

STATE OF THE COUNTY 2015/16

# MONROE COUNTY



HOME OF THE FABULOUS FLORIDA KEYS

## Message from County Administrator Roman Gastesi

# 2

2015 was another remarkable year for Monroe County, with your County government completing a long list of accomplishments big and small, mundane and exciting, which collectively have made

our island paradise a better place to live, work and play. With the strong leadership and clear vision of the Board of County Commissioners, the County tackled a broad range of tough policy issues, has been a leader in planning and adapting to climate change and sea level rise, and has embraced bold initiatives and important projects – all while showing fiscal responsibility by keeping taxes low and ensuring long-term viability.

The year started with transmission of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan to the State. The plan, which took three years to research and craft, provides new and clear policy direction on growth management and every other important issue facing our County for the next 20 years and beyond. These include: affordable housing, conservation of environmentally sensitive land and marine resources, transportation, infrastructure, recreation and open space, cultural resources, historic preservation and capital improvement planning for all County services. In 2016, we look forward to the plan being adopted and moving ahead to meet its goals. And that was just the start to a busy year. Here's a quick look back.

**CLIMATE CHANGE/SEA LEVEL RISE:** As a County that is Ground Zero for the effects of climate change, we have been proactive addressing the probable problems we will face as sea waters rise. We hosted the 7th Annual Climate Leadership Summit in December for 450 people. In January, we completed a comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan, which provides a five-year prioritized list of sustainable projects and their costs.

And with extreme tide flooding already becoming a nuisance problem in some areas, we amended a roadway project in Key Largo in the design phase in order to specifically address new climate change tidal data. A new drainage system also was put in place at Key West International Airport to deal with storm water, sea level rise and tidal conditions on the air carrier ramp.

We saved about \$130,000 last year and improved our carbon footprint by having our yard waste mulched and composted instead of taken to a land fill. We also are working with a contractor on a long-term gasification program to turn our yard waste into energy. That could lead to even more savings.

**STEWARDSHIP ACT:** In Tallahassee, we have worked for passage of the Florida Keys Stewardship Act, which would provide \$25 million a year for 10 years for improving water quality and acquiring land. We secured \$12.4 million in state-level RESTORE ACT funds, which come from the BP oil settlement, for water quality projects. And we secured \$1 million for the County in Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding for 2015, and also for 2016. These are federal payments that go to local governments to help offset losses in property taxes due to non-taxable federal lands within their boundaries.

**CENTRAL SEWER SYSTEM:** The end is in sight for providing central sewer to all of unincorporated Monroe County, with hookups underway at the Cudjoe Regional System. We are in the midst of \$7 million in canal demonstration projects, which are using different methods to improve water quality in canals that are rated "poor." A \$350,000 grant was used to provide 20,415 free pump-outs to boaters, safely disposing of nearly 300,000 gallons of sewage to protect our water quality. And a \$210,050 grant was used for buoy/channel marker maintenance and derelict vessel and debris removal to decrease navigational hazards.



**COUNTY PROJECTS:** With funding complete for wastewater projects, proceeds from the one-cent infrastructure sales tax were used to fund most of the 16 projects completed in 2015 and many of the 17 that are underway or scheduled to begin this year. These include: design of a new courthouse and detention center in Islamorada, a new Marathon Library, an 8-acre waterfront park at Rowell's Marina in Key Largo, the Big Pine Swimming Hole and renovations at Higgs Beach in Key West.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES:** We have worked to make our County a safer place. Construction also is nearing completion on the new Fire Training Academy on Crawl Key. We added 50 new fire hydrants to the Lower Keys as part of the Cudjoe Regional System. And in the works is the purchase of land on Cudjoe Key for a new fire rescue station for the crew now working out of the Sheriff's Office Substation. We will be working with the Sugarloaf Volunteer Association to resolve firefighting delivery issues at the Sugarloaf station. We distributed Trauma Star first-option stickers and informational letters to inform residents that taking the County's air ambulance eliminates all out-of-pocket expense. And, we will be hiring a new emergency management director to replace longtime director, who is retiring.

**AIRPORTS:** At Key West International Airport, we will complete a 2,000-square-foot expansion of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facility, eventually enabling the airport to increase custom's processing ability from 10 to 70 passengers per hour. We also are nearing completion on a new Customs and Border Patrol facility at the Florida Keys Marathon International Airport.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** In 2015, we reactivated the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, and this year it will continue to work on strategies to support the development of workforce housing.

**BUILDING DEPARTMENT:** The Building department implemented a new fee schedule to full fund permitting operations and it opened a new satellite office at the Ocean Reef Club. Code compliance completed a Clean Up Key Largo campaign and coordinated with the Tax Collector to improve enforcement of illegal vacation rentals.

**SERVING OUR CITIZENS:** Veteran's Affairs assisted 3,174 of the County's veterans, and helped increase retroactive income veterans received by \$475,000 last year. And Social Services will now be offering free transportation on Monroe County Transit to seniors.

Information Technology launched One View, which provides County data, reports and information to employees and citizens. Library Services will be moving some of its Florida history collection from Key West to the other four branches for all parts of the County to enjoy. Employee services adopted a new Wellness Program. Health fair participation increased almost 30 percent and incentives are given for employees to obtain age appropriate screenings – promoting health and leading to lower medical costs to the County.

While 2015 was a busy and productive year, as demonstrated through the pages of this 2015-16 State of the County Report, we know there is more work to be done and we look forward to continuing our efforts to make Monroe County the best place it can be.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from County Administrator Roman Gastesi	2-3
Board of County Commissioners	5
2015 Adopted Monroe County Organizational Chart	6
About Monroe County Government and Public Information	7
Fiscal Year 2016 Adopted Budget	8
Budget & Finance	9
Grant Administration	10
Legislative Affairs	11
Planning & Environmental Resources	12-13
Affordable Housing	14
Building	15
Permitting	16
Code Compliance	17
Emergency Services	18
Fire Rescue & Trauma Star	19
Fire Prevention & Fire Training Academy	20
Emergency Management	21
Social Services	22
Strategic Planning	23
Engineering Services & Roads	24-25
Project Management & Facilities	26
Your Infrastructure One-Cent Sales Tax at Work	27
County Projects Throughout the Keys	28-29
Fleet Management	30
Airports	31
Solid Waste/Recycling	32
Wastewater Update	33
Sustainability: Climate Change/Sea Level Rise	34
Sustainability: Canal Restoration	35
Extension Services	36
Animal Control	37
Veteran's Affairs	38
Guardian Ad Litem	39
Employee Services	40
Information Technology	41
Public Libraries	42-43
County Attorney/Medical Examiner	44
Tourist Development Council/Land Authority	45
County Parks, Beaches & Boat Ramps	46-47
Citizen Committees	48-50
Quick References	51-52
Letter from Mayor Heather Carruthers	54-55

### ABOUT THIS REPORT

The 2015-16 State of the County Report highlights the work and projects that were accomplished by your county government, and explains the progress that is being made with major issues that affect the island chain. It's like the Cliffs Notes version of the county government story for 2015, with goals and planned projects for 2016.



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monroecounty-fl.gov

*The report was produced by Cammy Clark, Monroe County's Public Information Officer, with Jason Koler, Sara Matthis and Javier Reyes of The Weekly Newspapers.*

#### Cover Photo:

Aerial of Islamorada  
by Andy Newman  
of the Tourist  
Development Council

**Commissioner**

**Danny Kolhage**, District 1  
530 Whitehead Street,  
Suite 102  
Key West, FL 33040  
305.292.3440  
boccdis1@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Mayor Pro Tem George Neugent**, District 2

25 Ships Way  
Big Pine Key, FL 33043  
305.872.1678  
boccdis2@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Mayor Heather Carruthers**,

District 3  
500 Whitehead Street, Suite 102  
Key West, FL 33040  
305.292.3430  
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**Commissioner David Rice**,

District 4  
Marathon Airport Terminal  
9400 Overseas Highway, #210  
Marathon, FL 33050  
305.289.6000  
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**Commissioner Sylvia**

**Murphy**, District 5  
Murray Nelson Government  
Center  
102050 Overseas Highway,  
Suite 234  
Key Largo, FL 33037  
305.453.8787  
boccdis5@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Board of County Commissioners

Constitutional Establishment Article VIII, Section 1(e) of the Florida Constitution states that except when otherwise provided by county charter, the governing body of each county shall be a Board of County Commissioners composed of five members serving staggered terms of four years. After each decennial census, the BOCC shall divide the county into districts of contiguous territory as nearly equal in population as practicable. One commissioner residing in each district shall be elected by the voters.

**Monroe County BOCC**

**Mission:** Provide outstanding public service responsive to the needs of our citizens, our unique community and our environment.

**Vision:** Working and learning together to maintain the diverse community by preserving the natural resources and habitat that makes us a unique and preferred place to live and visit.

**Value Statement:** We believe in the highest of ethical behavior as we sail the Seven "Cs": Competence, Creativity, Commitment, Concern, Care, Communication and Continuity.

**Monroe County BOCC MEETINGS**

The Commission meetings are public and held once a month. The dates and agendas are posted on the County's website: [www.monroecounty-fl.gov](http://www.monroecounty-fl.gov). Due to the geographical challenge of our 100-mile plus island chain, the meetings are held on a rotating basis at three sites:

**Murray Nelson Government & Cultural Center**

102050 Overseas Highway, Key Largo, 305-852-7161

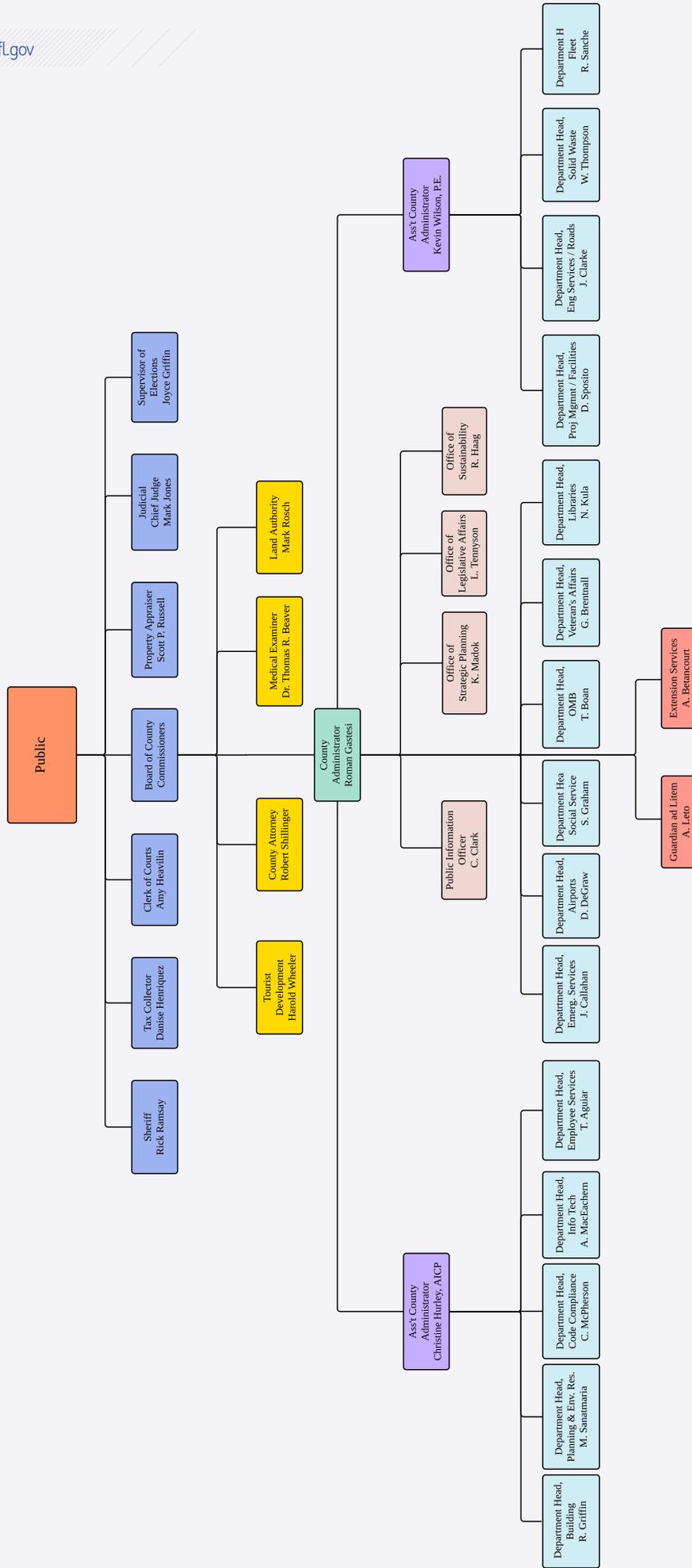
**Marathon Government Center**

2798 Overseas Highway, Marathon, 305-289-6036

**Harvey Government Center**

1200 Truman Avenue, Key West, 305-295-4385

# 2016 Adopted Monroe County Organizational Chart



## About Monroe County Government



The County Administrator, who answers directly to the elected Board of County Commissioners, has the overall responsibility of the daily operations of Monroe County's government – with the exception of constitutional officer functions. They are: Sheriff's Office, Clerk of Courts, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser, Judicial branch and Supervisor of Elections. The County Attorney, Land Authority, Tourist Development Council and Medical Examiner also answer directly to the BOCC.

The County Administrator, Roman Gastesi has two Assistant County Administrators (Christine Hurley and Kevin Wilson), who help him oversee the 21 offices and departments.

The County Administrator directly oversees: Office of Strategic Planning, Office of Legislative Affairs, Office of Sustainability, Public Information Officer, Guardian Ad Litem, Extension Services and six departments: Emergency Services, Airports, Social Services, Budget & Finance, Veteran's Affairs and Libraries.

Assistant County Administrator Christine Hurley oversees Information Technology, Employee Services and growth management departments: Building, Planning & Environmental Services and Code Compliance.

Assistant County Administrator Kevin Wilson oversees public works departments: Project Management & Facilities, Engineering Services & Roads, Solid Waste and Fleet Management.



