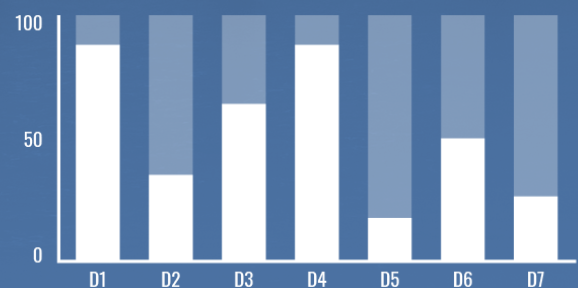
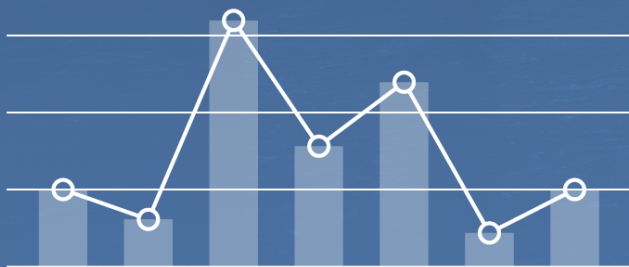
Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court & County Comptroller, Roger D. Eaton, is proud to present the Charlotte County Popular Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2020. The purpose of the PAFR is to provide a user-friendly summary of the financial position of Charlotte County, Florida and other interesting information for citizens who want a better understanding of the County’s finances. The financial information in the PAFR is taken from Charlotte County’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report details the County’s financial position and operating activities each fiscal year presented in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and includes financial statements audited by Cherry Bekaert, LLP, an independent firm of certified public accountants. The auditors’ report concluded that the financial statements

fairly reflect the financial condition of Charlotte County in all material respects.

The numbers in the PAFR come from an audited source but they are presented in a summarized, unaudited non-GAAP format that is more accessible to the public. Citizens who wish to review the audited, full disclosure statements can refer to Charlotte County’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report on Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court & County Comptroller’s website at http://charlotteclerk.com/Reports/ACFR_2020.pdf

ABOUT THE CLERK & COMPTROLLER

The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller’s Office is responsible for safeguarding public records and public funds. The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller is independently elected and accountable to Charlotte County residents. In addition to the roles of Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Auditor for Charlotte County, the Clerk and Comptroller is the Clerk of the Circuit Court, County Recorder, Ex-Officio Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners and Value Adjustment Board.



COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATION & CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS



CLERK AND COMPTROLLER

ROGER D. EATON

- Clerk of the Circuit Court
- County Comptroller
- County Recorder
- Clerk of the County Commissioners



PROPERTY APPRAISER

PAUL L. POLK

- Determine and assess all property value within the county



SHERIFF

BILL PRUMMELL

- To serve and protect our community



SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

PAUL A. STAMOULIS

- Designated to administer elections and voter registration for the county



TAX COLLECTOR

VICKIE L. POTTS

- Responsible for the collection of local and state taxes

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



DISTRICT 1

KEN DOHERTY



DISTRICT 2

**CHRISTOPHER
CONSTANCE**



DISTRICT 3

BILL TRUEX



DISTRICT 4

STEPHEN R. DEUTSCH



DISTRICT 5

JOE TISEO

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION



COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

HECTOR FLORES



DEPUTY COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

EMILY LEWIS



ASSISTANT COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR

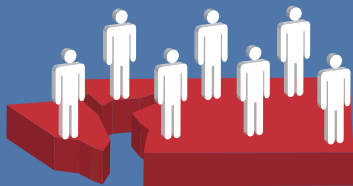
CLAIRE JUBB

HISTORY OF CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Charlotte County was established April 1921, located on the southwestern Florida coast, and was named for the Bay of Charlotte Harbor. Punta Gorda is the only incorporated city in Charlotte County. Charlotte County has a population of approximately 190,000 on 680 square miles of land and over 200 miles of natural shoreline and canals. Charlotte County's largest industries are trade, transportation and utilities, education and health services, leisure and hospitality, government, and construction.

The County is a political subdivision and a charter county of the State of Florida established by and operating pursuant to the Constitution of the State of Florida, Article VIII, Section 1(g). The Florida Constitution provides for "home rule" county charter government when approved by the voters through referendum. Charlotte County voters approved a charter form of county government effective January 1, 1986. The charter was amended in November 1992, November 1998, November 2010, and November 2016. Counties operating under charters have all the powers of local self-government not inconsistent with general law, or with special law approved by vote of the electors. The County, pursuant to its home rule powers, may enact county ordinances not inconsistent with general law.

Legislative control is vested with a five-member Board of County Commissioners, each of whom is elected to a four-year term. The day-to-day operational direction of the County is the responsibility of the appointed County Administrator. The operation of other specific government functions resides with five constitutional officers elected to four-year terms. They are the Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector.



