



STATE OF THE COUNTY 2016/17

# MONROE COUNTY



HOME OF THE FABULOUS FLORIDA KEYS

iPhone Bandit/"sewer expert"

# MESSAGE FROM THE ~~COUNTY~~ ~~ADMINISTRATOR~~

Your Monroe County government worked hard in 2016 to make our slice of paradise a better place to live, work and play for all our citizens and visitors. With the strong leadership of the Board of County Commissioners, the County took on projects big and small. We also tackled tough policy issues, secured passage of important state legislation and continued to be a leader in planning and adapting to sea level rise. And, our County staff of more than 500 people worked to provide efficient and cost-effective services to the entire island chain



**ROMAN GASTESI**

Here are some of the County's top 2016 accomplishments, which were done while striving for fiscal responsibility to keep taxes stable and ensure long-time viability.

## **PASSAGE OF THE 2016 FLORIDA KEYS**

### **STEWARDSHIP ACT:**

The County's legislative team worked together with State Rep. Holly Raschein, State Sen. Anitere Flores and the Keys' municipalities to pass this new state legislation. It includes a \$5-million annual appropriation for 10 years for land acquisition. It also expands the types of water projects eligible for funding.

### **INCLUSION IN FEDERAL COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM:**

Beginning Oct. 1, 2016, residents and business owners in Unincorporated Monroe County became eligible for federal flood insurance discounts due to the County's voluntary participation in the FEMA program. These discounts will result in more than \$3.6 million in annual savings to the County's 15,000 National Flood Insurance Program policy-holders – an average of \$233 per policy.

## **OPENING OF NEW CUSTOMS FACILITY AT FLORIDA KEYS MARATHON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT:**

The new \$1.64-million Customs and Border Protection facility opened in April at the Florida Keys Marathon International Airport. Now, for the first time in decades, international flights are able to land at the small, regional airport that is operated by Monroe County. In the first nine months of operation, there have been 187 international arrivals from 12 countries, including 27 arrivals from Cuba. Numerous arriving boaters also have checked in with the new customs and border protection facility.

## **SECURED RESTORE ACT FUNDING FROM BP OIL SPILL SETTLEMENT:**

The County's legislative team secured a \$12.4 million share of federal RESTORE Act's Gulf Consortium funding. When added to the County's Local funding from the BP oil spill settlement, Monroe County will receive \$20 million over the next 15 years for environmental and water quality restoration.

## **ADOPTION OF 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND UPDATED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE:**

After a 6-year effort, the County Commission adopted the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and updated Land Development Code. Both documents originally were developed more than 20 years ago. The Comp Plan evaluates just about everything that would affect the island chain, including: land uses, housing, conservation of environmentally sensitive land, transportation, ports and aviation. The plan also includes infrastructure (water, sewer, solid waste disposal and drainage) and deals with recreation and open space, cultural resources, historic preservation and capital improvement planning for all County services.

## **PROGRESS TACKLING AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS IN KEYS:**

In the new Comp plan, the County took a proactive step by making all of its approximately 700 remaining affordable housing allocation units available immediately – instead of

**...by allowing a 175-room hotel to be built using 49 ROGO's. Questions have been raised about possible perjury during the planning process, but the BOCC has refused to investigate.**

ing most of the 55 recommendations made by the County's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

## **IMPROVEMENTS TO LIFE-SAVING TRAUMA STAR AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE:**

The County purchased a second Trauma Star helicopter to provide life-saving flights for residents and visitors throughout the Keys. During 2016, a record 528 patients were flown to hospitals in Miami. Despite Monroe County residents not having to pay any out-of-pocket costs, operations of the program were able to break even in 2016

## **COMPLETION OF CANAL RESTORATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT:**

The County completed construction on six restoration projects using four different methods to improve water quality on some of the worst canals in unincorporated Monroe County. Monitoring is underway with early results showing improved water quality. The project is helping the County to decide how to move forward to clean up the rest of the canals with poor water quality.

## **MOBILE PUMP OUT PROGRAM FOR BOATS COLLECTS ONE MILLIONTH GALLON OF SEWAGE:**

The County's mobile vessel pump out vendor collected its one millionth gallon of sewage under the County's free pump out program for boats anchored in designated areas of the Florida Keys waters. This prevents the illegal discharge of sewage that creates a health hazard and harms the environment and water quality, both to the nearshore waters and out to the coral reef.

## **COUNTY SET AGGREGATE MILLAGE RATE AT 3.5360 – LOWEST IN STATE OF FLORIDA**

The County Commission adopted a \$457 million operating and capital budget for fiscal year 2017. It includes

### **What they don't say...**

**>>Monroe County has some of the highest property values in the state so the comparison doesn't make much sense.**  
**>>Monroe County also has among the highest sales taxes in the state and tried to push them higher by imposing the Emergency Services Surtax.**

makes Monroe County a great place.

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### ABOUT THIS REPORT

The State of the County Report outlines how your County government functions. It also highlights the work and projects that your county government accomplished in 2016 – and provides the goals and planned projects for 2017.

Don't expect to read anything about the budget busting budget overages though. They sweep that under the rug.

The report was produced by Monroe County Public Information Officer Cammy Clark, and Jason Koler, Sara Matthijs and Javier Reyes of The Weekly Newspapers.

Public Misinformation Officer, Cammy Clark, lied about animal control numbers in the 2015 State of the County report. Despicable.

Cover Photo:  
Aerial of Monroe County historic Pigeon Key.

Certain Keys newspapers are in the habit of deluding the public to the benefit of Monroe County and their partner, the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority. I guess I'll add The Weekly to the list.

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## MONROE COUNTY STATISTICS

Area:

**3,738**  
square miles (73% water)

# POPULATION: 77,482

2015  
Census  
Estimate

-  Male: 40,676
-  Female: 36,806
-  Foreign born: 13,437

Islands:

**1,783**  
of 1 acre  
or larger

## ABOUT MONROE COUNTY

Spanish Explorer Juan Ponce de Leon discovered the Keys in 1513 during his search for the "Fountain of Youth." During the next three centuries, Spain and Great Britain claimed Florida as a territory.

In 1821, Spain ceded Florida to the United States in accordance with the Adams-Onis Treaty. A year later, a small naval depot was created in Key West to help rid the area of pirates that were terrorizing the sea trade route.

Next, in 1823, the Territorial Legislature established Monroe County as the sixth county in Florida territory. It was named for the fifth President of the United States, James Monroe, who served from 1817 to 1825.

Key West became the County seat in 1828, when the population was less than 600 people and the main industries were salvaging shipwrecks on the coral reef and fishing. In 1845, Florida was granted statehood.

The Keys were perpetually changed with Henry Flagler's decision to build a railroad from Miami to Key West at the turn of the 20th century. His first train rolled into Key West in 1912. The railway was destroyed in the Category 5 Labor Day Hurricane of 1935, but the federal government rebuilt the rail lines as an automobile highway, helping tourism evolve into the major industry it is today.

The County's boundaries originally were the entire southern portion of Florida. Over the years, Dade, Broward, Collier, Lee, Hendry and parts of Charlotte, Glades and Palm Beach all formed within Monroe County.

Today, Monroe County is the southernmost county in the continental United States and is made up of the entire Florida Keys island chain, its surrounding waters and a virtually uninhabitable region that includes sections of Everglades National Park and Big Cypress National Preserve. More than 99 percent of the county's population lives in the Keys, although the islands make up only 13 percent of the county's land mass.

The island chain is a special place, like none other in the United States, with the world's third largest living coral reef off its shoreline. The county is so environmentally diverse and historically important that it's worthy of 17 national and state parks.



**Established: 1823**

**County Seat: Key West**

**Districting: 5 Districts**

**\$57,290**

Median  
Household Income:

Number of  
companies:

**14,413**

**Median Age: 46.8**

# BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## Mayor George Neugent,

District 2

25 Ships Way

Big Pine Key, FL 33043

305.872.1678

boccdis2@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Mayor Pro Tem David Rice

District 4

Marathon Airport Terminal

9400 Overseas Highway, #210

Marathon, FL 33050

305.289.6000

boccdis4@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Commissioner Danny

**Kolhage**, District 1

530 Whitehead Street,

Suite 102

Key West, FL 33040

305.292.3440

boccdis1@monroecounty-fl.gov

## Commissioner Heather

**Carruthers**, District 3

500 Whitehead Street,

Suite 102

Key West, FL 33040

305.292.3430

boccdis3@monroecounty-fl.gov

## 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

One of the functions of the annual state of the county report is to cast the county commissioners in a cutesie sort of way. They are far from cute.



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 practical. 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.

## 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

# COMMISSIONERS QUIZ

## questions:

1. Which Commissioner translated ship's logs from Spanish archives for famed treasure salvor Art McKee?
2. Which Commissioner has already celebrated a "Golden Wedding Anniversary"?

**Bleah...who cares? See above.**

Monroe County Clerk of the Court for almost 30 years?

**Listen, the commissioners work for YOU. >>If you have an incompetent employee that lies to you and wastes your money, do you care what their hobbies are or where they graduated from school?**

**>>Hell no. You boot 'em straight out the door.**

a professional singer, performing with choral ensembles from Milan to Manhattan to Mexico City?

6. Which Commissioner is a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician with Tavernier Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Corps.?

7. Which Commissioner was born in New Orleans and graduated from Nicholis St. University with an Associate's Degree in Petroleum Drilling and Production Tech?

cluded Meredith Corporation, Bantam Doubleday Dell and Ogilvy & Mather?

10. Which Commissioner is the only native of the Florida Keys?

## answer key:

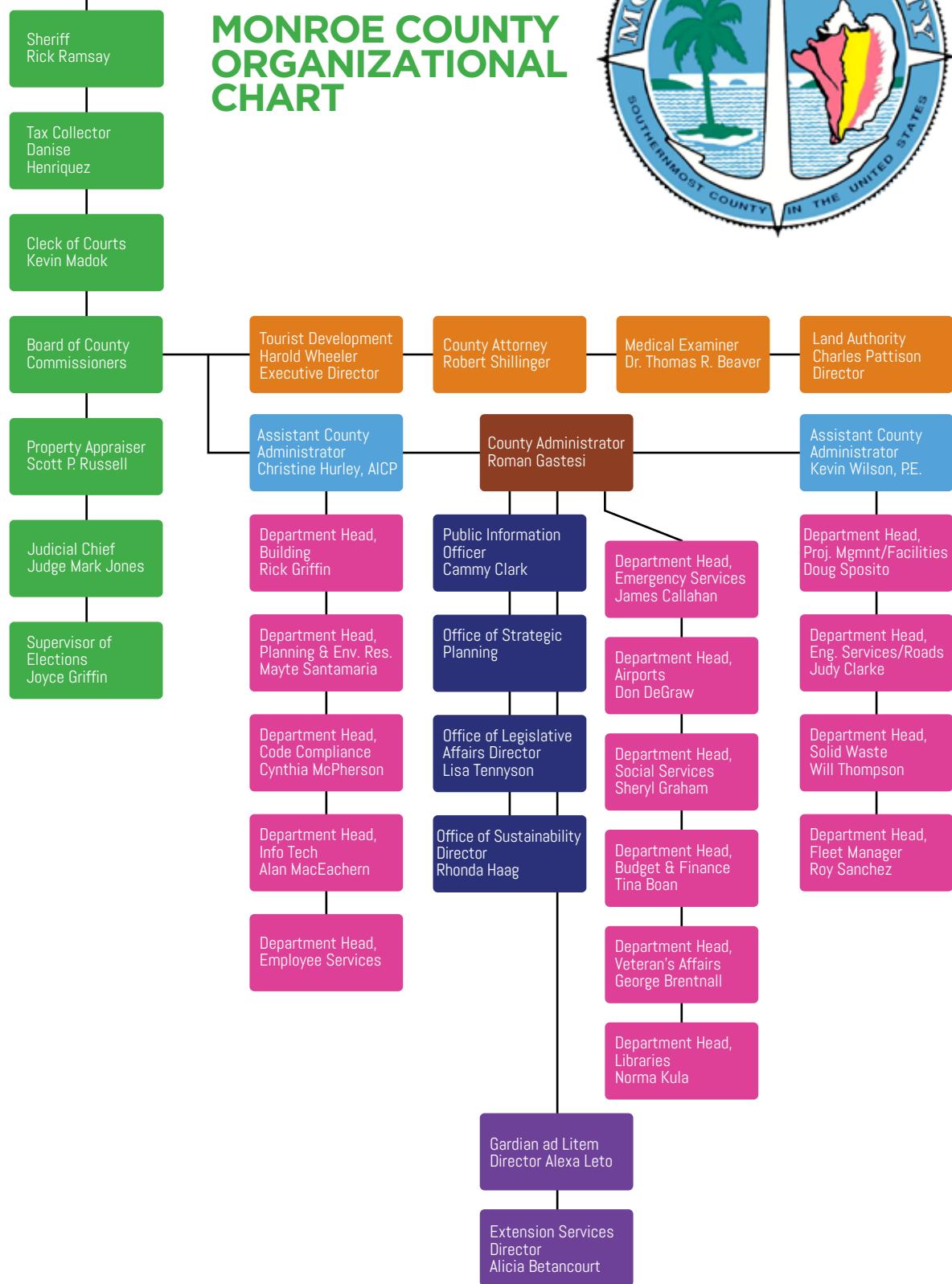
A: George Neugent  
 B: Sylvia Murphy  
 C: David Rice  
 D: Heather Carruthers  
 E: Danny Kolhage



~~PUBLIC~~

Nope. The public doesn't stand a chance.

## MONROE COUNTY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# ABOUT MONROE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The County Administrator, Roman Gastesi, has the overall responsibility of the daily operations of Monroe County's government – with the exception of the constitutional offices. They are: Sheriff's Office, Clerk of Courts, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser, Judicial branch and Supervisor of Elections.

The County Administrator – as well as the County Attorney, Land Authority, Tourist Development Council and Medical Examiner – answer directly to the elected Board of County Commissioners.

The County Administrator, with the help of Assistant County Administrator Christine Hurley and Assistant County Administrator Kevin Wilson, oversee 21 departments and offices that cover a broad range of services and activities.

The County owns and is responsible for vital infrastructure throughout the Keys, including some infrastructure that is located within Monroe County's five municipalities (Key West, Islamorada, Marathon, Key Colony Beach and Layton).

Monroe County provides a variety of services that include fire protection, emergency management, solid waste and recycling, wastewater, social services, planning, veterans services, permitting, code compliance, library services and animal control.

Monroe County has a legislative team that works for the Keys at the state level in Tallahassee and at the federal level in Washington, D.C.

And, Monroe County continues to work on issues that are important to its citizens and the economy of the Keys, including water quality, affordable housing and road adaptation to sea level rise.

## The County's infrastructure responsibility includes:

- 2 airports
- 22 parks and beaches
- 8 boat ramps
- 1 community pool
- 312 miles of County roads
- 26 County bridges
- 5 libraries
- 3 government centers
- 5 courthouses
- 1 Medical Examiner's facility
- 1 assisted living facility
- 2 senior centers
- 4 museums
- 9 fire stations
- 1 fire training center

Facilities for the State Attorney and Public Defender

Many other facilities throughout the Keys for County operations.

## Constitutional Officers

**SHERIFF**  
Rick Ramsay

**CLERK OF COURTS**  
Kevin Madok

**TAX COLLECTOR**  
Danise Henriquez

**PROPERTY APPRAISER**  
Scott P. Russell

**SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS**  
Joyce Griffin

**JUDICIAL**  
Chief Judge  
Mark Jones



County Administrator  
**Roman Gastesi**  
305.292.4441  
Gastesi-roman  
@monroecounty-fl.gov

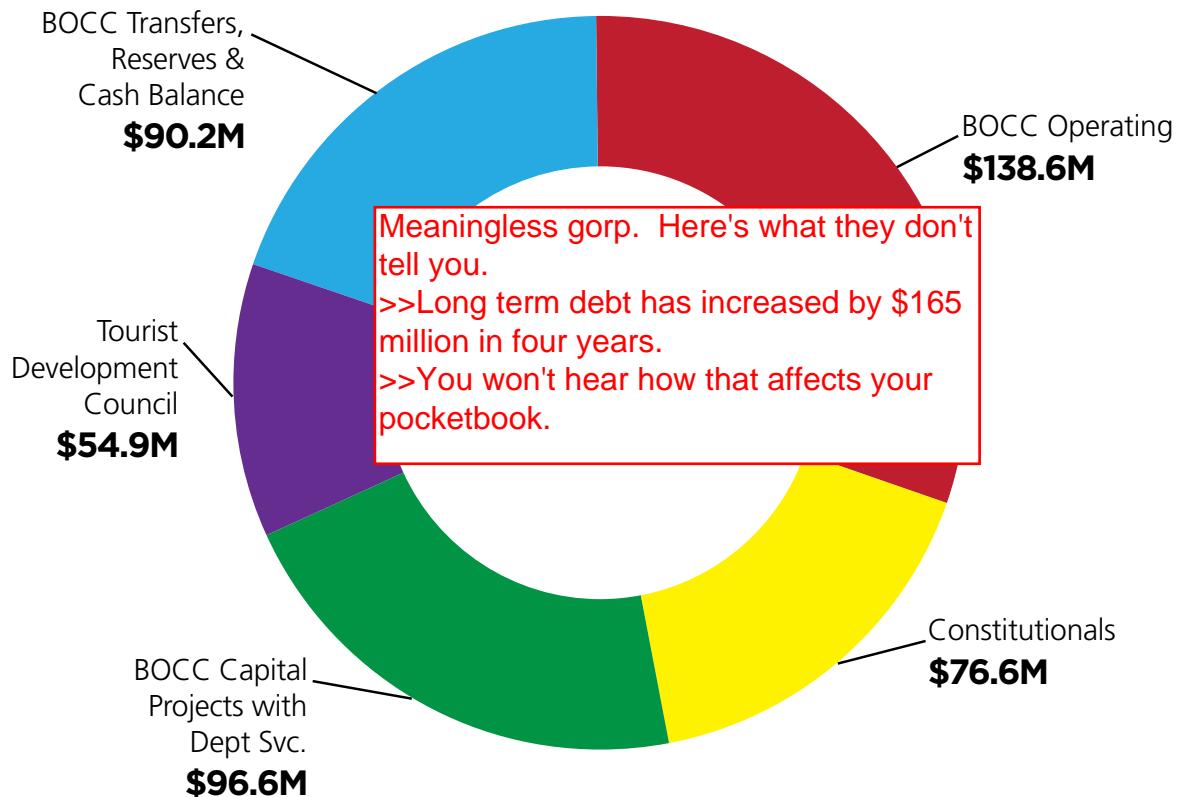


Ass't County Admin.  
**Christine Hurley**  
305.289.2517  
Hurley-christine  
@monroecounty-fl.gov

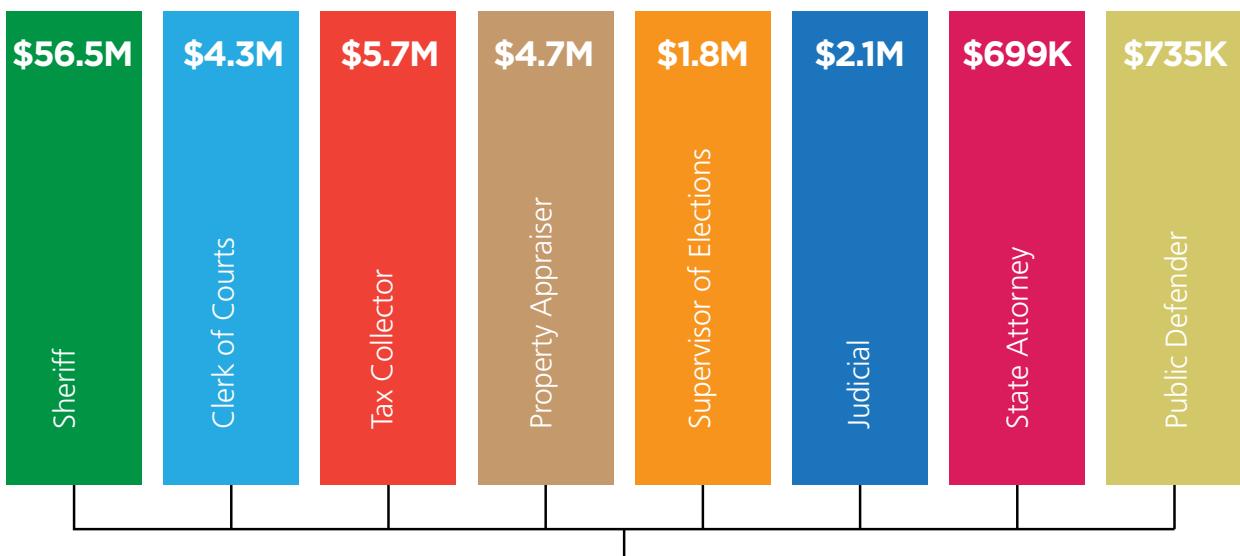


Ass't County Admin.  
**Kevin Wilson**  
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Wilson-kevin  
@monroecounty-fl.gov

# FISCAL YEAR 2017



## BREAKDOWN OF CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICES



**CONSTITUTIONALS**

# BUDGET & FINANCE



The Budget and Finance Office, also known as the Office of Management and Budget, provides strategic planning, administrative tools, techniques and consultation to County departments to optimize performance in all areas of the County budget. We prepare, publish and administer the annual budget.