### County Administrator

Roman Gastesi  
Phone: 305.292.4441  
Gastesi-roman  
@monroecounty-fl.gov



### Assistant County Administrator

Christine Hurley  
Phone: 305.289.2517  
Hurley-christine  
@monroecounty-fl.gov



### Assistant County Administrator

Kevin Wilson  
Phone: 305.282.4529  
Wilson-kevin@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Constitutional Officers

### SHERIFF

Rick Ramsay

### CLERK OF COURTS

Amy Heavilin

### TAX COLLECTOR

Danise Henriquez

### PROPERTY APPRAISER

Scott P. Russell

### SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Joyce Griffin

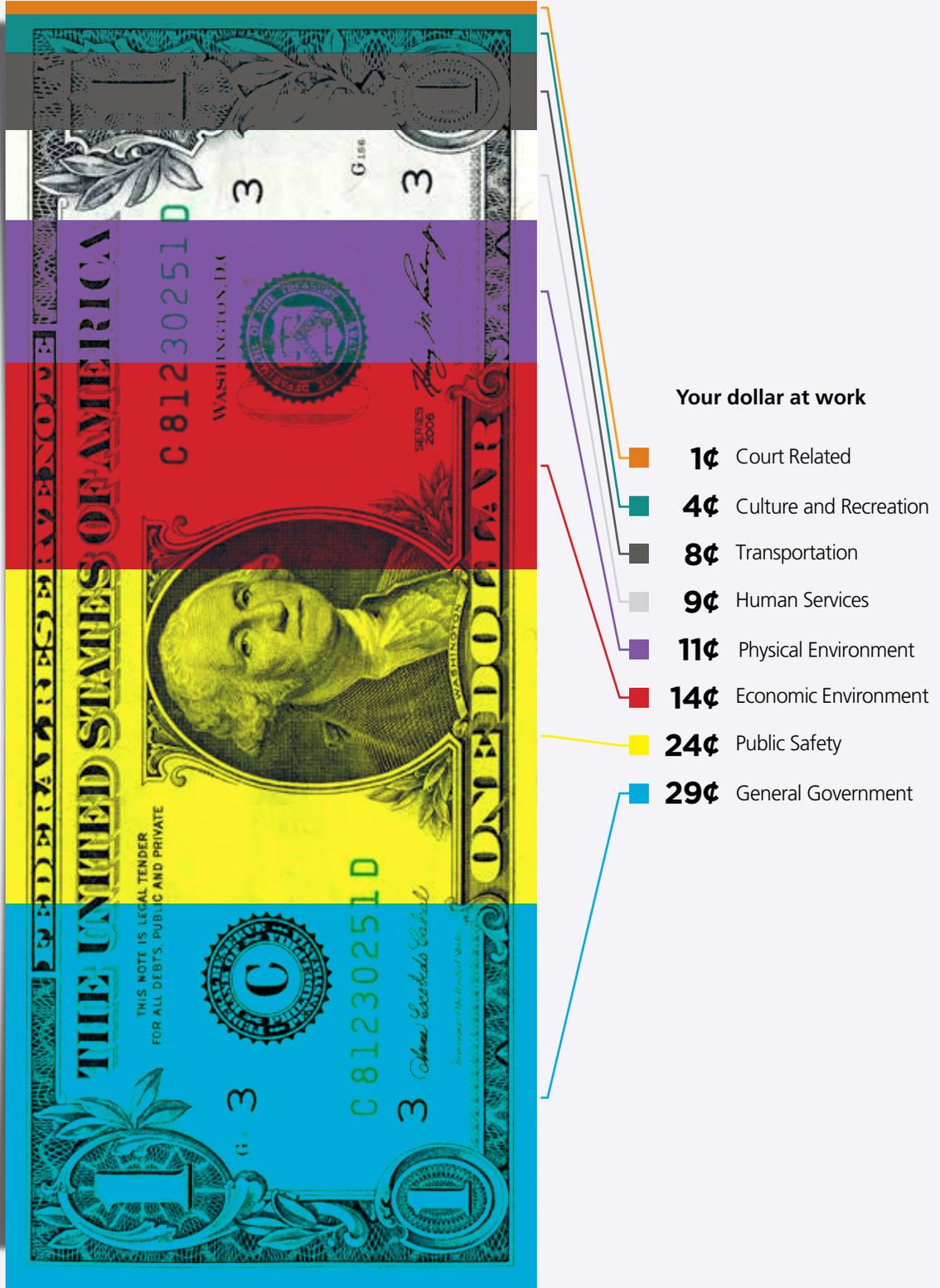
### JUDICIAL

Chief Judge Mark Jones



# FY2016

## Total Adopted Budget: \$416,958,562



## Budget & Finance

**The Budget and Finance Office, also known as the Office of Management and Budget, provides strategic planning and support to the County's government to ensure ethical, fiscally responsible and sustainable expenditure of your tax dollars. We also provide efficient and effective management of County programs, services and resources.**

We prepare, publish and administer the annual County budget. We monitor revenue and expenditures, perform multi-year budget forecasts, analyze the effect of the State budget on the County budget and prepare financial information for the Board of County Commissioners and the public.

We also manage the human services funding program for the County and the County's grants administration and the purchasing and procurement office, which processed more than 3,400 requisitions in Fiscal Year 2015.



Budget: \$869,720  
 Employees: 8  
 Director: Tina Boan  
 Phone: 305.292.4470  
[Boan-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Boan-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### Did You Know ?

On average, more than 50% of collected property taxes go directly to the Monroe County School Board, municipal governments and other taxing authorities.



### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created the County's first Budget-In-Brief booklet, summarizing the Adopted Budget.
- Provided coordination and development of the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget and facilitated County budget workshops and public hearings that explained the information in an understandable manner.
- Successfully achieved Truth in Millage (TRIM) compliance requirements from the Department of Revenue and electronically filed all required TRIM forms.
- For the 17th consecutive year, received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association.
- Continued to improve the budget process and provided greater assistance to County departments, County Commissioners and the public through staff's ongoing enhanced budget training and interaction with other local government budget professionals.

## Grants Administration

**The Grants Administration department monitors grant applications and implementation. We oversee Monroe County funding of nonprofit organizations; apply for and administer some pass-through grants; and oversee contracts related to grant awards that are distributed or received by the County.**

We provide grant administration assistance to other County departments and human service organizations; pursue funding opportunities and write grant proposals; and ensure a coordinated response to hurricane recovery grant assistance through the state and FEMA.

We facilitate meetings of the Substance Abuse Policy Advisory Board, and the application, implementation and monitoring of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and Clerk's Drug Abuse Trust funding.

We also facilitate meetings of the Human Services Advisory Board, which typically meets twice a year to review applications submitted for funding by nonprofit organizations that provide health and human services to the citizens of the Keys. The merits of each application are discussed and recommendations for funding are made to the County Commission.

### Highest funded medical service

Hospice of the Florida Keys, Inc. - \$141,000

### Highest funded core service

Florida Keys Children's Shelter - \$189,000

### Highest funded quality of life service

Keys to Be the Change - \$60,000

Applications by nonprofit providers fall within one of three established categories:

- Medical Services – which include mental health and dental care for the economically disadvantaged.
- Core Social Services – essential services such as food, clothing, or housing; emergency disaster relief; family violence issues; and adult and child daycare.
- Quality of Life Improvement Services – educational, preventative, training, recreational and cultural services to improve the quality of life for individuals.

For Fiscal Year 2016 there was a 10% increase in the level of funding by the Board of County Commissioners. Funding is derived annually through property taxes. During the budget process the BOCC approved the recommendations of the Human Services Advisory Board. In 2015, 25 organizations were awarded \$1.75 million in funding. For 2016, 27 organizations were awarded \$1.92 million.

Monroe County will award \$1.92 million to local nonprofit agencies to provide health and human services to citizens of the Keys.



Senior Administrator of Grants

Laura de Loach-Hartle

Phone: 305.292.4482

[DeloachHartle-laura@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:DeloachHartle-laura@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### Did You Know?

Many of the nonprofit organizations use the County awards as matching funds to receive state and federal grants.



## Legislative Affairs

**L**egislative Affairs oversees and manages the legislative and intergovernmental initiatives and functions for the county. Responsibilities include: developing the County's state and federal legislative agendas; coordinating the county's position and response to pending legislation; preparing press releases, resolutions, talking points, issue briefs and legislative updates; and identifying and responding to federal, state and local funding opportunities.

We work with the County's state and federal lobbyists, County staff and attorneys, the County's municipal partners, and other key stakeholders, to support and advance the County's legislative priorities and appropriations, and to organize and manage advocacy agendas, meetings and trips for county officials to the Florida State Capitol in Tallahassee and the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

We also are responsible for the implementation of \$20 million in RESTORE ACT funds that the County is slated to receive. The RESTORE Act is a 2012 federal law that established the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund, which provides programs, projects and activities that restore and protect the environment and economy of the Gulf Coast Region that suffered from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.



Employees: 1  
 Director: Lisa Tennyson  
 Phone: 305.292.4444  
[Tennyson-lisa@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Tennyson-lisa@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed the Monroe County Multi-Year Implementation Plan and submitted it to the U.S. Treasury. The plan enables us to distribute the first \$1.6 million in local RESTORE funds for coral and canal restoration projects. Another \$6.5 million in local RESTORE funds is pending.
- Successful secured \$12.4 million in state-level RESTORE funding for Monroe County to be used for water quality projects after a series of challenging negotiation sessions among the 23 counties of the Gulf Consortium.
- Drafted legislation to level the playing field for all National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participants. The last legislation passed in 2014 does not protect businesses or second homeowners from exorbitant rate increases, including those property owners who provide long-term rentals critical to workforce housing in the Keys.
- Secured \$1 million Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding, which are federal payments that go to local governments to help offset losses in property taxes due to non-taxable federal lands.

### 2016 GOALS

- Passage of the Florida Keys Stewardship Act, which would bring \$25 million annually for 10 years to the Florida Keys for water quality and land acquisition initiatives. We continue to work with Rep. Holly Raschein (R-Key Largo) and Sen. Wilton Simpson (R-Trilby) as it progresses through the Legislature.
- Secure state legislative appropriations for water quality and land acquisition, pedestrian bridge repairs, Overseas Heritage Trail and affordable housing.
- Secure state legislation to authorize stronger provisions for prevention of derelict vessels and pump-out requirements, and use of telecommunications for local advisory boards to facilitate citizen participation.
- At the federal level, we are anticipating the 2017 reauthorization of NFIP. We will continue to work with our partners support current and improved provisions for affordability for homeowners and business-owners.
- Begin RESTORE-funded construction projects.

## Planning & Environmental Resources

The Planning and Environmental Resources Department fosters sustainable, quality development in the county while conserving and promoting stewardship of the county's fragile environment and the unique character of its diverse island communities.



We are responsible for the administration of the adopted Monroe County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. We process amendments to the Comprehensive Plan

and Land Development Regulations. Additionally, we review development proposals for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. Department functions are implemented by these offices:

- **Comprehensive Planning** – prepares and implements the goals, objectives and policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan; processes comprehensive plan amendments; and updates the comprehensive plan to ensure it is consistent with all current statutory and rule requirements.
- **Current Planning** – administers all ordinances applicable to land use planning for the unincorporated areas of the county; reviews planning applications for compliance with Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations; and updates and amends land development regulations.
- **ROGO/NROGO** – administers a Permit Allocation System known as the Rate of Growth Ordinance (ROGO) for both residential development and commercial development that is based on state requirement to maintain a 24-hour hurricane evacuation clearance time and protect community character and the environment.

- **Environmental Resources** – protects the environment and species; coordinates with State and Federal environmental agencies; and reviews development proposals for environmental compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.
- **Marine Resources** – protects the marine environment, maritime infrastructure and public water access.
- **GIS** – develops, maintains and disseminates geographic data for the county.
- **Transportation Planning** – manages the completion of Travel Time & Delay Studies to ensure the County is maintaining traffic related levels or service; reviews traffic studies submitted with land use applications and coordinates with State agencies on roadway and trail projects.





### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Held numerous public hearings to review the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update, a policy document that will guide future growth and community development through 2030. It was sent to the State for review. The Comp Plan evaluates land use, housing, conservation of environmentally sensitive land and marine resources. It also addresses transportation, ports, aviation and infrastructure (water, sewer, solid waste disposal, drainage and groundwater aquifer recharge). The plan deals with recreation and open space, cultural resources, historic preservation and capital improvement planning for all County services. The Planning & Environmental Resources Department is leading the update process, which involved gathering new data and analyzing it; conducting an evaluation and appraisal of the existing

### Did you know?

There are approximately 8,168 privately owned vacant parcels in unincorporated Monroe County and only 1,970 more available Rate of Growth Ordinance units to distribute. The average parcel value in 2012 was \$30,400 for a total of \$248.3 million.



Comp Plan; and drafting new policies which incorporate input from the public and multiple agencies.

- Continued management of the countywide mobile vessel pump-out program that has produced stunning results: 20,415 pump-outs that safely disposed of 288,951 gallons of sewage to protect water quality.
- Secured \$210,050 in grant funding for buoy/channel marker maintenance and removal of derelict vessels and marine debris to reduce navigational hazards.
- Completed numerous management projects, including trash cleanups, invasive exotic plant removals and native plantings on County land with funding from the Monroe County Environmental Land Management and Restoration Fund.
- Continued assistance to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) to develop strategies to preserve and enhance affordable housing in the County. Updated Local Housing Assistance Plan with AHAC, which is required by the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program Act.

### 2016 GOALS

- Adoption of the 2030 Comp Plan and adoption of the updated Land Development Regulations to implement the 2030 Comp Plan.
- Continue coordination with Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) on proposed Hotel Room Allocation/Vacant Lot Retirement Rule to provide an opportunity to develop new hotel rooms while acquiring rights on other lands to protect environmental resources and retire development rights.
- Complete Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) duties to develop strategies to preserve and enhance affordable housing in the County, including developing inclusionary housing requirements for hospitality and commercial sector to build workforce housing and encouraging workforce rental housing.
- Continue investigating and moving forward with options for increasing land acquisition to protect sensitive habitat; assist with identifying a new land acquisition funding source within the County and the State to prioritize land acquisition; and maintain our relationship with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to concentrate on Florida Forever acquisitions.

Budget: \$4,958,080

Employees: 27

Senior Director: Mayte Santamaria

Phone: 305.289.2500

Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Affordable Housing



One of the most challenging issues facing all of Monroe County is affordable/workforce housing, due to the quadruple impact of high land values, land limited by geographic and environmental features, housing supply limited by the controlled Rate of Growth Ordinance and a tourism economy with a prevalence of lower paying service-sector employment.

In November 2015, the Board of County Commissioners passed a resolution calling for support and collaboration between the County and its five municipalities to address the issue, which it deems a “crisis.” The Monroe County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) was directed to invite the representatives of the municipalities to an AHAC meeting to share insight and ideas in finding solutions.

The previous year, the BOCC approved a stakeholder assessment effort, which was conducted by the Consensus Center at Florida State University, to determine the scope of the problem. The effort solicited perspectives and ideas on workforce housing challenges and on whether a county-wide consensus building effort should be convened to address the complex issues surrounding workforce housing in the Florida Keys.

Following the initiation of this assessment, the Commission re-appointed and expanded the members of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

The report found that affordable housing wasn’t just a problem in Monroe County but a “crisis.” The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as a residence with a cost that does not exceed 30 percent of a household’s gross income. In 2013, 51% (or 16,849) of Monroe County households were “cost-burdened”, paying more than 30% of income for housing. Statewide it was only 43 percent. More than half of Monroe County renters are cost burdened (8,350 of 14,002) and about 45% of Monroe County homeowners are cost burdened (8,499 of the 18,936).

In November 2014 the United Way of Florida also released its report, ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed: Study of Financial Hardship, which indicates that nearly half of all Monroe County households (14,221 of 29,241) live above the federal poverty line but still struggle to afford basic expenses including housing, child care, food, transportation and health care.

The County relies mainly on the private sector, supplemented by government programs, to ensure the provision of adequate housing. While the County does not construct housing, it does provide incentives for development. For example, the County provides residential density bonuses, waiver of application fees and waiver of impact fees to encourage the development of very-low, low, median and moderate income housing.

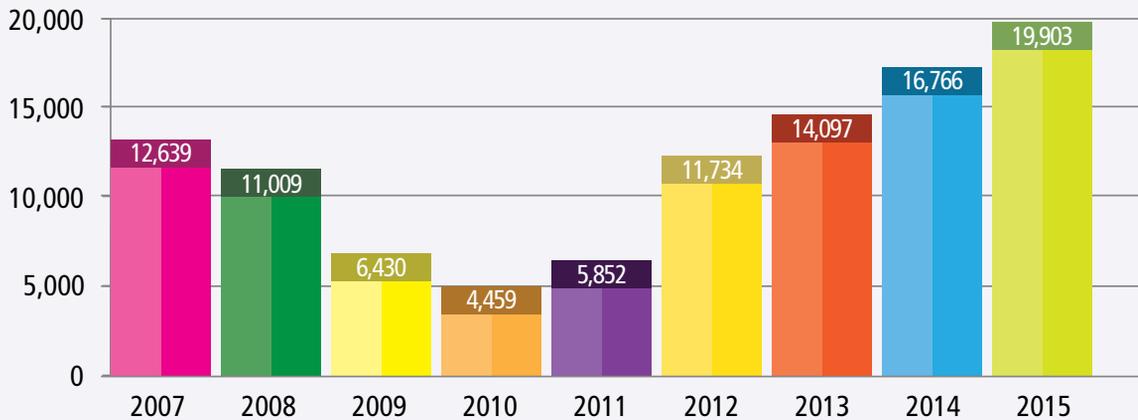
The County sets aside more than 20% of its allocations (71 of the 197 annual ROGO allocations) for affordable housing. Even with the specific affordable housing allocation set aside, not all of them are being used due to the high cost of land and construction costs.

