



Charlotte County Government

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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 5, 2026
To: Honorable Board of County Commissioners
From: Hector Flores, County Administrator
Subject: Organizational Structure Changes

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline and provide justification for several recommended organizational changes intended to strengthen leadership and departmental structures to better align with the County's operational priorities and organizational culture, and also positions the County to more effectively meet both current and future service demands.

The changes will be included as an item for your confirmation on our January 13, 2026 BCC Regular Meeting agenda, with an effective date of January 14, 2026.

Appointment of Public Safety Director / Fire Chief

I intend to appoint Matthew McElroy as Public Safety Director and Fire Chief, removing the interim designation. Since assuming the interim role, Chief McElroy has demonstrated consistent leadership, operational stability, and strategic vision across Fire & EMS and Public Safety functions. Formalizing this appointment will provide continuity of leadership, reinforce accountability, and support long-term planning within one of the County's most critical service areas.

Establishment of Emergency Management as an Independent Department

I recommend establishing Emergency Management as an independent department, and I intend to appoint Patrick Fuller as Emergency Management Director. Emergency Management has grown in scope and complexity, particularly in light of increased storm activity, disaster recovery demands, and intergovernmental coordination requirements. Elevating Emergency Management

ADMINISTRATION

18500 Murdock Circle | Port Charlotte, FL 33948
Phone: 941.743.1944 | Fax: 941.743.1554

will enhance organizational focus, improve preparedness and response capabilities, and ensure dedicated leadership attention to mitigation, response, recovery, and resilience efforts.

Realignment of the Transit Division

To better align services with the populations served, I recommend moving the Transit Division to the Human Services Department from Budget & Administrative Services. Transit services are closely tied to human service delivery, particularly for transportation disadvantaged residents who rely on coordinated access to healthcare, employment, and essential services. This realignment will improve program integration, enhance service coordination, and support a more client-centered approach to transportation services.

Renaming of the Human Resources Department

Finally, I recommend officially renaming the Human Resources Department as the People Operations Department. This change more accurately reflects the County's organizational culture and modern approach to workforce management, emphasizing employee engagement, development, performance, and organizational effectiveness. The new title better aligns with the County's commitment to valuing employees as its most important asset and fostering a people-centered workplace.

Pursuant to the Charlotte County Charter, Section 2.3 Executive Branch B (1) – County Department Heads: The county department heads, with the exception of the county attorney and the director of economic development, shall be appointed by the county administrator, with the advice and consent of the board of county commissioners, and shall be responsible to the county administrator.

Administrative Code sections 2.01 Charlotte County BCC Organizational Chart and 4.00 County Administration will be updated accordingly to reflect the changes.

I respectfully request the Board's confirmation and support of these recommendations.

Please feel free to contact me should you require additional information or discussion on any of these items.

C: Emily Lewis, Deputy County Administrator
Claire Jubb, Assistant County Administrator
Janette Knowlton, County Attorney
Thomas David, Deputy County Attorney

Matthew S McElroy

Deputy Chief

(941) 661-3657

matthew.mcelroy@charlottecountyfl.gov

Objective:

Provide strategic leadership and operational oversight to ensure effective emergency response and firefighter safety. Support incident command, policy implementation, and departmental readiness. Lead personnel development, training programs, and succession planning. Strengthen administrative functions including staffing, budgeting, and compliance. Promote community risk reduction, interagency coordination, and public safety.

Experience:

Deputy Chief 2024 to Present

Battalion Chief with Marine Operations 2019 - 2024

Lieutenant with Marine Operations 2017 – 2019

Line Lieutenant 2015 – 2017

Lieutenant with Special Operations 2013 - 2015

Education:

Bachelors of Applied Science in Public Safety Administration

St. Petersburg College 2017

Associates Degree in Emergency Medical Services

Daytona Beach Community College 2001

Associates Degree in Associates of Arts

South Florida Community College 1989

Skills:

Assisted and Developed Policies and Procedure for the department.

Experienced front-line officer supervising seven stations in charge of daily operations and staffing. Florida Certified Fire Instructor for fifteen years. Specializing in the Marine Operations division with Charlotte County Fire and EMS, developing training and certifying members within this division.

Work History:

Charlotte County Fire and EMS

2002 to Present

Charlotte County School Board

2015 to Present

City of Port Orange

1997 to 2002

United States Navy

1995 to 1991



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January 5, 2026

Mr. Matthew McElroy
26571 Airport Rd.
Punta Gorda, FL 33982

Mr. McElroy,

It is my distinct pleasure to extend to you a conditional offer of employment as our Public Safety Director/Fire Chief with a start date of January 14, 2026.