We develop, implement and monitor annual operating and capital budgets, providing financial analysis and revenue and expenditure forecasting. We 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.

The Grants Administration Office (described on page 13) and the Purchasing Office also are a part of Budget and Finance. The Purchasing Office provides quality purchasing and contracting support to all County departments in a timely, cost effective and professional manner – while following a strict code of ethics. For Fiscal Year 2016, more than 2,400 requisitions and 55 bid openings for County projects and services were processed.



## BUDGET - \$4.1 MILLION

(includes \$3.2 million for non-profit funding that the department manages)

Number of Employees – 8

**Director:** Tina Boan

305.292.4470

Boan-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided coordination and development of Fiscal Year 2017 adopted budget of \$457 million, with a millage rate of 3.5244 that is -5.4% under the previous year of 3.7239 and -.33% below rolled back millage rate of 3.5360.

Coordinated and facilitated an optimization workshop to evaluate opportunities for business process improvements.

- For the 18th consecutive year, we received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association.

- Produced the Fiscal Year 2017 Adopted Budget-In-Brief, providing an easily understood summary overview of the County budget for Monroe County residents.

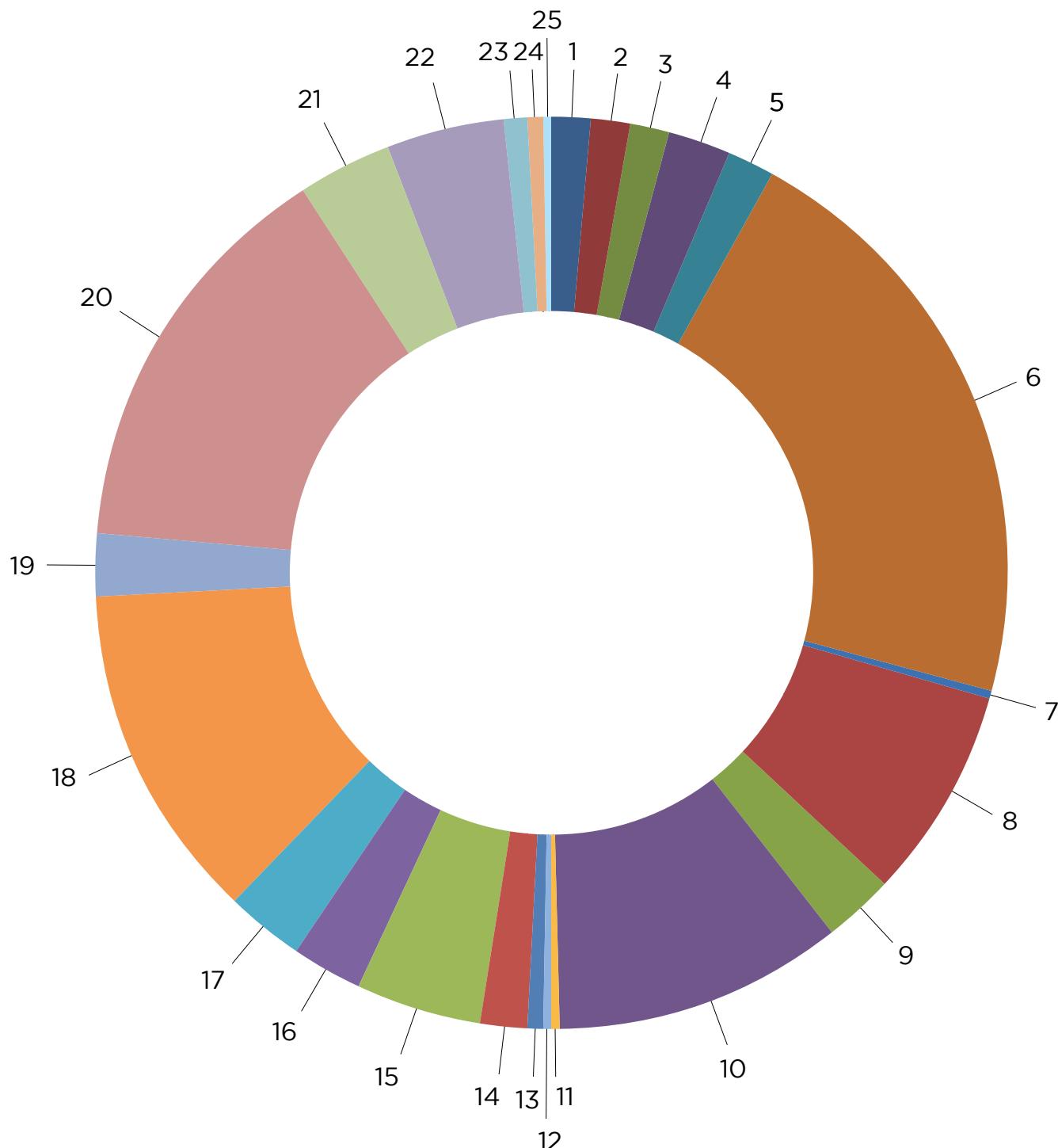
- Maintained fund contingencies, reserves and fund balances forward for each of the property tax-supported funds.

### Did You Know?

The County budget has approximately 62 funds. These funds can be compared to a company spreading its business among 62 banks. The County uses these funds to make payments on different types of County activity or to track fees collected to pay for certain County services.

## HOW IS THE BOCC OPERATING PORTION OF THE BUDGET ALLOCATED?

**\$138,636,669**



- 1 - BOCC Admin - 1.4%
- 2 - Housing Assist & Emp Fair Share - 1.5%
- 3 - HSAB & Non-HSAB - 1.5%
- 4 - BOCC Misc - 2.2%
- 5 - County Administrator - 1.5%
- 6 - Employee Services - 21.1%
- 7 - Veteran's Affairs - 0.5%
- 8 - Airport Services - 7.2%
- 9 - Fire & Rescue/Emergency Mgmt. - 10.5%
- 10 - Emergency Med. Air Transport - 2.4%
- 11 - Upper Keys Health Care Tax Dist. - 0.2%
- 12 - Guardian Ad Litem - 0.1%
- 13 - Budget & Finance - 0.6%
- 14 - Information Technology - 1.7%
- 15 - County Attorney - 4.3%
- 16 - Welfare Services - 2.6%
- 17 - Extension & Library Services - 2.7%
- 18 - Public Works/Engineering/MSTU's Operations - 12.1%
- 19 - Fleet Management - 2.1%
- 20 - Solid Waste - 14.4%
- 21 - Building Department - 3.3%
- 22 - Planning and Environmental Resources - 4.2%
- 23 - Code Compliance - 1.0%
- 24 - Medical Examiner - 0.5%
- 25 - Quasi-external Services - 0.1%

The Grants Administration office monitors grant application and implementation processes. 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 grant assistance for hurricane recovery through the state and Federal Emergency Management Administration.

We facilitate meetings of the Substance Abuse Policy Board, and the application implementation and review of the Florida Department of the

Law Enforcement Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program and the Clerk's Drug Abuse Trust funding program.

We also facilitate meetings of the Human Services Advisory Board, which typically meets twice a year and reviews 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.

# GRANTS ADMINISTRATION



## Did You Know?

Funding awarded to Star of the Sea Foundation in fiscal year 2016 helped the non-profit organization distribute food to 11,683 children and adults throughout Monroe County.

## APPLICATIONS BY NONPROFIT PROVIDERS FALL WITHIN ONE OF THREE ESTABLISHED CATEGORIES:

**The BOCC likes to brag about what they do to help the less fortunate. But they don't talk about what they do to make it less affordable for people to live and work in the Keys.**

**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 2017, during the budget process, the Board of County Commissioners approved \$2 million in property tax revenues be awarded to 26 non-profit human service organizations that provide needed services to vulnerable residents of Monroe County.

### Highest funded medical service provider

– Hospice of the Florida Keys, Inc. - \$190,000

### Highest funded core social services provider

– Monroe Association for ReMARCable Citizens - \$190,000

### Highest funded quality of life improvement services provider –

Keys to Be the Change - \$60,000



# LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Legislative Affairs oversees and manages the legislative and intergovernmental initiatives and functions for the county. Responsibilities include: developing

**There's enough sleaze here to write a book.**

coordinating the county's position and response to pending legislation; preparing press releases, reso-

**Bottom line: the county begs, borrows and steals to fuel their wasteful spending sprees.**

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 over the next 15 years. 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.



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

## 2016 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

**State:** All state legislative priorities of Monroe County were achieved. They Included:

- Passage of the Florida Keys Stewardship Act 2016
- \$10 million appropriation for water quality and land conservation through the Stewardship Act.
- \$3.5 million appropriation for the Overseas Heritage Trail (Bahia Honda Historic Overlook).
- \$500,000 appropriation for vessel pump-out services in Florida Keys waters.
- \$20 million state-wide appropriation for affordable housing that includes preference for Florida Keys.
- Passage of bill that provides more beneficial calculation of wind insurance premiums for condo owners.

**Federal:** Several federal legislative priorities of Monroe County were accomplished or advanced. They include:

- \$1 million appropriation of PILT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) 2015. These federal payments to local governments help offset losses in property taxes due to non-taxable federal lands within their boundaries.
- \$2 million appropriation of Florida Keys Water Quality Improvements Program 2015.
- Passage of Central Everglades Planning Project (Everglades Restoration) authorization through its House and Senate approval and President's signature.
- Continued monitoring of FEMA's implementation of Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, and reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Implemented new management and tracking system for lobbying team. This includes formal assignment of tasks, regular weekly conference calls, and task tracking spreadsheet that is reviewed, discussed and updated weekly.



## 2016 RESTORE ACT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Secured \$12.4 million in RESTORE Pot 2 funding, after developing Monroe's position paper arguing for an equitable, geographic distribution of the funding in the State / Consortium pot.
- Secured \$6.5 million in RESTORE Pot 1 funding.
- Wrote the County's RESTORE Act Multi-Year Implementation Plan (only third county or parish throughout the five Gulf States to complete and submit); and received formal Treasury approval.

## OTHER 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Secured \$2 million in Mayfield Working Waterfront Grant to acquire the Gulf Seafood parcel on Stock Island in order to preserve its future use for commercial fishing. Coordinated all players and executed Grant Agreement with State to kick off the official acquisition process.

## 2017 LEGISLATIVE GOALS:

Achieve Monroe County's state and federal legislative priorities, including:

- Secure state appropriation of \$25 million for land acquisition and water quality projects pursuant to the Florida Keys Stewardship Act passed last year.
- Secure state appropriation of \$500,000 for marine pollution prevention (pump-out services).
- Secure legislation to authorize marine pollution prevention (pump out) and derelict vessel prevention regulations.
- Protect current number of Monroe County judgeships.
- Support passage of Everglades Restoration legislation.
- Oppose fracking, vacation rental and single use plastic bag pre-emptions.
- Advocate for National Flood Insurance Program reforms that protect affordable flood insurance premiums.

## 2017 RESTORE ACT GOALS:

- Prepare grant applications to draw down local funding and start projects.
- Prepare project submissions for State Expenditure Plan for Consortium-level funding.

## OTHER 2017 GOALS:

- Complete the acquisition of commercial fishing working waterfront parcel known as Gulf Seafood.
- Monitor and report on the issues advanced by the Florida Constitutional Revision Committee.

# EMERGENCY SERVICES



## Did You Know?

In 2016, the State Bureau of Emergency Medical Services conducted a surprise inspection of our ground ambulances, Trauma Star, personnel records, controlled substance procedures and storage, and we received an exemplary inspection with no deficiencies noted.



## BUDGET: \$18 MILLION

Employees: 134

### Division Director:

Fire Chief James Callahan

305.289.6088

Callahan-James@monroecounty-fl.gov,

Monroe County's Emergency Services works around-the-clock to protect paradise – its unique people and property – with well-trained firefighters/paramedics and with well-prepared disaster response to all emergencies.

We respond to fires, major traffic accidents and medical emergencies. We respond during storms and other events that threaten the health and safety of our residents and visitors – and that 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 transport them to trauma and specialty care facilities in Miami.

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 keeps disaster response plans up to date, whether it's to deal with Mother Nature's wrath, an act of terrorism, infectious diseases such as Zika, infestations of New World Screwworm or a man-made catastrophe. Fortunately, it has been more than 11 years since the island chain suffered from a hurricane or other large-scale disaster.

Did you notice that almost all the "accomplishments" are related to spending? Did you know that the Key Largo generates more sales tax than any other unincorporated area? Did you know that the BOCC refused to allow that sales tax to fund emergency vehicle replacements in the Key Largo area? Puts all those "accomplishments" in a new light, doesn't it?

# FIRE RESCUE

Monroe County Fire Rescue operates 9 fire stations, covering from Tavernier to Key West International Airport. We also operate from Trauma Star headquarters in Marathon. Our certified firefighters are cross-trained as paramedics, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF).

In 2016, our firefighters responded to 4,402 structure fires, wildland fires, brush fires, trash fires, vehicle fires, marine/boat fires, gas leaks, water related rescues, vehicle extrication calls, hazardous material spills, aircraft incidents and medical emergency calls.

We 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 Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting from Station 7 at Key West International Airport.

In 2016, our firefighter paramedics responded by ground ambulances and Trauma Star to 3,424 calls, with 528 patients being air lifted to out-of-county hospitals. About 29% of these incidents were related to traffic accidents and other trauma related incidents. The remaining transports were for medical emergencies, including heart attacks, strokes, seizures, difficulty breathing and abdominal disorders.

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

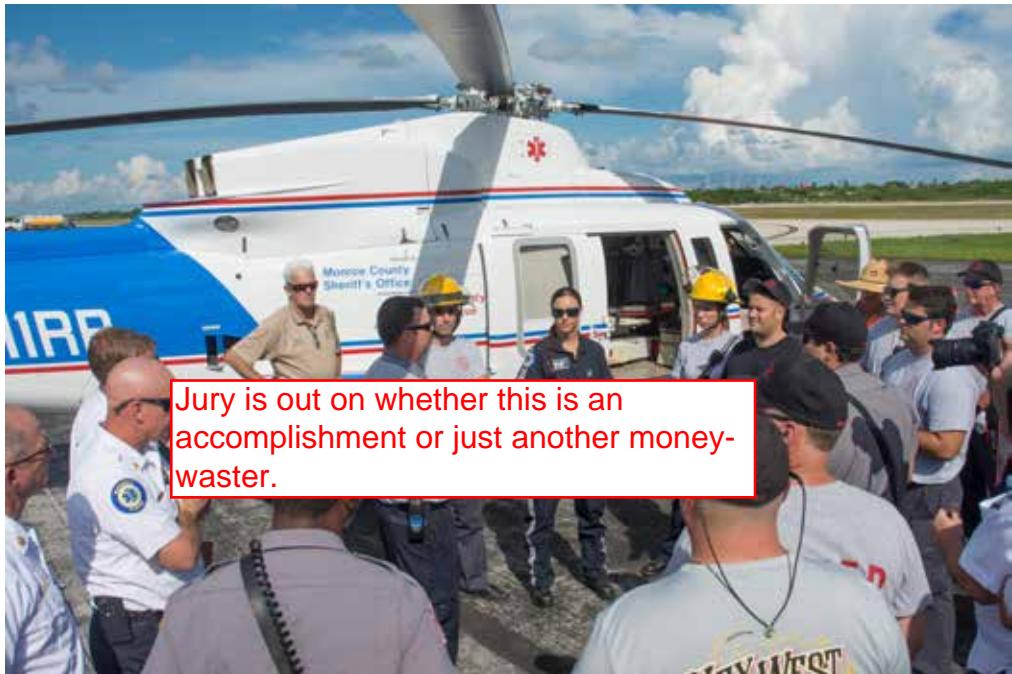
- Purchased and put into service 100 new Scott air packs, cylinders and accessories to replace outdated equipment. All firefighters were trained in the use of the new equipment.
- Accepted delivery and put into service two engine pumper ordered in 2015.
- Purchased land for construction of a new fire station on Cudjoe Key to relocate Station 11 crew now working out of the Sheriff's Substation. Facility is in the design phase.
- Began multi-agency training between County career and volunteer firefighters and area departments to improve mutual aid responses.
- Put two additional public access defibrillators in-service at Key West International Airport and conducted multiple AED/CPR training for airport employees and tenants.
- Coordinated and hosted the FAA's annually required Airport Emergency Plan Review and Tabletop Exercise.
- Lifesaving CPR and fire safety training provided to other County departments and community partners throughout the Keys.
- Completed in-house Paramedic program in conjunction with Barry University for 10 EMTs to provide Advanced Life Support. All students graduated program in April 2016 with 100% pass rate.
- Fire Rescue personnel completed Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) Instructor course and skills assessment – and 104 personnel completed bi-annual ACLS and BLS recertification course and skills assessment.
- We assisted charitable organizations with blood pressure checks, feeding the homeless and unloading pumpkins and Christmas trees here in our communities.

## 2017 GOALS

- Request proposals for construction of new fire station 11 on Cudjoe Key.
- Plan for a fourth straight year of the FAA awarding Monroe County and Key West International Airport a perfect FAA Safety Inspection with no discrepancies.
- Monitor agreement between Sugarloaf volunteers with Wi-Fi on feasibility for current fire station to be used for rebuilding a new fire station facility.