The County will take the actions available, including residential density bonuses and waiver of fees, to encourage the development of very-low, low, and moderate income housing, where the need for it is identified. The Monroe County Housing Authority is responsible for low income and affordable rental apartments throughout the County, and oversees the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, the first state housing program in the nation to provide funds directly to local governments to increase affordable housing opportunities in their communities.

This stakeholder assessment report found that there is no single strategy that will solve the workforce housing crisis in Monroe County. Instead the challenge ahead is to craft a balanced package of targeted options.



## Building department total plan reviews on permits by calendar year



As of 1/15/2016

## Building Department

The Building Department protects public health and safety, property and the environment by providing efficient, effective and considerate permitting for construction in accordance with Monroe County Code and the Florida Statutes. The permitting also is consistent with the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan.

We review plans and provide permitting services for compliance with the Florida Building Code, the Monroe County Code and all other life safety codes. We also provide inspection services in accordance with the Building Code, coordinated administration and enforcement of the County's floodplain regulations and a contractor licensing and testing program.

We coordinate unsafe structures abatement with the Code Compliance Department and the Office of the County Attorney and provide staff support for the Contractors Examining Board and the Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

**Did You Know?** The Building Department issued 5,182 permits that encompassed a total job value of more than \$156 million.

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- After decades of being in "Bad Standing" with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), we achieved "Good Standing" by satisfactorily addressing more than 300 findings from six FEMA Community Assistance Visits (audits) from 2013 to 2015. As a result, the County is eligible to apply for entry into the Community Rating System, which will enable property owners to be eligible for discounts on their annual flood insurance premiums. It's likely that will result in a \$2.8 million savings, or an average of about \$174 per property annually. Over time, the County can gain additional points by offering additional programs.
- The Board of County Commissioners adopted a fee schedule that covers the cost of permitting and additional funding to purchase software and implement process improvements that will improve delivery of permits.

### 2016 GOALS

- Develop procedures and tools to track permits from date of application to issue to speed up process.
- Obtain contract to develop implementation strategy and configuration for electronic/digital plan submittal and review of permits which would speed up processing.
- Contract and implement additional Interactive Voice Response Inspection enhancements to support FEMA initiatives and notification to owners that have expiring permits.

Budget: \$4,068,670

Employees: 30

Building Official: Rick Griffin

Phone: 305.453.8815

Griffin-rick@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Permitting

### When do I need a building permit in unincorporated Monroe County?

#### A permit is required for:

- Site preparation, including land clearing, placement of fill, and excavation
- Demolition
- Tie downs of habitable structures
- Signs
- Fences
- Sheds
- Any new construction and remodeling work of principal and accessory structures
- All work in the electrical, mechanical, and plumbing trades
- All work subject to the County floodplain management requirements
- Resource extraction
- Any work involving life safety

There are certain residential exceptions for several of these categories. Please contact the County Building Department with specific questions. We have four offices throughout the County:

#### Marathon:

Government Center  
2798 Overseas Highway,  
Suite 330  
Marathon, FL 33050  
305.289.2501

#### Key Largo:

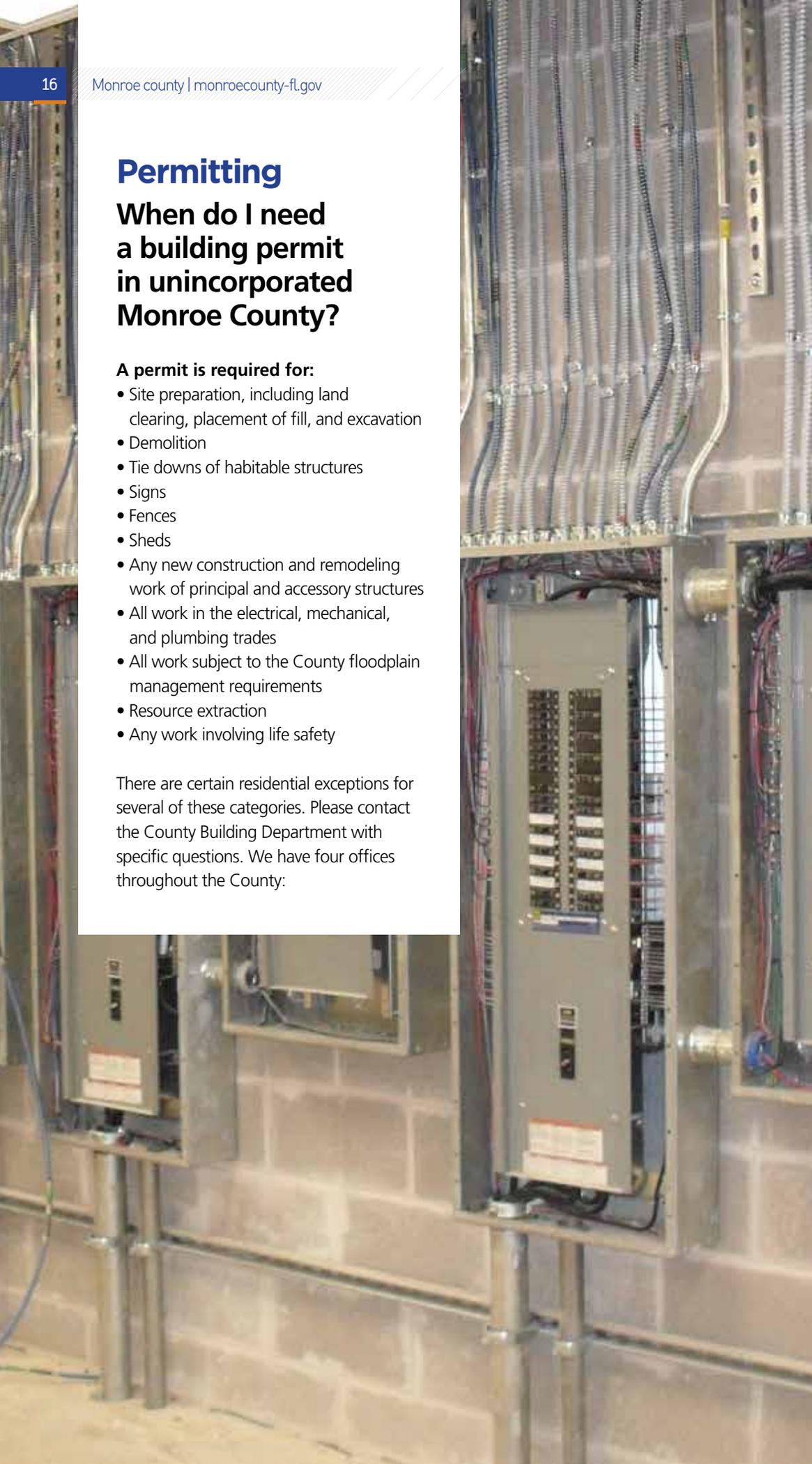
Murray Nelson Government  
& Cultural Center  
102050 Overseas Highway  
Key Largo, FL 33037  
305.453.8800

#### Ocean Reef:

11601 CR 905  
Key Largo, FL 33037  
305.453.8765

#### Stock Island:

5503 College Road,  
Suite 204  
Key West, FL 33040  
305.295.3990



Budget: \$1,467,544

Employees: 15

Director: Cynthia J. McPherson

Phone: 305.289.2508

McPherson-cynthia@monroecounty-fl.gov



Before

After

W

The Code Compliance Department provides an equitable, expeditious and effective method of enforcement of building, zoning, land development, environmental and other County codes to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Monroe County. We also establish working partnerships with neighborhoods and outside agencies to help with compliance. We also proactively inspect construction sites to ensure that work is not being conducted illegally by unlicensed contractors, who can be a detriment to unknowing property owners seeking assistance in making improvements on their properties.

We also establish working partnerships with neighborhoods and outside agencies to help with compliance. We also proactively inspect construction sites to ensure that work is not being conducted illegally by unlicensed contractors, who can be a detriment to unknowing property owners seeking assistance in making improvements on their properties.



## Code Compliance

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed the Clean Up Key Largo Campaign, addressing illegal signs, trash, debris and inoperative vehicles and vessels primarily along U.S. 1 through education and courtesy notices resulting in 121 properties becoming compliant.
- Through the Code Compliance process, the County levies fines for non-compliant properties. However, for years, the fines on many sites have gone unpaid. Last year, the staff and commissioners reviewed and revised the Lien Process for property owners who have achieved compliance, enabling them to request a fine reduction to be heard by the Special Magistrate rather than the BOCC. We also worked with the County Attorney's office to proactively seek court assistance to gain compliance at properties whose owners have disregarded liens.
- A revised Noise Ordinance was completed with support from citizens and a collaborative effort with the County Attorney's Office. The revision clarifies the definition of disturbing noise and also allows the Sheriff's Office to issue tickets.
- In 2016, Code Compliance referred the first case to the State Attorney's Office for unlicensed contractor activity which resulted in an arrest.
- We continue to work with the Monroe County Tax Collector's Office to educate the public about regulations involving short-term vacation rental (less than 28 days) of private properties in unincorporated areas. We have improved compliance this past year using with a new strategy

that involves targeting advertising of illegal rentals. The homeowners are sent a notice of violation and a date for a hearing, in which a judge can levy fines. We are now scheduling 3-5 hearings per month, a significant increase from previous years.

- Code Compliance proactively requires properties to hook up to wastewater. This year, 194 properties were processed through code compliance and have gained connections.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2015, the Code Compliance Department opened 1,587 new cases; conducted 16,138 inspections; and presented 316 cases before the Special Magistrate.

### 2016 GOALS

- Continue to enforce the mandatory wastewater hookup requirements required by the state.
- Reinvigorate working with the Building Department on the Unsafe Structure/ Demolition Process, providing a process to eliminate the worst structures in the county.
- Maintain efforts with the Tax Collector's office to improve enforcement of illegal vacation rentals.

## Emergency Services

**M**onroe County's Emergency Services Division works around the clock to protect paradise – its unique people and property – with well-trained firefighters and well-prepared disaster-response to all emergencies. We respond to fires, major traffic accidents and medical emergencies. We also respond during storms and other events that threaten the health and safety of county residents and visitors, and may damage property and affect the local economy. We provide on-scene emergency medical treatment and transport patients to local area hospitals by land. For critically injured patients, we use our Trauma Star air ambulance to take them to special-care facilities out of the county.

We also do a lot of preparation work and training before emergencies strike. We instruct and drill our fire rescue members at our Joe London Fire Training Academy, as well as provide EMT and paramedic training. We work to prevent fires and accidents with routine inspections of businesses and multi-unit residences for fire code and life-safety compliance.



Our Emergency Management department works to keep its disaster response plans up to date, whether it's to deal with Mother Nature's wrath, an act of terrorism or a man-made catastrophe. Fortunately, it has been more than 10 years since the island chain suffered from a hurricane or other large-scale disaster. Our operation was tested in 2010 during the threat of the BP/Deepwater Horizon oil spill making its way to our waters and shorelines, which thankfully it did not.

Budget: \$16.62 million

Employees: 134

Division Director: Fire Chief James Callahan

Phone: 305.289.6088

Callahan-james@monroecounty-fl.gov



## Fire Rescue & Trauma Star

Fire Rescue operates from nine fire stations – from Tavernier to Key West International Airport – and from Trauma Star facility in Marathon. Trauma Star, our air ambulance, serves all of the Florida Keys, including the Dry Tortugas. Our certified firefighters are cross-trained as paramedics or Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

In 2015, our firefighters responded to 1,456 fires and non-medical emergency calls, accounting for about 30 percent of field operations. These included structure, grass, rubbish, wild land, car, boat and aircraft fires. We also mitigated propane and gasoline leaks, and oil and chemical spills; assisted law enforcement in search and rescue and facility evacuations during bomb threats and other



law enforcement operations. We also provided ARFF (Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting) from Station 7 at Key West International Airport.

In 2015, our firefighter paramedics responded by ground ambulances and Trauma Star to 3,377 calls, with 2,241 patients transported to area and out-of-county hospitals. About 27 percent were for traffic accidents and other trauma incidents. The remaining transports were for medical emergencies, including heart attacks, strokes, seizures, difficulty breathing and abdominal disorders.

#### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created and distributed the “Trauma Star First Option” stickers and informational letter to all Monroe County residents and property owners about the benefits of flying Trauma Star to the mainland. There are no out-of-pocket expenses for residents or homeowners with property in Monroe County.
- Trauma Star and EMS Ground switched to in-house billing and averaged a 46.09% collection rate; compared to the previous vendor’s baseline collection rate of 33.7%.

- Put into service two 2,500-gallon tanker/pumpers and two rescue ambulances.
- Transitioned to a new software for improved incident reporting for fire and EMS emergencies.
- Fire Station 7, at Key West International Airport, received a perfect score during its annual Federal Aviation Administration Safety Inspection of facilities, records, equipment and tested response skills.

#### 2016 GOALS

- Apply for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, requesting funds to purchase new self-contained breathing apparatus that provide safety to firefighters in situations that are dangerous to their life and health.
- Put into service two new fire engines.
- Complete the New Joe London Fire Training Academy, a classroom and locker room/bathroom facility with an enclosed garage for fire apparatus and equipment. Once it’s ready, bring back Firefighter I and Firefighter II courses, and ongoing Fire/EMS training for all County firefighters, and other agencies, including law enforcement.
- Complete the second year of in-house billing to maintain or improve average collection rate of 46.09% for air and ground ambulance charges.

#### TRAUMA STAR

Trauma Star is our emergency helicopter service – staffed with highly trained critical-care nurses, firefighter/paramedics and pilots – which operates jointly with the Monroe County Sheriff’s Office to transport critically injured patients to out-of-county trauma and specialty care centers. County residents receive no out-of-pocket charges for this critical life-saving service.

For an island chain that has no trauma, therapeutic cardiac or neurosurgical service centers – and is isolated from the mainland by distance and a busy single highway – Trauma Star saves critical minutes lost by ground and rapidly transports patients to a trauma, heart or stroke center for life-saving interventions not available in the Keys. These precious minutes save lives and reduce or eliminate permanent disabilities.

Last year, Trauma Star’s twin engine Sikorsky, which can carry two critical patients at a time and travels at 175 miles per hour, transported 397 patients to mainland facilities: 75 for trauma, 15 for stroke, 19 for heart attacks and 5 first response calls to the Dry Tortugas, which are remote islands 70 miles west of Key West. The remaining 283 transports were hospital-to-hospital transfers of critically ill patients.



## Fire Prevention

**The Fire Prevention department's mission is proactive: to eliminate fires and injury-causing accidents from happening. Our responsibilities include inspecting businesses and multi-unit residences for compliance with the Florida Fire Prevention Code.**

We also provide complete and accurate fire protection engineering and plans review, definitive fire cause investigation, life-safety code enforcement, occupancy inspections and outreach and education, especially to children.

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Monroe County Fire Marshall's Office conducted 763 building plan reviews for compliance with the Florida Fire Prevention Code. Growth Management permitting required more than 641 hours of staff time. Accompanying site inspections were conducted for all commercial occupancy permits, many of which were large-scale projects that required daily or weekly inspections over several months.
- In unincorporated Monroe County, 19 fires occurred that required formal investigations: 15 structures, two mobile home/recreational vehicles and two water vessels.
- All five public schools, 15 adult and child day care facilities and Mariner's Hospital received annual inspections.
- In cooperation with the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority,

water supplies for firefighting activities were enhanced with the installation of 63 new fire hydrants, primarily in the Lower Keys.

- More than 200 residents and tourists visited our fire stations during Fire Prevention Week Open House. More than 800 children were treated to visits by Sparky the Fire Dog and our firefighters.

### 2016 GOALS

- Continue efforts with FCAA for installation of additional hydrants throughout the County.
- Complete and provide feedback to contractors submitting commercial building plans.
- Attend all Development Review Committee meetings to assist customers in the review and permitting process.
- Assist owners and operators of special occupancies, including daycare and adult living facilities.



### FIRE TRAINING ACADEMY

Monroe County's Joe London Fire Training Academy, located on Crawl Key in the Middle Keys, is one of only 41 certified firefighting training centers in Florida. Named after Joe London, the County's Fire Marshall from 1984-2003, the facility includes a training tower, burn building and classroom facility. The academy also offers medical training.