CHARLOTTE COUNTY HAS A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY

190,000



SQUARE MILES OF LAND

680



MILES OF NATURAL SHORELINE AND CANALS

200

2020 COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES



CCSO DISTRICT 3 HQ WITH EVIDENCE

The new District 3 office allows the Sheriff Department to relocate from leased space in the Promenade’s Mall to county-owned property on Loveland Boulevard. Relocating the Evidence and Impound facility to a new centralized location allows the department to be more efficient. It also provides a more suitable space for evidence storage and operations than the current facility. The Sheriff building was constructed at 16,574 square feet and the Evidence facility at 24,565 square feet. The total site is 20 acres with 10.5 acres developed.

CENTENNIAL PARK AQUATIC CENTER

This is a fully designed aquatic center including a 50-meter competition pool with dive well and swim lanes with starting blocks, scoreboard, bleachers, shade structures, additional parking, and a community garden. This facility was planned and constructed adjacent to the Centennial Park Recreation Center project completed last year. The pool house includes restrooms with showers and lockers, pump and control room, office, and storage space.



MANASOTA KEY BEACH RENOURISHMENT PROJECT

The initial project proposes to discharge 1,009,000 cubic yards of beach compatible sand inclusive of the design beach, advance nourishment, equilibrium template, construction tolerance and tapers to restore the critically eroding shoreline of Manasota Key between R175 (Sarasota County) to R15.4 (Charlotte County).

PAVING PROGRAM 2019

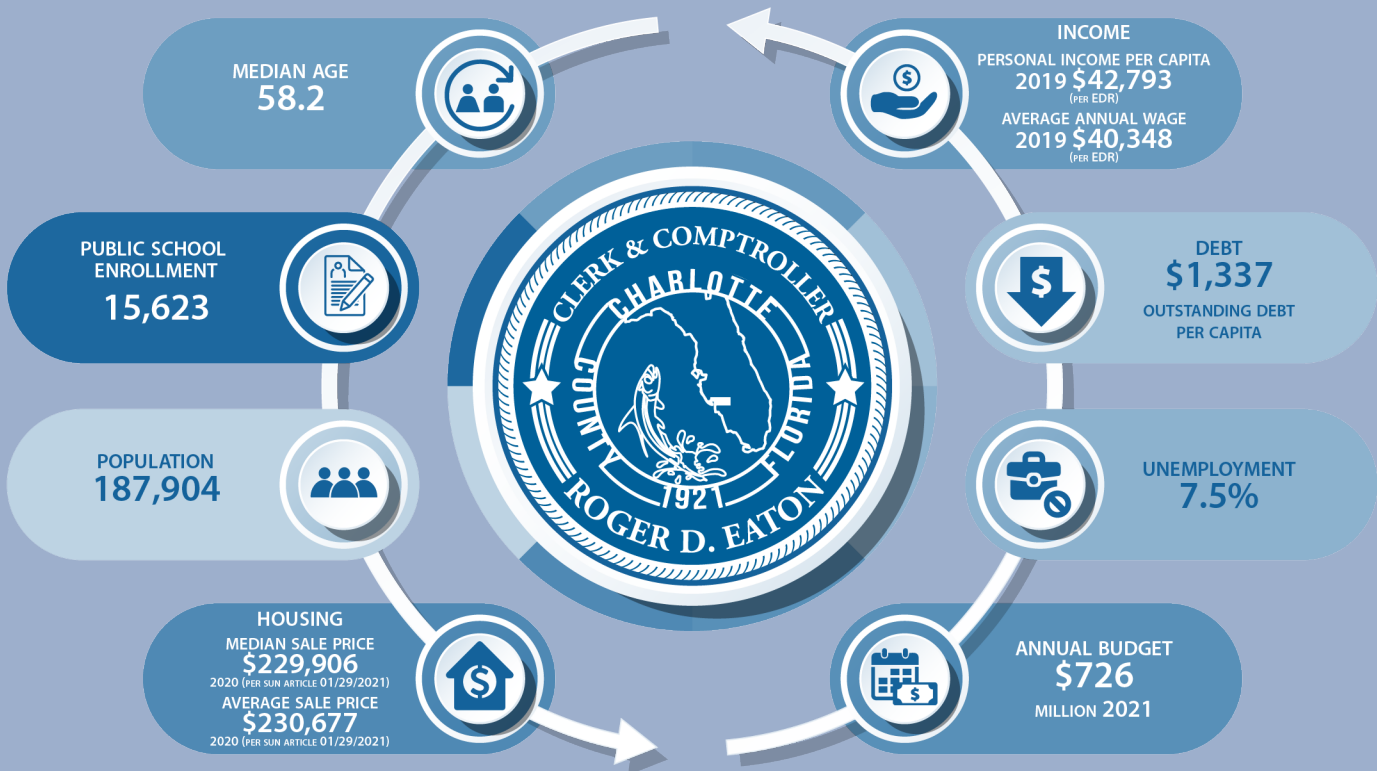
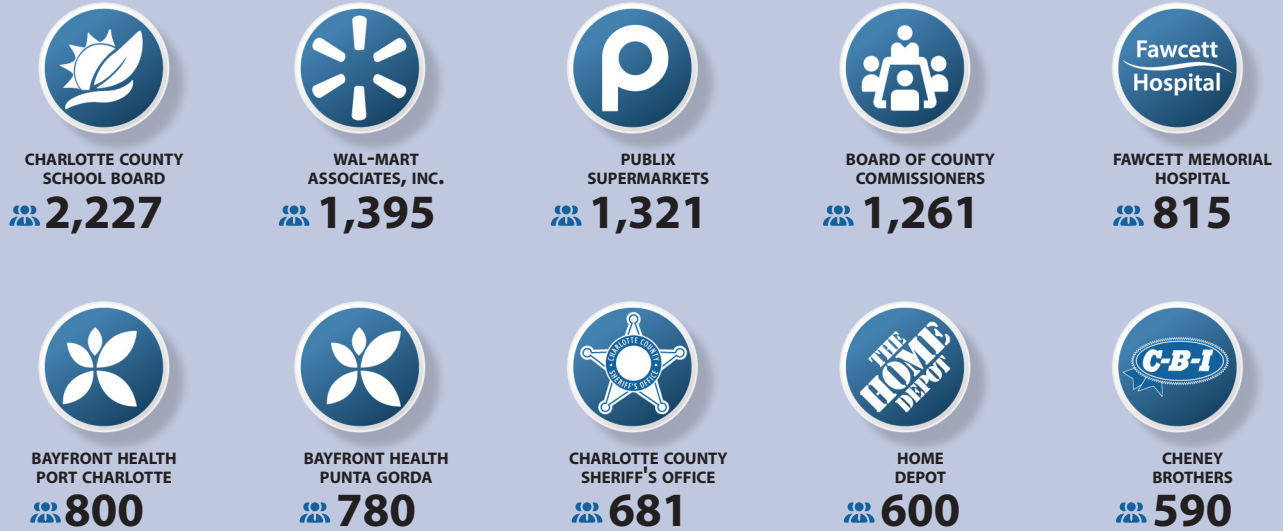
The purpose of this project is to resurface Charlotte County roadways in greater Port Charlotte, including sections of the Harbor Boulevard Areas, Spring Lake Areas, Winter Garden Areas, and 3 Lakes Areas. Paving included sodding, asphalt removal/ milling and pavement marking. This project is considered complete.



