

Property/

from A1

county commissioners passing a lower millage rate from the previous year. New construction accounted for roughly \$7.2 million of that amount, including an additional \$2.7 million from Sun-seeker Resort alone coming onto the tax rolls early last year. County staff also added the taxes raised from Sun-seeker will go into the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency, the county's entity for investing in the area's

infrastructure. Roughly \$3.3 million in property taxes came from homes with the Homestead tax reduction, while about \$8 million was attributed to properties back on the tax rolls after Hurricane Ian. The remainder of the \$45 million came from non-residential properties, at about \$8.2 million, and "other" properties at \$18.4 million. Commissioner Christopher Constance said that a similar phenomenon happened in the construction market after Hurricane

Charley in 2004, with a major spark in valuation going until 2007. "I think that's what we're experiencing again," he said. The subsequent market crash of 2007-08 saw years of annual decreases in valuation until Charlotte County hit a low of about \$13 billion in 2013. Since then, assessed valuation has slowly built up again — with noticeable spikes between 2021 and 2022, and now 2024 and 2025. Lisby also noted there could be some adverse

factors on valuation in the coming year. County budget staff estimated a loss of roughly \$3.9 million in taxable value due to Hurricane Helene and Milton last October. An additional \$293,368 was shaved off due to the passage of a state constitutional amendment to require an inflation-adjusted Homestead property calculation. Lisby was largely optimistic about Charlotte County's fiscal status in the near future, noting an increase in not just ad

valorem taxes but interest payments to the county. She calculated that 2024 revenue for the county included roughly \$47.3 million in interest earnings — the first time, she added, that it represented a statistically significant piece of revenue. The largest amount of revenue for the county was property taxes at roughly \$225.8 million, followed by water/sewer charges at about \$116.4 million. The amended budget passed by the County Commission last fall was estimated at roughly

\$2.278 billion. Minus transfer payments and the use of reserves, the net budget is estimated to be \$811 million, representing a decrease from last year. Lisby also added, however, that these numbers were preliminary and had yet to be audited. The tentative county budget for next year is currently planned to be ready for presentation by July, with a final vote and tax rates set after public hearings in September. frank.difiore@yoursun.com

Miracle/

from A1

IGNORANCE

Farrell, who arrived as McPhee was beginning CPR, said she had been posting a video of a rider to Fox Lea's social media when McPhee called. She didn't realize until two days later the rider was Ryan, she said. It was remarkable how calm everyone was while Ryan was being revived, even Ryan's parents, she said. Will said he was thinking, "any minute she's going to wake up. There's no part of you that thinks 'it ends

here." "In that moment, I think ignorance was the best friend I had," he said. What everyone was ignorant of was that Ryan had an inherited condition called catecholaminergic polymorphic ventricular tachycardia that can cause lightheadedness, fainting, fatigue and, in extreme cases, cardiac arrest, all attributable to a disruption of the heart's rhythm. Ryan, who had no history of health problems and no symptoms of a heart condition, had suffered a cardiac arrest at age 14.

Her parents also didn't know this: The survival rate for a cardiac arrest outside of a hospital setting is only 10%. Genetic testing at JHACH revealed the condition, which is being treated with medication. Ryan has also undergone the implantation of an automated implantable cardioverter defibrillator that will monitor her heart rhythm and can deliver a shock to stabilize it, if necessary. The correct diagnosis took a while. CPVT manifests most commonly in children, with

a median age of onset of 10, so Ryan was on the old side of the demographic. The first doctors to treat her thought she had fainted, then suffered a traumatic injury causing her cardiac arrest when she fell, Will said. He said he was skeptical of that hypothesis from the start, which JHACH doctors later rejected. Ryan, who had already ridden earlier, had had lunch and something to drink, so fainting seem unlikely, though she did say later that she felt herself blacking out after the third jump. And she didn't hit the ground hard when she fell, he said. But a heart condition? Ryan had undergone electrocardiograms previously and the results were all completely normal, Will said. A stress test would have revealed there was an issue and genetic testing would have pinpointed it, but there's no reason to test for CPVT until symptoms appear, as they did in a life-threatening way for Ryan. GROUNDED Ryan, who has been riding "just about since she was able to walk," was released from the hospital and returned home to Georgia Tuesday night. She's eager to get back in the saddle, Will said. But she's on "rest and recovery" until a stress test on April 7 that they hope will clear her to ride again. They may need to "put her on a leash" to keep her



PROVIDED PHOTO

Ryan Haselden and Carla pose for a selfie. Ryan hopes to resume riding in a month, if she's medically cleared following a cardiac arrest while competing at Fox Lea Farm on her 14th birthday, Feb. 19.