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Promoted new Training Chief to the Fire/EMS training division to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of this unit.
- Two new training officers promoted from fire suppression to the Fire/EMS training division.

### 2016 GOALS

- Provide officer development training to all incumbent fire officers that cover the following topics: firefighter assignments and safety, fire theory and application, and strategic considerations.
- Deliver compressive drive pump operators performance tests to all qualified pump operators in the department.
- Place into service two new fire apparatus pumpers and standardize all front-line fire apparatuses.
- Provide department facility fire training and controlled burn at the fire academy to all combat firefighters.
- Research and evaluate providing inter-facility medical transfers on additional ground units.

**E**mergency Management prepares the county to deal with any event that might threaten the safety of the County's residents and visitors or impact property and infrastructure.

One mission is to make the county less vulnerable. The department does this by creating and implementing comprehensive plans that build, sustain and improve the county's capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

Emergency Management is the operational leader, coordinating all municipalities, private partners and state/federal agencies during emergencies, including hurricanes.

When disaster does strike, we are ready to respond with trained personnel and necessary resources.

#### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Obtained FEMA and State of Florida approval of the 2015 Local Mitigation Strategy Plan Review and Update. Adoption of the plan made the county and its residents eligible for post-disaster and pre-disaster grants to implement certain mitigation projects.
- Secured \$300,000 grant from the State's Shelter Retrofit Program to conduct an engineering study and cost benefit analysis of the Arnold and Edwards Halls to examine their viability to serve as shelters during high wind incidents. The study was completed in December and all parties are



## Emergency Management

developing a strategy outlining the next phases of the project.

- In partnership with the Monroe County Health Department, the County entered into an agreement with Pinecrest Rehabilitation Center in Miami to serve as an out-of-county shelter for Monroe County's medically managed clients.
- Developed a plan to detail how the County's emergency response community will manage the consequences resulting from a prolonged interruption of water supply from the mainland. We subsequently conducted a functional-table top exercise with key partner agencies to validate the plan. The lessons learned are being used to further strengthen the plan.
- To help enhance readiness for any potential radiological emergency and to help ensure staff continually get trained or receive refresher training, the department has



Budget: \$860,000 (\$480,000 paid by grants)

Employees: 5

Director: Irene Toner

Phone: 305.289.6065

Toner-irene@monroecounty-fl.gov

undertaken quarterly trainings county wide. The training began with Ocean Reef and expanded to Key West, with 68 responders completing the course.

#### 2016 GOALS

- Assist Growth Management Department in its quest to obtain Community Rating System classification, which will make County property owners eligible for discounted flood insurance premiums.
- Train an additional 250-plus radiological emergency responders throughout the County and schedule exercises.
- Work with partner agencies to refine and streamline the in-county shelter worker program, making the process less cumbersome to maximize participation by volunteers.
- Continue to work with Miami Dade County Emergency Management, Miami Dade County Fair and Exposition Inc. and the Florida Division of Emergency Management to follow up on the recommendations from the shelter retrofitting, identify funding sources and secure the necessary capital to make both halls viable shelter facilities during high wind incidents. Continue to identify and aggressively pursue additional out-of-county facilities that may be suitable to serve as an out-of-county shelter for Monroe County evacuees. Find additional facilities in Miami Dade and Broward counties that would be suitable to serve as out-of-county shelters for medically managed clients.



## Social Services

**M**onroe County Social Services assists a diverse population with a number of long-standing programs and some new exciting ones. We are committed to offering basic and life-sustaining services, with respect, to each citizen in need in Monroe County, regardless of his or her circumstances. In 2015, we had 2,635 office visits and 5,529 incoming calls from people inquiring about our wide variety of programs.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides financial relief from high energy costs to prevent services disconnection for families and individuals in crisis. Particular efforts are made to serve the elderly, those with special needs, and families with very young children. In 2015, we assisted 645 households.

Social Services and Monroe County Housing Authority's SHIP (State Housing Initiatives Partnership) forged a unique partnership. During 2015, Social Services handled the operations and administration of the SHIP program for the Monroe County Housing Authority. We spent \$300,000 on improvements to 14 homes throughout the County.

Bayshore Manor, a 16-bed Assisted Living Facility, provides residents and adult day care guests with quality and compassionate care, while striving to enhance quality of life, preserve dignity, and meet health, social and emotional needs. As the only Assisted Living Facility in Monroe County, Bayshore Manor remains at maximum capacity and maintains a constant wait list. At Bayshore Manor, we also care for adult day guests. Last year, these guests spent 5,371 hours at the facility, receiving care between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Through our home delivered meal and congregate meal programs, our Nutrition Services allow clients to receive hot, healthy, nutritionally sound meals on a daily basis. In 2015, we delivered 1,666 hot home meals and 27,792 frozen meals.

The Department's In-Home Services Program ensures that our elder population can age in place with an optimal degree of independent living, in a manner that preserves dignity and human connectedness. These services are targeted to those seniors in greatest economic and social need. Services include: personal care, respite, homemaking, shopping and running errands, chores, case management and companionship. These programs are largely funded by grants from the Department of Elder Affairs.

Monroe County Transportation (MCT) provides door-to-door para transit service for any transportation disadvantaged resident of Monroe County. In 2015, we provide 18,938 one-way trips to the doctor, grocery store, etc. Additionally, MCT maintains the Special Needs Registry for individuals who require assistance during evacuations.



Budget: \$5,1 Million

Employees: 54

Senior Director: Sheryl Graham

Phone: 305-292-4510

Graham-sheryl@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Strategic Planning

### The Strategic Plan guides the scope and direction of County services based on priorities established by the Board of County Commissioners – after extensive input from the public.

The plan enables all County divisions and departments to focus their actions, resources and budgets on goals and projects that support the County's grand vision of its desired future.

Creation of the County's first Strategic Plan began in 2006 with a series of public workshops. Public input continues to shape the plan as it is updated to respond to changing priorities, with new ones arising as others are accomplished or no longer needed.

Monroe County has 25 citizen boards and committees that continually inform County staff and Commissioners about their priorities, concerns and recommendations on a wide variety of issues, including wastewater, the environment, public safety, transportation, infrastructure and quality of life. The County also will hold future public outreach meetings to gather information and perspective on what is important to citizens and business owners. An update to the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan is in the works, which will form the foundation of future County budgets. The Strategic Planning department also manages the Capital Plan for County construction projects and capital financing.

#### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Made significant progress in integrating employee performance reviews with the County's Strategic Plan. Employee performance reviews were expanded to include the assigning of goals to each employee that are tied to department goals.
- Improved the Annual Departmental Action Plan to be more meaningful and consistent between departments, and to more closely tie in to the Strategic Plan.
- Successfully implemented next phase of capital project financing. During fiscal year 2015, we issued bonds to refinance the Series 2003 bonds outstanding, providing \$25 million for capital projects. We also issued a \$16 million line of credit to aid in the efficient funding of the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater Project.
- Entered into a new interlocal agreement with the Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District, which allows Monroe County to use KLWTD's \$17 million allocation of the Mayfield Grant on the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater project in return for an interest-free repayment schedule to the District.

#### 2016 GOALS

- Improve upon the evolution of the performance review process.
- Advise and implement final stage of capital plan financing.
- Improve upon Department Action Plan, changing timing of report so that departments include details when creating budgets.
- Continue analysis of Fire Rescue sales surtax and aid in development of strategies for statute changes and/or implementation.
- Create formal comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan for adoption during 2017.



Employees: 1

Director: Kevin Madok

Phone: 305.292.4480

Madok-kevin@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Engineering Services and Roads



**T**he Engineering Services and Road Department is responsible for managing the engineering design, permitting and construction of County roads, sidewalks, bike paths, bridges and stormwater infrastructure improvement projects. We also are responsible for maintaining them all. In addition, the department oversees the Card Sound Toll Authority, which is responsible for operating the toll booth on Card Sound Road near the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line. The authority also maintains Card Sound Road, County Road 905 and the rights of ways. This includes mowing grass, trimming vegetation and disposal of trash.

In 2014, we conducted a pavement assessment project to calculate the condition for all county roads in order to prioritize repair work. A bridge assessment report was also completed in 2014 to identify and quantify bridge repair/replacement priorities on county-maintained bridges for the next 15 years. Engineering Services reviews right of way permit applications on County land for work performed by residents and contractors; issues the permits; and inspects the work to ensure it is done in accordance with County standards.

Staff provides support to the Planning Department by reviewing proposed development for impacts to County roads. We also provide comments through the Development Review Committee process and by reviewing and providing comments on road abandonment requests. The department also maintains the U.S. 1 traffic signals and street lights within unincorporated Monroe County.



Budget: \$26.4 million  
 (includes \$23.9 million for 11 projects)  
 Employees: 37  
 (24 Engineering Services  
 and Road Maintenance  
 13 Card Sound Toll Authority)  
 Director: Judy Clarke  
 Phone: 305.295.4329  
[Clarke-judy@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Clarke-judy@monroecounty-fl.gov)

**ENGINEERING SERVICES 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Revised county Right-of-Way Code to allow for limited landscaping at the request of the Board of County Commissioners and the public.
- Completed construction of the U.S. 1 Bayside Shared Use Path in Key Largo; awarded the construction contract for the Pedestrian Bridge Over Marvin Adams Waterway to eliminate the gap in the path and provide for safe bicycle/pedestrian travel from MM 100 to 106.
- Began construction on the Lake Surprise Estates Roadway and Drainage Improvement project. Three additional projects – two in Key Largo and one on Stock Island – are in the design phase.
- Nearly completed No Name Key Bridge Repair Project. This is the sixth and final high-priority, “structurally deficient” bridge to be repaired by the county since 2009.

**ROAD MAINTENANCE 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Trimmed trees and brush along 412 miles of County rights of ways; and mowed 558 miles of County right-of-ways.
- Used 7.5 tons of cold patch asphalt to repair pot holes in County roads.
- Saved approximately \$70,000 in dump fees by recycling mulch.
- Cleaned yard for start of new public works facility construction project.
- Trimmed and chipped 5,500 feet of wood line at Marathon Airport.
- Installed and refurbished 2,287 feet of trench drains.
- Performed 37,025 feet of road shoulder work.
- Painted 10,360 feet of approach lines to road stops and installed 259 new stop bars.

**CARD SOUND TOLL AUTHORITY  
2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Mowed grass, trimmed trees and chipped cuttings along 50 miles of right of way on CR 905, Card Sound Road and associated neighborhoods.
- Removed 18 tons of trash from receptacles placed along the right of way and transported it to the transfer station.
- Monitored and maintained the condition of new bicycle lanes in North Key Largo (CR 905) on a daily basis. Dead animals are removed daily and lanes are swept on an as needed basis.
- All maintenance workers completed week long OSHA 30 safety training.

**ENGINEERING SERVICES 2016 GOALS**

- Continue roadway and drainage improvement projects; begin construction on four projects currently being designed and begin engineering design and permitting for future projects; we will be working with the sea level rise group on the road adaptation pilot project and incorporating updated information into all roadway improvement projects.
- Maintain and repair the 25 Monroe County bridges; begin construction on Card Sound Bridge Repair project; do engineering design and permitting of Garrison Bight Bridge repair project, with construction to follow in 2017; and continue design and permitting of Sugarloaf Boulevard Bridge Replacement Project, with construction scheduled for 2018.
- Create database of county maintained drainage structure to create a Geographic Information System layer for better analysis.

**ROAD MAINTENANCE 2016 GOALS**

- Achieve and maintain 100% staffing levels.
- Enter all GPS locations of drainage structures into the County GIS system and State One Call System to minimize damage to County facilities.
- Work with Engineering Services to identify problem roads and neighborhoods that have sea level rise flooding issues.
- Initiate development of an asset management system to facilitate proactive maintenance of county roads, including culverts, drainage structures injection wells, signs and guardrails.
- Merge maintenance of Card Sound Road and SR 905 with Upper Keys Roads Department and assure a smooth employee transition.

**CARD SOUND TOLL AUTHORITY 2016 GOALS**

- Complete design-criteria package and issue Request for Proposals (RFP) for design-build installation of automated tolling system (Toll by Plate/Sunpass).
- Complete traffic and revenue study and finalize Card Sound Long Term Business Plan.

## Project Management & Facilities

**P**roject Management and Facilities contracts and builds all new public facilities for Monroe County. We currently are managing 44 projects throughout the Keys, with a total construction budget of \$48 million. These include a new Plantation Key Court House and Detention Center, a new Marathon Library, a new Crawl Key Training Academy for firefighters and the Big Pine Swimming Hole.

We are responsible for maintaining and repairing more than 100 County buildings with more than one million square feet of space, as well as a few leased buildings throughout the Keys. These include the correctional facilities and the East and West Martello museums. We also are responsible for maintenance and repairs of County parks, beaches, communication towers and boat ramps.

Maintenance includes: air quality testing, and certification and maintenance for alarm systems, elevators and sewage treatment plant operations.



Budget: Facilities: \$6.7 million  
 Project Management: \$44 million  
 Employees: 78  
 Director: Doug Sposito  
 Phone: 305.292.4416  
 Sposito-doug@monroecounty-fl.gov

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Began design on eight projects: Plantation Key Court house and Detention Center, Atlantic Blvd Relocation, Marathon Library, Bernstein Park Renovations, Transfer Station Offices, Big Pine Swimming Hole, Big Pine Park Vista and Reynolds Street Pier.
- Began construction on five projects: Crawl Key Training Academy, Magnolia St. Public Works Building, Higgs Beach fitness Trail, Senior Meal Site and Key West Light House Renovations.
- Purchased land for the Cudjoe Fire Station.
- Completed five projects: Veterans Park Pavilion, Bayshore Manor rest-rooms, Freeman Justice Center Acoustics, Blimp Road Boat Ramp and renovations throughout the county to comply with ADA regulations.
- Initiated Public-Private Partnership Ordinance for receiving un-solicited proposals for communication tower replacements.

### 2016 GOALS

- Begin design for: Cudjoe Fire Station, Rowell's Marina and Ellis Building Renovations
- Complete designs for: Plantation Key Court house and Detention Center, Atlantic Boulevard Relocation, Marathon Library, Transfer Station Offices and Big Pine Swimming Hole
- Complete construction of 10 projects: Crawl Key Training Academy, Magnolia Street Public Works Building, Senior Meal Site, Bernstein Park Renovations, Transfer Station Offices, Big Pine Park Vista, Reynolds Street Pier, Gato Building Painting, Truman Center Painting and Jefferson Brown Chiller Plant
- Begin construction on Cudjoe fire Station and Atlantic Boulevard re-location.
- Sign first-ever county Public Private Partnership contract under new statute.

## One-Cent Sales Surtax For The Keys Infrastructure Fund

**First, here's a little history about the surtax. In 1989, Monroe County citizens passed the first "infrastructure tax," a one-cent addition to the sales tax – for a period of 15 years. It originally was earmarked to pay for construction of the Monroe County Detention Center on Stock Island, a much-needed facility to replace the overcrowded jail in Key West. At the time, the county was under federal court order to solve the overcrowding problem.**

In 2012, the one-cent "infrastructure sales surtax" was extended to 2033 with the approval of 68 percent of the voters of Monroe County. The purpose of this extension was to fully fund the remaining state-mandated central sewer and storm water treatment upgrades; repair roads and bridges; continue land acquisition efforts, and fund other important county infrastructure projects. At the time, the entire country (including the Keys) was just starting to recover from a economic downturn, and the Keys were still tens of millions short of funding its sewer mandate.

The 2012 tax extension mandated that the funds collected, starting in 2019, be used only for wastewater until such time as the governing body of the County or municipality determines that the necessary wastewater projects are completed or in progress and fully funded. Once that mandate was met, use of a jurisdiction's remaining funds could be used for other referendum-allowed infrastructure projects.

Since 2012, the Keys economy has improved and funds from state and federal sources to help with the sewer projects have materialized. With the help of the surtax, which generated more than \$100 million to complete several wastewater systems, the County's sewer obligations are now fully funded.