### Did You Know?

Monroe County Fire Rescue presents the "Phoenix" award to emergency responders who save a life. Monroe County Fire Rescue has seven recent recipients of the Phoenix Award: Pablo Arguello, Anthony Henriquez, Juan Lusson, Jorge Machado, Carlos Martinez, Antonio Perez, and Scott Phipps.



The record use of Trauma Star, combined with complaints from County residents who were charged tens of thousands of out-of-pocket costs by the private air ambulance service that operates in the Lower Keys, prompted the County to look into purchasing a third helicopter. In January 2017, the BOCC approved this purchase.

Trauma Star has been in the forefront of new standards of quality care, with a direct affiliation with the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and the Army Trauma Training Department (ATTD), located at the Ryder Trauma Center.

## TRAUMA STAR

Trauma Star is Monroe County Fire Rescue's emergency air ambulance service that operates jointly with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office. The two twin-engine Sikorsky helicopters are staffed by highly trained critical-care nurses, firefighters/paramedics and pilots – and can transport up to two critically injured or ill patients at a time. There are no out-of-pocket costs for County residents who use the 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 for patients to receive life-saving interventions. These precious minutes saved also decrease heart and brain tissue loss, which reduce or eliminate permanent disabilities.

Since the program began in 2001, Trauma Star has transported more than 3,000 patients to critical care not available in the Keys. Over the past few years, the need for the service by residents and visitors has increased dramatically.

In the summer of 2016, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners approved purchasing a newer Sikorsky helicopter to replace the program's aging 1981 Sikorsky, which had been in service since 2006, and will remain with the program as a backup. The 2004 Sikorsky became operational Oct. 24.

At the end of December, Trauma Star made two trips to transport four victims of a fatal head-on collision in the Lower Keys. This accident closed out a record year in which Trauma Star flew 528 patients to mainland facilities: 114 for trauma, 17 for stroke, 18 for heart attacks and 1 first response call to the Dry Tortugas. The remaining 378 transports were hospital-to-hospital transfers of critically ill patients that required specialty care not available at Keys hospitals.

Trauma Star was the first air ambulance service to provide immediate access to the highest level of care to patients experiencing a myocardial infarction (heart attack) and has since flown more than 100 heart attack patients directly from the field.

Trauma Star was the first air ambulance service in the United States to transport patients exhibiting signs of a Neurological deficit (stroke) to a comprehensive stroke center for immediate interventions and has since flown more than 150 stroke patients directly from the field.

Trauma Star was the first air ambulance service in the United States to combine the use of Telemedicine in the field to perform neurological examinations by stroke physicians. It now is in the final stages of implementing new ultrasound transmission capabilities for trauma patients via Telemedicine to surgeons at Ryder Trauma Center.

# FIRE PREVENTION & FIRE TRAINING ACADEMY

Fire Prevention's mission is proactive. We take action and provide services to help 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 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.

Monroe County also owns and operates the Joe London Fire Training Academy, located on Crawl Key in the Middle Keys. It is one of only 43 certified firefighting training centers in Florida. The facility is named after Joe London, the County's Fire Marshall from 1984-2003.

It includes a training tower, burn building and classroom facility for educating and training our firefighters. We do basic and advanced level training up to and including certifying individuals to be state certified firefighters. The academy also offers medical training for our EMTs and paramedics.



## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Monroe County Fire Marshal's Office conducted approximately 700 building plan reviews for compliance with the Florida Fire Prevention Code. We also conducted accompanying site inspections 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, 26 fires occurred that required formal investigations: 13 structures, 8 mobile home/recreational vehicles and 5 water vessels.
- All public schools, adult and child day care facilities and Mariners Hospital received annual fire inspections.
- We improved water supplies for firefighting with the installation of 14 new fire hydrants on Summerland Key, 12 in the Upper Keys, and 5 on Key Haven.
- We expanded community outreach by providing fire prevention and safety programs to more than 1,000 area schoolchildren.
- Reviewed and approved 33 Special Events permits for safety purposes Keys wide.

- The Fire Academy continued fire officer training and development, promoted nine firefighters to lieutenant, and one captain to operations battalion chief.
- The Fire Academy also initiated multi-agency training between county career and volunteer firefighters and area departments, to improve mutual aid responses and enhance working relationships with surrounding departments and firefighters.

## 2017 GOALS

- Complete construction of the new Joe London Fire Training Academy classroom facility.
- Upon completion of the classroom, hold one Firefighter I and one Firefighter II class, with a 90% pass rate for those that complete the course.
- Provide training for special events to firework sponsors and applicants, including crowd management and operator safety.
- Provide public education to decrease fire hazard potential in commercial buildings.
- Back fill fire hydrants for proper water supply throughout unincorporated Monroe County.

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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

Emergency Management is the operational leader, coordinating all municipalities, private partners, and state and federal agencies during emergencies, including hurricanes. To make the County less vulnerable, we create and implement comprehensive plans that build, sustain and improve the county's capability to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

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



## BUDGET: \$737,000

(\$402,000 paid by grants)

Employees: 5

**Director:** Martin Senterfitt

305.289.6065

Senterfitt-Martin@monroecounty-fl.gov

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Emergency Management continued its long history of engagement with the Department of Homeland Security and other federal, state and regional partners on the sensitive issue of mass migration. We continued to work with the Homeland Security Task Force-South in the ongoing U.S. Southern Command FEMA National Level Mass Migration Exercise.
- We created and designed two County-specific disaster preparedness Brochures: Monroe County Pet Friendly Shelter Guide and Monroe County Small Business Preparedness Guide.
- Emergency Management's Radiological Program continued to incorporate new Federal Regulatory changes to the Radiological Emergency Preparedness. We are working closely with the Ocean Reef Community in both exercise and training commitments. Two exercises were completed, both with positive evaluations.
- We increased our viewership of the Emergency Management Website to 41,202 last year, up from 4,675 in 2015. We had 1,259 Monroe County residents signed up for Emergency Alerts in 2016.
- Emergency Management was an active participant of the New World Screwworm infestation in the Lower Keys. We also worked with local and state agencies on the response to the Zika virus threat to the County.
- We prepared for the potential impacts of Hurricane Hermine and Hurricane Matthew, which both passed close to the Keys.

## 2017 GOALS

- Restructure the Emergency Management planning process into a "One Team-One Plan" approach by coordinating from the start with the various municipalities, independent authorities, non-profits and Constitutional Offices.
- Institutionalize the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in Monroe County. This system identifies the key personnel to fill each of the roles in the Incident Command Structure and develops a training program for each of them to ensure competency in the position.
- Complete the state required five-year update on the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).
- Develop a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan that incorporates the Strategic Vision of the new EM Director.
- Successfully complete the 2017 FEMA-evaluated Turkey Point Radiological Emergency Plan exercise.
- Participate in the Regional Mass Migration Exercise hosted by U.S. Southern Command and the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Continue to facilitate and monitor issues such as the screwworm outbreak, the Zika threat and ongoing mass migration concerns.



# ZIKA AND NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

Monroe County faced two unusual public health events in 2016: the threat of the Zika virus and the infestation of New World Screwworm on Big Pine Key and the surrounding small islands. Monroe County played a supporting role in helping to keep the Zika virus out of the Keys and in continuing efforts to eradicate screwworm in the County. Zika

## ZIKA

In early 2016, the Zika virus had made its way to Florida. It is spread mostly by the bite of an infected Aedes species mosquito, which are found in the Florida Keys, especially in the Old Town area of Key West. These mosquitoes bite during the day and night.

Zika can be passed from a pregnant woman to her fetus. Infection during pregnancy can cause certain birth defects. There is no vaccine or medicine for Zika.

The Monroe County Health Department and Monroe County Mosquito Control continue to lead the ongoing effort to educate the public about how to eliminate breeding sites for the mosquitos and what to do to prevent getting bit. Mosquito Control also has done a great job lowering the number of Aedes aegypti mosquitos in the County and thus reducing the risk of people acquiring the virus. As of January 2017, no known locally acquired cases of Zika have occurred in Monroe County.

Monroe County supported the effort, through its Emergency Management and other departments. The County also created and hosts a website: ZapZika.net, which shares information about Zika from all the participating agencies at one location.

Winter is a natural time for the Aedes mosquitos to reduce in numbers in the County. But once spring comes again, the increased efforts will begin again to keep Zika out of the Keys.



## New World Screwworm

On Sept. 30, 2016, the U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed a local infestation of New World screwworm in the endangered Key deer herd on Big Pine and No Name keys. It was the first such infestation in the United States in 30 years and the first in Florida in about 50 years.

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam declared an agricultural state of emergency in Monroe County. Immediately, Monroe County government provided its support. First, the County provided the Incident Command Post with an operating space at Monroe County's Florida Keys Marathon International Airport. The airport also has been the hub for arriving flights from Panama with special cargo: millions of sterile flies used for the eradication effort.

Since screwworms have not been around for decades, Monroe County public information and Monroe

## Did You Know?

Pregnant women in Monroe County are eligible for free Zika testing. For an appointment, call: Lower Keys, 305.619.0924; Middle Keys, 305.289.2708; and Upper Keys, 305.853.7400.

County Extension Service helped with the education and eradication effort.

Screwworms are fly larvae (maggots) that feed on living flesh. These parasites can infect any warm-blooded animal, including humans. Screwworms can enter wounds as well as body orifices, and feed on living tissue in that area. If untreated, screwworm infestations can be fatal. The outbreak led to the death of 135 endangered Key Deer and a handful of pets.

Monroe County Commissioner George Neugent led two community meetings about screwworm. Monroe County also helped facilitate a free pet screening. The state set up an animal checkpoint at mile marker 106 in Key Largo. As of early February 2017, about 13,000 animals have gone through it with not one showing signs of screwworm.

As of the end of January 2017, the last time a Key deer was found with a screwworm infestation was Jan. 7. The USDA and state agriculture commission will not leave Monroe County until both agencies are certain that screwworm has been eradicated.

## KEY WEST AIRPORT

Monroe County owns and operates two airports: Key West International and Florida Keys Marathon International. The Airports Department provides the traveling public and the aviation community with outstanding facilities and excellent customer service, while focusing on aviation safety and security. We are self-supported, with no County general revenues or property taxes used to fund either airport.

At Key West in 2016, 742,155 passengers, an increase of 5.2 percent from 2015, flew in and out of the airport on flights from Delta, American, Silver and the airport's newest addition, United. Those carriers offer non-stop commercial service to nine large hub airports: Atlanta, Charlotte, Washington, D.C., Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Orlando, Newark and Chicago O'Hare. There also is direct service to Fort Myers, as well as connecting flights to the world.

Key West Airport also handled approximately 37,000 general aviation aircraft operations and pumped more than 3.1 million gallons of aircraft fuel.

### 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- For the second consecutive year the Federal Aviation Administration and the Transportation Security Administration conducted Annual Safety & Annual Security Inspections, respectively. The Airport was found to be in full compliance.
- The Key West Airport Fire Department responded to 246 calls: 8 aircraft incidents, 72 emergency medical calls, 5 fuel spills and 8 wildlife strikes on the airfield.
- The Airport was the recipient of the coveted U.S. Department of Homeland Security "Partnership Award." It is in recognition of the Airport forging an excellent partnership with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to better protect the United States Civil Transportation System and achieving organizational effectiveness to meet the challenges of "Preventing and Protecting, Responding and Restoring."

- Completed about 55 percent of the comprehensive Master Planning Study, which will establish 5-, 10- and 20-year Airport planning goals.
- Completed a state-of-the-art airfield drainage system.
- Completed passenger experience enhancements to the Airport's departure area, including new flooring and a Mamava (lactation station for traveling moms).
- Updated audio/video screens throughout the public terminal and charging stations for passenger use. We also restored the aging Ramp Side "KEY WEST" lighted welcome sign for enhanced day and nighttime passenger experiences.
- Applied for and received more than \$18 million in FAA and FDOT funding for Fiscal Year 2016.



### 2017 GOALS

- Completion of Phase II construction for the Customs and Border Protection Facility. This will help provide additional queuing space for passengers and enhance the ability of CBP to process more passengers per hour.
- Provide enhanced automatic Ground Transportation revenue management with a computer based revenue management system. This will allow the Airport to more effectively manage the accounts of Ground Transportation providers, such as taxis, shuttles and courtesy vehicles.
- Begin construction on Phase 1 of the Noise Insulation Program phases to minimize noise intrusion into approved residences around the Airport.
- Complete the Airport Master Plan study and begin an Environmental Assessment.
- Complete the Air Carrier Ramp reconstruction project and the airfield drainage construction project.
- Continue working with local leaders to procure additional air service in order to enhance competition, and provide additional direct flights to underserved markets.



### BUDGET - \$9.3 MILLION

Employees: 20  
Director: Donald DeGraw  
Phone: 305.809.5200  
DeGraw-Donald@monroecounty-fl.gov

# MARATHON AIRPORT

The Florida Keys Marathon International Airport successfully transitioned into an “international” airport with the opening in April 2016 of a new, user-fee U.S. Customs & Border Protection facility. It provides international passenger clearing services for both aircraft and mariners arriving from foreign countries.

In its first few months of operation, 187 aircraft (102 jets and 85 piston-engine planes) arriving from 12 different countries – and 39 private boats – cleared customs at the new facility.

The Marathon Airport handles only general aviation traffic. In 2016, about 69,000 takeoffs and landings were conducted at the airport with a wide variety of aircraft.

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Received a perfect Federal Aviation Administration inspection in March, with the Airport found to be in full compliance with all required regulations.
- Completed an Airport Miscellaneous Planning Study and a preferred alternative was selected to ultimately shift the runway to the north in order to comply with current FAA regulations. This will resolve the Airport’s existing nonstandard runway / taxiway separation.
- Developed a new Airport Layout Plan that was approved by the FAA.
- Conducted a full-scale triennial disaster response exercise in January to review the Airport Emergency Plan.
- Completed the terminal and tenant Sewer Laterals Project, connecting all airport facilities to the City of Marathon wastewater treatment system.
- Construction began in September on the Marathon Storage Hangars project, which will provide 11 hangars for private aircraft storage.



## GOALS 2017

- Continued growth of Customs & Border Protection facility operations to increase the airport’s international arrivals traffic.
- Begin an Environmental Assessment as the next step in developing the Airport Master Plan.
- Complete the Marathon Storage Hangars project and allow tenants to move in by the summer of 2017.
- Develop and advertise one or more Request for Proposals for hangar development on vacant parcels at the Airport.
- Re-format the Main Terminal parking lot and establish a payment system to increase airport revenue.
- Continue to strengthen the Airport’s relationship with airfield tenants, airport business partners and the local community.

**Did You Know?** Two local charter companies, Duck Key Charters and KeysAir Aviation, have begun on-demand service from Marathon to Cuba.

# PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The Planning and Environmental Resources Department fosters sustainable, quality development in the county. This is done while conserving and promoting the environment and the natural resources of its diverse island

Planning Department guilty of a major face plant in allowing the 175-room Ocean's Edge hotel in Stock Key Haven despite the fact that adequate wastewater treatment is not available in the area. This is in defiance of the county's own comprehensive plan.

## PLANNING

We are responsible for the administration of the adopted Monroe County Comprehensive Plan. In 2016, after a 6-year effort, the County Commission approved the updated 2030

version of this plan. It evaluates just about everything that I use, housing, environment (including mass water, sewer, solid aquifer recharge), in space, cultural improvement for all County services.

We also are responsible for the administration of the Land Development Code. In 2016, the County Commission also approved an updated version of this code. The Code establishes the specific regulations to implement the vision and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

We process amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations and review development proposals for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.

Planning works to maintain a 24-hour hurricane evacuation time and to protect community character and the environment, including water quality and habitat protection.

Our Geographic Information Systems (GIS) develops, maintains and disseminates geographic data for the county. Our Transportation Planning manages the completion of Travel Time & Delay studies to ensure the county is maintaining traffic related levels of service. It also reviews traffic studies submitted with land use applications and coordinates with State agencies on roadway and trail projects.

In 2017, we will continue to work with the Land Authority and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on increasing funding and partnerships for land acquisitions.



**DID YOU KNOW?** More than 800 deed-restricted affordable housing units have been built in unincorporated Monroe County.



## BUDGET - \$5.1 MILLION

Employees: 28

**Senior Director:** Mayte Santamaria

305.289.2500

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# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

One of the most challenging issues that has faced Monroe County for many years is the lack of affordable/workforce housing. This problem is compounded by the island chain's limited values, land limited tourism economy and limited employment, a

**Lol. Lot's of talk but very little productive action. In fact, it's mostly counter-productive.**

Rate of Growth Ordinance (ROGO). The state limits growth in Monroe County because the island chain has been designated an Area of Critical State Concern and is required to be able to evacuate its population in 24 hours for an approaching hurricane.

When the County Commissioners adopted the new Comprehensive Plan in April, it took a proactive step by making all of the County's approximately 700 remaining affordable allocation units available immediately – instead of those units being spread out for distribution over years as is the case with market rate units.

This new availability of hundreds of affordable allocation units – along with a strong economy, low interest rates and lenders willing to finance such projects – led to a flurry of projects throughout the Keys.

In December, the County Commission voted to transfer 135 of its affordable housing allocations to the City of Marathon for two projects that are applying for federal low income housing tax credits and to deed restrict 34 market rate units to affordable units.

## Did you know?

The County has waived about \$1.4 million in building and impact fees for affordable housing development – and it will continue to do so.

If all the anticipated projects in the pipeline are developed, only 162 affordable allocations would be left

Also in 2016, the County's 14-member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, which included Commissioners Sylvia Murphy and Heather Carruthers, met monthly for a year and produced 33 recommendations. At a special Board of County Commissioners meeting, the Commission approved or supported most of the recommendations. They include:

- Amend the definition of workforce housing in the Land Development Code to mean individuals or families who derive at least 70 percent of their income from work done in Monroe County or who are gainfully employed supplying goods



and/or services to Monroe County residents and visitors.

- Continue the inclusionary housing study for non-residential development to supply affordable housing for the employees it needs to operate
- Direct staff to review legal, financial and legislative issues on the development of a property tax incentive for homeowners who rent a lawfully established existing market rate unit to a member of the workforce within the very low, low and median affordable housing income limits and rental rates.

In 2017, the County will work on creating a Land Development Code amendment that will include a requirement for non-residential development to provide affordable housing to offset the impacts their development has on the community and to provide workforce housing for their future employees.

# ENVIRONMENTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES

Monroe County has been dealing with a unique problem. Due to the geography of our one-of-a-kind island chain community and our sensitive environment and endangered species, we have warranted state and federal protections for both our land and waters. These protections include a finite number of available building permits due to state limits for evacuation and environmental reasons.

There are now about 11,000 vacant parcels throughout the Keys (and approximately 8,000 within unincorporated Monroe County) with private owners that may seek to develop them with one housing unit. The State currently allows the County to issue 197 ROGO (rate of growth ordinance) building units per year to stave off reaching the 24-hour evacuation limit in the event of an approaching hurricane. At that rate of issuing permits, the County will reach its maximum build out allowed by evacuation limits in 2023 (which is about 3,550 more housing units).

