



Deltona, DeBary, Enterprise and Osteen



Working for you

Patricia Northey
Volusia County Council District 5
COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE
MAY 2013

State of the County address

Annually, as required by the County Charter, a report on the State of the County is given. This year it was my honor to help deliver it, along with colleagues Cusack, Wagner and Chair Davis. The focus of the remarks was about the county's challenges and accomplishments in 2012 and goals for the coming year.

Some Highlights from the speech include:

'A reduction of our operating budget by almost \$8 million, making it six years in a row that County government has significantly downsized without abrupt service cuts and employee layoffs. Our workforce is leaner by approximately 260 positions, even though we added 250 new employees when we absorbed EVAC ambulance and consolidated dispatch. We have a Triple A bond rating and reserves available in the event of an emergency.

A significant achievement last year – not just for County government but for the entire community - was the consolidation of emergency communication services. All law enforcement, fire and emergency medical calls in Volusia County are now dispatched from one location managed by the Sheriff's Office. This allows us to respond faster to emergencies and save the cities and their residents more than six million dollars every year.



Volusia County has one of the largest populations of veterans in Florida and the number of clients served by our Veterans Office continues to grow, last year by an average of 100 people a month. Our top notch staff fought for and received an additional \$15 million in retroactive compensation for our veterans and their families. That's \$4 million more than the previous year. We are proud to have so many veterans living in our community. We appreciate their service to our country, and honor their sacrifice.

We made a number of changes on the beach last year aimed at making it safer and improving customer service. An information campaign was launched that encourages parking on the beach instead of driving; New rules prohibit beach drivers from texting and require them to keep their side window down and headlights turned on; One-way traffic zones aimed at curbing cruising have been created in key areas. Parking is now prohibited in front of the most popular beachfront parks; Beach employees use smaller, more approachable vehicles with security enhancements.

The County developed its first app for smart phones. The Beach Navigator gives real time information about rip currents and ocean temperatures and guides beachgoers to bathrooms and parking locations. The Beach Navigator is free and you can download it from our website.

Last year the first six miles of the East Central Florida Rail Trail linking Thornby Park with Green Springs Park in Southwest Volusia was completed and opened. This is the beginning of what will eventually become one of the longest rail-trails in the state, covering 50 miles between Enterprise to Edgewater, in addition to a 10-mile leg through Brevard County.

Volusia County continues to expand "green" practices within our operations and the community. Through the Green Volusia Program, we completed a \$2.4 million federal grant that covered the cost of installing energy and water efficient retrofits at County facilities. These improvements will save hundreds of thousands of dollars in utility costs and an estimated one million gallons of water a year. We've also "greened" County vehicles and equipment. Our fleet now includes almost 400 hybrid and flex-fuel cars and trucks, plus propane-powered forklifts and mowers. Votran.

Our bus system, has gone green, with nine hybrid diesel buses making the rounds. Last year was the fifth consecutive year that Votran ridership has grown, with almost 3.6 million boardings.

The first phase of SunRail, 31 miles from DeBary to Orlando is expected to open next year. We anticipate it will be the catalyst for the creation of thousands of jobs as shops and businesses develop around the rail stations and platforms. This is a tremendous financial commitment for the County, with an estimated total cost through 2030 of \$1.3 billion. Federal and state governments will pay most of this, but Volusia County's portion – 25 percent split among the five Central Florida partners – will still amount to a significant chunk of change, some \$26 million for phases 1 and 2, which will take SunRail through DeBary to DeLand.

The recession has made one thing clear: County government cannot do what it's always done and expect to deliver both tax relief and expanded quality services. We must find different ways of doing business. We have to look to each other – the county, cities and Volusia residents, to find ways to create effective yet affordable government.

With four new Council members taking office, this year marks a new chapter in County government. The seven of us have different backgrounds and life experiences, but we have at least one thing in common: we all want to protect and improve our quality of life and keep Volusia County moving forward.’ (From prepared remarks given May 2, 2013)

If you are interested in listening to the full remarks, you can go to our County web site: www.volusia.org and find the link on the home page.



The ECHO program provides funds for the acquisition or construction of environmental, cultural, historic, and outdoor recreation facilities for the public.

Approved by the voters in 2000, ECHO has been wildly successful. Not only has ECHO improved the quality of life for our residents, it has positively impacted redevelopment of our cities and county and helped to spur economic development. ECHO has supported a wide variety of worthy projects located in every corner of our county across each element of the program.

Through this fiscal 2013 year, the ECHO program has generated over \$66 million in revenue. And we expect through the end of the program we will collect another \$40 million to be used to enhance the quality of life in our beautiful county.

ECHO policy is set by the County Council and administer by the County Parks Department, with a lot of help from our ECHO advisory Board. Board members tirelessly give their time to review and rank the applications before the Council approves them for funding. These board members are your insurance that requests for grants in aid funding are indeed worthy programs and that your tax dollars will be well utilized. It is an important job and the board members have served with distinction.