For Fiscal Year 2015, the penny surtax generated about \$34 million of which about 60 percent is paid by tourists and day visitors. The funds are distributed among



the County and five municipalities using a revenue-sharing formula mandated by statute. The County received \$20.1 million (60 percent) and the rest was divided among Key West, Marathon, Islamorada, Key Colony Beach and Layton.

Last year, the County made good use of its surtax funds – spending \$13.5 million to follow its Capital Projects Plan, a multi-year blueprint that identifies each proposed capital project that includes construction and rehabilitation of public buildings, major street improvements, park and recreation projects and acquisition of major necessary equipment, like fire trucks.

Many of the 2015 expenditures were for designs and engineering of projects that have or will go into the construction phase in 2016, when more funding is needed. The 2016 proposed funding using the surtax is \$25.8 million.

## County Projects form Key West to Key Largo

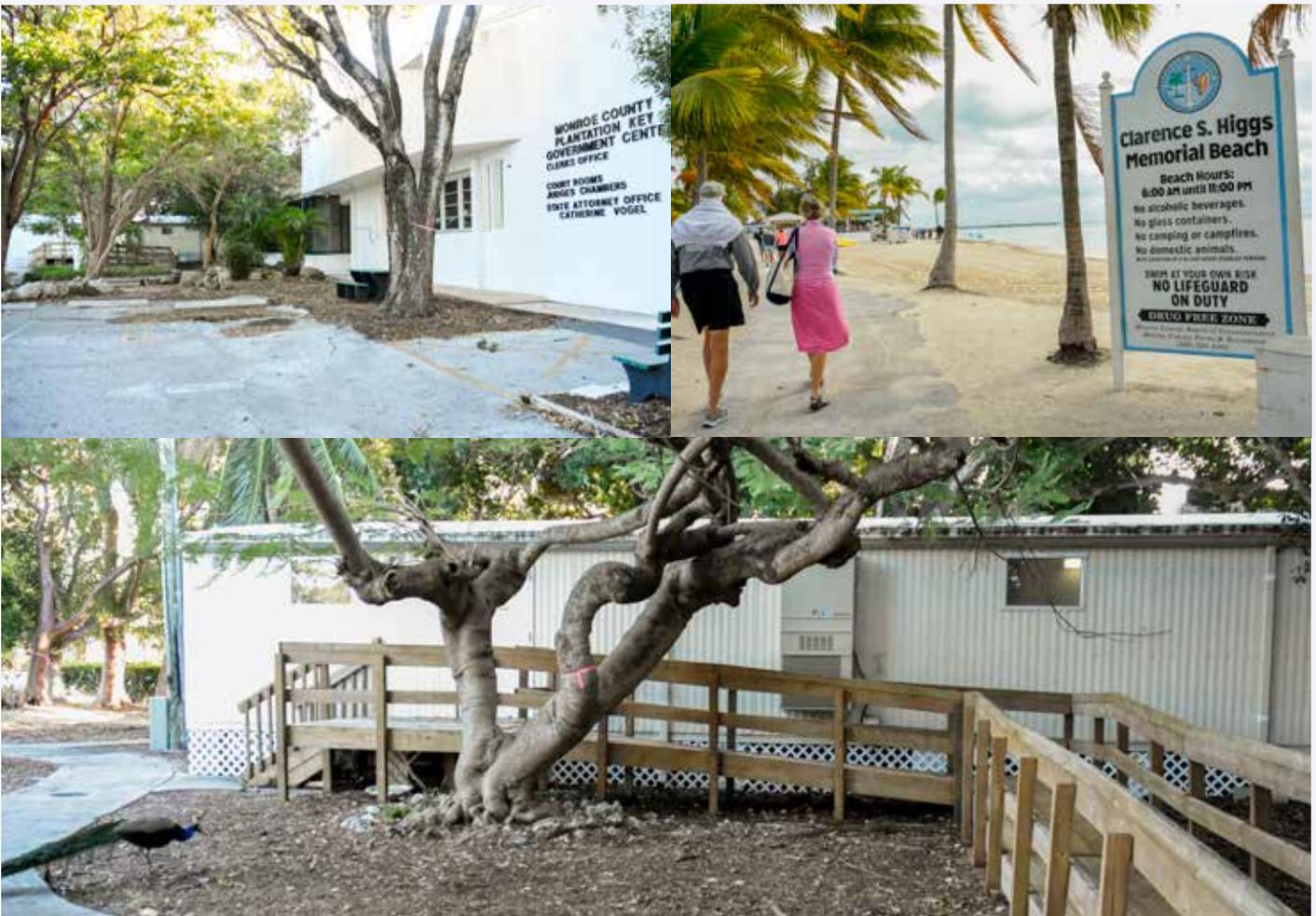
### UPPER KEYS

The County is working on a new \$20 million courthouse and jail complex on Plantation Key. This is desperately needed to replace the crumbling, outdated and inefficient facilities, including a courtroom inside a trailer. A new public works facility also is being built as part of this project. Construction will soon begin on a new pedestrian bridge over Adams Cut Waterway, which is the last piece of the six-mile pedestrian/bike path. Several road and drainage projects are underway, including one that will address sea level rise. Renovations will begin on the Card Sound Toll Bridge and a rest area is in the works for Rowell's Marina 8-acre waterfront park.

### MIDDLE KEYS

Construction will be completed on the new Crawl Key Fire Training Academy, a place for firefighters and fire rescue/emergency medical technicians to train. It's a 5,625-square-foot masonry and concrete building that will include two covered and closed garage bays, a training classroom, two offices, a storage room and two restrooms with showers and lockers. Renovations will begin on Old Seven Mile Bridge to make it safe for pedestrians, cyclists, runners and tourist along the 1.8-mile section that leads to historic Pigeon Key. The County worked with the City of Marathon and the Florida Department of Transportation to save the engineering marvel from more than a century ago.





## LOWER KEYS

The County, in partnership with the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, is completing a deep injection well, the last piece of the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater System. It was the largest and most complex sewer project, encompassing eight islands and 10 bridge crossings. The County is working on the Big Pine Swimming Hole, a passive recreational park near mile marker 29 on U.S. 1. And, the County is in the midst of developing the \$3.8 million Higgs Beach Master Plan, which includes a Visitor & Nature Center, relocation of the road and parking lots to expand the beach area, a new children's playground, new volleyball and pickle ball courts, a new dog park, a new fitness trail and better lighting.



## Fleet Management



leet management operates and manages three County garages in Key West, Marathon and Plantation Key, which all provide full-service maintenance, repair and fuel facilities.

It's a big job to keep the County's fleet of about 800 cars, trucks, generators and anything else with a motor humming, especially in the heat, humidity and salt air of the Keys. The fleet includes about 255 units from the Sheriff's Department and 67 emergency power generators.

We provide fuel 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – even during electrical power outages – at three fully automated sites that are also utilized by the Monroe County School Board. And we also administer County vehicle/equipment replacement programs for about 450 units.

**Did you know?** The 12 full- and part-time mechanics that work in three different garages and out in the field provide most of their own tools, including: drive socket sets, gasket scrapers, wrenches, voltage meters, nut drivers, air tools, hammers and miscellaneous specialty items. The tool sets range from about \$3,000 for new mechanics to \$20,000 for lead mechanics.

Fleet Budget: \$2,991,964

Number of Employees: 17

Director: Roy Sanchez

Phone: 305.292.3572

[Sanchez-roy@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Sanchez-roy@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Crews completed a combined 2,800 work orders while also performing preventive maintenance, repairs and safety inspections.
- Garage personnel purchased, distributed and billed for \$160,000 gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel.
- Replaced 33 outdated County vehicles and other units.
- Replaced fuel tank fill intake housings at Key West fuel facilities.
- Added a new plug-in hybrid to County's fleet.

### 2016 GOALS

- Reduce employee turnover, fill all vacated fleet positions and increase garage production by approximately 40 percent.
- Establish apprentice mechanic training program and try to establish small pool of available entry level mechanic applicants.
- Improve safety practices at all county garages/facilities.
- Better document vehicle and equipment maintenance, inspections and repairs.





The Airports Department continues to provide the traveling public and the aviation community

with outstanding facilities and excellent customer service, while focusing on aviation safety and security, at both the Key West International and Florida Keys Marathon International airports. We are self-supported, with NO general fund or property taxes used to fund either airport!

At Key West: Delta, American and Silver airlines offer non-stop commercial service to Atlanta, Charlotte, Washington, D.C., Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, Ft. Myers and Tampa airports, as well as connecting flights to the world. In addition to scheduled airlines, the airport also handled about 40,000 general aviation aircraft takeoffs and landings.

At Marathon: General aviation dominates the airport's use, with about 69,000 aircraft operations annually. A new user-fee U.S. Customs & Border Protection facility is almost complete, allowing the airport to provide international passenger clearing services starting later this year. Another significant investment in the airport's infrastructure is underway: the development of several new hangars to store locally based general aviation aircraft and increase airport revenue.



Budget: \$9.3 Million

Employees: 20

Director: Donald DeGraw

Phone: 305.809.5200

[Degraw-donald@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Degraw-donald@monroecounty-fl.gov)

**At Florida Keys Marathon International Airport, general aviation dominates with about 69,000 operations annually.**

## Airports

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Key West & Marathon: Achieved a perfect FAA Safety & Compliance Inspection, with no discrepancies found.
- Key West: Completed a \$4-million crushable concrete block safety system on the west end of the 4,801-foot runway to prevent injury to people and damage to an aircraft

in the event of an overrun. The east end was completed in October 2010 and has captured one aircraft in November 2011.

- Key West: Completed a \$300,000 airfield drainage project to alleviate flooding.
- Key West: Airport terminal is

90% lighted with energy efficient LED fixtures that provide energy savings.

- Marathon: Near 100% completion of the new user-fee customs facility.
- Marathon: Completed landscaping and terminal enhancements.

### 2016 GOALS

- Key West: Complete a 2,000-square-foot expansion of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility, eventually enabling the airport to increase custom's processing ability from 10 to 70 passengers per hour.
- Key West: Conduct Phase 1 of the neighborhood Noise Insulation Program.
- Marathon: Complete 11 new aircraft storage hangars.
- Marathon: Complete a "Runway – Taxiway" separation study to determine best option for making the airport safer.
- Marathon: Complete and begin using the new customs facility.

# Solid Waste and Recycling



**T**he Solid Waste department provides trash, recycling and yard waste collections and processing services to our 75,000 residents as well as to the Keys' millions of annual tourists. The department works closely with four contracted haulers to provide fast, clean and dependable service to the residents and businesses of Monroe County.

In 2015, the collection of separated yard waste rolled out County wide. This has made it possible for the County to reach its goal of diverting yard waste away from landfills and to a more environmentally friendly use: conversion into mulch or compost at a facility on the mainland. And by contracting with a new haul out contractor, the County has realized a savings of \$8 per ton, or more than \$100,000 by the end of calendar year 2015.

After distribution of new 65 gallon recycling carts to all County residences, recycling rates continue to improve. Increased recycling saves the County money. Processed recycled materials are less expensive to transport than trash and also have long-term environmental and sustainability benefits.



Budget: \$17.8 million  
 Employees: 17  
 Director: Will Thompson  
 Phone: 305.292.4432  
 Thompson-will@monroecounty-fl.gov

### 2015 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued to enlist more businesses in a commercial recycling program.
- Finalized designs for the replacement of the scale house buildings at the County's three transfer stations.
- Collected 64,000 pounds of household hazardous waste and 125,900 pounds of electronic waste. The electronic waste is recycled for the value of its parts, while the hazardous household waste is disposed of by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's certified contractors to ensure it is handled in a safe and responsible way.

### 2016 GOALS

- Continue negotiations to develop a gasification plant to convert the County's organic waste into energy.
- Continue outreach and education of the general public to increase recycling rates, which increased by 25 percent over the previous year and are not at an overall rate of about 65 percent countywide.

### Monroe County Transfer Stations and Recycling Centers

Cudjoe Key	Mile Marker 21.5, Blimp Road, Cudjoe Key	305.745.2513
Long Key	Mile Marker 68, Long Key	305.664.2263 or 305.664.2269
Key Largo	County Road 905, Key Largo	305.367.4236



## Wastewater

**In 1999, with nearshore water quality deteriorating around the Keys, the State of Florida mandated that the entire island chain install advanced wastewater treatment systems to eliminate the use of tens of thousands of septic tanks, illegal cess-pits and ineffective small treatment units. It has been a daunting task for a small county spread over a series of 40 islands, but the finish line is oh so near.**



The County's final piece of its wastewater master plan – as well as its largest and most complex – is the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater System. After nearly three years of construction, the system's treatment plant began operations in October, with the first connections starting soon after.

It has not been cheap, primarily due to the unique geography of the county that led to the creation of 12 major service areas for central sewers. The Cudjoe Regional project has cost nearly \$200 million. The entire Keys-wide price tag for installing central sewers is approaching \$800 million. And, when you add the money individual property owners and businesses must pay to hook up to the system, the overall cost may exceed \$1 billion.

The Keys could not have paid for this project without outside funding. The County worked with state and federal legislators to acquire grants and other funds; pushed for voters to approve a much-needed extension to the one-cent infrastructure sales tax; and partnered with the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority for the county portions of the system. The County's portion of the project is fully funded.

At the same time, five municipalities, the Key Largo Wastewater Treatment District and the Ocean Reef-based North Key Largo Utility Company installed sewer systems in their areas. The County's wastewater "department" manages the flow of funds to the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, which built, operate and maintains the County's systems.

Cudjoe Regional runs from Mile Marker 17 on Sugarloaf Key to Mile Marker 33 on Big Pine Key in unincorporated Monroe County. As of January 2016, 400 of the 7,500 homes and business have been hooked up. This is the last major area to hook up in the Keys.

It's been a long and expensive process, but the efforts to convert to central sewers was a necessity for the Keys marine ecosystem that is dependent on clear water with low nutrient levels. Without the new water systems, the water quality of the canals and near-shore waters would have continued to degrade and threaten tourism, our economy, the fragile environment and the Keys way of life.

## Sustainability – Climate change and sea level rise

**M**onroe County, a chain of islands that barely juts above the sea, is ground zero for experiencing the impacts of global climate change. Some of those impacts, especially those due to sea level rise, already are taking place throughout the County. Many streets already are flooding numerous times throughout the year from extreme fall and spring tides. Habitat for wildlife that once was high and dry is becoming encroached with seawater. Rising seas also will affect roads, bridges and other County infrastructure, as well homes and businesses – now and continuing in the future.

In 2012, the Board of County Commissioners approved a new position for a sustainability manager, whose job is to address sustainability and climate change issues, manage a comprehensive canal restoration program to improve the county's water quality and to monitor the solid waste and recycling program to help the Keys become greener and thus more sustainable. The department launched its new Sustainability website in 2015, at [www.GreenKeys.info](http://www.GreenKeys.info).

Budget: \$350,000

Employee: 1

Director: Rhonda Haag

Phone: 305.453.8774

[Haag-rhonda@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Haag-rhonda@monroecounty-fl.gov)



Monroe County has taken a leading role in the regional effort to combat climate change. In December 2015 the County hosted the regional 7th Annual Climate Leadership Summit, with the City of Key West, Islamorada and Marathon as co-hosts. This Summit focused on climate change outreach and preparation activities that the 4 Compact Counties (which also include Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach) and municipalities are preparing for and implementing. In January 2016, the County BOCC hosted a public workshop to review the completed draft GreenKeys Sustainability Action Plan, which includes a 5-year prioritized list of sustainability projects and estimated costs that will help the County prepare its infrastructure for the uncertain effects of future sea level rise. The plan is available to review on the [GreenKeys.info](http://GreenKeys.info) website.



The plan includes results of the County's vulnerability assessment, sea level rise modeling efforts, as well as an evaluation of the County's current level of sustainability using the Sustainability Tools for Assessing and Rating Communities ("STAR") community rating system. Monroe County achieved a 3-star (out of 5-star), one of only four communities in Florida to reach that level, indicating the County is already well along in its Sustainability planning efforts.