This also confirms our agreement of a starting annual salary of \$182,187.20. Your employment rights and benefits, as well as your general responsibilities as an employee, are contained in the Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual of the Board of County Commissioners. The following benefits are specific to your employment:

1. Based on your status as an Exempt employee under the Fair Labor Standards Act, you will accrue Paid Time Off in the amount of 260 hours per employment year, earned at the rate of 10.0 hours per bi-weekly pay period. In addition, you will be entitled to three Personal Days per fiscal year.
2. Residency Requirements: Charlotte County requires Senior Management to reside in Charlotte County.

Your employment is contingent upon the approval of your appointment by the Board of County Commissioners. We are excited by the talents and abilities you will bring to this new position with Charlotte County and look forward to the start of what we believe will be a mutually beneficial and lasting employment relationship.

Please indicate your acceptance of the conditional offer contained herein by signing and dating this document and sending back to me. Please retain this letter for your records.

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If there is anything that I can personally do to assist in your transition, please don't hesitate to call me at (941) 764-4970.

Sincerely,

Hector Flores
County Administrator

cc: file HR

I accept the terms and conditions of this employment offer:

Matthew McElroy

Matthew McElroy (Jan 6, 2026 13:21:38 EST)

Name

Date

ADMINISTRATION

18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 538 | Port Charlotte, FL 33948-1068
Phone: 941.743.1944 | Fax: 941.743.1554

Patrick G. Fuller

159 Sapodilla St, Punta Gorda, FL 33980 | (850) 559-1361 | patrick.fuller.em@gmail.com

Education

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE | APRIL 2009 | FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

- Major: Interdisciplinary Social Science

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS | AUGUST 2006 | TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Major: General Studies

TRAINING | 2008 TO PRESENT | EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE/FDEM

- Focus: Successfully completed over 600 hours of training in the field of Emergency Management focusing on all four phases (Preparedness, Response, Recovery and Mitigation) offered through the FEMA Emergency Management Institute, National Domestic Preparedness Consortium, NOAA, and various institutions of higher learning.
- Completion of the National Association of Counties (NACo) High Performance Leadership Program
- Graduate of the Lee County Public Safety Leadership Academy
- Graduate of the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association Basic (2010) and Intermediate Academies (2011)

Work Experience

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR | CHARLOTTE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT | 5/2019 TO PRESENT

- Coordinates community response to disasters: develops and implements emergency management plans; determines levels of activation; coordinates evacuations; trains Emergency Operations Center staff; coordinates logistical support; and conducts related meetings, telephone calls, and correspondence.
- Oversees and supervises Emergency Management staff performing responsibilities maintaining and building the Emergency Management program, meeting statutory requirements, forecasting community needs based on growth and implementing best practices established throughout the profession.
- Conducts public education and awareness activities: prepares and presents seminars, classes, and workshops; prepares and distributes printed materials and news releases; and makes media appearances.
- Coordinates training programs: directs and evaluates departmental in-service training; develops and provides testing for emergency procedures and contingency plans; and oversees the assessment of community and organizational needs to determine public safety training and exercise programs.
- Responds to major/critical incidents and/or disasters: provides logistical support to emergency personnel; requests and directs additional assistance as needed; assesses/evaluates incident scenes; ensures utilization of proper methods to ensure the safety of the public and emergency personnel; and facilitates communication between employees, citizens, volunteers, local government agencies, etc., determines appropriate protective actions, set objectives and advises County administration.
 - Performed duties of EOC Director during five Presidential Declarations and numerous undeclared events (Hurricane Dorian, COVID-19, TS Eta, TS Isias, Hurricane Ian, January 2022 Tornadoes, Hurricane Idalia, Hurricane Helene.
 - Deployed in support of Gadsden and Lafayette Counties during Hurricane Michael and Idalia respectively.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR | CHARLOTTE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT | 6/2017 TO 5/2019

- Responds to major/critical incidents and/or disasters: provides logistical support to emergency personnel; and facilitates communication between employees, citizens, volunteers, local government agencies, and other various stakeholders.
- Provide analysis and technical expertise in response to, and recovery from, emergencies and disasters in both the Emergency Operations Center setting, as well as the field.
- Oversee a training and exercise program that ensures staff can adequately respond to, prepare for, mitigate against and recover from disasters.
- Develop and implement budgets to include grant revenue from both the State of Florida and Federal sources.
- Conduct public education and awareness activities such as seminars, speaking engagements, classes, workshops and concept of operations presentations and tours of the Emergency Operations Center.
- Coordinate with Federal, State, County, City, private, and volunteer entities dealing with emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery planning.
- Provided mutual aid support to Gadsden County, FL Emergency Management by deploying in advance of Hurricane Michael, augmenting Emergency Operations Center staff and field response.