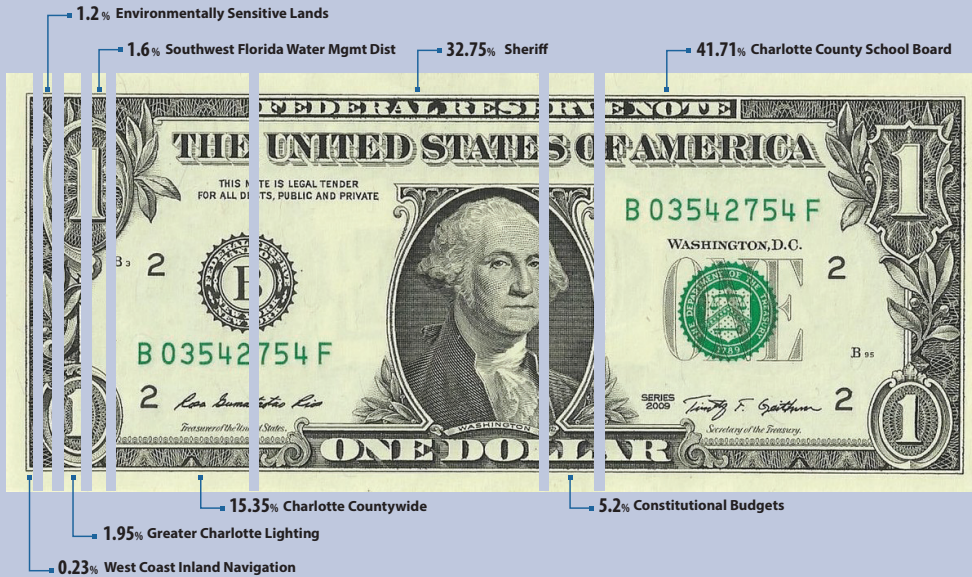
These completed projects represent a cross section of the County’s strategic areas of focus: public services (CCSO District 3 HQ with Evidence), community development (Centennial Park Aquatic Center), and infrastructure (Manasota Key Beach Renourishment Project, and Paving Program 2019). The CCSO District 3 HQ with Evidence also addresses efficient and effective government as it relocates to a centralized location and relocates from leased space to county-owned property.

CHARLOTTE COUNTY STATS

PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS



CHARLOTTE COUNTY POPULATION (FROM EDR)



PRINCIPAL PROPERTY TAX PAYERS (TAXABLE ASSESSED VALUE)



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OVERVIEW

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION

The Statement of Net Position is presented in more detail in Charlotte County's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The summary shown here is a high-level summary that presents total assets and liabilities and compares them to prior years. The comparison may serve as a useful overall indicator of Charlotte County's financial position and trends over the past two years.

The County's activities are presented in two categories: governmental activities and business-type activities.

Governmental activities include most of the County's core services such as administration, building, public safety and public works. Property taxes and state shared revenues finance most of these activities. Business-type activities consist of Water and Sewer utility and Landfill, which is primarily financed through user fees and charges.