GreenKeys! is a proactive plan, intended to provide guidance for current and future decision makers, County employees, Board of County Commissioners, and County residents and business owners. The strategies and recommendations provided in the plan are meant to help guide the County in becoming more sustainable. The Plan seeks to engage the community and build resilience in the face of challenges. In 2016, the County will decide how to proceed and begin some of the projects.

## Sustainability - Canal Restoration

# A

majority of the 502 canals throughout the island chain do not meet the State's minimum water quality criteria and are a potential source of nutrients and other contaminants

to nearshore waters. Many canals contain little to no dissolved oxygen, the result of years of accumulated seaweed, canals dug too deep, little to no circulation and dead end canals.

While the Keys' new wastewater treatment and storm water management systems will greatly help, these projects will not completely eliminate the impaired water quality conditions, particularly the levels of dissolved oxygen in the canal waters.

To address the problem, a much-needed Canal Restoration program began in 2012. The plan was completed in 2014, prioritizing the water quality for the 502 residential canals in the Keys. The plan found that 311 of the canals have impaired water and 131 are rated poor.

In 2014, the Board of County Commissioners approved moving forward with a \$5 million series of canal restoration demonstration projects, choosing six canals with the poorest water quality in unincorporated Monroe County. Seven potential demonstration projects were selected using five restoration techniques: weed gate installation, organic muck removal, culvert installation, backfilling and pumping for recirculation of water.



### Here's the progress:

In 2015, the County completed its first canal restoration project at Canal #29 in Sexton Cove in Key Largo. The backfilling project placed 900 truckloads of fill in the canal to bring it from a depth of 40 feet to 8 feet. Upon completion, a return of abundant sea life was noted by canal residents.

The second project on Geiger Key, involved the installation of a 24-by 38-inch culvert. Researchers from Florida International University found a dramatic jump in the water quality, immediately going from poor to good.

The third and fourth projects, organic removal project on Big Pine Key, saw the vacuum dredging of 5 feet of decayed seaweed and muck. One canal will receive a brand new air curtain and the other canal will receive an upgrade to the existing air curtain.

The fifth project, installation of a 60-inch submerged culvert in Tropical Bay Estates on Big Pine Key is scheduled for construction to start in early 2016. The sixth demonstration project, an air curtain on Big Pine Key, is scheduled for installation the first quarter of 2016. Once installed, no additional weed wrack loading is anticipated in these two canals.

The final potential demonstration project, the Eden Pines pumping project, has progressed to the point where residents have requested pump sizes and the Refuge has agreed to consider the project. But homeowner participation and agreement is lacking. The project is not funded through the original \$5 million and the County is researching alternate technologies for this canal system.

## Extension Services



Budget: \$212,351  
 Employees: 4  
 (1 County, 3 University of Florida)  
 Director: Alicia Betancourt  
 Phone: 305.292.4501  
 Betancourt-alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov

# T

he University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Monroe County Extension Service is residents' connection to the experts and to research from across the state and at the university. Extension Services is dedicated to bringing current, science-based answers to all questions. They focus on horticulture, climate change, energy and water quality right here in the community.

UF- IFAS Monroe County Extension conducts research and provides education to the Keys community. Are you interested in science? It has several citizen science programs that can help you become a researcher for your community. Are you interested in natural resources, gardening or sustainability? It offers UF certification programs in the Keys. The office is supported by both Monroe County (37%) and UF (56%) and the Department of Agriculture (7%).

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Provided programs such as Master Gardeners, Sustainable Floridians, Florida Keys Water Watch and Financial Literacy.
- Managed 163 community volunteers who worked 2,869 hours, equaling about \$61,997 of community service.
- Hosted workshops and events, including 261 teaching events. Answered 21,513 requests for information. Provided leadership, grant writing, volunteers and management of events, including the Tropical Fruit Fiesta, Key West Seafood Fest and the Southeast Florida Regional Leadership Climate Summit.
- The departments internet presence garnered 138,943 hits, 10,000 downloads, 426 shares and 22 retweets.
- The department monitored climate change indicators, trends and impacts supporting the Climate Change Advisory Committee. It assisted in the STAR rating, Sustainability Action Plan, and the Climate Action Plan.
- Wrote grants totaling \$234,000 in 2015 to provide resources and program support.



### 2016 GOALS:

- Hire a small business agent to work with Keys business and non-profits on marketing, diversification and planning.
- Lead new programs on such topics as micro-plastic particles, Florida Keys friendly landscapes, sponge restoration, energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions and climate adaptation strategies.
- Lead the educational effort in water quality including fertilizer and pesticide usage and the Florida Keys Water Watch Program, a volunteer-based water quality-monitoring program for local citizens and school groups.
- Partner with other groups to restore sponges in Florida Bay and to educate citizens about the importance of sponge habitat.
- Offer the state required Green Industries-Best Management Practices landscaper certification to all commercial landscapers.

## Animal Control

### Animal control promotes responsible pet ownership, animal care and community safety. It works to increase pet adoptions and reduce pet overpopulation.

It strives to treat the symptoms of irresponsible pet ownership while seeking to eliminate the causes by compassionately using education and enforcement measures.

Animal Control is responsible for enforcing State and County animal control regulations, protecting the public from the dangers and nuisances of uncontrolled, dangerous or feral animals, and protecting animals from cruelty, abuse and abandonment.



The Keys have three animal control shelters that are currently managed by two independent contractors: The Florida Keys Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which has branches in Key West and Marathon and covers from Key West to Mile Marker 70 of the Overseas Highway; and the Humane Animal Care Coalition in Key Largo, which covers the rest of the Keys.

Animal Control Officers conduct investigations, issue citations and attend court proceedings related to alleged violations. The three County shelters provide all animals in their custody with proper care, nutrition and shelter. The contractors provide an adoption service for all adoptable animals. They also are responsible for ensuring that animals are properly vaccinated for rabies and that all dogs, cats and ferrets also have up-to-date county license tags and certificates.

In 2015, the Key Largo facility sheltered and cared for 736 animals, of which 67 dogs and 20 cats were returned to their owners. All the remaining adoptable animals, 89 dogs and 114 cats, were adopted. Last year, it also performed 598 service calls for the community, protecting both citizens and animals.

In 2015, the Key West facility served 1,888 animals through adoption, clinic, lost and found, cruelty and animal control. (It also temporarily cares for the pets of domestic abuse victims who are in shelters). This overall number was a 12 percent increase from the previous year. The release rate was 83 percent: 508 animals were adopted; 301 animals were reunited with their owners; 94 animals were transferred to breed or species specific animal rescue groups; and 49 wild animals were transferred to species specific rehab groups. In 2015, the Key West facility also handled 756 cases of animal control/cruelty, including 26 cruelty/neglect investigations, 40 enforcement cases, and 494 animal welfare check reports.

Last year in Marathon, an estimated 800 to 1,000 animals were served. In November, the Florida Keys SPCA took over management of the facility from another contractor.

The Key West shelter is in the permitting phase to build a much-needed new facility. About 75% of the project cost has been raised in cash and pledges.

#### KEY WEST

The Florida Keys Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)  
5230 College Rd.  
Key West, FL 33040  
Ph: 305.294.4857  
After-Hours: 305.394.7596

#### MARATHON

The Florida Keys Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)  
10550 Aviation Blvd.  
Marathon, FL 33050  
Ph: 305.743.4800  
After-Hours: 305.394.7806

#### KEY LARGO

Humane Animal Care Coalition  
105951 Overseas Hwy.  
Key Largo, FL 33037  
Ph: 305.451.0088

## Veterans Affairs

**M**

onroe County Veterans Affairs, established in accordance with Florida Statute 292.11, helps the Florida Key's approximately 9,500 veterans, as well as military retirees, active duty personnel and their families obtain benefits from the

Veterans Administration.

These benefits include compensation for service-related disabilities, non-service connected pensions, burial allowances and widow's benefits, VA educational benefits, VA home loans and VA insurance claims.

It helps veterans obtain military and VA documents; get health care through the VA system; and apply for upgrades to military discharge.

It assists veterans obtain benefits through the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. These include: disabled veterans license tags, property tax exemptions and educational benefits.

It transports veterans to the VA Medical Center in Miami. And we participate in numerous ceremonies throughout the keys to honor veterans and active duty personnel.



### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- For the fourth year in a row it helped veterans in the county increase their retroactive income, increasing last year by \$474,000 to nearly \$4.1 million. Overall annual payments increased to \$30.7 million.
- Assisted 3,174 veterans seeking assistance through office visits: 11,940 by phone and 291 field visits. It added 480 new clients.
- Received 4,190 calls for transportation, with 1,856 veterans taken roundtrip to the Miami VA hospital.
- Coordinated and hosted meetings in Key West and Marathon by the VAMC Miami director and staff. Provided updated information on VA health care and future initiatives.
- Provided quarterly briefings to Naval Air Station Key West, Joint Interagency Task Force South for veterans, retirees and active duty personnel leaving the military.
- Met with state Rep. Holly Raschein to provide updated information and concerns of veterans of the county. Coordinated and provided information to U.S. Congressman Carlos Curbelo on veteran's issues and concerns.
- Increased outreach to the general public through radio interviews, providing briefings to numerous organizations and by assisting with awards presentation and various other events.
- Worked with local VFW and American Legion to implement a system to verify veterans status and needs in order to ensure they are provided with appropriate assistance.
- Worked with VA outreach coordinators and housing assistance personnel to assist veterans in obtaining housing, either locally or at another location, through the numerous programs offered through the VA.

### 2016 GOALS

- Update equipment and software, as necessary, to implement upcoming VA initiatives on claims submission and tracking.
- Work closely with local entities, VA Medical Center Miami and the VA clinic Key West to assist veterans in need and monitor the local homeless population.

Budget: \$602,101

Employees: 10

Director: George R. Brentnall

Phone: 305.295.5150

Brentnall-george@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Guardian ad Litem

**The Guardian ad Litem Program, established into Florida law in 1980, mandates that every abused, neglected or abandoned child who enters the criminal or civil court system be provided with a volunteer appointed by the court who will advocate in the best interest of that child.**

More than 10,000 citizens statewide have volunteered countless hours to advocate for these children. Research shows that children who are represented by a volunteer advocate are 50% less likely to return to foster care, and those who do spend less time in foster care. They have fewer placement changes when in care and do better in school.

Last year in Monroe County, more than 319 children were in the dependency system. They were served by 114 outstanding volunteers, who selflessly gave their time and talents to help these vulnerable kids. This volunteer work includes investigation, report writing and testimony about a child's current situation and what has happened to the child. The Guardian ad Litem makes recommendations to the court about what the child needs to be safe and what permanent plans are in the best interest of the child. Last year, the department worked to reach permanency for 126 children through adoptions, family reunifications, permanent guardianships and age-out transitions.



Budget: \$195,000  
 Employees: 11 (2 county, 9 state)  
 Director: Alexandra Corsi Leto  
 Phone: 305.292.3485



The Guardian ad Litem program now is at capacity with its existing funding and has made several legislative budget requests this year to address the skyrocketing number of children coming into care: either as out-of-home placements (children primarily sent to foster and group homes) or as in-home placements (the Department of Children and Families recommends the child remain in the home but with provided services). In Monroe County, the program have been able to take on 100 percent of the dependency cases.

Statewide, Guardian ad Litem's existing funding enables representation of 20,100 children in out-of-home care, which requires more than 10,000 volunteers. As of May 2015, the number of children in such care had climbed past 22,000, an increase of 2,500 kids in just one year.

For in-home care, there are approximately 5,600 children, with nearly 1,500 being under three years old. These children are confirmed victims of abuse or neglect and are arguably the most vulnerable because they have limited ability to communicate and have limited visibility in the community. We would like to see at a minimum that all children under age 3 have a Guardian ad Litem.

The program is in a critical place and is asking the Legislature for an additional \$2.36 million to provide advocates for all out-of-home children and all at-home children under age 3.

## Employee Services

**T**he Employee Services Department provides guidance and information to the County's approximately 500 employees (approximately 1,200 employees for Benefits, Workers' Compensation and Safety) and the public in order to maintain a well-trained, fairly-compensated, healthy and safety-conscious workforce that keeps pace with the evolving needs and goals of the county.

There are four offices within the Department: human resources, workers' compensation, benefits and safety. Services include: recruitment, hiring, employee retention, oversight of group insurance and wellness. workers' compensation, creating and implementing policies that avoid risk to citizens and employees. The department investigates all accidents.



Budget: \$26.2 million  
 (\$21.2 million for group insurance)  
 Employees: 12  
 Director: Teresa Aguiar  
 Phone: 305.292.4557  
 Aguiar-teresa@monroecounty-fl.gov

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Held annual health fairs and offered free screenings for all employees and health plan participants to encourage county employees to stay healthy and catch health issues early. It's estimated the potential health care cost savings of a health fair is \$125,000 over three years. Last year, participation increased almost 30% to approximately 300 people, and most importantly identified six critical conditions of those who participated in the health fair.
- Approximately every three years, the County issues a request for proposals for the Medical and Dental insurance. Both of these proposals resulted in a savings to the employees and the County.
- The injury incident rate continued to go down due to the many hours of safety training, compliance by our employees and the proactive focus of the County's Employee Safety Committee. More than 200 hours of specialized safety training was provided, including how to respond to suspicious packages and bomb threats, survive an active shooter and put out fires.
- The Workers' Compensation program helps employees injured on the job. It also works to prevent accidents. A training program and materials were developed on how to report and document work related incidents.
- Human Resources purchased two live scan fingerprint machines to receive complete and accurate information in addition to expediting the receipt of criminal background information on new hires and employees to about 48 hours. Prior to the machines, fingerprint results took 6-8 weeks to receive.

### 2016 GOALS

- Encourage employees to participate in phase 2 of the Wellness Program, which the BOCC adopted last year. Employees will receive a \$25-per-month health insurance premium discount throughout the year of 2017 and four hours of paid annual leave for completing age-appropriate health screenings by October 31, 2016.
- Continue to monitor health insurance plan costs and explore plan modifications, premium changes, or department rate changes if needed and implement health care reform (Affordable Care Act) mandates.
- Continue to promote wellness initiatives to employees including: lunch and learn, health fairs, educational workshops, community-sponsored run/walk-a-thons and employee health challenges.
- Continue to promote specialized training as deemed necessary and maintain an acceptable Injury Incident Rate.
- Continually monitor the County pay plan and employee salaries and benefits to assure staff is retained, decrease annual turnover rate, which is currently 15 percent, and attract the best county employees for increased efficiency and professionalism.

### Did You Know?

Last year, Human Resources received and processed 1,454 applications for employment, filling 150 vacant positions — 49 were through promotion/transfer and 101 new hires.



## Information Technology

Information Technology (IT) provides efficient, reliable and cost-effective information management services for all things technology related. We plan, design, implement and support the county's network, computer, telephone systems and Monroe County TV: channel 76 on Comcast and channel 99 on AT&T U-verse.

The government access channels broadcast Board of County Commissioners meetings, other local government meetings, public service announcements and original content, including "Snapshots." The 10-episode show, which is in the works, is a joint effort with the Monroe County Public Library History Department and the IT Department and features historian Tom Hambright.

Information Technology also operates the Monroe County mobile app — which provides the latest news, event calendars, meeting agendas, employment opportunities, local weather alerts, facility information, a staff phonebook and the latest bid opportunities — on a mobile device. It also has a visitors section for things to do and see around the Keys.

And, we work with the Planning and Environmental Resources Department to manage Monroe County's Geographic Information System (GIS), which enables us to display geographic data in an intuitive manner on the county website and through the county's mobile app.



Budget: \$2.1 million  
 Employees: 13  
 Director: Alan MacEachern  
 Phone: 305.453.8792  
 Maceachern-alan@monroecounty-fl.gov

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Successfully replaced more than 70 inefficient library PCs with modern, energy-efficient and thin computers, providing a faster and easier library user experience at a lower cost at five library locations throughout the County.
- On the county website, we launched Open Government Monroe (<http://oneview.monroecounty-fl.gov/#/>), an easy-to-use app that provides citizens with important information about government services and schedules.
- Installed new free public Wifi capabilities at Monroe County libraries, senior centers, fire stations and at five Monroe County parks. Big Pine Key Park will be up and running later this year.
- Improved the free public Wifi coverage at existing Monroe County facilities and significantly increased intra-network capabilities/security, resulting in better overall public Wifi availability and speed.
- Designed, developed and implemented the user-friendly Fire Hydrants app for Emergency Services. This app manages all aspects of fire hydrant planning, usage, maintenance and testing.