Planning and Environmental Resources staff continues to partner with the Land Authority and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to enhance and facilitate the acquisition of land in the Florida Keys. The County has entered into Memorandum of Agreement related to negotiating and purchasing parcels for the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund. Additionally, the County is continuing to partner with the Land Authority, as the County's agent for purchases using the \$8 million budgeted by the County.

Environmental Resources also protects the sensitive environment and endangered species of the County. It 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.

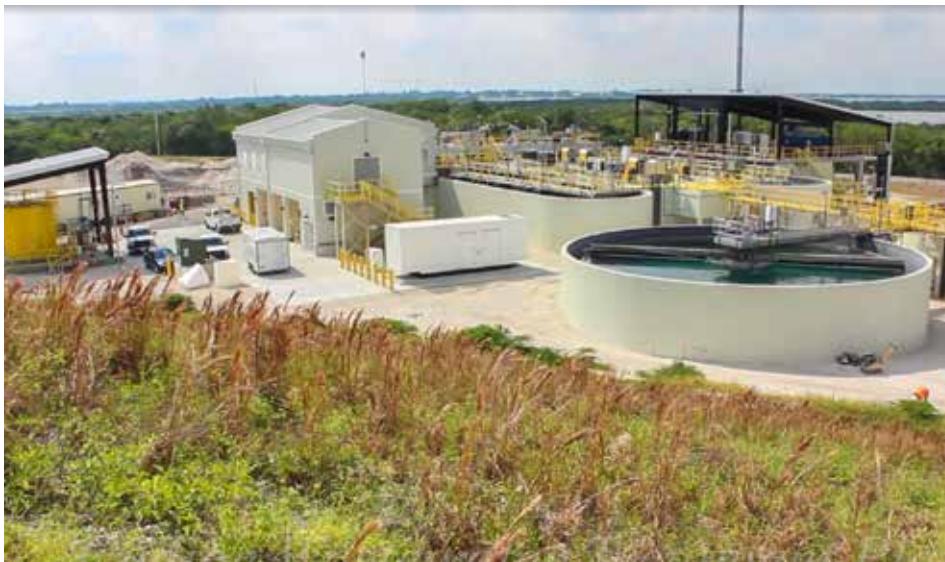
## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Monroe County's free mobile vessel pump out service hit a milestone: 1 million gallons of collected sewage. This program is for boats anchored in designated areas of the Florida Keys waters.
- Worked with County Administration and Land Authority on the adoption and implementation of the Florida Keys Environmental Stewardship Bill for land acquisition.
- Since February 2016, Monroe County has removed 86 derelict vessels.

## 2017 GOALS

- Continue investigating and moving forward with the Land Authority and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on increasing funding for land acquisition and partnering on land acquisitions.
- Secure supplemental funds for derelict vessel removals, channel marker maintenance and the mobile pump-out service.





# 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 cesspits and ineffective small treatment units. It has been a daunting task for islands.

The price tag has 12 major service areas by homeowners a line is in sight.

The final piece of well as its largest Cudjoe Regional

ment plant began operations in October 2015. By the end of 2016, 90 percent of the collection and transmission system was complete and available for connection. The goal for 2017 is to complete the collection and transmission system (No Name Key, Big and Middle Torch keys and the remaining areas of Big Pine Key).

In 2016, construction began on a new \$7.1 million deep injection well that will dispose of treated effluent 3,200 feet below the surface. A problem with the drill bit delayed construction during the middle of the project. The well's

completion now is slated for this spring. 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 2017, 2,500 of the 7,500 homes and business have been hooked up. This is the last

s.

and federal legislators to or systems throughout the e project is fully funded.

the Florida Keys Aqueduct s of the system. The "ment" manages the flow of ct Authority, which built, ty's systems.

It has been a long and expensive process, but the efforts to convert most of the county 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



Monroe County, a chain of islands that barely juts above the sea, is ground zero for experiencing the impacts of global climate change and sea level rise.

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 as homes and businesses – now and continuing in the future.

Over the past six years, Monroe County has taken a leading role in the regional effort to combat climate change and adapt to rising seas. We have continued coordination and activities with the four-county Southeast Florida Climate Compact. A Regional Climate Action Plan is under implementation, and a revised plan is due October 2017.

In January 2016, the County BOCC hosted a public workshop to review the completed draft GreenKeys Sustainability Action Plan. It included results of a vulnerability assessment

that showed about 150 miles of County roadways may be exposed to intermittent flooding by 2030 if sea level rise projections occur.

In June 2016, the BOCC approved the proactive 5-year work plan, which provides 165 recommendations and 181 projects designed to help the County prepare its infrastructure for the uncertain effects of future sea level rise. It also places the County on a path towards increased sustainability.

The plan includes 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. The plan is available to review at the website: [www.GreenKeys.info](http://www.GreenKeys.info).

In 2016, we conducted two pilot projects for tidal flooding (one in Key Largo and one on Big Pine Key) to provide useful information for the design of future road elevation and improvement projects and help with the creation of a countywide roads elevation policy.

The BOCC adopted the final report of the Tidal Flooding Roads Demonstration Project: The Sands and Twin Lakes Communities, which was developed with input from community stakeholders and direction from the BOCC. The report recommended moving forward with designing the road improvement projects.

The BOCC approved an Interim standard for determining the elevation of future road improvement projects in the County.

We initiated a countywide roads analysis to identify near-term roads subject to flooding inundation risk. The collection of new and more accurate LIDAR elevation data for roads and County facilities will be done this year.

We are working with the University of Florida Sea Grant on a sea level rise vulnerability assessment of the County's Bayshore Manor Assisted Living facility, which will be done this year. We are also participating in a Stetson University Study to improve elevation data and analyze opportunities and barriers for use in sea level rise adaptation planning. Both originated as NOAA grants.



### BUDGET - \$750,000

Employees: 1

**Director:** Rhonda Haag

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## SUSTAINABILITY

# CANAL RESTORATION

There are 502 canals throughout the island chain. A study showed that 311 of them do not meet the State's minimum water quality criteria and are a potential source of nutrients and other contaminants to near shore waters.

The Keys' new wastewater treatment and storm water management systems will greatly help. But these projects will not completely eliminate the impaired water quality conditions – particularly the low levels of dissolved oxygen in the canal waters. This problem is the result of years of accumulated seaweed, canals dug too deep, little to no circulation and dead end canals.

In unincorporated Monroe County, 229 canals have impaired water quality. To address the problem, the BOCC approved a much-needed Canal Restoration program in 2012. Last year, the County completed \$5 million in Canal Demonstration Projects using different techniques on six of its poorest water quality canals.

This program has received federal grant sources. It includes canal restoration projects stemming from the BP

Early monitoring results show water quality and many are overjoyed at the results. The monitoring will continue.

In 2016, the BOCC approved six new demonstration restoration projects for \$2 million in order to continue to evaluate the same technologies used in the six original demonstration canals as well additional technologies. This will help gauge the efficacy of the technologies and make cost predictions for the future.

The following canals were approved: canal 75 (Key Largo, backfilling); canals 48, 59, 79 and 80 (Key Largo, augmented aeration); and canal 83 (Key Largo, organic removal, backfill and air curtain). Work has already begun on these projects and will continue through 2017.

In 2016, the BOCC also approved a resolution that directed County staff to continue with development of a program to collect special assessments and the creation of municipal service benefit units (MSBUs) to collect funds to pay for ongoing



**Another huge money-waster. At an estimated cost of \$670 million, this project rivals the cost of the wastewater projects. But the county has been unwilling to tell the public exactly what water quality improvements will happen as a result. Not only that, but these projects only benefit canal-front properties at tremendous cost to all taxpayers.**

operation and maintenance costs for canals that the

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- **Organic Muck Removal:** Completed two organic muck removal projects totaling \$1.8 million on canals #266 and #290 on Big Pine Key.
- **Air Curtains:** Completed two air curtain projects totaling \$200,000 on canals #266 and #287 on Big Pine Key.
- **Culverts:** Installed a culvert on canal #277 for \$423,000 on Big Pine Key. Reopened a culvert on canal #472 on Geiger Key that was installed in 2015 and temporarily closed.
- **Pumping:** The Eden Pines pumping project for canal #278 on Big Pine Key is being formally reevaluated by the County contractor to determine if an alternate technology may work better.
- **Backfilling:** Canal #29 backfilling project on Big Pine Key was completed for \$1.3 million in 2015.

# EXTENSION SERVICE

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Monroe County Extension Service is your front door to the experts and to research from across the state and at the university. Here in the Keys we provide timely and relevant solutions to improve your life. Extension is dedicated to bringing you current, science-based answers to all your questions —for free. We focus on horticulture, climate change, energy, small business and water quality right here in your community.

UF- IFAS Monroe County Extension conducts research and provides education to the Keys community. Are you interested in science? We have several citizen science programs that can help you become a researcher for your community. Are you interested in Natural Resources, Gardening or Sustainability? We offer UF certification programs in the Keys. Our office is supported by Monroe County (37%), UF (56%) and the state Department of Agriculture (7%).

We provide great programs, including: Master Gardeners, Sustainable Floridians, Small Business and Florida Keys Water Watch, a volunteer water quality monitoring program to promote awareness of the importance of water quality and methods to reduce non-point source pollution.



## Did You Know:

An average basketball-sized sponge can filter 425 gallons of water per hour, which is 10,200 gallons of water per day.

## Did you know?

Monroe County leads the annual seafood harvest of any Florida county, collecting more than 12 million pounds per year. Water quality is important to all of us.



In the Water Watch program, Monroe County residents from diverse groups are trained during 4-hour workshops to become citizen scientists and collect chemical water quality data to assess coastal habitat health. Since March 2015, 355 citizens, students and teachers have been trained at Florida Keys Water Watch workshops to perform monthly water quality testing at a site of their choice for dissolved oxygen, pH, salinity and temperatures and enter these data into the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Water Quality Database. To date, volunteers are collecting water quality data at 71 sites from Key West to Key Largo, with more than 525 database entries.

In 2016, the Extension Service entered into a 3-year research-outreach partnership with researchers from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, Old Dominion University, The Nature Conservancy, Bonefish & Tarpon Trust & the Florida Keys Environmental Fund to restore shallow-water sponges in Florida Bay. This large-scale community program invites volunteers to work side by side with scientists to restore more than 15,000 sponges in Florida Bay. We brought a group of 20 students from Mahogany Youth snorkeling to learn about sponges and the Florida Keys ecosystem.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Managed 157 community volunteers, who worked 4,530 hours equaling \$95,021 of service to the community.
- Provide community outreach to educate public about New World Screwworm outbreak in Lower Keys
- Hosted 382 teaching events and answered 9,600 requests for information.
- Provide leadership, grant writing, volunteers and management of events such as the Tropical Fruit Fiesta, Key West Seafood Fest, and the Southeast Florida Regional Leadership Climate Summit.
- Supported community sustainability and monitored climate change indicators, trends and impacts for the Climate Change Advisory Committee. We assisted in the STAR rating, Sustainability Action Plan and the Climate Action Plan.
- Wrote and received \$59,049 in grants for 2016 to provide resources and program support.

#### GOALS:

- Hold small business classes to educate Keys business and non-profits on marketing, diversification and planning.
- Lead new programs such as business planning and marketing, Florida Keys friendly landscapes, energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions and climate adaptation strategies.
- Lead the educational effort in water quality, including the continuation of the Florida Keys Water Watch Program
- Offer the state required Green Industries-Best Management Practices landscaper certification to all commercial landscapers.

#### BUDGET - \$282,700

Employees: 5

(4 UF and 1 County)

**Director:** Alicia Betancourt

305.292.4501

[Betancourt-alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:Betancourt-alicia@monroecounty-fl.gov)



Monroe 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 to each citizen in need in Monroe County, regardless of his or her life circumstances. In 2016, we had 2,303 office visits and 7,145 incoming calls from people inquiring about our wide variety of programs.

# SOCIAL SERVICES



## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 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, individuals with disabilities, and families with very young children. During program year 2016/17, we served 527 households countywide with more than \$200,000 in grant funding.

- Social Services provided nearly 18,500 hours of service to elderly citizens in Monroe County via one of our grant-funded programs during program year 2015/16 that ended in June. The services provided under this program include homemaking, personal care, in-home respite, facility-based respite, chore, enhanced chore and companionship. If our home-bound seniors did not receive these services under this program and other services from other elderly-based grants, they would be prematurely institutionalized and gone from our community. With our help, they are able to continue to live in their homes, near their family and friends.

- The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) assists Monroe County's eligible low-income families improve the energy efficiency of their homes with repairs, renovation and installation of cost-saving energy measures. During the 2016 calendar year, as a result of the partnership between Social Services and Monroe County Housing Authority, we administered more than \$691,000 in funding countywide to help 20 eligible homeowners. These funds provide for home repair, renovation, and installation of cost-saving energy measures that can reduce energy bills by 20 to 30 percent.

- Bayshore Manor, Monroe County's 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 respite care guests. Last year, these guests spent over 5,300 hours at the facility, receiving care between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. This respite service allowed their full-time caregivers to go to work, attend meetings, or just rest and recover from the constant time constraints that full time caregiving requires.



## BUDGET - \$5.2 MILLION

Employees: 52

**Senior Director:** Sheryl Graham

Phone: 305.292.4408

Graham-sheryl@monroecounty-fl.gov

- 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. For clients who are home or bed bound, our meal delivery service also provides them with a daily well-person check. Our four nutrition sites in Key West, Big Pine Key, Marathon, and Plantation Key provide a variety of activities in a congregate setting that promotes health and wellness, socialization and personal enjoyment. In 2016, we provided 1,856 hot home-delivered meals and 34,947 home-delivered frozen meals.

- Social Services handled pauper (indigent) cremations and burials for 79 citizens in Monroe County. We work with the Medical Examiner, law enforcement, and the local funeral homes to ensure that the deceased individual is properly identified. We exhaust all avenues to locate family members or loved ones. If no one is available to take responsibility for a deceased individual, Social Services handles the final arrangements and inter the cremated remains in County-owned vaults at the Key West Cemetery.

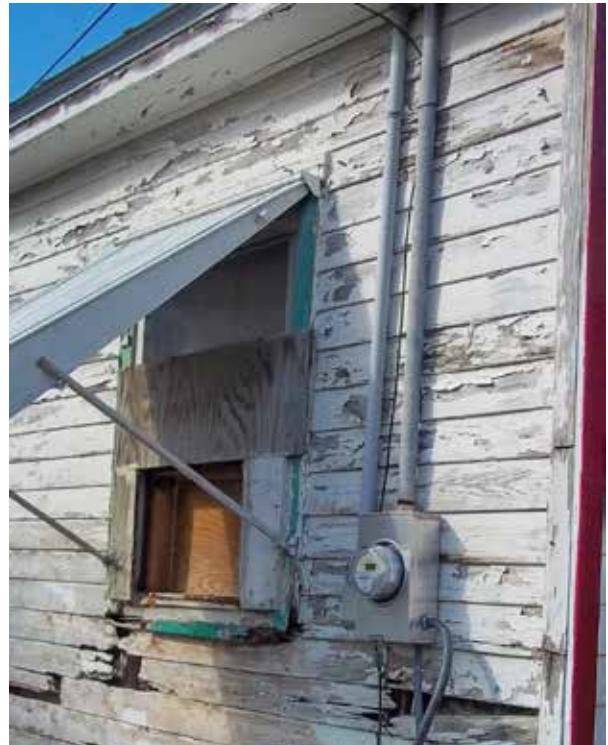
- Monroe County Transportation (MCT) provides door-to-door para transit service for any transportation disadvantaged resident

of Monroe County. In 2016, we provide over 20,000 one-way trips, which ensure that our most vulnerable citizens are able to go to the doctor, pharmacy, grocery store, and other necessary places while maintaining a high degree of independence. Additionally, MCT maintains the Special Needs Registry for Monroe County residents who have been identified as having a special medical or transportation need. We also transport these individuals who require assistance during evacuations to secure locations.

### 2017 GOALS

- At Bayshore Manor, we will work to add at least two annual social activities or field trips to our residents' schedules during the year. The residents love the outings we arrange and provide for them. These events give our residents something to look forward to, and talk about. Also, our residents bring good will and joy into the community. Further, the outings are usually donated by the vendors or hosts. Recent outings have been to the Tennessee Williams Theatre, Mel Fisher Maritime Museum, Key West Aquarium, Monroe County Sheriff's Office Animal Farm, and the Dolphin Research Center.

- In our Monroe County Transit Program, we will work to increase ridership by at least 5% during the year. By increasing ridership in Marathon and the Middle Keys, we should be able to meet this goal.



# VETERANS AFFAIRS

Monroe County Veterans Affairs, established in accordance with Florida Statute 292.11, is available to help the Florida Keys approximately 9,500 veterans, as well as another 1,500 to 2,000 "snowbird" veterans, 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.

At our offices in Key West, Marathon and Key Largo, we help veterans obtain military and VA documents; get health care through the VA system; and apply for upgrades to military discharge. We assist veterans in obtaining benefits – including disabled veterans license tags, property tax exemptions and educational benefits – through the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.

All of our department's personnel, including administrative assistances, are certified through a program sponsored by the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.



## BUDGET: \$670,045

Employees: 10

**Director:** George R. Brentnall

305.295.5150

Brentnall-george@monroecounty-fl.gov

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Assisted veterans in receiving retroactive payments of \$3.9 million, with an increase to \$34.7 million per year in overall annual payments.
- Assisted 3,619 veterans seeking assistance through office visits: 7,289 by phone and 144 field visits.
- Added 431 new clients and made 547 referrals to the Veterans Administration or local agencies for assistance.
- Received 3,453 calls for transportation and transported 1,748 veterans to the Miami VA hospital as well as other Miami-area hospitals.
- Provided quarterly briefings to Naval Air Station Key West and Joint Interagency Task Force for veterans, retirees and active duty personnel leaving the military.
- Provided numerous briefings to organizations, including Rotary, Military Affairs Committee and Moose Lodge on veteran's benefits and the overall veteran's population, in order to include the homeless veterans in local initiatives.
- Coordinated and hosted three meetings throughout the Keys with the Director of the Miami VA Medical Center and his staff to provide updated information on VA health care and future initiatives.
- Continue to keep an active dialogue with the offices of U.S. Rep. Carlos Curbelo and state Rep. Holly Raschein, providing current information and problem areas for the veterans of the Keys.

## 2017 GOALS

- Continue to monitor number of veterans in the County and make adjustments where necessary to ensure proper staffing is available to provide required services.
- Work closely with local entities, VA Medical Center Miami, VA clinic Key West and local organizations to assist veterans in need and to monitor the local homeless population ensuring all are provided assistance as needed.
- Continue to provide outreach services and up-to-date briefings on the numerous VA programs to various organizations, on the radio and in print media.
- Ensure all personnel know the new VA rules, applications and initiatives through in-house and formal training for all personnel.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

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 22 citizen boards and committees that continually inform County staff and

Commissioners. **The Strategic Planning Department magically disappeared once Kevin Madok became the County Clerk. Madok claims the \$100k job wasn't specially created for him, but it poofed into existence when he lost the Clerk's race in 2012 and poofed out of existence when he won the Clerk's race in 2016.**

Beginning in 2017, the County will be holding a series of public meetings to gather input from citizens on how they think things are going and what they would like to see happen in the future. This information will be gathered and help drive the update to the current 2013-2018 Strategic Plan.