under control through April 6, he joked. Riding is a "core part" of Ryan's identity, he said, and she has a goal of representing the U.S. in the 2032 Olympics in Brisbane, Australia, as well as qualifying for various major competitions in the interim. Not long ago that would have been an impossible dream, he said, because people with CPVT, which can be triggered by exercise and stress, would be told to adopt a sedentary lifestyle, which can lead to other health issues. Ryan's doctors actually want her to be active, he said, though having an ICD will preclude her from achieving another ambition — attending the Air Force Academy and, ultimately, becoming an astronaut. She was already taking flying lessons, he said, but the Federal Aviation Administration won't issue a medical certificate to someone with an implanted heart device. His daughter has plenty of goals left, he said. She's around to achieve them because Fox Lea, where she had ridden several times previously, was more prepared than most equestrian facilities to deal with the emergency it was confronted with, Will said. Farrell, who's the daughter of a surgeon, said that when her mother started Fox Lea 41 years ago, it was with the goal of providing a safe place for riders and horses. For example, she said, none of the roads has ever been paved, because a dirt surface is better for a horse to walk on and for a rider who falls. There was an AED onsite well before the U.S. Equestrian Federation mandated it in the past few years — a policy she'd long advocated for, she said. Ready access to an AED was the key to saving Ryan's

life, McPhee said. There are two at Fox Lea, with one carried on the golf cart that she uses as a sort of ambulance. It's checked every day, she said, and without it, she doesn't know what more she could have done before other first responders arrived. By then, Ryan's chances of being revived would have been decreasing and the likelihood she would have some sort of deficit if they could bring her back would be higher. Her recovery is "pretty much a miracle" of having the "right people at the right spots at the right time with the right equipment," Farrell said. Many employees are CPR certified, Fox Lea's Director of Media and Government Relations Laurie Birnbach said, but there's no requirement that trainers know it. Fox Lea is pushing to include CPR as part of a certification program for trainers that's being developed, she said. Will said Ryan's family wants to leverage her standing in the sport and the outpouring of support they've received because of her incident by advocating for CPR and AED training and ensuring every equestrian facility has an AED that's in good condition and fully charged and whose location is known and readily accessible. He's aware of another facility where the AED is in the concession stand, which is locked sometimes, he said. Obviously, he said, he'd prefer Ryan hadn't had to go through this ordeal, the horror of which only became apparent later when they learned "what they'd gotten away with." It will be a traumatic experience for them for a long time, he said. But since it did happen, he said, "I want it to be for a reason."

INSHORE SLAM

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AWL Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

FOOD | ALCOHOL | CRAFT VENDORS | MUSIC | BOUNCE HOUSES

Entry Fee: \$100/2 Person Team

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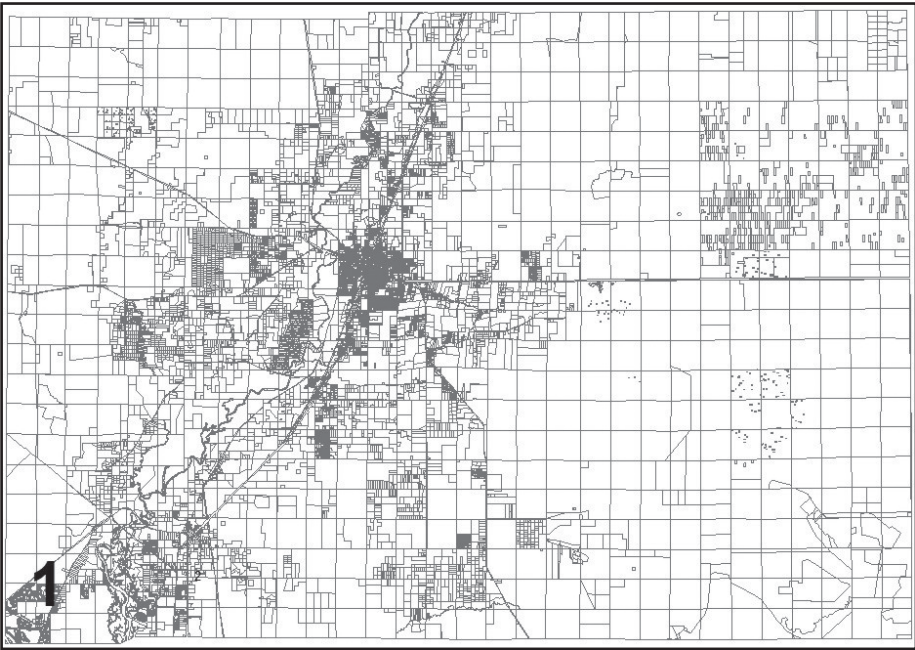
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The DeSoto County Board of County Commissioners (Board), Florida will consider the adoption of the resolution(s) regarding the below-described development order application. The resolution(s) will be considered at regularly scheduled Public Hearing Meetings of the Board of County Commissioners on the dates listed and at the times listed below, or as soon thereafter, as they may be heard on that date. All public hearings will be held in the County Commission Meeting Room 103, Administration Building, 201 E. Oak Street, Arcadia, Florida. Copies of the applications and staff reports are available at the Development Department Room 204, Administration Building, 201 E. Oak Street, Arcadia, Florida five days prior to the meeting dates and are available on the County's website at www.desotobocc.com under Department News and News & announcements. Members of the public may appear and be heard on the matters to be considered. If you want to appeal any decision of the Board, you may need to arrange for a verbatim transcript to be prepared.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 6:30 PM

1. Resolution, Oak Stone LLC (VAC-0017-2023)

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF DESOTO COUNTY, FLORIDA, VACATING A PORTION OF STONEYBROOK OAKS SUBDIVISION, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 9, PAGE 92, PUBLIC RECORDS OF DESOTO COUNTY, GENERALLY LOCATED IN SECTIONS 29 AND 30, TOWNSHIP 39 S, RANGE 23 E, DESOTO, COUNTY FLORIDA, THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND SKETCH OF SAID PORTIONS TO BE VACATED BEING INCLUDED IN "EXHIBIT A"; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.



PUBLISH: AS DISPLAY AD Friday, March 7, 2025 and Friday, March 14, 2025

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