### 2016 GOALS

- Replace the existing, 15-year-old Monroe County telephone system with a modern, cost-efficient Voice over IP (VoIP) solution that will provide increased functionality and significantly improved ease of use and access for more than 40 locations.
- Begin replacement of Monroe County personal desks tops computers, laptops, servers and server databases where existing technology has become obsolete or outdated.
- Upgrade MCTV equipment and processes to support High Definition and work with Comcast to migrate existing analog Comcast transmission to digital for better picture and sound quality.
- Continue the creation of Monroe County themed original content for MCTV, in addition to the recording and broadcasting of meetings and events.

### Did You Know?

Monroe County received and processed more than 2 million emails in 2015 — but more than half of those were identified as spam, a virus or other malware and blocked before ever reaching a user's inbox.



## Library Services

**T**he county operates five public libraries, with a common mission to meet the changing needs of our patrons for information, education and entertainment. We do so with materials in a variety of formats, in buildings that are inviting, comfortable and fitted for technological growth, and with a staff that is friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.

We provide books, periodicals and audio and video materials for circulation, both in print format and through electronic access. We have free access for the public to the internet, through library computers and through our wireless access that enables patrons to use their own laptops and other mobile devices. Our patrons have 24/7 access to our catalog information, giving them off-site ability to renew and request Library materials. They also have 24/7 access to the Library website, with links to a variety of databases, also at no charge.



Budget: \$ 4,182,396  
 Employees: 43  
 Director: Norma Kula  
 Phone: 305.853.7349  
[Kula-norma@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Kula-norma@monroecounty-fl.gov)

We offer programs designed for mothers and toddlers, for school-aged children, for tweens and teens, for adults, and for senior citizens, both at the Library and through outreach activities in the Keys communities. Patrons can participate in a variety of classes, book discussion clubs, art lessons and speaker series offered by Friends of the Library groups. Reference service is available onsite, as well as through text and electronic chat.

### 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Our digital collection has grown steadily in size to nearly 4,000 items, and in usage, with circulation for the year reaching nearly 22,000, an increase of 17% over the previous year.
- Our focus on our Florida History collection is expanding beyond the materials now archived in the Key West Library. The archivist hired a year ago is working closely with our longtime historian Tom Hambricht and the branch managers to investigate the historical treasures at each branch, with a goal to implement a program of digitization and preservation designed to facilitate access to each collection.



- The Library, working with the county Information Technology staff, has purchased a new system of computers and software to improve our capabilities for patron access to the internet at the Libraries. The new system has streamlined the sign-up and access process, as well as improving the printing by patrons to greatly reduce excess use of paper and ink on unintended print jobs.
- Library staff has greatly benefited from membership in the Southwest Florida Library Network, one of five Library consortia in the state. The costs of all workshops and travel expenses have been covered by a State grant awarded to SWFLN, making staff development opportunities much more accessible to Monroe County Library employees.
- Two 3-D printers were loaned to the Monroe County Library by SWFLN for presentations and demonstrations of this technology to the public. Nearly 200 people of all ages enjoyed these programs that were held at all five branches.



### Did You Know?

Out of the 19,000 photographic images digitized from our Florida History collection onto the Flickr site, the most viewed was a photo from the National Weather Service showing an image of three waterspouts simultaneously visible in one area over Keys waters. It has been viewed 10,039 times and counting.



### 2016 GOALS

- We will work with interested parties in the community, County staff and the design/construction group selected for the new Marathon Library to clarify, identify and present ideas and suggestions for space and usage needs to be incorporated into the new building.
- Building on the success of our 3-D printing presentations, we will continue to explore changing technologies in the library world. They include: makerspaces, mobile reference service, resources for power users of our public access computers, and user experience as applied to Library facilities, both physical and virtual.
- Continue development of branch collections in non-English materials, with an increased focus on materials in electronic format.
- Increase and broaden our understanding of the uses and advantages of well-designed and well-implemented social media for communication and publicity purposes.



## County Attorney

**T**he County Attorney provides cost-effective legal services and counsel to the Board of County Commissioners, the County Administrator, the County departments and all County regulatory and advisory boards in all matters relating to their official County duties, while ensuring transparency in County government.

The County Attorney's Office provides counsel on virtually every major decision made by the Board of County Commissioners and its County staff. The County Attorney's Office also conducts statutorily required ethics training for the Commissioners and Constitutional officers and represents the County Canvassing Board during all elections.

In 2015, legal work was provided for the construction of the bike path on CR 905 in Key Largo, the Customs and Border Protection facility at the Marathon Airport, the Big Pine Swimming Hole, the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater Treatment System, Sugarloaf and Summerland Fire Stations, Bernstein Park, Key West International Airport and Higgs Beach.

During the year, the County Attorney's Office represented the County in more than 1,000 matters in federal and state courts, as well as state and local administrative hearings. Legal staff reviewed every contract, bid solicitation, resolution and ordinance considered by the County Commission. In 2015, the County Attorney's Office drafted ordinances designed to reduce human trafficking and predatory towing practices within the County.

Effective October 1, 2015, the Risk Management Office moved into the County Attorney's Office under the supervision of the County Attorney. This change is intended to improve the efficiency of both offices and eliminate duplication of effort. The Risk Management Office ensures that the County and its contractors are properly insured with all appropriate coverages. County Attorney and Risk Management staff review tort claims made against the County and determine the appropriate response.

### Did You Know?

Of the more than 102,000 members of the Florida Bar, only 251 are Board Certified by the Bar as experts in the field of City, County and Local Government Law. Six of those attorneys work for the Monroe County Attorney's Office. Three more recently retired.



Budget: \$5,875,751

Employees: 17

Bob Shillinger: County Attorney

Phone: 305.292.3470

Shillinger-bob@monroecounty-fl.gov



## Medical Examiner

The Medical Examiner's Office determines the cause, manner and mechanism of death in cases where a person dies suddenly, unexpectedly or foul play is suspected.

Budget: \$631,405

Employees: 3

Executive Director: Thomas R. Beaver

Phone: 305.743.9011

district16medicalexaminer@gmail.com



## Land Authority



The Land Authority purchases property in the county for conservation, recreation and affordable housing. In 2015, we closed 51 real estate transactions, acquiring 71 parcels that total 16.8 acres – all for conservation use.

It was the most transactions closed by any local government land conservation program in Florida last year.

The acquired properties include tropical hardwood hammock, pinelands and wetlands that provide many environmental benefits. These include habitat for endangered species and migrating birds.

We also assisted the State of Florida in closing the purchase of the 900-acre Johnson Property, located on Sugarloaf, Saddlebunch and Park keys. We also manage and restore county conservation and state-owned lands that the county manages.

## Tourist Development Council

The Monroe County Tourist Development Council, a public body created by referendum of the voters in Monroe County, sets the overall direction for the Keys tourism marketing effort.

It does so in a manner that will assure long-term sustained growth in tourism revenues, while also guaranteeing the sustainability and improvement of our destination product. This includes our man-made and natural resources, and improvements to the quality of life of our residents.

The Council is a legislative extension of the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners, which appoints its nine members. Six of the Council's nine members must represent the five taxing districts and are actively engaged in tourism marketing through ownership or managerial operation of a tourism-dependent business. A county commissioner and two other elected municipal officials fill the remaining three seats to represent the interests of the public sector.

The Council is funded by a four cent bed tax on lodging accommodations. The BOCC approves all TDC policies, funding and expenditures. During fiscal year 2015, it spend \$8.9 million in promotion of the Keys and \$4.85 million on a wide variety of cultural, fishing, diving, recreational and athletic activities.

## County Boat Ramps

**Boaters can launch their vessels from seven public boat ramps in unincorporated Monroe County. All are free to County residents. Check the County website for more information.**

### Sunset Point Park

Mile Marker 95.2 Bayside  
Key Largo

### Harry Harris Park

Mile Marker 92.5 Oceanside  
Tavernier

### Koehn Ave. Boat Ramp

Mile Marker 30.8 Bayside  
Big Pine Key

### Eden Pines Boat Ramp

Mile Marker 30.8 Bayside  
Big Pine Key

### State Road 4A Boat Ramp

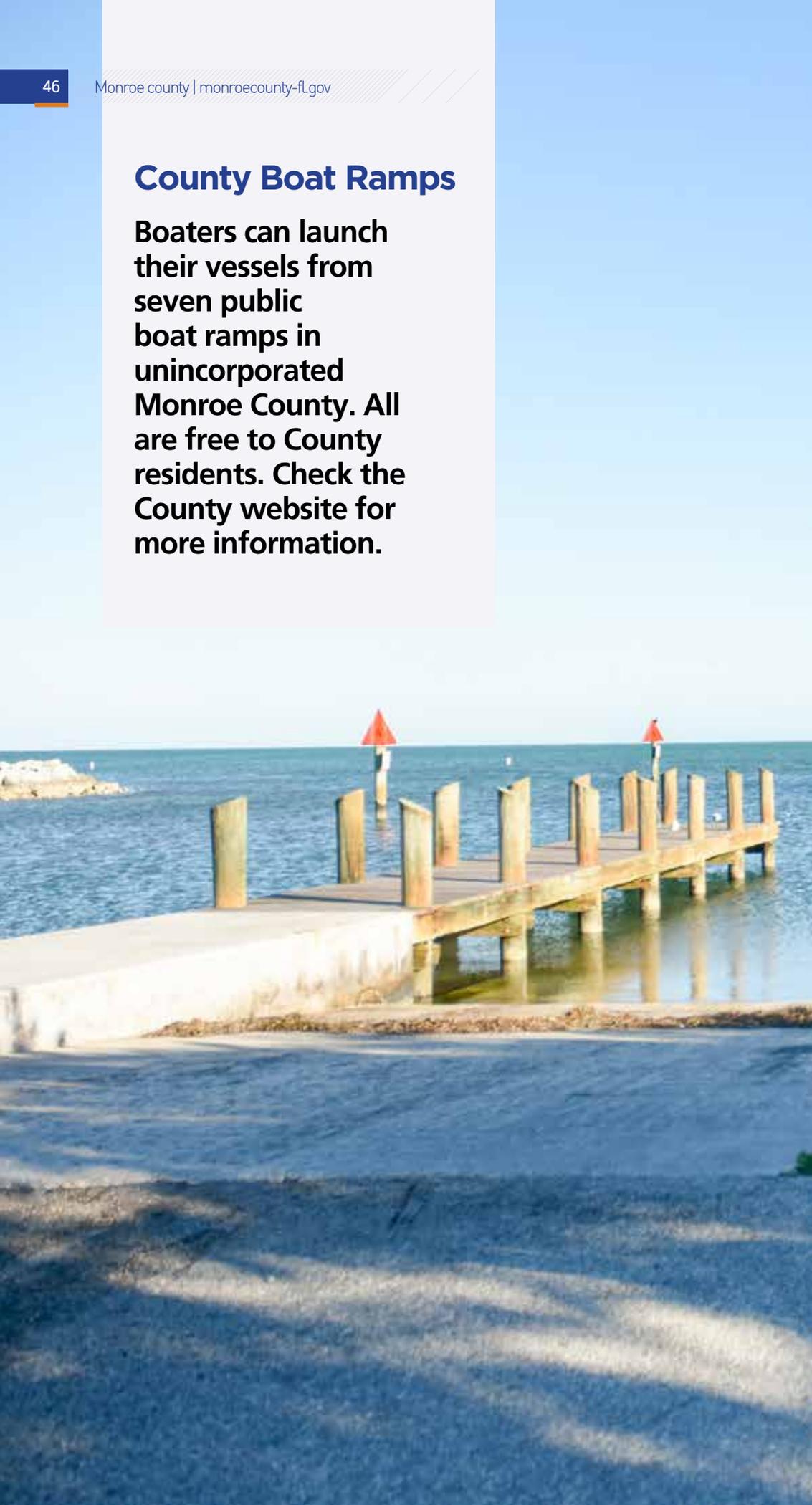
Mile Marker 28.5 Bayside  
Little Torch Key

### Blimp Road Boat Ramp

Mile Marker 21.2 Bayside  
Cudjoe Key

### Barcelona Boat Ramp

Mile Marker 9.3  
Big Coppitt Key



## County Parks & Beaches

**Unincorporated Monroe County maintains 20 parks and beaches, covering more than 100 acres that showcase the beauty and culture of the island chain. Enjoy!**



### KEY LARGO

**Friendship Park**, 69 Hibiscus Drive  
**Sunset Point Park**, Sunset Drive  
**Key Largo Community Park & Pool**, 500 St. Croix Place

### TAVERNIER

**Settlers Park**, Mile Marker 92.5, U.S. Highway 1  
**Burr Beach/Park**, End of Beach Road  
**Harry Harris Park**, Beach Street

### LITTLE DUCK KEY

**Veterans Memorial Park**, Mile Marker 40, U.S. Highway 1

### BIG PINE

**Blue Heron**, Lytton's Way  
**Watson Field Park**, Key Deer Boulevard  
**Palm Villa Park**, End of Palm Avenue and Wilder  
**Big Pine Park**, 601 Sands Road

### RAMROD KEY

**Ramrod Park**, Bayshore & Pruitt

### SUGARLOAF

**Sugarloaf School**, Crane Boulevard

### SADDLEBUNCH KEY

**Bay Point Park**, Mile Marker 15, U.S. Highway 1

### GEIGER KEY

**Boca Chica Beach**, Geiger Key Road

### BIG COPPITT KEY

**Big Coppitt Park**, Avenue F  
**Wilhelmina Harvey Park**, Prado Circle

### STOCK ISLAND

**Bernstein Park**, 5th Street and 5th Avenue

### KEY WEST

**Higgs Beach**, 1000 Atlantic Blvd.  
**Key West Pines Park** (Key West International Airport), South Roosevelt Boulevard

## Citizen Boards & Committees

**Monroe County has 25 citizen boards and committees that contribute to the county government in a variety of ways. Some serve as advisory groups to the Board of County Commissioners. Some committees work on issues and projects.**

Below is a brief description about each board or committee. More information, including agendas and meeting times, is provided on the county website: [www.monroecounty-fl.gov](http://www.monroecounty-fl.gov)



### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Works on affordable housing opportunities for residents and workforce, and fulfills Florida Statute requirements regarding the Local Housing Assistance Plan.

**Contact:** Mayte Santamaria, 305.289.2562; [Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### **ART IN PUBLIC PLACES**

The committee purchases and installs artwork, funded with 1 percent fees from major new construction or renovations, which culturally benefit the county's citizens.

**Contact:** Elizabeth Young, 305.295.4369 [director@keysart.com](mailto:director@keysart.com)

### **CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Makes recommendations to Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) regarding appropriate mitigation and adaptation policies needed to address climate change issues.

**Contact:** Alicia Betancourt, 305.453.8774; [Betancourt-alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Betancourt-alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CITIZENS ADVISORY TASK FORCE**

Assists Monroe County by conducting neighborhood revitalization and housing rehabilitation programs using Community Development Block Grant funds.

**Contact:** Tina LoSacco, 305.292.4427 [Losacco-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Losacco-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### **CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT & APPEALS**

This is an appeal's board that hears discrepancies of interpretations of the current County building codes.

**Contact:** Odalys Mayan, 305.289.2583 [Mayan-odalys@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Mayan-odalys@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### **CONTRACTORS EXAMINING BOARD**

Interprets and makes rules and regulations, and hears public complaints and code compliance violations.

**Contact:** Odalys Mayan, 305.289.2583 [Mayan-odalys@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Mayan-odalys@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE MENTAL HEALTHY & SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY COUNCIL**

Makes recommendations regarding County's grant submission process pertaining to the Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Program.