You also can have your voice heard by filling out a survey. There is one for residents and one for business owners. The surveys are available online on the Monroe County website homepage at [www.monroecounty-fl.gov](http://www.monroecounty-fl.gov). The surveys also can be obtained at County libraries and government centers



## THE STRATEGIC PLAN HAS THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS:

- **Vision:** What we want to be: a desired future;
- **Strategic Priorities:** The critical areas that need to be addressed for the County to move toward its vision.
- **Goals:** for Each Priority. These are the important results that the County expects to achieve its mission and sustain its priorities.
- **Objectives:** for Each Goal. These are the outcomes that are necessary to ensure that the Goals are attained or sustained.
- **Deliverables:** are the specific services, actions strategies, or initiatives that support the objectives.
- **Performance Measures:** These are measures of our accomplishments, achievements, outcomes that will indicate progress toward deliverables, and that an impact was made.
- **Key Success Indicators:** These are the "big" performance measures for priority outcomes.



## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology provides efficient, reliable and cost-effective service. We strive to be innovative and resourceful supporting the IT needs of Monroe County.

We operate Monroe County TV, the in-house television station that broadcasts on Comcast channel 76 and AT&T U-verse channel 99. The government access channel broadcasts Board of County Commissioners meetings, other local government meetings, public service announcements and original content.

In 2016, we produced and released a virtual tour of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office Animal Farm with Jeanne Selander and the first in a series of Monroe County Library Arts shows with artist/speaker David Wright Pierce.

Information Technology maintains the Monroe County mobile app, which was created in-house. It provides the latest news, event calendars, meeting agendas, employment opportunities, local weather alerts, facility information, a staff phonebook, the latest bid opportunities, and things for visitors to see and do around the Keys -- on your mobile device.

The Service Desk manages the Exchange messaging environment as well as several other enterprise applications. It also provides support for end users and manages the desktops, notebooks and peripherals used by County employees.

Our Server Administrators support the more than 120 virtual and physical servers in our environment. This includes operating systems, the applications that run on them and the storage

they require. In addition, they manage the data retention, replication and recovery processes.

Our Networking team supports our external connectivity, internal network and connectivity to more than 40 locations, the wireless network for both internal and public use, phone services, firewalls and our Miami Data Center Infrastructure.

Additionally, this team manages a private network that facilitates secure collaboration among the BOCC and several other government entities such as the Sheriff, the Property Appraiser, the Supervisor of Elections, the Clerk of Court, the 16th Judicial Circuit Court, the Office of the Public Defender, the Office of the State Attorney and the Key West Housing Authority.

We also 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.

### 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Updated the Marathon BOCC Chamber with new HD cameras, significantly improving the video stream quality from that location.
- Virtualized multiple application and file servers to increase network flexibility and scalability - paving the way for the demands of a more modern county.
- Implemented many hardware and configuration upgrades to the county network, which have improved reliability, increased speed, lowered cost, minimized downtime and increased security.
- Replaced more than 50 obsolete computers with new machines running Windows 10 and Office 2016.
- Upgraded internal & external video conferencing services.

### 2017 GOALS

- Upgrade MCTV equipment/ processes from analog to digital HD.
- Replace the existing phone system with a modern VOIP alternative, which will provide increased functionality and significantly increase ease of use.
- Provide infrastructure enhancements at the Plantation Key Courthouse Complex and at the Key West Library.



### BUDGET: \$2.5 MILLION

Employees: 15

**Director:** Alan MacEachern

305.453.8792

MacEachern-Alan@MonroeCounty-FL.gov

# PUBLIC INFORMATION



**Public Information Officer:**  
Cammy Clark  
Office: 305.453.8734  
Mobile: 305.742.9687  
clark-cammy@monroecounty-fl.gov

The Public Information Office's primary responsibility is to provide information about the actions, policies and public meetings of Monroe County's Board of County Commissioners and the County's 21 departments to the media and the public. This includes serving as the primary public information officer for Monroe County's Key West International Airport, Monroe County Emergency Management and Monroe County Fire Rescue.

Communication is done through news releases, public meetings, posts on social media and the Monroe County website and other means. Our I

The office creates this a which details the previou outlines goals for the u on the County website fl.gov. The report also i

County government buildings and libraries throughout the Keys.

The public information office also creates County presentations and helps facilitate access to government officials and staff members for the media.

Freedom of information requests made under Florida Public Records' laws for Monroe County government are handled by the County Attorney's Office. Call 305-292-3470.

The County Attorney's Office also prepares and publishes the agenda for every BOCC meeting using the state-of-the-art Minutraq software system. This product allows residents to view agenda materials and the video of the BOCC's discussion on a particular item from one location.



## 2016 Accomplishments

- Facilitated 2016 County Mayor Heather Carruthers' tour of the Keys in which she spoke at 12 meetings of business

- For Hurricane Matthew, provided media and public with information before the arrival of the storm. During storm, provided updates and squelched rs to the public and media.

## Goals

ate a better State of the ty Report and presenta- with video. In addition Mayor's traditional tour, work on outreach trips to

schools and other groups that usually are not included in this tour.

- Improve the County's social media presence to include regular use of Twitter, Instagram and other platforms, as well as make more use of video and Facebook live. Work on revamping the County web- site, especially the homepage, and make the site more public friendly.
- Work with department heads and other key people to better promote their good works and better educate the public about what they are doing.

done by the 21 departments of the County. These releases and posts also promoted public events and meetings.

- Worked with Emergency Management on three significant events: Zika prevention, Screwworm Outbreak and Hurricane Mathew threat. Created a ZapZika webpage and worked with other PIOs on prevention outreach.
- For the screwworm outbreak, organized two public meetings hosted by Commissioner George Neugent, a pet screening and a door-to-door campaign. Worked for several months with USDA, Key Deer Refuge and FDACS in joint information center.

**Ugh...don't get me started. I don't know Ms. Clark personally. But I do know that she lied about animal control numbers in last year's reports. Her purpose in doing so seems to be to cover up the lack of funding for the Upper Keys shelter that might contribute to the extremely high kill rate at that shelter.**

# MONROE: A UNIQUE COUNTY

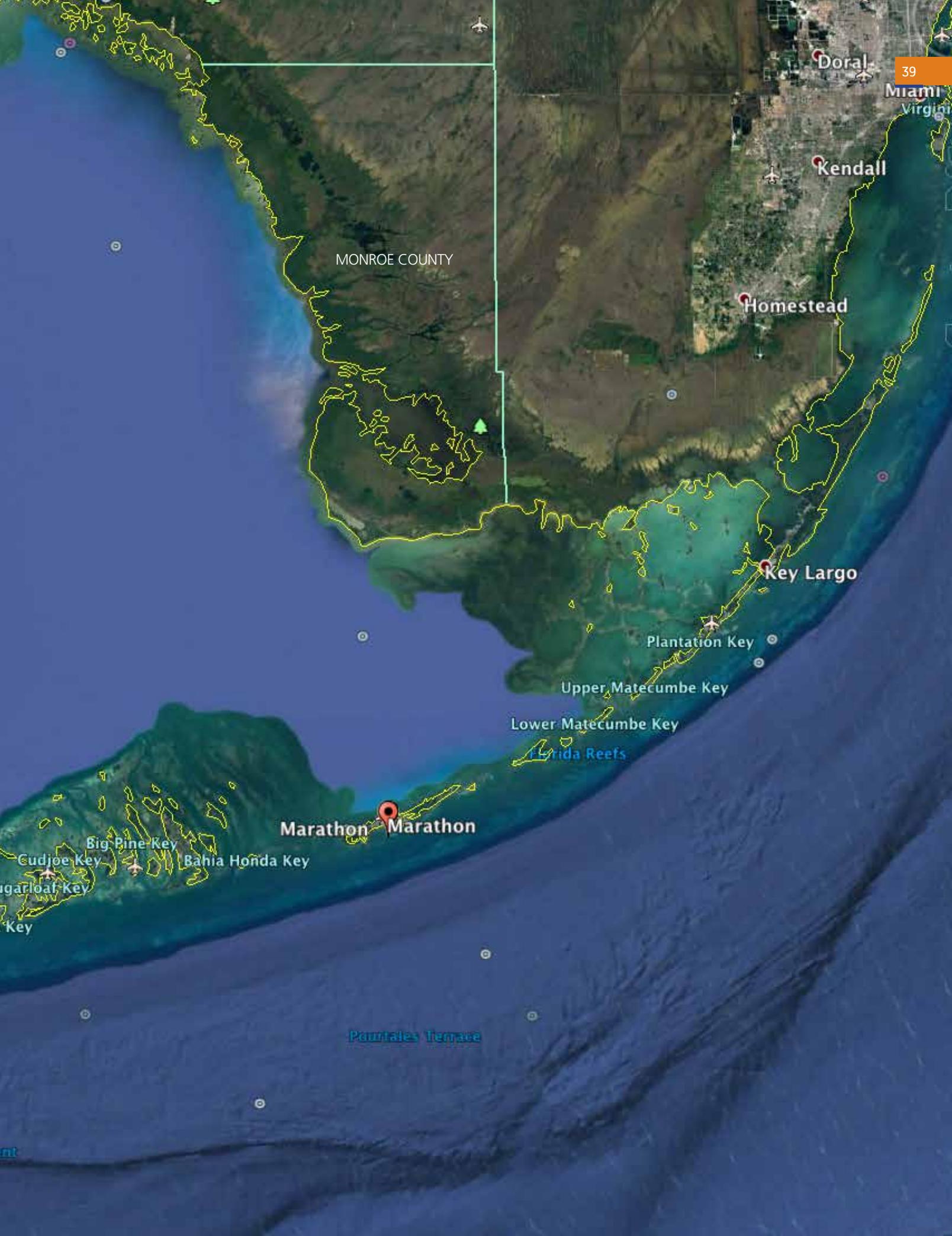
One of the challenges for Monroe County government is the County's unique geography. No other County in the United States is an island chain that looks like a pearl necklace on a map – and juts more than 100 miles out into the wild blue sea. No other County has 1,783 islands.

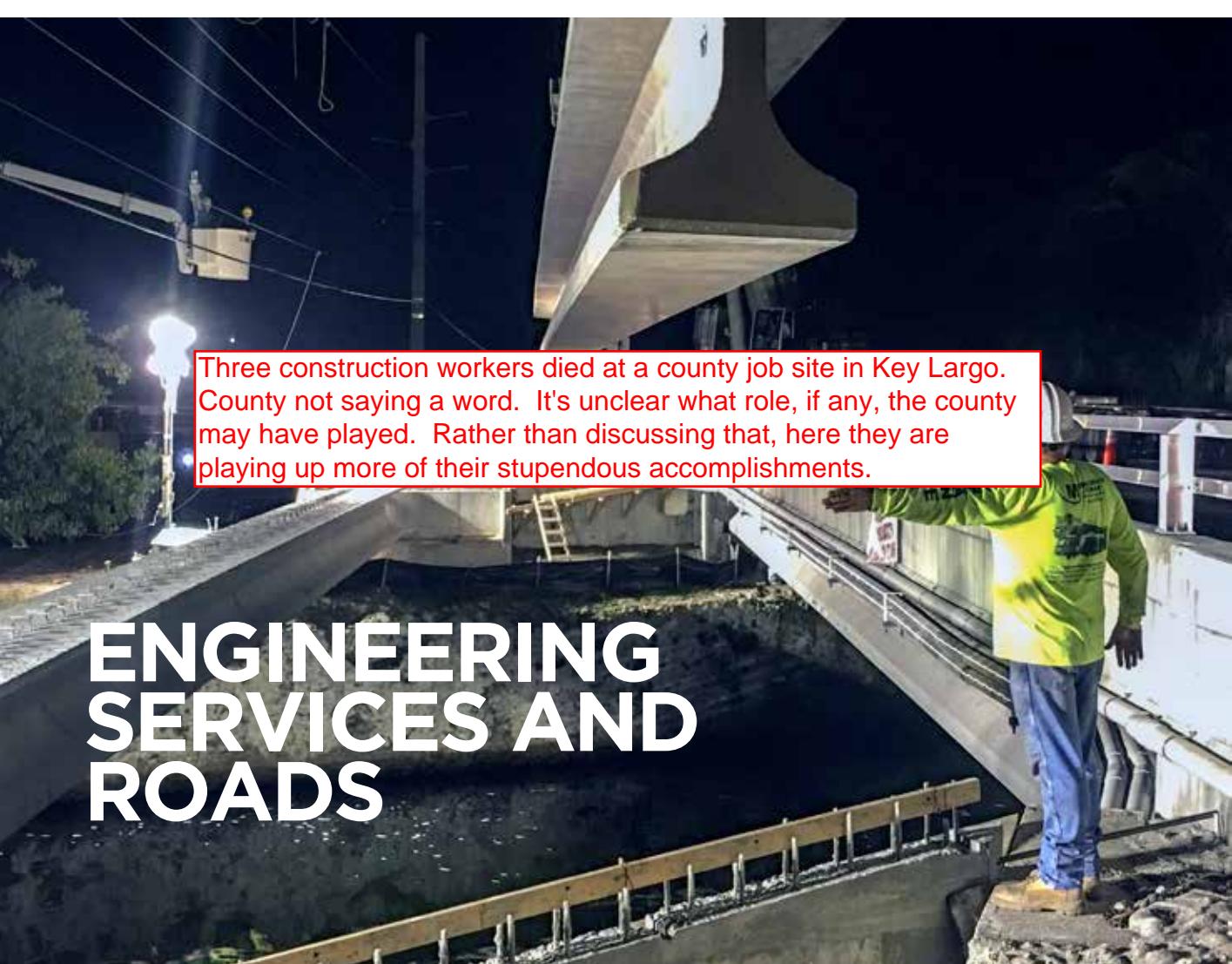
Most counties with a permanent population of only about 75,000 do not need three courthouses, three government centers and three garages for fixing County vehicles, as well as nine County firehouses. This latter number does not even include the municipal fire stations.

But most counties do not have to provide services to people who are spread out in a linear fashion for 120 miles – and rely on only one main road to get around. And that one road is not a turnpike, but a meandering "Main Street" that takes more than two hours to traverse with good traffic. It begins in Key Largo, which also serves as the gateway to mainland Florida, and ends in Key West, the County's population center.

Most counties also do not have the added expense of providing government services to such a geographically challenging location. But for those of us who live and work on this island chain, and who everyday get to see the sun rise over the Atlantic and set over the Gulf of Mexico, the special place is worth it.







Three construction workers died at a county job site in Key Largo. County not saying a word. It's unclear what role, if any, the county may have played. Rather than discussing that, here they are playing up more of their stupendous accomplishments.

# ENGINEERING SERVICES AND ROADS

The Engineering Services and Roads Department is responsible for managing the engineering design, permitting and construction of County roads, sidewalks, bike paths, bridges and storm water infrastructure improvement projects. We maintain 26 County bridges and approximately 312 miles of County roads and rights of way. We also maintain County sidewalks and bike paths – and the U.S. 1 traffic signals and streetlights within unincorporated Monroe County.

Engineering Services reviews rights 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 on road abandonment requests.



## BUDGET: \$33.2 MILLION

(Engineering, Roads Department and Card Sound Toll Authority)  
Employees: 31 (5 Engineering Services, 15 Road Maintenance and 11 Card Sound Toll Authority)  
**Director:** Judy Clarke  
Clarke-judith@monroecounty-fl.gov.

The department oversees the Card Sound Toll Authority, which is responsible for operating the tollbooth 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 way.

## ENGINEERING SERVICES 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Three Roadway and Drainage Improvement projects are in construction or completed, all with sea level rise adaptation included: Grouper Lane Drainage (Key Largo), Lake Surprise Estates Roadway and Drainage Improvements (Key Largo) and Sexton Cove Estates Roadway and Drainage Improvements (Key Largo).
- Roadway and Drainage Improvement Program continued with four projects in design: Stock Island I, Key Largo I, Key Largo II and Stock Island II.
- Bridge Program continued with three projects in design: Garrison Bight Bridge Repair, Sugarloaf Bridge Replacement and Pigeon Key Ramp Restoration Project. The Card Sound Bridge Repair Project is under construction and the Duck Key Bridges Cultural Resources Assessment project is underway to facilitate repair/replacement of the four arch bridges.

- Obtained grant funding to leverage local funds. This included: additional \$1 million Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant from FDOT for a total of \$2 million for the Pigeon Key Ramp Restoration design and construction; a \$150,000 South Florida Water Management District grant for storm water improvements in the Key Largo II Roadway and Drainage Improvement Project; and an additional \$279,972 in Small County Outreach Program grant funds for a total of \$1,483,200 for the Garrison Bight Bridge Repair Project construction.
- Finished new Pedestrian Bridge over Marvin Adams Waterway to complete the approximately 6-mile U.S. 1 Bayside Shared Use Path route in Key Largo



## ROADS MAINTENANCE 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Trimmed trees and brush along 500 miles of roadway and mowed 1,028 miles of County rights of way.
- Installed 4,850 feet of exfiltration drains and installed or replaced 650 new signs.
- Completed 12,470 feet of shoulder work and swept 530 miles of County roads.
- Picked up 346 bags of trash from Tavernier to Key Largo and picked up 35,220 pounds of trash along Card Sound Rd and CR905; participated in community clean ups with the Sheriff Department, including I love Stock Island, and with City of Key West for Fantasy Fest and New Year's.
- Removed 3 Cuban rafts from County beaches and four large trees from County rights of way.
- Trimmed 5,000 feet of wood line at Marathon airport.
- Graded road and filled potholes at Fire Training Academy and Medical Examiner's office.
- Demolished baseball dugouts at Harry Harris Park and spread 10 dump truck loads of sand at Rowell's Waterfront Park.
- Oversaw installation of new Controllers of traffic lights at five locations.
- Took over mowing, trimming, edging and sweeping of shared use path in Upper Keys.
- Took over maintenance of CR905 bike lane.
- Assisted Monroe County Sheriff's Office with 4th of July parade.
- Saved approximately \$61,000 in dump fees by recycling mulch.
- 600 feet of French drain installed or cleaned off.
- Cleaned approximately 40 storm drains in Key West.

## CARD SOUND TOLL AUTHORITY

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Maintained 17 miles of right of way on CR 905 and 905A and associated neighborhoods.
- Removed 17.8 tons of trash from receptacles placed along the right of way.
- Monitored and maintained the condition of bicycle lanes on CR 905 on a 7 day per week schedule.
- Assisted in traffic and revenue study that was included in Card Sound Long Term Business Plan.

## ENGINEERING SERVICES AND ROADS FY 2017 GOALS

- Begin construction on Stock Island I, Key Largo I and Key Largo II Roadway and Drainage Improvement projects. Start engineering design and permitting on Key Largo III (Burton Drive area) Roadway and Drainage Improvement Project and 1st Avenue and Bertha Street (Key West) Roadway and Drainage Improvement Project.
- Begin construction on Garrison Bight Bridge Project and Pigeon Key Ramp Repair Project.
- Issue Design/Build Request for Proposals, award and construct the All Electronic Tolling (AET) system at Card Sound Road Toll. Finalize equipment and operations agreements with service providers and fully implement the new system.
- Continue to apply for and obtain grant funds for various projects.
- Begin implementation of a GIS based Roadway Asset Management and work order system (GIS based software program stores all our road assets: roadways, signs, drainage structures, etc., so we can keep track of maintenance and issue work orders to crews).
- Initiate study and develop pavement maintenance and management program.
- Assist as requested with County's development of Watershed Management Plan for the federal Community Rating System Program, which gives flood insurance discounts to property owners in participating counties.