The continued success of ECHO is only as good as its future. And this is where we need your help. We invite you to participate in a series of listening sessions across the county that will focus on where we go from here. Council members will help host five community listening sessions (one in each district) to give residents an opportunity to comment about the program's future.

It is important for council members who will be attending these sessions to hear from you. Come out to one of the listening sessions and share with us what you like about ECHO and if you have any concerns, we want to hear those too.

Sessions are scheduled from 5 to 8 p.m. on these dates:

- Tuesday, May 14, at the Museum of Florida Art, 600 N. Woodland Blvd., DeLand
- Tuesday, May 21, at the Museum of Arts & Sciences, 352 S. Nova Road, Daytona Beach
- Thursday, May 23, at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, 1414 Art Center Ave., New Smyrna Beach
- Wednesday, May 29, at The Casements, 25 Riverside Drive, Ormond Beach
- Tuesday, June 4, at Lyonia Environmental Center, 2150 Eustace Ave., Deltona

For more information, please contact ECHO Coordinator Bobbie King at bgking@volusia.org or 386-736-5953



FIND ME ON FACEBOOK.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Patricia-Northey-Volusia-County-Council-Member-District-5/183463818343054>

I am regularly posting content on County Council issues to this page. Like the page to get the most recent Council News.

AND ON TWITTER: @PNORTHEY

You can find many of our County services on Facebook and twitter as well. You can also sign up for email notifications from the manager's office, parks, rec and culture, emergency management and other important county services. WWW.Volusia.org

IN THE NEWS!

CONGRATULATIONS GOES OUT TO OUR THE WEST VOLUSIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARD WINNERS!



Jim Armstrong, Fred & Suze Peace and Sandy Walters

Jim Armstrong - Vann Rhodes Volunteer of the Year

This award is given for volunteer service in the community

Fred and Suze Peace - Historic Educators of the Year Award

This is the first annual award, to recognize those who have worked to promote historic education in our community.

***Sandra Walters - Historian of the Year Award**

This award is given to a person who has worked to preserve & promote our rich local history. Sandy has been the driving force behind the preservation of Thornby in Deltona/Enterprise. She has written a book on how the community took on the government and saved this beautiful piece of property for the public trust. A documentary is being filmed on the preservation project and will be on PBS this fall. I was honored to be interviewed for the film.

Meeting and Greeting in APRIL

Met with Halifax Area Advertising Director, **Jeff Hentz**; Follow-up transportation meeting for SW Volusia dual enrolled students; Represented the Council to the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor Meeting; Attended ECHO workshop; Met with City of Deltona Economic



Development Director, **Jerry Mayes** and **Lee Lopez**, City Media to discuss nature based tourism; Toured Farnton and the Deep Creek Basin; Attended the Central Florida MPO Alliance meeting on regional transportation issues; Participated in the Volusia Flagler Boys & Girls Club opening at Spring Hill; participated in WSSB radio call in program; Welcomed the Deltona Relay for Life participants for the annual event; attended ground breaking of



the Cici & Hayatt Brown Museum of Art in Daytona; Met with Deltona Mayor **Masiarczyk** and School Board Chair, **Diane Smith** to continue



discussions on school based transportation needs; talked CRA's w/ **Edgewater City Council Member Gene Emter** and City manager **Tracy Barlow**; Celebrated the success of our community volunteers at the **Johanna Knox Award Dinner**; participated in **WNDB Marc**



Felicia Benzo (R) Volunteer of the Year (Johanna Knox Award)

Bernier's, VolusiaNaires program; helped to cut the ribbon on Deltona's new Audubon park; Coffee with West Volusia Hospital Commissioner **Andy Ferria**; met with the West Volusia Mayors to discuss issues of mutual concern; Ate some good 'cue at the Enterprise Preservation Barbecue; participated in the Florida Hospital Fish Mission Review; Spoke at the Memorial for Tara Jacobs Brown scholarship award program; helped to cut the ribbon at Esther Street



Park grand opening in NSB on the Ocean.



PLACES TO GO AND THINGS TO DO!

We are blessed to live here in Volusia County. The weather is perfect this time of year. Now is the time to get out and explore our county. There is so much to do right here at home. Begin by going on line and check out our county web site. www.volusia.org. You can use the drop down menu to explore our beaches, our trails, parks, libraries and historical places.

Please note: This is a monthly newsletter, written and edited by yours truly, updating you on what is happening in District 5 and in the County. This is a public record and is intended for broad distribution. It may be shared. Please feel free to email me on any issue that you have a concern. My email address for official county business is pnorthey@volusia.org. My cell phone is 386-717-0505 Or you can reach my assistant at the numbers O) 386-943-7026; F) 386-943-7028: Photo credits: photos provided by Pat Northey; Sandy Walters; NSB; Eli Schaperow;