The largest portion of Charlotte County's net position is in capital assets such as land, buildings and improvements, equipment, and infrastructure, less any outstanding debt used to acquire the assets.

Charlotte County, Florida
Summary of Net Position
September 30, 2020 and 2019
 (\$000's)

| | Governmental Activities | | Business-Type Activities | | Total | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 |
| Assets | | | | | | |
| Current and Other Assets | 533,174 | 495,511 | 171,869 | 145,104 | 705,043 | 640,615 |
| Capital Assets, Net | 932,949 | 891,118 | 359,984 | 357,207 | 1,292,933 | 1,248,325 |
| Total Assets | 1,466,123 | 1,386,629 | 531,853 | 502,311 | 1,997,976 | 1,888,940 |
| Deferred Outflows | 86,737 | 64,454 | 8,830 | 9,549 | 95,567 | 74,003 |
| Liabilities | | | | | | |
| Current and Other Liabilities | 64,467 | 57,232 | 32,211 | 30,173 | 96,678 | 87,405 |
| Long-term Liabilities | 402,540 | 327,459 | 145,215 | 169,136 | 547,755 | 496,595 |
| Total Liabilities | 467,007 | 384,691 | 177,426 | 199,309 | 644,433 | 584,000 |
| Deferred Inflows | 5,569 | 15,296 | 439 | 1,050 | 6,008 | 16,346 |
| Net Position | 1,080,284 | 1,051,096 | 362,818 | 311,501 | 1,443,102 | 1,362,597 |

There are several transactions that have had an impact on the Statement of Net Position for the year ended September 30, 2020. Most notably, capital assets increased by \$44.6 million which included improvement projects such as North Charlotte Regional Park Recreational Center, Port Charlotte Beach complex, Sheriff's District 3 Evidence and Impound Facility as well as sidewalk, road improvements, sewer projects and wastewater, water and reclaimed water lines. Current and other assets are mainly due to an increase in cash and investments attributable to a conservative spending approach

to replenish a portion of the reserves spent down in prior year. Total liabilities increased by \$60.4 million due largely due to increase in net pension liability of \$55.9 million. In addition, there was an increase in loans payable of \$19 million for beach nourishment project and road widening projects. Along with a bond payable decrease of \$17.1 million due to scheduled payments and successful efforts to refinance outstanding issues to take advantage of lower rates due to market conditions as a response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Statement of Activities

Statement of Activities, often referred to as an income statement, reflects all of the financial activity of Charlotte County during the fiscal year ended September 30, 2020. The statement presents information to show how the County's net position changed during the year as a result of

financial activity. Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as an indicator of whether the County's financial position is improving or deteriorating. The following is a summarized version of the detailed statement of activities found in Charlotte County's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report as compared to 2019.

Charlotte County, Florida
Summary of Net Position
September 30, 2020 and 2019
(\$000's)

| | Governmental Activities | | Business-Type Activities | | Total | |
|---|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 |
| Revenues | | | | | | |
| Program Revenues | 175,898 | 145,505 | 143,339 | 112,839 | 319,237 | 258,344 |
| General Revenues | 251,706 | 242,922 | 7,070 | 6,430 | 258,776 | 249,352 |
| Total Revenues | 427,604 | 388,427 | 150,409 | 119,269 | 578,013 | 507,696 |
| Expenses | | | | | | |
| Program Expenses | 399,092 | 347,093 | 98,408 | 89,142 | 497,500 | 436,235 |
| Change in Net Position before transfers | 28,512 | 41,334 | 52,001 | 30,127 | 80,513 | 71,461 |
| Transfers | 676 | 571 | (676) | (571) | 0 | 0 |
| Changes in Net Position | 29,188 | 41,905 | 51,325 | 29,556 | 80,513 | 71,461 |
| Net Position October 1 | 1,051,096 | 1,009,191 | 311,501 | 281,945 | 1,362,597 | 1,291,136 |
| Net Position | 1,080,284 | 1,051,096 | 362,826 | 311,501 | 1,443,110 | 1,362,597 |

The Statement of Activities shows that Charlotte County's total net position has improved over the beginning net position by \$80.5 million. \$29.2 million of the increase is in governmental activities. Ad valorem property taxes increased \$10.4 million as a result of Charlotte County experiencing a \$1.2 billion increase in property values with holding millage rates flat as compared to the prior year. Charges for services decreased this year by \$2.6 million, the majority of which were in the areas of transportation and culture and recreation due to effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Grants and Contributions were \$33.0 million higher than 2019. CARES funding accounted for \$15.3 million of the increased along with \$11.5 million for the beach nourishment project. Business-type activities

realized an increase in net position of \$51.3 million due in large part to revenues increasing \$30.5 million over FY 2019, which consists of charges for services in the sanitation district and water and sewer charges.

Expenses increased \$61.3 million or 12% at the entity wide level. \$52 million of the increase is related to governmental activities. Governmental activities include costs of general government, public safety, physical and economic environments, transportation, human services and culture and recreation. Business type expenses increased \$9.27 million. Project close out for East West Spring Lake sewer project was \$2.8 million, \$1 million increase for depreciation in addition to \$.6 million increase in payments to Peace River Water Authority.