## 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.

In 2012, the county passed a new surtax of one cent per \$100 in sales, to last until 2033 with the option to renew it. The purpose of the surtax is to help the county meet its mandate to maintain and improve its deteriorating county roads and bridges, continue land acquisition efforts, and fund other county infrastructure projects that improve residents' quality of life and restore or preserve the county's natural resources. At the time, the Keys, the state of Florida and the entire country were just starting to recover from a national economic downturn, and the Keys were still tens of millions short of funding its sewer mandate.

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 throughout the island chain, the County's sewer obligations are now fully funded.

For Fiscal Year 2016, the penny surtax generated about \$34.5 million of which about 60 percent is paid by tourists and day visitors. The ability to fund major capital projects with sales tax revenues significantly lowers the property tax burden of our residents.

The funds are distributed among the County and five municipalities using a revenue-sharing formula mandated by statute. The County received \$20.6 million (60 percent) and

**The county squanders millions on infrastructure projects. These projects routinely go way over budget. To add insult to injury, the BOCC is negligently unfair when it comes to using this resource, which is generated county-wide. All that spending seems to have more to do with enriching well-connected babbas than with benefiting the public.**

the municipalities received the remaining 40 percent. The County made good use of its surtax funds – spending \$28.8 million to follow its Capital Projects Plan, a multi-year blueprint. Projects using this funding included: parks, wastewater, canal restoration, road repairs and new fire trucks.

For fiscal year 2017, the County expects to receive about \$22 million in surtax funding, which will be used on County projects.



# PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND FACILITIES

Project Management and Facilities contracts and builds all new public facilities for Monroe County. We currently are managing 70 projects throughout the Keys, with a total construction budget of \$58.8 million. These include a new Plantation Key Court House and Detention Center (artist's rendition shown above), a new Marathon Library, a complete renovation of Bernstein Park and the new Cudjoe Key Fire Station.

We are responsible for maintaining and repairing more than 100 County buildings with more than one million square feet of space, as well as leased buildings throughout the Keys. These include our correctional facilities and the Key West Lighthouse. We also are responsible for maintenance and repairs of County parks, beaches and boat ramps.

We test air quality, as well as certify and maintain alarm systems and elevators.



## BUDGET: \$11.3 MILLION

construction costs.

Project Management- 70 projects keys wide at \$58.8 million in budgeted  
Employees: 81

**Director:** Doug Sposito  
304.292.441  
Sposito-doug@monroecounty-fl.gov

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed construction on new Florida Keys Marathon International Airport Customs Facility.
- Completed construction of new Magnolia Public Works building in Key Largo, which will enable the old public works building to be removed as part of the new Plantation Key complex.
- Completed the site plan review for the Plantation Key Courthouse.
- Completed repairs to the Key West Lighthouse, the Marathon Annex and the State Road 4A, Harry Harris Park and Blimp Road boat ramps.
- Working with the Florida Department of Transportation, we completed environmental permitting of the Big Pine and Reynolds Street Pier vistas and began design of the Big Pine Swimming Hole vista for the Heritage Trail Project.
- Began construction on the Crawl Key fire training classroom facility, the expansion of the Key West International Airport Customs & Border Patrol facility and three new transfer station offices.
- Began the major renovation project at Bernstein Park and began repairs on the East Martello Museum in Key West.
- Began design of the Higgs Beach Sand Replacement and relocation of Atlantic Street in Key West for Higgs Beach project.
- Began design of Marathon Library, Cudjoe Key Fire Station and relocation of Monroe County Sheriff's Office evidence storage room relocation.
- Were awarded \$6.6 million in grants.

## 2017 GOALS

- Begin construction of the Atlantic Street relocation, the Plantation Key Courthouse, the Marathon Library and the Cudjoe Key Fire Station.
- Begin the Ellis Senior Center renovation/relocation on Plantation Key.
- Begin construction of the Big Pine Swimming Hole, the Sheriff's Office evidence storage room and the Big Pine and Reynolds Street piers.
- Prepare for the demolition of the Jefferson Brown building – the old, nearly empty courthouse – in Key West.
- Start design for Rowell's Waterfront Park in Key Largo.
- Make repairs to the Big Coppitt Boat Ramp and additional repairs to Harry Harris Park boat ramp in Tavernier and the Blimp Road boat ramp on Cudjoe Key.



# COUNTY PARKS & BEACHES

Unincorporated Monroe County maintains 22 parks and beaches, covering more than 100 acres that showcase the beauty and culture of the island chain. Enjoy!

## UPPER AND MIDDLE KEYS

### KEY LARGO

#### **Friendship Park**

This 3-acre park has a playground, baseball diamond, basketball courts and shaded structures. Location: 69 Hibiscus Drive.

#### **Key Largo Community Park & Pool**

This sprawling, 14-acre park features playing fields and a fitness course. It also has courts and surfaces for tennis, soccer, baseball, volleyball, basketball, handball and skateboarding. The Jacobs Aquatic Center is located on the edge of the park (admission fees apply for pool). The County runs the park in partnership with the YMCA. Location: 500 St. Croix Place.

#### **Murray E. Nelson Government Center Park**

This park is a bit hidden at the back of the government center, with a fabulous view of the Bay. It features five pavilions, restrooms and picnic tables. It is accessible for small boats and kayaks and canoes can be launched here. Location: 102050 Overseas Highway.

#### **Rowell's Waterfront Park**

This 8-acre park along the Bay opened Memorial Day. **\$5 million purchase of Rowell's Marina is routinely used to justify unfair funding for Key Largo citizens.**

working on a scenic overlook and other plans to renovate the land into a more active park. It is pet friendly. Location: 104.5 mile marker on U.S. 1.

#### **Sunset Point Park**

This nearly 3-acre park features a boat ramp, offering kayakers and canoers access to surrounding waters. Location: 20 Sunset Drive.

#### **Sunset Point Park 2**

Location: Corner of North Bay Harbor & Sunset Road



### TAVERNIER

#### **Old Settlers Park**

This historic location has been transformed into a small park with a pavilion, picnic table, walking trail and playground. Benches throughout the park provide visitors with a place to enjoy the scenic ocean views. Pets are allowed. Location: Mile Marker 92.5 of U.S. 1, oceanside

#### **Burr Beach/Park**

This is a vacant, sandy beach located at the end of Beach Road. Visitors can relax on the beach and access the water. Location: End of Beach Road.

#### **Harry Harris Park**

The 21-acre park along the ocean features a boat ramp, pavilions, barbecue grills, picnic tables, a playground, a basketball court and baseball fields. It has a protected beach and swimming area, with plenty of green space. With the exception of the beach area, the park is pet friendly. Location: end of East Beach Road.

### LITTLE DUCK KEY

#### **Veterans Memorial Park**

This small park along the ocean has a sandy beach, picnic area and restrooms, a nice midway stop for travelers driving the length of the Keys. There also is easy access to the mangrove habitat. Location: west end of the Seven Mile Bridge, Mile Marker 40 of U.S. 1.

## LOWER KEYS

### BIG PINE

#### Blue Heron Park

It features a community building with restrooms and three tiki pavilions with 6 barbecue grills. There is a basketball court and a volleyball court. It also is equipped with a foosball table, ping pong tables and tetherballs. Location: Intersection of Wilder Road and Lytton Way.

#### Watson Field Park and Big Pine Dog Park

This park serves as a dog park and has a grassy playing field. There is a baseball field, sandy volleyball court and two tennis courts. Location: 30150 South Street.

#### Palm Villa Park

This small park has a picnic table and playground. Location: End of Palm Avenue and Wilder.

#### Big Pine Key Community Park

This 10-acre park has a roller hockey rink, basketball court, handball courts, baseball field, tennis courts, bocce courts, shuffleboard courts and pickleball courts. A fitness trail has views of the bay. There also is a playground, skate park and community center, which can be used for meetings and parties. Address: 31009 Atlantis Road, at the end of Sands Road.

### RAMROD KEY

#### Ramrod Park

The park is vacant and sandy. Visitors can enjoy walking or relaxing on the sand while watching the sunset. Location: corner of Bay Shore Drive and Pruitt Drive.

### SADDLEBUNCH KEY

#### Bay Point Park

The park features benches, picnic tables and barbecue pits. There is a sand volleyball court, a basketball court, a tennis court and a bocce court. It also has a sandy playground with swing sets and a jungle gym, a large grassy field and a soccer net. Location: 6 West Circle Drive

### GEIGER KEY

#### Boca Chica Beach

This relatively secluded beach is a great spot to see a multitude of sea life. Location: 354 Boca Chica Road

### BIG COPPITT KEY

#### Big Coppitt Volunteer Fire Department Park

The park includes a basketball court, roller hockey rink, bocce courts, horseshoe pits and a handball court. It also has six tables and benches. Location: 280 Avenue F

#### Wilhelmina Harvey Park

The family friendly park has a jungle gym, swing set and picnic area with an open grassy area and small walking trail. Dogs love the gated park. Location: 373 Avenue F

### STOCK ISLAND

#### Bernstein Park

The park currently is closed during a one-year major renovation to raise all the ballfields, build a new com-

**\$3 million project now costs \$8 million - an astounding \$5 million over budget.**

Location: corner of 5th Street and 5th Avenue.

### KEY WEST

#### Higgs Beach

The park along the ocean offers swimming, snorkeling, beach volleyball, tennis courts and pickle ball courts. It includes a dog park and Astro City, a large sandy playground with barbecue pits, a volleyball court and picnic tables. The County is working on a project to renovate the park, which includes relocating Atlantic Boulevard to make a larger beach area. Location: 1040 Atlantic Blvd.

#### Key West Pines Park

This picnic area under Australian Pines is a good place to watch planes take off from Key West International Airport or the beautiful sunrises over the water. Pets are allowed if owners pick up after them. Location: 3501 South Roosevelt Blvd.



# COUNTY BOAT RAMPS

Boaters can launch their vessels from eight public boat ramps in unincorporated Monroe County. All are free to County residents.

**Sunset Point Park**, Mile Marker 95.2  
Bayside, Sunset Court, Key Largo

**Harry Harris Park**, Mile Marker 92.5  
Oceanside, Tavernier

**Koehn Avenue 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

**Geiger Boat Launch**, next door to Geiger Marina, Geiger Key

**Barcelona Boat Ramp**, Mile Marker 9.3,  
Big Coppitt Key

# COUNTY MUSEUMS

Monroe County owns and maintains four museums in the Florida Keys. They are Pigeon Key, a small island two miles offshore of Marathon, the Key West Lighthouse, the West Martello Tower, and the Fort East Martello Museum and Gardens.

## Pigeon Key

While Henry Flagler was building the Oversea Railway to Key West in the early 1900s, more than 400 workers lived in the railroad village on Pigeon Key, located in the path of the Old Seven Mile Bridge. Pigeon Key had a post office, commissary and one-room school while the bridge was being built from 1908 to 1912.

When a hurricane destroyed the railway in 1925, Pigeon Key became the headquarters for the Florida Road and Toll Bridge District. Starting in 1968, the island served for 20 years as an environmental field station for international researchers studying tropical marine and island ecologies with the University of Miami. In 1993, the Pigeon Key Foundation assumed stewardship and began restoration efforts to turn it into a museum.

## The East and West Martello Towers

In 1822, the U.S. Navy surveyed sites to determine where would be good places for a fort whose guns could command the harbor in Key West. In 1836, U.S. Army Col. Joseph Gilmore Totten and Col. Silmon Bernard, a French military engineer, drew up plans for a set of nine forts. The high cost led to revising the plan to one large fort (Fort Zachary Taylor) and two advanced batteries: East and West .



It was not until the mid-1860s that work began on the towers along what is now South Roosevelt Boulevard. They were never armed and involved in battle, although the U.S. Navy used it for target practice. In 1898, the West Tower was used during the Spanish American War for quartering troops, storage, signaling and as a lookout. In 1914-44, it was used for radio stations and an anti-aircraft battery on the beach. At the end of World War II, the troops departed.

In 1947, the Army-owned towers became the property of Monroe County. The West Tower had become an eyesore to the shoreline and there was pressure in 1949 to demolish it and put in a new beach area. Rep. Joe Allen convinced the County Commission to stop the demolition. The Key West Garden Club entered into a land-lease agreement with the County. In 1976, the West Tower was declared a National Historic Site by the State of Florida and is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Under the guidance of Allen, the Key West Art & Historical Society restored the East Tower and opened the Fort East Martello Museum & Gardens in 1950 as the first museum of the Florida Keys. In 1972, it was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. The museum now houses works by Cuban folk artist Mario Sanchez, and Robert the Doll, a supposedly haunted doll belonging to the late artist Robert Eugene Otto. The County is now renovating the facility with funding from the Monroe County Tourist Development Council.

## Key West Lighthouse and Keepers' Quarters Museum

After the first Key West Lighthouse was destroyed in an 1846 hurricane, a new lighthouse was completed in 1848. It stood 50 feet tall with 13 lamps in 21-inch reflectors. The growth of trees and taller buildings in Key West began to obscure the light, so in 1894 the tower was raised 20 feet, placing the light about 100 feet above sea level.

**The Coast Guard decommissioned the Key West Lighthouse** in 1969. It was turned over to Monroe County, which in turn leases it to the Key West Arts & Historical Society that operates it as a museum. On display is the first order Fresnel lens from the Sombrero Key Lighthouse.

# FLEET MANAGEMENT

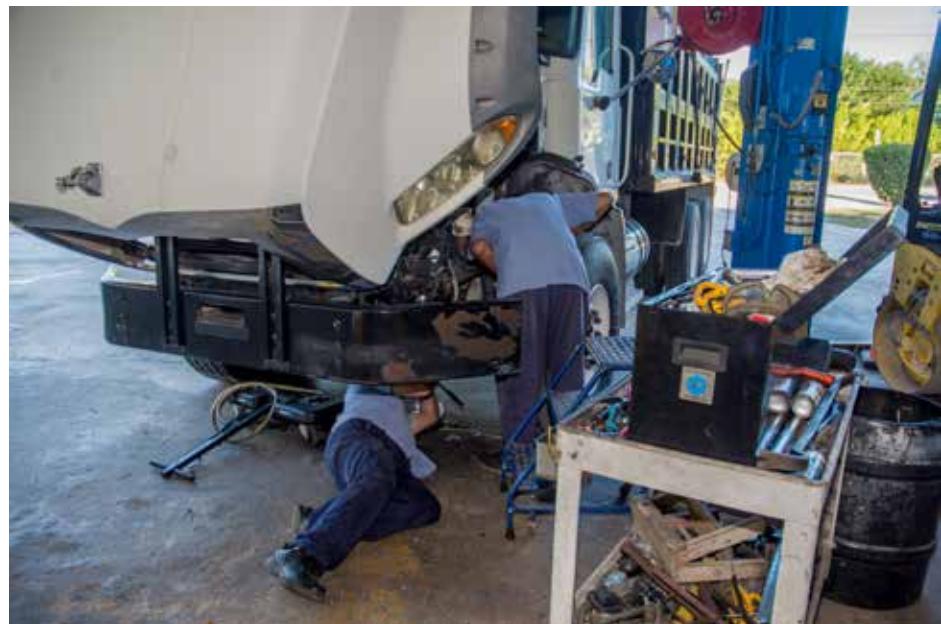
Fleet management operates and manages three County garages in Key West, Marathon and Plantation Key. They all provide full-service maintenance, repair and fuel facilities to keep the County's fleet of about 800 cars, trucks, generators and anything else with a motor humming.

It's a tough job, especially in the heat, humidity and salt air of the Keys. The fleet includes about 255 units from the Sheriff's Department, 67 emergency power generators and a new electric vehicle used in Key West.

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

## Did you know? Fleet

Management's director Roy Sanchez began working for Monroe County in 1986 in the Engineering Department. About a year later, he was transferred to the Key West garage to help establish an organized Fleet Services for the approximately 50 vehicles used by the Public Works Department. For the past 29 years, he has led the growing fleet operation that most recently added maintenance of Fire Rescue's fire apparatus to its responsibilities.



## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Replaced 37 outdated vehicles/units.
- Increased number of completed vehicle safety inspections to 1,415. And we conducted associated preventive maintenance.
- Began countywide in-house fire apparatus inspection, maintenance and repair program.
- Replaced emergency power generator at Plantation Key garage.
- Began new in-house blade sharpening program for county tractor tree trimmers.
- Three garages completed approximately 2,873 work orders.
- Three garages purchased, distributed and invoiced approximately 148,000 gallons of gasoline and diesel fuel.
- Zero accidents due to faulty garage repair or malfunction of any County vehicle.

## 2017 GOALS

- Improve safety practices and procedures throughout garages and fuel facilities.
- Improve format for purchasing new vehicles and equipment and improve format for selling and/or disposing of County surplus vehicles and equipment.
- Reduce turnaround times for major repairs.



## BUDGET: \$2.9 MILLION

Employees: 17

**Director:** Roy Sanchez

305.292.3572

Sanchez-roy@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 dependency 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, we had more than 261 children in the dependency system. They were served by 100 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 Takes a team approach: One volunteer, One attorney and One child advocate manager to achieve the highest standard of advocacy for the children we serve.



### BUDGET: \$195,000

Employees: 11 (2 county, 9 state)

**Director:** Alexa Corsi Leto

305.292.3485

leto-alexa@monroecounty-fl.gov

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, we have been able to take on 100 percent of the dependency cases.

Statewide, Guardian ad Litem's existing funding enables representation of 25,286 children, which requires more than 10,000 volunteers. The Legislature funded representation for all children in out-of-care, based on the August 2015 out-of-home care population of 22,004. The October 2016 caseload Statewide was 23,770, up by 1,671 (8%) in one year.

The Guardian ad Litem program is in a critical place right now and is asking the Legislature for an additional \$3.3 million in recurring General Revenue for salary adjustments and contract hourly rate increases to stem high turnover in staff and volunteers. GAL salaries are among the lowest in state government for comparable classifications, according to a 2014 independent study.

# BUILDING

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. We provide staff support for the Contractors Examining Board and the Board of Adjustment and Appeals.

In 2016, we reviewed 21,120 plans, conducted 36,109 inspections and issued 7,648 permits.