REGION 6 COORDINATOR | FL DIV OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (FDEM) | 1/2012 TO 6/2017

- FDEM's liaison to local governments and communities; providing first line support to Region 6 communities on all emergency management issues; to include planning support, recovery assistance, training coordination and grant reviews.
- Acts as the field response wing of FDEM, deploying as needed statewide to support initial response efforts and provide situational awareness to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).
- Responsible for conducting Capabilities Assessments for counties as part of the renewal process for Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans.
- Served as the State Disaster Recovery Center Manager for a DRC opened in Santa Rosa County in response to flooding in May of 2014. Staffed several County Emergency Operations Centers as the SERT Liaison/Regional Coordinator for TS Debby, TS Isaac, TS Chantal, TS Erika, TS Colin, Hurricane Hermine, Hurricane Matthew, 2012 Republican National Convention, 2016 College Football Playoff Championship, Lee Williams Road Wildfire and 30th Avenue Wildfire in Collier County.

WATCH OFFICER/DEPUTY OPERATIONS CHIEF | FDEM | 11/2010 TO 1/2012

- Responsible for the training and supervision of nine full-time Florida State Watch Office (SWO; 24/7 tactical communications and planning operations center) employees.
- Tasked with reviewing all incident notifications throughout the State for accuracy and determining the possible need for further actions on the part of the State based on severity and/or local resource needs.
- Assigned as the SEOC Security Officer; responsible for the physical and personnel security of the SEOC as well as other facilities as required. Provided technical assistance training related to security matters for Division staff and State Emergency Response Team (SERT) partners.

DUTY OFFICER | FDEM | 3/2010 TO 11/2010

- Acted as an on-call Duty Officer (Watch Stander) to ensure that proper emergency notifications are made to senior staff, State and local response and recovery organizations, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) partners, and various federal agencies.
- Ensured the readiness of the SEOC and Alternate SEOC by maintaining facilities and equipment.
- Served in the Deputy Operations Chief position at the SEOC during the Deepwater Horizon Activation.
- Deployed to Unified Command Mobile during the Deepwater Horizon activation and served as the Operations Chief for the State Management Team.

- Deployed to Branches 4 and 1 during Deepwater Horizon and served as the Deputy Branch Director representing the State of Florida.

OPERATIONS OFFICER | FDEM | 9/2009 TO 3/2010

- Responsible for staffing the State Watch Office and acting as a communications operator; maintaining contact with all parties reporting incidents that may impact the State of Florida.
- Operations Section during Operation Haiti Relief both on the floor of the SEOC and in the State Watch Office.

OPERATIONS CHIEF | UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE | 7/2002 TO 4/2022

- Retired April 2022 as a Master Sergeant (E8).
- While a drilling Reservist I have previously held the positions of Operations Chief, Company Gunnery Sergeant, Platoon Commander, Platoon Sergeant and Supply Chief for a Detachment of 110 Marines tasked with providing Combat Service Support to operating units.
- Responsible for the Training and Education of Detachment Marines to include Military Occupational Specialty training, Annual Training requirements and Professional Military Education.
- Performed duties as a marksmanship coach, Range Safety Officer and Officer in-Charge for annual marksmanship training events.
- Deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2005 & 2008); each time managing the distribution operations for areas of the Al Anbar Province. Awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal after each deployment.
- Deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (2011); serving as the MARCENT Coordination Element Supply Chief. Awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.

FISCAL CHIEF | UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS | 6/1998 TO 6/2002

- Active Duty Marine stationed in Okinawa Japan (1999) and Camp Lejeune, NC (2000-2002).
- Served as the property manager for Material Readiness Battalion; tracking all major end items assigned to the commodities of the Battalion.
- Held the position of Fiscal Chief for 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, overseeing the operational budget for the Battalion.

Certifications / Licensure

- Florida Professional Emergency Manager (FPEM)
- Florida Certified Public Manager (CPM)
- FEMA Advanced Professional Series (APS) Certificate
- Florida Professional Emergency Manager (FPEM)
- Florida Certified Public Manager (CPM)
- FEMA Advanced Professional Series (APS) Certificate

Volunteer Work / Professional Activities

- Local Salvation Army Advisory Board Member
- Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) Executive Board Member representing Emergency Management
- Co-Chair, Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) Emergency Management Directors Working Group
- Member of the Local Emergency Preparedness Committee (LEPC)
- Member of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- Charlotte County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) Steering Committee member
- Volunteer youth flag football coach



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Mr. Patrick Fuller
26571 Airport Rd.
Punta Gorda, FL 33982

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It is my distinct pleasure to extend to you a conditional offer of employment as our Emergency Management Director with a start date of January 14, 2026.

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Sincerely,

Hector Flores
County Administrator

cc: file HR

I accept the terms and conditions of this employment offer:

1/6/2020

Name

Date

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