GENERAL FUND

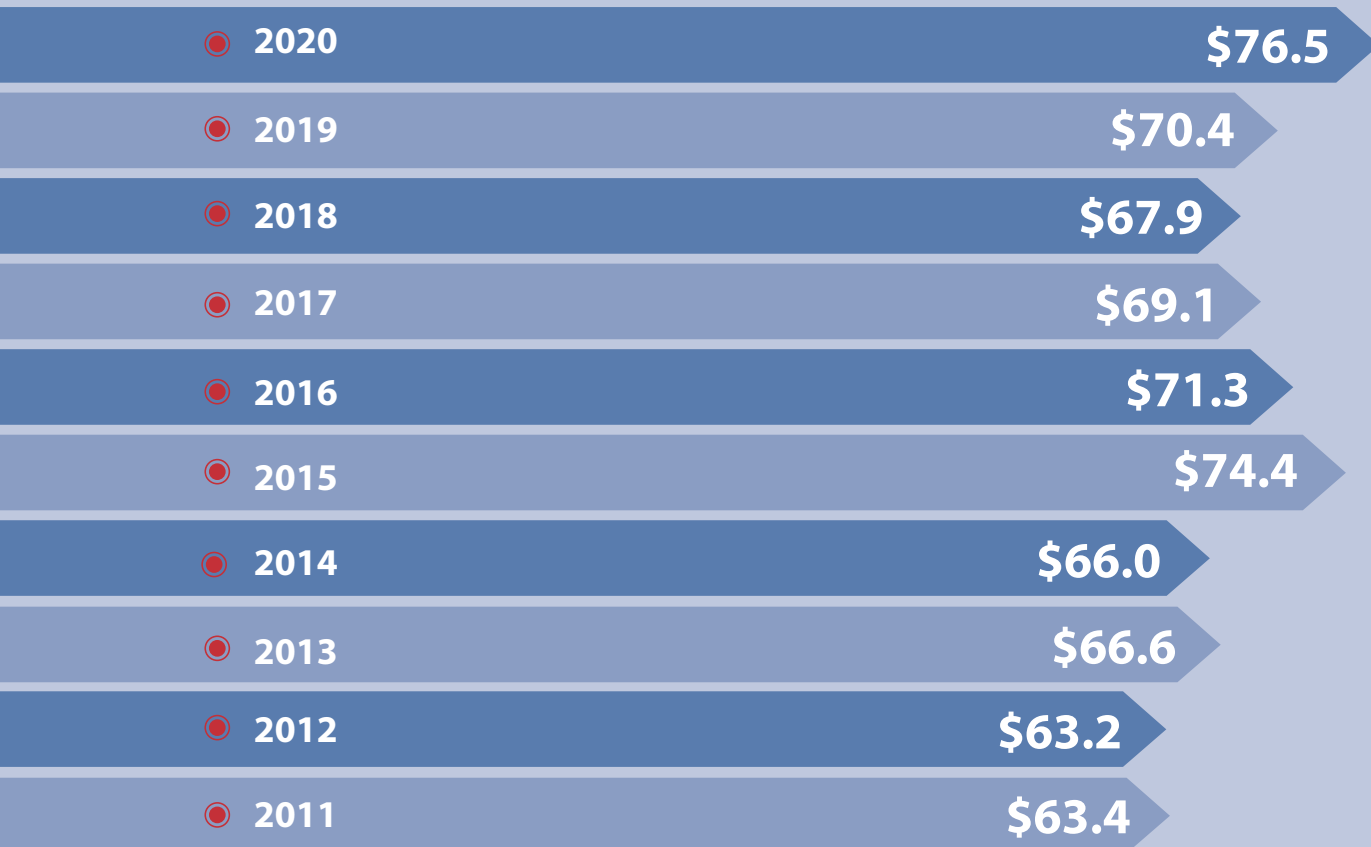
The General Fund is the operating funds for the principal governmental activities of County. The ending fund balance as of September 30, 2020 was \$76.5 million.

The fund balance classifications used are:

- Nonspendable – funds that cannot be spent, such as prepaid items, inventory and advances to other funds.
- Restricted – Resources that are used based on constraints from other parties, such as grantors, creditors, contributors or laws and regulations.
- Assigned – amounts the County intends to use for a specific purpose.
- Unassigned – amounts that have not been assigned or restricted.