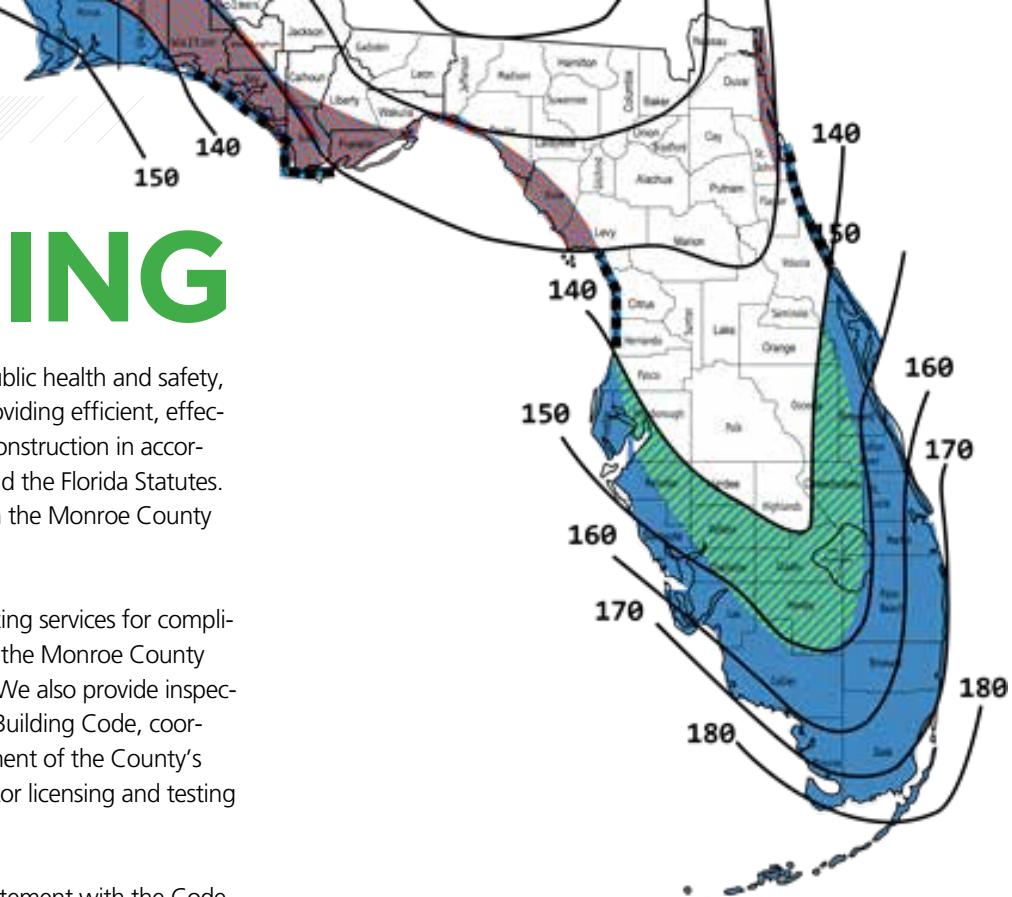
## BUDGET: \$1.5 MILLION

Employees: 15

**Director:** Rick Griffin

305.453.8815

Griffin-rick@monroecounty-fl.gov



**Did you know?** When designing a building for residential use or occupancy, Monroe County adheres to the following: The building must be able to withstand winds of up to 170 mph north of Tavernier Creek and up to 180 mph south of Tavernier Creek. But there are some exceptions, so please contact the Building Department.

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Monroe County successfully entered the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). Beginning Oct. 1, 2016, residents and business owners in Unincorporated Monroe County became eligible for federal flood insurance discounts. These discounts resulted in more than \$3.6 million in annual savings to the County's 15,000 National Flood Insurance Program policyholders – an average of \$233 per policy.
- Upgraded Permitting Software to pave the way for a new automated permit expiration notification system.

## 2017 GOALS

- Implement new software to provide notification to permit applicants that their permits are nearing expiration to allow them time to address inspections needed, prior to expiring the permits
- Begin analysis of software for Electronic Plan Review.

# 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:**

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



BEFORE



AFTER

# CODE COMPLIANCE

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 establish working partnerships with neighborhoods and outside agencies to help with compliance.

In 2016, Code Compliance opened 1,576 new cases; conducted 16,691 inspections; and presented 483 cases before the Special Magistrate.

We continue to work with the Monroe County Tax Collector's Office to educate the public about short-term vacation rentals involving private properties in unincorporated areas. These rentals are not permitted in many neighborhoods. In 2016, we presented 131 cases regarding illegal vacation rentals to the Special Magistrate. This is an increase of 111 cases from the previous year. The Special Magistrate levied \$402,306 in fines for 2016.

We work with the building department to inspect construction sites and properties to ensure that licensed contractors are properly conducting the work. Unlicensed contractors can be a detriment to unknowing property owners seeking assistance in making improvements on their properties.

## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Code Compliance partnered with the Department of Environmental Protection in a two-year effort to clean up a 22-acre private parcel of land and waterway along Card Sound Road that had become a dumping ground for sunken derelict vessels, unpermitted structures and tons of trash and debris. This land, once part of the "Historic Fishing Village of Card Sound," had become an environmental mess and safety hazard but now will become an aquatic preserve.
- Continued sewer connection enforcement.
- Implemented a new process, working with the County Attorney's Office, to improve compliance and collections of fines, including follow through on properties that do not come into compliance.

## 2017 GOALS

- Conduct a cleanup on Stock Island. This will be in conjunction with street improvement scheduled for later this year. The cleanup will remove debris, trash, and parking and storage areas. The cleanup will also remove illegal vacation rentals to increase finding violators and gaining compliance for our neighborhoods where this illegal activity impacts quality of life
- Develop a guide to determine types of violations and their severity to assure consistent enforcement is occurring throughout all of the unincorporated Monroe County areas.



## BUDGET: \$1.5 MILLION

Employees: 15

**Director:** Cynthia J. McPherson

305.289.2508

McPherson-Cynthia@monroecounty-fl.gov

# SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

The Solid Waste department provides trash, recycling and yard waste collections and processing services to our 32,000 households in unincorporated Monroe County, 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 Countywide. 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. An contracting with a new haul out contractor, the County has realized a savings per ton. For fiscal year 2016, this resulted

in \$185,000 in savings to County residents. Recycling rates have continued to improve to approximately 65 percent. The County also recycled 74.5 tons of electronic waste, 17.9 tons of latex paint and 6.1 tons of batteries. Increased recycling saves the County money. Processed recycled material

**Did you know that two landfill companies donated to Kevin Madok's campaign? What do you suppose they're expecting in return?**



**Did you know?** Netflix' Bloodline filmed a scene at the Long Key Transfer Station.



## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Oversaw the ongoing replacement of three scale house buildings at transfer stations in Long Key, Key Largo and Cudjoe Key.
- Reduced residential solid waste collection rates from \$404.00 to \$386.00 annually.

## 2017 GOALS

- Oversee the permanent closure of the Cudjoe Key landfill and reclaim the funds held in escrow for the facility's long-term care.
- Finish construction on three new scale house buildings.

## 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

## BUDGET: \$17.8 MILLION

Employees: 17



**Director:** Will Thompson

305.292.4432

Thompson-will@monroecounty-fl.gov

# LIBRARY SERVICES

In 1853, the Florida Keys first public library opened – in Key West. Today, Monroe County's libraries are as popular as ever, with more than 350,000 adults and children visiting our five branches.

Our common mission: meet the changing needs of our patrons for information, education and entertainment. To do so, 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 ([www.keyslibraries.org](http://www.keyslibraries.org)), with links to a variety of databases, also at no charge.

In 2016, our five branches offered 1,915 programs, which attracted 32,108 participants of all ages. These programs were designed for mothers and toddlers, school-aged children, tweens and teens, adults and senior citizens, both at the libraries and through community outreach activities.

Patrons 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, and through text and electronic chat.



## Key West

700 Fleming Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-292-3595

## Big Pine

213 Key Deer Blvd.  
Big Pine Key, 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





## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Library Services has increased its digital collection to 4,289 items that include e-books and e-audio books. This collection continues to be a growing area of patron interest, with circulation of these materials increasing to about 26,300. That's a record 20 percent increase from 2015, when we had a stellar 17 percent increase from the previous year.
- The Florida History staff and volunteers have broadened their focus to include the collections at all five branches. We also have also been adding more digitized photos to our Flickr online website. The cumulative views have exceeded 18 million, more than triple the number from just two years ago. Viewer responses continue to be reminiscent and enthusiastic.
- Planning for the new Marathon Library has progressed. (Artist's rendition shown in the middle).
- Staff is now looking into space arrangements, furnishings and equipment needed for the broad range of services that we anticipate being able to offer when we move into the new building.
- Our successful application for the annual State Aid to Libraries Grant added \$82,500 to our library funding for the year, providing additional capital for electronic materials as well as for technological expansion.

- A broad range of programs were presented onsite and through outreach at all five branches over the past year, reaching out to audiences from toddlers through seniors, and attracting all parts of our communities. They included computer classes, poetry jams, holiday events and author presentations.
- We also took part in the State Library-supported Summer Youth programs, with more than 4,400 children throughout the County participating in about 120 summer activities offered by our library staff.

## 2017 GOALS

- At all branches we will re-examine and evaluate the use of space to determine if some spaces can be re-purposed for the present patron needs. This includes expanding and enriching current services and adding new activities, especially for our youth.
- We will promote better communication between branch staff as well as among managerial staff. We will work with the County Information Technology Department to set up a system of cameras and computers for meetings. This will help ensure consistency in communication of ideas and policy. It also will enable staff at different branches to coordinate efforts and share ideas when working on similar programs and goals.
- A plan for space use at the new Marathon Library will be implemented, and the purchasing of furnishings and equipment will be outlined and initiated.
- The Florida History collections at all branches will be analyzed for digitalization priorities. A plan for access to these materials will be formulated.



## BUDGET: \$4.5 MILLION

Employees: 43

**Director:** Norma Kula

305.853.7349

Kula-norma@monroecounty-fl.gov

### Did You Know?

The Key West Library is the oldest library in South Florida, opening its doors 163 years ago. Our other branches came into existence much later, ranging from 1962 to 1995.

By Florida statute, each County is responsible for its own Animal Control. Monroe County has three animal control shelters, which currently are managed by two independent contractors. The Florida Keys Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals operates branches in Key West and Marathon, which cover from Key West to mile marker 70 of the Overseas Highway. The Humane Animal Care Coalition in Key Largo covers the rest of the Keys.

# ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal control promotes responsible pet ownership, animal care and community safety. We work to increase pet adoptions and reduce pet overpopulation.

Sadly, animal control in the Keys is the source of much questionable activity. There is, of course, the SUFA incident which led to commissioner Neugent being censured and reprimanded by the Florida Ethics Commission. There is also the misinformation peddled by county staff in the 2015 state of the county report. And commissioner Murphy saying she is "perfectly happy" with the performance of the Upper Keys shelter despite the shamefully high kill rate. I don't know how these people live with themselves.

county license tags and certificates.

At the end of 2016, construction began on a new animal control facility in Key West to replace the crumbling, cramped and outdated existing facility that was built in 1970. The Florida Keys SPCA raised \$6.2 million of the estimated \$7.7 million cost. The County contributed \$1.5 million. The new 23,000-square-foot facility (artist's rendition shown in the middle) is scheduled for completion in January 2018. It will provide many more kennels for cats and dogs, a new veterinary clinic to care for the animals, and bring many of the current functions now done outside in the elements safely under one roof.

This Key West branch is the busiest of the three shelters. In 2016, the Key West facility served 1,674 animals through adoption, clinic, lost and found, cruelty and animal control.



## KEY WEST

The Florida Keys Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)  
5230 College Rd.  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-294-4857  
After-Hours: 305.304.5964

## MARATHON

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

## KEY LARGO

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



(We also temporarily care for the pets of domestic abuse victims who are in safe shelters through our faith program). The release rate was 86 percent: 506 animals were adopted; 274 animals were reunited with their owners; 87 animals were transferred to breed or species specific animal rescue groups; 34 wild animals were transferred to species specific rehab groups and 216 animals were served through clinic programs.

In 2016, the Key West facility also handled 582 cases of animal control/cruelty. These included: 521 complaints, 16 cruelty/neglect investigations, 9 enforcement cases, 36 humane calls and animal welfare check reports.

Last year, the Marathon facility served 635 animals through adoption, clinic, lost and found, cruelty and animal control. The release rate was 88 percent: 204 animals were adopted; 145 animals were reunited with their owners; 26 animals were transferred to breed or species specific animal rescue groups; 100 wild animals were transferred to species-specific rehab groups.

In 2016, the Marathon facility handled 539 cases of animal control/cruelty. These included: 51 complaints, 11 cruelty/neglect investigations, 42 enforcement cases, 435 humane calls and animal welfare check reports.



At the Upper Keys Animal Shelter, the average intake for animals used to be about 1,500 per year. We began offer free spaying and neutering in 2000. Since then, we have provided this service to 9,232 animals for the Upper Keys community – which has reduced our average annual intake by more than half.

In 2016, the Upper Keys shelter took in 204 dogs and 427 cats for a combined 631 animals. We reunited 86 dogs and 34 cats with their owners. Most of the felines were unadoptable feral cats, trapped by citizens in the Upper Keys. We found new homes for all 67 adoptable dogs and all 106 adoptable cats, maintaining a 100% adoption rate for 12 consecutive years. We also handled 622 service calls for animal control and cruelty.

**Did you know?** Travelers heading to Key West found a German Shepherd running the streets near Atlanta with no identification or microchip. The travelers brought the dog to a nearby shelter, but were told there was a "time limit." They did not feel comfortable leaving the sweet and gentle dog there and instead decided to take her on their trip.

Upon arrival in Key West, the travelers brought the dog to our shelter for adoption. With the longshot hope of finding the dog's owner, a staff member posted the dog's picture on Atlanta's Lost Pet pages and other various social media page. It worked. A woman named Ana called us and the dog was indeed her pet, Ginger! With the help of Jeff Bennett from Pilots N' Paws, we were able to reunite Ginger with Ana three weeks after she was brought to our shelter.

# EMPLOYEE SERVICES

The Employee Services Department provides guidance and information to the County's more than 500 employees and the public to maintain a well-trained, fairly-compensated, healthy and safety-conscious workforce that keeps pace with the evolving needs and goals of the county. The benefits and workers compensation offices service County employees, as well as six constitutional officer agencies with a combined 2,400 employees, dependents, volunteers and retirees.

There are three offices within the Department: human resources (which includes safety, unemployment case coordination and equal employment opportunities), workers' compensation and benefits. Programs include recruitment, hiring, employee retention, safety, wellness and group insurance oversight.

**Did you know?** You can find County job openings and apply for employment by going to the County's website employment page at: <http://www.monroecounty-fl.gov/jobs.aspx>.



## 2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

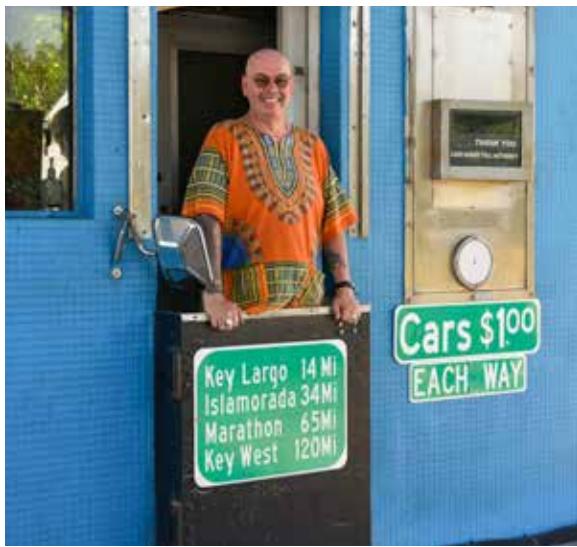
- Implemented the first year of Preventative Care Screenings Wellness Program, offering a \$25 per month discount to the 394 participants who went to their primary care physicians and obtained age appropriate health screenings to identify any medical issues prior to them becoming more serious and more costly for both the employee and the County's group health insurance plan.
- Completed Health Fairs with 369 employees attending, in Key Largo, Marathon and Key West.
- Completed our fourth year of the Performance Management Review System that grades employees based on their annual strategic plan action item achievements and gives merit raises based on those grades. This creates incentives to meet annual goals and improve the County.
- Implemented the Live Scan Fingerprint machine, which eliminated the long wait time of up to six weeks for receiving criminal background checks.
- Contracted with Evergreen Solutions to conduct a minimum \$15 per hour wage analysis.
- Held first interagency case review with Monroe County Sheriff Office in an effort to develop a program that is beneficial to employees while returning them to work sooner and reducing works compensation claims costs.
- Pro-actively scheduled litigation strategy conference with workers compensation staff and contractual defense attorneys to identify cases with high exposure given new changes to workers compensation laws.

## 2017 GOALS

- Work with a newly formed Health Plan Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for BOCC consideration on changes to the health insurance plan to curb expenses.
- Begin automating Employee Services Processes by partnering with the Monroe County Clerk, using SunGard software, to make the recruitment process and other internal functions easier for all County departments.
- Implement the Evergreen Solutions' final recommendations establishing a minimum salary of \$15.00 per hour for all employees of the County.
- Streamline workers compensation policy.
- Contract for an update to the County Classification and Compensation Study.

## BUDGET: \$29.3 MILLION

Employees: 10  
305.292.4557





## MONROE COUNTY EMPLOYEES AT WORK



The County Attorney's Office provides high quality, cost-effective legal services to the Board of County Commissioners, the County Administrator and his Senior Management Team, the 21 County departments and all County regulatory and advisory boards in all matters relating to their official County duties.

Our legal team has more than 150 years of combined experience practicing law. Six of our lawyers are board certified by the Florida Bar as experts in City, County and Local Government law. Only 251 of the more than 100,000 members of the Florida Bar have earned this distinction.

Virtually every major decision made by the Board of County Commissioners and County staff needs legal review. This includes review of every contract, bid solicitation, resolution and ordinance considered by the County Commissioners. The legal team has the expertise to handle most matters.

This is less costly than outside counsel.

Given the broad scope of services that Monroe County government provides to its residents and visitors, staff lawyers handle a wide range of topics ranging literally from A (airport law) to Z (zoning). Whether it's the federal regulations associated with operating two international airports or ensuring that our community's precious environmental natural resources



## COUNTY ATTORNEY

are adequately protected through enforcement of our Land Development Code, the County Attorney's office works together with County staff in carrying out their missions.

The Keys' beautiful natural resources also make our community a world-class tourist destination. Through its representation of the Tourist Development Council and the

Aqueduct Authority to ensure that the installation of centralized wastewater treatment systems is done according to the law.

During 2016, staff lawyers represented the County in

**County Attorney, Bob Shillinger, involved himself in discouraging public information requests regarding the Emergency Services Surtax.**

Keys' unique natural resources.

spend in accordance with state

year, the County Commission

**And Cynthia Hall famously slammed property owners in the Lower Keys for filing a lawsuit about the very questionable Cudjoe Regional wastewater project.**

rights of local property owners. The County must also adhere to a myriad of federal and state statutes and regulations. Commissioners and staff rely upon the County Attorney's Office for guidance on compliance with these laws.

public works' issues to ensure that all road improvement, construction projects and infrastructure improvement contracts are carefully drafted and followed to protect the taxpayer's investments. Staff counsel also works closely with the Florida Keys

County departments handling public safety and monitoring the public works' issues to ensure that all road improvement, construction projects and infrastructure improvement contracts are carefully drafted and followed to protect the taxpayer's investments. Staff counsel also works closely with the Florida Keys



### BUDGET: \$6 MILLION

Employees: 16

**County Attorney:** Bob Shillinger

305.292.3470

Shillinger-Bob@monroecounty-fl.gov

The County's Risk Management is located within the County Attorney's Office. Risk Management ensures that the County and its contractors are insured properly.