**Contact:** S. Edie Hambright, 305.293.7422 [shambright@keysso.net](mailto:shambright@keysso.net)

### **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Reviews all applications for development and review all applications for amendments to existing plans.

**Contact:** Mayte Santamaria; 305.289.2562; [Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov)

### **DUCK KEY SECURITY DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD**

Provides security services for the residential areas of Duck Key.

**Contact:** Sherry Popham, 305.393.0657; [sherry@marathonboatyard.com](mailto:sherry@marathonboatyard.com)

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Participates in the Navy's ongoing environmental impact study for aircraft operations at Naval Air Station Key West.

**Contact:** Isabel DeSantis  
305.292.3440; Desantis-Isabel@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **FLORIDA KEYS COUNCIL FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Implements special projects that advocate for residents and visitors with disabilities and their families.

**Contact:** Anna Haskins  
305.292.4591; Haskins-anna@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Designates and regulates historical properties within the unincorporated area of the County.

**Contact:** Diane E. Silvia, 305.292.6718  
hfkf@bellsouth.net

### **HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD**

Review funding requests from non-profit human services agencies and make recommendations to the BOCC.

**Contact:** Laura de Loach-Hartle  
305.292.4482; DeloachHartle-laura@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **KEY WEST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AD HOC COMMITTEE ON NOISE**

Act as a conduit for information to and from their constituents on issues related to airport and aircraft noise.

**Contact:** Don Degraw, 305.809.5200;  
Degraw-donald@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **LAND AUTHORITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Makes recommendations to BOCC on matters related to Land Authority property acquisitions.

**Contact:** Dina Gambuzza,  
305.295.5180; Gambuzza-dina@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD**

Provides the Board of County Commissioners with information and counsel concerning all matters relating to the libraries.

**Contact:** Valerie Moore, 305.809.5266;  
Moore-valerie@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **MARINE & PORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Makes recommendations to the Monroe County Port Authority and BOCC on matters relating to ports or marine issues.

**Contact:** Celia Hitchins, 305.289.2580;  
Hitchins-celia@monroecounty-fl.gov

### **OLDER AMERICANS ADVISORY BOARD**

Make recommendations to BOCC regarding services or programs that would benefit older American citizens of the County.

**Contact:** Pam Martin, 305.853.0907  
pmflkeys@aol.com

### **PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

Review existing facilities, programs, expenditures and revenues and make recommendations for improvements and additional facilities and programs.

**Contact:** Chris Rivera  
305.292.4523; Rivera-chris@monroecounty-fl.gov





#### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Serves as the local planning agency. Reviews proposed amendments and provides recommendations to the BOCC on items regarding rezoning requests and amendments to Future Land Use Map, Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan. Reviews other land issues, including use permits, variances and ROGO rankings and awards.

**Contact:** Mayte Santamaria  
305.289.2562; Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov

#### **RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Makes recommendations to BOCC regarding projects to be funded through the RESORT ACT.

**Contact:** Lisa Tennyson  
305.292.4444; Tennyson-lisa@monroecounty-fl.gov

#### **SHARED ASSET FORFEITURE FUND ADVISORY BOARD**

Makes recommendations for grant funding to private, non-profit organizations using money from the Sheriff Office's forfeitures and seized assets.

**Contact:** Michelle Quad  
305.292.7090  
mquad@keysso.net

#### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY ADVISORY BOARD**

Review and recommend applications for funding under the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program.

**Contact:** Laura de Loach-Hartle,  
305.292.4482; DeloachHartle-laura@monroecounty-fl.gov

#### **TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Sets an overall direction for the Monroe County tourism marketing effort to assure long-term sustained growth in tourism revenues and sustainability of resources.

**Contact:** 305.296.1552  
Harold Wheeler, Executive Director,  
Tourist Development Council.

#### **UPPER KEYS HEALTH CARE TAXING DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD**

Makes budgetary and procedural recommendations to BOCC in matters regarding the taxing district.

**Contact:** Pamela Johnson,  
305.451.2766; Johnson-pam@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Quick References

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**Mayor:** Heather Carruthers, District 3  
305.292.3430

boccdis3@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Carol Schreck  
305.292.3430

Schreck-carol@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Mayor Pro Tem:** George Neugent,  
District 2

305.872.1678

boccdis2@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Terri Colonna  
305.292.4512

Colonna-terri@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Commissioner:** Danny Kolhage, District 1  
305.292.3440

boccdis1@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Isabel DeSantis  
305.292.3440

Desantis-Isabel@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Commissioner:** David Rice, District 4  
30.289.6000

boccdis4@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Tamara Lamarche  
305.289.6000

Lamarche-tamara@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Commissioner:** Sylvia Murphy, District 5  
305.453.8787

boccdis5@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Pam Johnson  
305.453.8787

Johnson-pam@monroecounty-fl.gov

### COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

**County Administrator:** Roman Gastesi  
305.292.4441

Gastesi-roman@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Lindsey Ballard  
305.292.4443

Ballard-lindsey@monroecounty-fl.gov

### ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINSTRATORS

**Christine Hurley**, 305.289.2517

Hurley-christine@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Kevin Wilson**, 305.282.4529

Wilson-kevin@monroecounty-fl.gov

### AIRPORTS

**Director:** Don DeGraw

305.292.3518

Degraw-donald@monroecounty-fl.gov

### BUDGET & FINANCE

**Director:** Tina Boan, 305.292-4470

Boan-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov

### BUILDING

**Director:** Rick Griffin, 305.453.8815

Griffin-rick@monroecounty-fl.gov

### CODE COMPLIANCE

**Director:** Cynthia J. McPherson,  
305.289.2508

McPherson-Cynthia@monroecounty-fl.gov

### COUNTY ATTORNEY & RISK MANAGEMENT

**County Attorney:** Bob Shillinger

305.292.3470

shillinger-bob@monroecounty-fl.gov

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Director:** Fire Chief James Callahan,  
305.289.6088

Callahan-james@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Storm Ready Hotline:** 1.800.955.5504

**Emergency Management:**

305.289.6018

*During emergencies*

*please only call the hotline.*

**Fire Academy:** 305.289.6004

**Fire Prevention:**

Upper Keys 305.453.8726

Lower Keys 305.797.0875

**Fire Rescue Headquarters:**

305.289.6004

**Trauma Star:** 305.289.6008

**Trauma Star Billing:** 305.289.6010

Upper Keys Health Care Taxing

**District:** 305.451.2766

### EMPLOYEE SERVICES

**Director:** Teresa Aguiar, 305.292.4558

Aguiar-teresa@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Benefits:** Maria Gonzalez

305.292.4448

Gonzalez-maria@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Human Resources:** Pam Pumar  
305.292.4559

Pumar-pam@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Safety:** Mark Gongre, 305-292-4559;  
Gongre-mark@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Worker's Compensation:**

Meri-De Mercado, 305.292.4451

Mercardo-Meri-De@monroecounty-fl.gov

### ENGINEERING SERVICES & ROADS

**Director:** Judith Clarke; 305.295.4329

Clark-judith@monroecounty-fl.gov

### EXTENSION SERVICES

**Director:** Alicia Betancourt

305.292.4501; Monroe@ifas.ufl.edu

Betancourt-alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov

### FLEET MANAGEMENT

**Director:** Roy Sanchez, 305.292.3571

Sanchez-roy@monroecounty-fl.gov

### GRANT ADMINISTRATION

**Sr. Administrator:** Laura deLoach-Hartle  
305.292.4443

grantsmanagement@monroecounty-fl.gov

### GUARDIAN AD LITEM

**Director:** Alexa Leto, 305.292.3485,

Leto-Alexa@monroecounty-fl.gov

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Director:** Alan MacEachern,  
305.453.8792

Maceachern-aland@monroecounty-fl.gov

### LAND AUTHORITY

**Executive Director:** Mark Rosch

305.295.5180

Rosch-mark@monroecounty-fl.gov

### LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

**Director:** Lisa Tennyson, 305.292.4444

Tennyson-lisa@monroecounty-fl.gov

### LIBRARY SERVICES

**Director:** Norma Kula, 305.853.7349,

kula-norma@monroecounty-fl.gov

**MEDICAL EXAMINER**

**Director:** Thomas R. Beaver  
305.743.9011  
beaver-thomas@monroecounty-fl.gov

**MONROE COUNTY TELEVISION**

Channel 76 on Comcast  
Channel 99 on AT&T U-verse  
305.295.5128

**PLANNING &  
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

**Director:** Mayte Santamaria  
305.289.2500  
Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT & FACILITIES**

**Director:** Doug Spósito  
305.292.4416  
Spósito-doug@monroecounty-fl.gov

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Director:** Sheryl Graham  
305.292.4510  
Graham-sheryl@monroecounty-fl.gov

**SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING**

**Director:** Will Thompson  
305.292.4432  
Thompson-will@monroecounty-fl.gov

**STRATEGIC PLANNING**

**Director:** Kevin Madock  
305.292.4480  
Madock-kevin@monroecounty-fl.gov

**SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Director:** Rhonda Haag, 305.453.8774  
Haag-rhonda@monroecounty-fl.gov

**TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

**Executive Director:** Harold Wheeler  
305.296.1552; www.fla-keys.com

**VETERAN'S AFFAIRS**

**Director:** George R. Brentnall  
305.295.5150  
Brentnall-george@monroecounty-fl.gov

**CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICES  
CLERK OF COURTS**

**Amy Heavilin**, 305.295.3130  
www.clerk-of-the-court.com

**16th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT**

www.keyscourts.net

**PROPERTY APPRAISER**

**Scott P. Russell**, 305.292.3420  
www.mcpafl.org

**SHERIFF**

**Rick Ramsay**, 305.292.7000  
rramsay@keysso.net

**SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS**

**R. Joyce Griffin**, 305.292.3416  
www.keys-elections.org

**TAX COLLECTOR**

**Danise D. Henriquez**, 305.295.5010  
www.monroetaxcollector.com

**OTHER COUNTY/STATE AGENCIES  
STATE ATTORNEY**

**State Attorney:** Catherine Vogel  
305.292.3400, www.keyssao.org

**MOSQUITO CONTROL**

**Director:** Michael Doyle  
305.292.7190, www.keysmosquito.org

**COUNTY ASSISTANCE**

**Florida Keys Council  
for People with Disabilities**  
Anna Haskins, 305.292.4591  
Haskins-anna@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Monroe County Transit**

Reservations: 305.292.4424  
Cancellations: 305.295.4373

**Sewer Connection Assistance**

305.745.2062

**Special Needs Registry**

Anna Haskins, 305.292.4591  
Haskins-anna@monroecounty-fl.gov

**COUNTY LIBRARY BRANCHES****Key West**

700 Fleming Street, Key West, FL 33040  
305.292.3595

**Big Pine**

213 Key Deer Blvd., Big Pine, FL 33043  
305.872.0992

**Marathon**

3251 Overseas Highway  
Marathon, FL 33050  
305.743.5156

**Islamorada**

81830 Overseas Highway  
Islamorada, FL 33036  
305.664.4645

**Key Largo**

101485 Overseas Highway, Tradewinds  
Shopping Center, Key Largo, FL 33037  
305.451.2396

**ANIMAL CONTROL****KEY WEST**

The Florida Keys Society for the  
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)  
5230 College Rd.  
Key West, FL 33040  
Ph: 305.294.4857  
After-Hours: 305.394.7596

**MARATHON:**

The Florida Keys Society for the  
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)  
10550 Aviation Blvd.  
Marathon, FL 33050  
Ph: 305.743.4800  
After-Hours: 305.394.7806

**KEY LARGO:**

Humane Animal Care Coalition  
105951 Overseas Hwy.  
Key Largo, FL 33037  
Ph: 305.451.0088



**Your Board of County Commissioners spent a lot of time out in the public this past year to meet with citizens, hear their thoughts and concerns about issues, and see progress on projects for themselves.**





## Message From Monroe County Mayor Heather Carruthers

**As this State of the County report demonstrates, 2015 was a year of accomplishments. Your County staff continued to build its professionalism with training, education and experienced hires – and worked as a team to achieve strategic goals.**

From improvement in water quality to preservation of critical habitat to concerns regarding the impact of development on traffic – nearly all aspects of County life and business were examined and addressed through the County's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. After this three-year process, our Comprehensive Plan was successfully transmitted to the State. This year, we will address two outstanding issues (building height and offshore islands), update our Land Development Regulations and continue to ensure that our actions are consonant with that thoroughly vetted Comprehensive Plan. Let's look at key areas of County work, many of which involve multiple departments working towards the same goals.

**Natural Environment.** Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of 2015 was the substantial completion of our central wastewater project. In 2016, work on hook-ups and the deep injection well will continue to finish the Cudjoe Regional System. We performed more than 20,000 free pump-outs from boats just offshore, processing 288,951 gallons of sewage. This year, we will work to find a sustainable way to continue that service.

Last year we began a long-term project to restore water quality and flow in canals throughout the County. The first of six canal clean-up demonstration projects was completed at Sexton Cove in Key Largo, and projects continue on Geiger Key and Big Pine. This year, we will determine how to move forward and how best to finance this multi-million dollar effort for the long term.

On land, we entered into negotiations with a company that potentially can create energy from our yard waste, and saved taxpayers money in the interim by mulching or composting our yard waste that had been going to a landfill. We hosted the 7th Annual Climate Leadership Summit, substantially completed our Sustainability Action Plan and held a series of workshops to examine sea-level rise predictions and potential adaptive responses. In 2016, we will begin to prioritize initiatives to mitigate the impacts of sea-level rise.

We are hopeful the Florida Keys Stewardship Act will pass the State legislature in 2016. The Act will provide the County with \$25 million per year for the next 10 years to assist with water quality improvement efforts as well as land acquisition. This not only would preserve our environment, but also limit the County's takings liabilities as we approach "build-out" in 2023 as determined by the State.

**Built Environment.** After years of working to comply with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's directives, the County was finally able to receive confirmation that we may begin work to qualify for the Community Rating System. Doing so provides a framework for helping preserve property from the impact of flooding and can help reduce flood insurance premiums for all ratepayers. Improved elevation data will further assist homeowners and the County to mitigate against flood damage and rising flood premiums.

As the real estate market has recovered, the lack of workforce housing has again emerged as a critical issue for our residents and economy. The County made immediately available more than 700 permits for workforce housing and reactivated its Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC), which has already completed a number of key tasks. This year, AHAC will develop specific strategies to support the development of workforce housing (particularly for rentals), recommend changes to Land Development Regulations, and identify funding sources to address this crisis.

From installing electric vehicle charging stations to changing to LED lighting fixtures, we continue to reduce the County's carbon footprint. Our project management team completed 16 projects last year and will be working on 17 this year, all with an eye towards improving energy efficiency and resilience.

**Services.** The County helps meet the needs of individuals in many ways. For the fourth year in a row, we facilitated increased retroactive income payments for our veterans. We distributed Trauma Star stickers so responders know they should call the County air ambulance first when residents need emergency medical transportation. Our libraries upgraded their computer systems. The Social Services department handled final arrangements for 78 indigent residents, including 10 veterans and 4 infants. Through the Human Services Advisory Board, we provided \$1.9 million in funds to local agencies to meet the needs of children, the elderly, the disabled and disadvantaged.

**Finance and Management.** All this work has been completed while improving transparency, cost-efficiency and management. We augmented County resources by securing funding from the Federal government, including \$12.4 million resulting from the BP oil spill. We coordinated with the Tax Collector's office to improve enforcement of transient rental regulations and collect unpaid bed taxes. Through OneView, citizens now have access to a tremendous amount of information regarding the County, from facility locations to budget details. With our new Performance Evaluation System, we are integrating staff performance reviews with the County's Strategic Plan. And despite the State shifting more than \$1 million in Health Department expenses to the County, we reduced our millage rate by more than 6%.

It is both a challenge and an honor to provide leadership in this incomparable place we call home. In the coming year, your County Commission and superb County staff will continue to work to protect our environment, improve the quality of service we provide residents and manage your tax dollars efficiently and transparently.



[www.monroecounty-fl.gov](http://www.monroecounty-fl.gov)