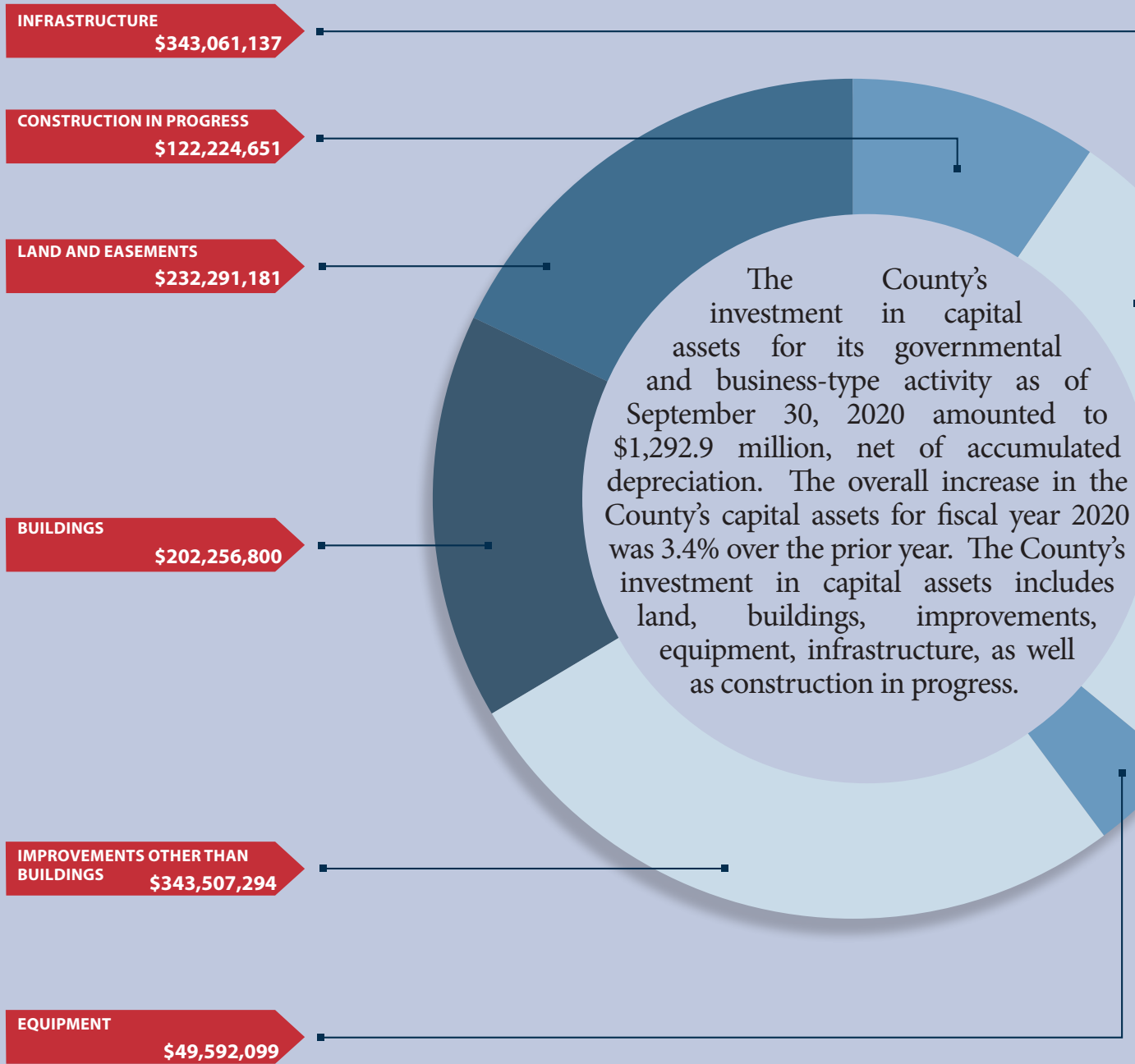
FUND BALANCES REPORTED

| | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Nonspendable | \$768,828 | \$715,162 | \$645,541 |
| Restricted | 3,453,327 | 2,579,870 | 1,699,024 |
| Assigned | 7,198,523 | 7,129,322 | 5,220,528 |
| Unassigned | 65,119,573 | 59,968,635 | 60,315,926 |
| Total | \$76,540,251 | \$70,392,989 | \$67,881,019 |

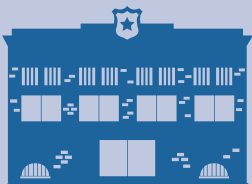


In millions as of September 30th of each year

CAPITAL ASSETS



The overall increase in net capital assets from 2019 to 2020 was \$44.6 million. A few of the major projects that can be attributed to this increase include the following:



New Sheriff District 3 Headquarters facility with evidence building and impound yard.



North Charlotte Regional Park Recreational Center with multi-purpose gymnasium, fitness center, multi-purpose classrooms and administrative offices.