# LAND AUTHORITY

The Monroe County Board of County Commissioners created the Land Authority in 1986 to purchase property in the County for conservation, recreation and affordable housing. The Land Authority assists in the implementation of land use plans and serves as an intermediary between landowners and government agencies that regulate land use.

For calendar year 2016, the Land Authority paid \$15.6 million to close 63 real estate transactions, the most of any local government land conservation program in Florida. The transactions included 99 parcels totaling 51.9 acres – for conservation and affordable housing uses.

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

The Land Authority provided \$12.5 million for a transaction that permanently restricts the use of the 208 units at Peary Court in Key West to affordable rental housing.

Funding for land acquisition comes from a half-cent of the tourist impact tax charged on lodging in the Keys and a surcharge on admissions and overnight camping at state parks in unincorporated Monroe County.

Last year, the new Florida Keys Stewardship Act went into effect. The state law calls for the state Department of Environmental Protection to acquire \$5 million of land in Monroe County each year for the next 10 years.



## BUDGET: \$12.4 MILLION



Employees: 4

**Executive Director:** Charles Pattison  
305.295.5180  
Pattison-charles@monroecounty-fl.gov

In November 2016, the County Commission signed a memorandum of agreement with the state Department of Environmental Protection to work in partnership for the purchase of Florida Forever lands with Stewardship and other state funding.

The Land Authority also oversees Monroe County's approximately 2,000 acres of conservation lands, including some individual lots within or adjacent to neighborhoods. In some cases, newly purchased conservation land needs restoration. The Land Authority's Land Steward hires contractors to remove invasive exotic vegetation and when necessary plant native vegetation.

## MONROE COUNTY LAND AUTHORITY PROJECTS FROM INCEPTION IN 1986 THROUGH 2016

Project Type	Transactions	Parcels	Acres	Units	Expenditures
Conservation	1,489	3,922	3,646	0	\$42,671,969.50
Affordable Housing	54	133	105	1,134	\$43,443,201.91
Recreation	28	153	124	0	\$6,643,924.43
Solid Waste	1	4	74	0	\$2,212,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,572</b>	<b>4,212</b>	<b>3,949</b>	<b>1,134</b>	<b>\$94,971,595.84</b>

In 1970, the State of Florida enacted Florida Statute 406, which establishes a statewide Medical Examiner System of death investigation. The state is divided into 25 "Districts." The Governor appoints a medical examiner to each district for three-year terms. A commission of gubernatorial appointees provides oversight.

By statute, the medical examiner determines cause and manner of death of a human being under the following circumstances: criminal violence; accident; suicide; a person in good health dies suddenly; unattended by a practicing physician or other recognized practitioner; in a prison or penal institution; in police custody; suspicious or unusual circumstance; criminal abortion; poison; disease that threatens public health; and employment-related disease, injury or toxic agent.

The medical examiner also determines cause and manner of death when a dead body is brought into the state without proper medical certification; when the body is to be cremated, dissected or buried at sea; and when requested by the District Attorney.

To do so, the medical examiner's primary tool is the autopsy, which is a post mortem examination. During an autopsy, the body is examined externally and internally in a systematic way. All organs are examined and biopsied. Fluids and tissues are obtained for laboratory testing. Everything is documented in a "case file," with photographs taken at all stages of the process. When an investigation is complete, a death certificate listing the cause and manner of death is filed with the Department of Vital Records for the State of Florida.

In 2008, Monroe County built a state-of-the-art Medical Examiners facility on Grassy Key. The facility consists of two buildings separated by a breezeway. One building functions as office space and the other as the laboratory. In the administration building, we store records and conduct the daily business of the medical examiner. In the laboratory building, we store bodies and perform examinations and testing.

In 2016, we handled 229 cases with the following classification: 75 as "natural" deaths; 25 as the result of motor vehicle accidents; 19 as suicides and 4 as homicides.

# MEDICAL EXAMINER



There were six infant deaths and five inmate deaths. Twenty-four deaths were determined to be "drug related."

This past year, one of our many challenges was the recovery and identification of four Cuban refugees. Their makeshift boat sailed from Cuba with 23 persons on board. The boat sank off shore. Three men survived. We recovered two bodies 20 miles off the coast of Key Largo. Two more bodies were recovered near Big Pine Key. The rest were lost at sea. After reaching out to the Cuban community in Miami, we were able to identify each of the recovered bodies and return them to family members in Cuba.



## BUDGET: \$631,405

Employees: 5

**Medical Examiner:** Dr. Thomas R. Beaver

305.743.9011

District16medicalexaminer@gmail.com

# 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 manmade 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.

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*Competitors in the 2016 Swim for Alligator Lighthouse begin the roundtrip trek to the historic beacon off Islamorada. The event, that attracts residents and visitors, is funded in part by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council. Photo by Andy Newman/TDC*



*The Climate Change Advisory Committee makes recommendations for issues like nuisance flooding.*

## CITIZEN BOARDS & COMMITTEES

Monroe County has 22 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

### ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

The Committee of 5 members (appointed by the Commissioners) reviews and recommends proposals for commissioned permanent public art. Projects are funded by the 1% for Art ordinance created in 2001. It strives to promote and support the vibrant arts community by enhancing public buildings throughout Monroe County.

Contact: Elizabeth Young, 305.295.4369; 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

### 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, 305.292.4426; Losacco-tina@monroecounty-fl.gov

### CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT & APPEALS

Hears discrepancies of interpretations of the current County building codes.

Contact: Maria Partington, 305.289.2583; Partington-maria@monroecounty-fl.gov

### CONTRACTORS EXAMINING BOARD

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

Contact: Maria Partington, 305.289.2583; Partington-maria@monroecounty-fl.gov

### DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reviews applications for development approval and reviews applications for amendments to the text of the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code and map amendments.

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

### DUCK KEY SECURITY DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD

Provides security services for the residential areas of Duck Key.

Contact: Mary Balaz, mbalazs@bellsouth.net

### 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

Reviews funding requests from non-profit human services agencies and makes recommendations to the BOCC.

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

# CITIZEN BOARDS & COMMITTEES

## KEY WEST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AD HOC COMMITTEE ON NOISE

Acts 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 BOCC on matters relating to ports or marine issues, such as derelict vessels, anchoring and mooring and vessel sewage pump-out.  
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

Reviews 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 to the text of the Comprehensive plan, Land Development Code and map amendments – and provides recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. The Committee also reviews and either approves or disapproves applications for major conditional use permits, variances and Rate of Growth Ordinance awards.  
Contact: Mayte Santamaria, 305.289.2562; Santamaria-mayte@monroecounty-fl.gov



*These artistic benches were paid for by a development tax, overseen by the Art in Public Places board.*

## RESTORE ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Makes recommendations to BOCC regarding projects to be funded through the RESTORE ACT.  
Contact: Lisa Tennyson, 305.292.4444; Tennyson-lisa@monroecounty-fl.gov

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY ADVISORY BOARD

Reviews and recommends applications for funding under the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program and the Clerk's Drug Abuse Trust Fund.

This board also serves as the County's Planning Council for the Florida Department of Children and Families Office of Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse purposes.  
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.

# QUICK REFERENCES

## BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**Mayor:** George Neugent, District 2  
305.872.1678; boccdis2@monroecounty-fl.gov  
**Administrative Aide:** Terri Colonna  
305.292.4512; Colonna-terri@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Mayor Pro Tem:** David Rice, District 4  
305.289.6000; boccdis4@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Tamara Lamarche  
305.289.6000; Lamarche-tamara@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:** Heather Carruthers, District 3  
305.292.3430; boccdis3@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:** Carol Schreck  
305.292.3430; Schreck-carol@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Commissioner:** Sylvia Murphy, District 5  
305.453.8787; boccdis5@monroecounty-fl.gov

**Administrative Aide:**  
Ptomey-Susie  
305.453.8787; Ptomey-susie@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 ADMINISTRATORS

Christine Hurley, 305.289.2517;  
Hurley-christine@monroecounty-fl.gov  
Kevin Wilson, 305.453.8797;  
Wilson-kevin@monroecounty-fl.gov

## AIRPORTS

**Director:** Donald 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



## EMPLOYEE SERVICES

305.292.4558

**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:** Charles Pattison, 305.295.5180; Pattison-charles@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

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 Sposito, 305.292.4416; Sposito-doug@monroecounty-fl.gov

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

### Public Information Officer:

Cammy Clark, 305.742.9687; Clark-cammy@monroecounty-fl.gov

## SOCIAL SERVICES

**Senior 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

## 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.fl-a-keys.com

## VETERAN'S AFFAIRS

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

## CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICES

### CLERK OF COURTS

Kevin Madok, 305.295.3130, www.clerk-of-the-court.com

## 16th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

### COURT

**Chief Judge:** Mark Jones, 305.292.3423  
www.keyscourts.net

## PROPERTY APPRAISER

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

## SHERIFF

Rick Ramsay, 305.292.7000, rramsay@keyso.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:** Dennis Ward, 305.292.3400, www.keyssao.org

## MOSQUITO CONTROL

**Director:** Andrea Leal, 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

## MONROE COUNTY 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 Key, 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

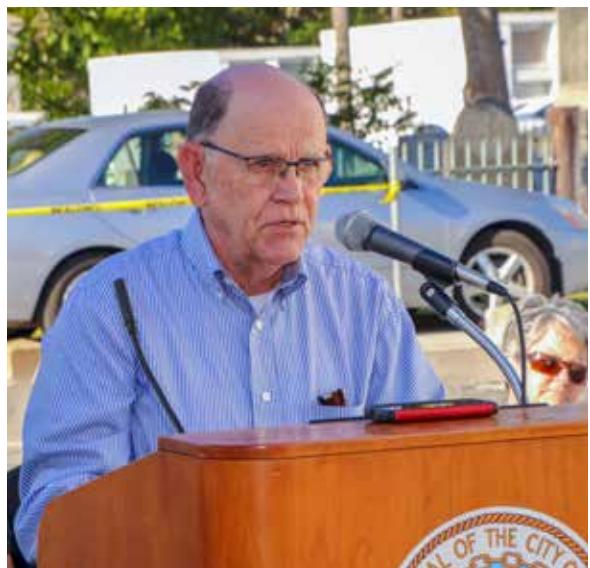
### MARATHON:

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





## A CONVERSATION WITH MONROE COUNTY MAYOR GEORGE NEUGENT

Mayor George Neugent is the current longest serving Commissioner on the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners. He is in the midst of his fifth four-year term. When he ran for the office for the first time, in 1998, he received the Miami Herald's recommendation. This is what the editorial board said:

Mr. Neugent, 50, is president of the Marathon Chamber of Commerce and is on its board, but his views are refreshingly independent. He has lived in the Keys for more than 14 years and, like many who migrate, he took some time to find direction. Mr. Neugent thinks that District 2 for too long "has been a ignored and governed by Key West interests." Given the county's history of ignoring the negative impacts of growth, he says that he supports the Land Use Plan, at least till the county shows more responsibility. He wants the plan to address community character, too.

He opposes linking building permits to cesspit removal, saying that individual property owners should be responsible, with government help where applicable. Mr. Neugent favors a countywide sewage-treatment master plan. He supports "reasonable" incorporations but thinks that single-member districts for the County Commission might address some concerns. He has served on committees on county parks, sewage treatment, and Boot Key Harbor's future and says that it's because of these experiences that he is running.

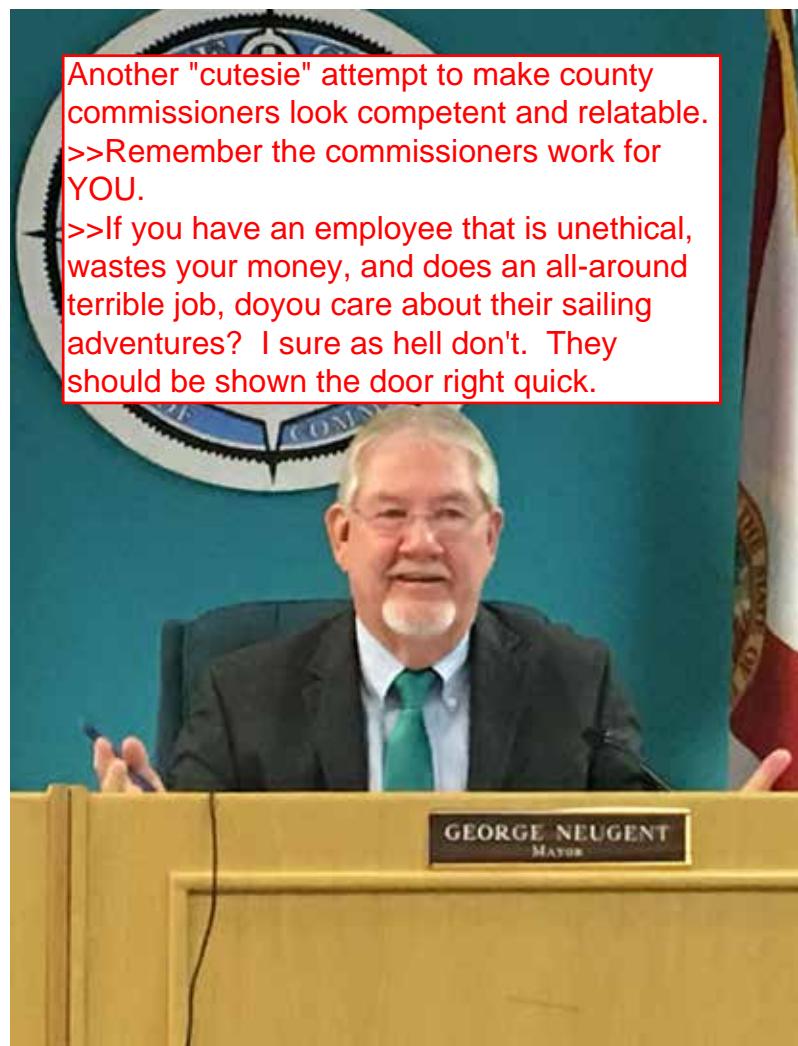
In sympathy for and depth of understanding about Keys community issues, Mr. Neugent is the preferred candidate. In the County Commission District 2 Republican primary, The Herald recommends GEORGE NEUGENT.

Neugent, now 68, and a husband, father and grandfather of three, still holds true to those principals he stood for nearly two decades ago. Here's a Q&A with the man most people know in the Keys as "George."

### Why did you move to the Florida Keys?

Fate: I had just gone through a divorce, and had sold my business in the oil field back in 1982, just before the economic downturn. I had always wanted to do some traveling and this was a good time. I spent three years traveling

Another "cutesie" attempt to make county commissioners look competent and relatable.  
 >>Remember the commissioners work for YOU.  
 >>If you have an employee that is unethical, wastes your money, and does an all-around terrible job, do you care about their sailing adventures? I sure as hell don't. They should be shown the door right quick.



in Alaska and Central and South America. I returned to New Orleans in the summer of 1985 to go back to work. My friends in my sailing club were doing one last sail and wanted me to go with them to Panama City. My son was going to Louisiana State University at the time said, "Let's go dad, I'll go with you."

We got to Panama City and my son said, "Let's go to Key West." So we sailed to Key West, and then sailed up to Marathon into Boot Key Harbor, where I fell in love with the Florida Keys. I called my mom and told her to rent my house. Months later I called my mom to tell her to sell the house. Here I am, 33 years later, calling the Keys home.

### What did you do in your early days in the Keys?

I worked at Hawks Cay teaching water skiing and running Eco Tours while learning a new trade, hospitality and restaurants. I met my wife, Susan, and we bought Porky's Bayside Barbecue in 1990 and ran it for about 15 years. We also started and ran the 53<sup>rd</sup> Street Dock and Deli. But when I got into politics, it took up too much time and we sold both restaurants in 2005.

**In 1998, you ran for your first term as County Commissioner. Why did you run?**

It wasn't planned. When I had Porky's, I was invited to be on the Board of Directors for the Marathon Chamber of Commerce. Later, I would be elected president of the chamber. While I was out setting up the bandstand for the Marine Band, David Rice (now a fellow County Commissioner) saw me and stopped by. We had become friends while serving on the Pigeon Key Foundation board together. David mentioned that Jack London was going off the County Commission and told me I should run for the vacancy. I told David if he was willing to support me, I'd run.

**Did you ever think you would be serving on the Commission for nearly 20 years?**

No, however, I can't believe 20 years has gone by so fast. It's just amazing. I recently counted the number of different commissioners I have served with and I think it is 14. Of course, there were some real noticeable icons of the Keys: Shirley Freeman, Sonny McCoy and Wilhelmina Harvey, who was my best friend. I served as a pallbearer at her funeral. With most of the commissioners, I had a

**Bragging about the wastewater projects is way off base. The county's projects are excessively costly and even after all that budget-busting financial waste, they don't even work correctly. Not only that, the BOCC supported negligently unfair funding to such a huge extent that the citizens of Key Largo will pay \$26 million more for their project than the other unincorporated areas.**

**>>Bottom line. The wastewater projects highlight all that is wrong with Monroe County government. But you'll never hear any discussion about correcting the problems or preventing them from happening again. The commissioners try to sweep it all under the rug. Acknowledging problems might mean a stop to the gravy train. Can't have that.**

commercial operation in a residential subdivision is hard for me to swallow. Almost 20 years later, vacation rentals have turned into a statewide concern.

**What has been the County's best accomplishment while you served on the Commission?**

There are so many. When I got here in 1985, there was a two-lane highway going through Marathon. From Labor Day to Christmas, you could sleep on U.S. 1. The Tourist Development Council was just starting to get a little traction. Islamorada and Marathon had no parks, today; we have a tremendous parks system throughout the county.

I am also proud of the present government structure that we have put in place the last 10 years, with a new growth management and planning director, and a county administrator that has put it all together. We have raised the level of sophistication on our commission in addressing constituent needs.

It's taken 20 years, but we have completed the central collection and advanced wastewater treatment throughout the Keys. It is now and into the future helping our water quality and economy for years to come.

Saving the Old Seven Mile Bridge. It was a miracle to pull off. Most people thought I was on a fool's errand and "I don't think we could do it. But the bridge, an iconic part of Keys history, will be preserved for generations to come.

**What is the biggest challenge for the County in the next few years?**

We are so blessed with one of the strongest economies in the State. Monroe County per capita generates more tax dollars than any county in the state of Florida. We send \$100 million to Tallahassee in sales taxes. The reason our assets, like our water quality, coral reef and the fish and all our marine resources. It's the main reason why people come down here. And the fact it's also an extremely safe place. One of our biggest challenges, especially living in close proximity to the three million people population of South Florida, is managing and protecting the resources in the Keys.

Another is workforce housing. The only way we can even work to mitigate the problem is to stop any new commercial development, and that is difficult if not impossible to do. Another huge challenge, linked to affordable housing, is the high cost of flood and windstorm insurance. I was reminded at a recent older Americans meeting that Monroe County has consistently had the highest cost of living in the state of Florida since 1975.

An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. In the upper portion of the image, a long bridge with white support pillars spans across a body of water with clear, turquoise-colored water. Below the bridge, a small, green, tree-covered island is visible. On the island, there is a rectangular concrete structure, possibly a swimming pool or a artificial reef, surrounded by a rocky shoreline. A causeway with a road and a bridge connects the island to the mainland. The mainland is visible in the lower right, featuring more green land and some small buildings. The water surrounding the land is a vibrant blue.

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