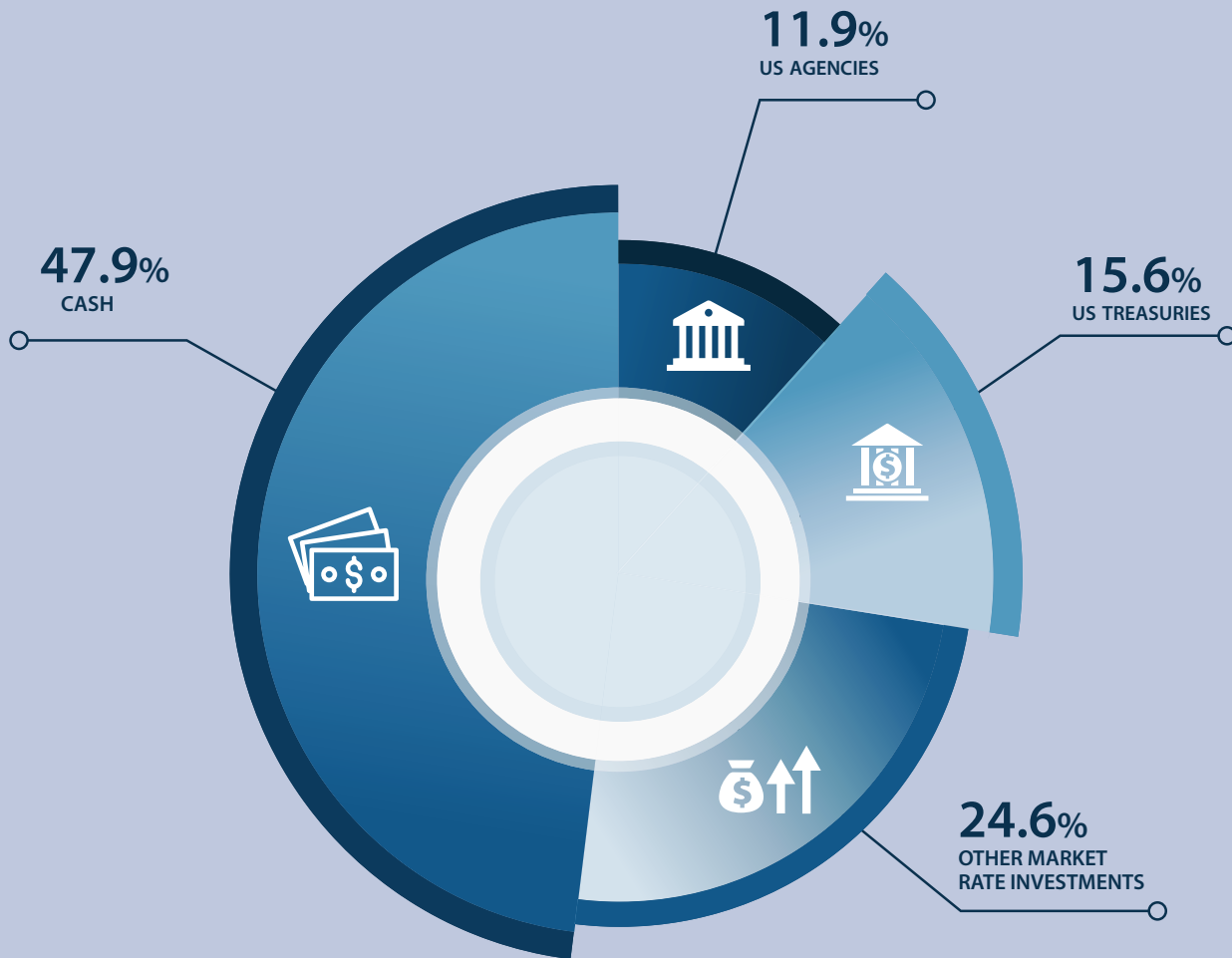


Sidewalk improvements on Lakeview Blvd, including a pedestrian bridge as well as on the west side of Belmont Road.

CASH AND INVESTMENTS

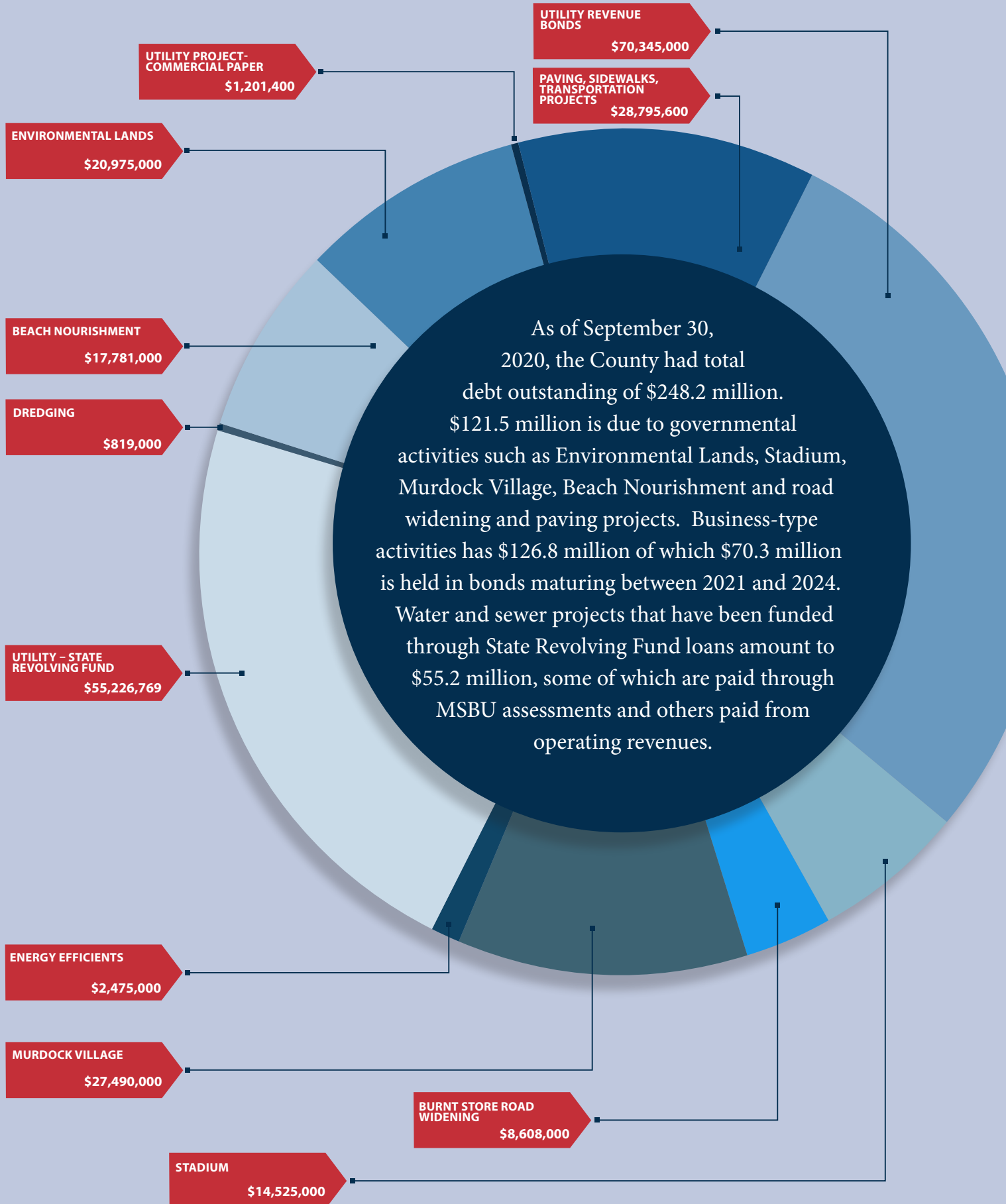
The Clerk of the Circuit Court and County Comptroller manages the County’s investment portion with the primary objective of safeguarding principal, ensuring liquidity and maximizing investment earnings within guidelines of the County’s adopted investment policy. The adopted investment policies were developed in accordance with Florida Statute, s218.415.

Cash and investments totaled \$629.2 million as of September 30, 2020. Cash includes bank deposits, money market accounts and highly liquid investments with maturities of less than 90 days when purchased. Investments consist of U.S. Treasury Notes, U.S. Government Agency Securities. Other investments consist local government investments pools such as Florida Trust Day to Day, Florida FIT, Florida FIT 1-3 fund and Florida Prime.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| US Agencies | 11.9% |
| US Treasuries | 15.6% |
| Other Market Rate Investments | 24.6% |
| Cash | 47.9% |

CHARLOTTE COUNTY DEBT



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



The Charlotte County Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office prides itself in actively supporting important community causes.

In 2020, Clerk Eaton and his staff helped the Animal Welfare League by waiving adoption fees for pets and



IT'S EATON'S EATS ALL MONTH LONG!



Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County



providing free food to pet owners who lost jobs due to COVID-19.

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SUBSCRIBE Charlotte County Clerk of Court Roger D. Eaton



FOLLOW @CharCoClerk



FOLLOW Charlotte County Clerk of Court Roger D. Eaton

Each year, for the past six years, in recognition of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Roger D. Eaton and his staff have promoted DV awareness to the community by conducting fundraiser events and raising money for the local Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies Shelter.

In October 2020, we raised \$1,436 and were able to donate monies raised to the shelter to help those who are affected by domestic violence.



Staff wearing purple for DV awareness month

HEART WALK



Annual Charlotte
County Heart

Walk

The Clerk's Office participates in the Annual Charlotte County Heart Walk to support the mission of the American Heart Association by raising funds to fight heart disease in our community

PINK OUT DAY



The Virginia B. Andes
Volunteer Community Clinic

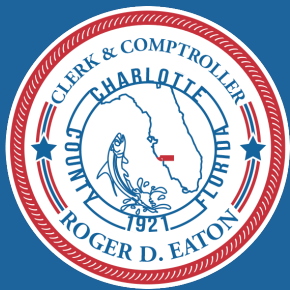


The Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic offers early detection breast screening for uninsured and under-insured adults in Charlotte County. The Clerk's Office had a Pink Out Day in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness; raising and donating \$844.00 to the program

Interested in Learning More?

Thank you for reading the 2020 Popular Annual Financial Report. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the foundation of this document, can be found on the Clerk's website. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report is a more detailed analysis of the County's fiscal year and offers an in-depth account of the overall financial status of Charlotte County.

http://charlotteclerk.com/Reports/ACFR_2020.pdf



OFFICE LOCATIONS

Charlotte County Justice Center

350 E. Marion Avenue
Punta Gorda, Florida 33950

Charlotte County Murdock Administration Center

18500 Murdock Circle
Port Charlotte, Florida 33948

OFFICE HOURS

Office Hours
Monday - Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm


CharlotteClerk.com

