

# WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

January 18, 2024

## DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORT (William Lawrence):

**Shoutouts this week goes to All the Department Manager's this week and their staff.**

Commissioner Roberts shared an e-mail she received this past week, and I thought I would share this in my report.

Greetings Treva Just finished reading the 14-page Manager's Report. Wow and Wow what a Great Team.

In all my years in Lady Lake, I've never read or heard a yearly report that listed all Our Town of LL accomplished in the year.

The team you will be working with is outstanding- I've known many through the years when I was a volunteer on a few Boards in L L.

The New Town Mgr. is a great motivator for the employees and the town, his recognition of their expertise and service. His forward thinking in developing our community, to provide the services that make Our community's one family is outstanding.

Elisha P WOW WOW she is a ball of fire. Her approach to communication, working together with all departments, and employees, also her outside interest to continue to introduce our Town of Lady Lake to possible development commercial (High End Medical, Tech, Education, etc.) and families.

Three cheers to the Finance Dept to keep the millage rate DOWN DOWN Hats Off; but I won't object to an increase in 2024 to compensate these outstanding members of our Lady Lake Town who keep it a Welcoming Hometown.

Wishing you Success in your New Position

Maria

**The identity Team Meeting** was held on Wednesday morning. We discussed the facilitator and core values. We will have the facilitator at the next meeting to start developing our core values and then move on to our vision statement.

## CLERK'S OFFICE (Nancy Wilson):

It is always good to have evidence because you would not otherwise believe what I am about to tell you. In 2021, we had an election that cost the town \$22,486. We were all aghast at the cost and

started talking about having elections in general election years only. For those of you who do not know, around 2008, the responsibility of paying for elections was shifted to municipalities in odd-numbered years so we had to cover all election costs in those years. In 2022 we were not charged anything by the Supervisor of Elections (SOE) as expected. Last year, the quote I received from SOE for the November 2023 election was a whopping \$45,024! Because all wards would likely not have an election, we ONLY budgeted \$35,000. Well, the bill arrived on Monday and the cost of the 2023 election was \$5,080!! I was so shocked, that I called to verify, and yup, it is \$5,080. Would you have believed me? This is of course fabulous news so now I have \$30,000 to spend, is that correct Pam and Bill? This in no way minimizes the need to hold elections in even-numbered years only for a variety of reasons that will be discussed closer to the 2024 election.

I asked for about \$1,000 last budget to purchase a portable recorder since we only have recording capability in the Chambers. This has been an issue at times when the room is occupied yet we have a meeting that needs to be recorded. I have used this type of device in the past and it was fantastic without losing audio quality. We received it and it resides in the clerk's office for use by all departments. We will set up the device when you need to use it so all you'll have to do is turn it on/off. The one issue may be that we will need to have a memory card reader to transfer the audio to our computer, which could be a security issue – I'll be consulting John about this.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):**

This week, I attended the Identity Meeting and the Commission Meeting.

I also attended a professional development training titled "Making a Multicultural Connection" that not only discussed the importance of reaching out to the growing Hispanic community in Florida but also emphasized the importance of knowing your audience, empathetic storytelling, and making data-driven decisions.

We quickly put out messages via social media on the low-pressure water issue on Wednesday evening. In the very near future, we will be able to send email, text, phone and push notification alerts through our new mass notification system, should an incident warrant it.

We continue to work on the new website. A challenging aspect of this transitional time is that we must duplicate efforts and update both the old and new websites to ensure everything is up to date, effectively doubling the workload.

We are currently in the review process of the department pages, working with department heads and key staff to check that all relevant information is included.

We had media requests this week regarding the Library and PD, and I'm happy to report that the PD recruitment efforts are still receiving media attention. Please see link to Villages Daily Sun story: [Area law enforcement offer chances to serve |](#)

This week, I would like to give a shoutout to Thad and his team for expertly navigating sensitive development issues.

**FINANCE (Pam Winegardner):**

The Town of Lady Lake's utility billing department consists of three employees with one being a part-time employee. The town is approaching 3,000 accounts, which keeps the billing office and our field employees quite busy.

Each month starts off with our water bills being delivered by the U.S. Postal Service the first week of the month. When these bills are created the last week of the month before, the utility system creates a due date 20 days from the creation date. There are several avenues to pay town water bills. Our customers can walk in between the hours of 7:30 am to 6 pm, Monday through Thursday. The Town also has two drop boxes with one at the Town Hall in front of Chamber doors and the other at our library by the book drop box. A payment portal is available online on our town website [ladylake.org](http://ladylake.org). Several options are offered besides signing up for a bank draft.

The first full week of each month is a meter reading for bills that will be due next month. When the reads are back from the field, town staff in the billing department reviews all accounts for problem areas such as no read or an incorrect read from the meter, high consumption, software glitches causing failure to upload or download routes, and inactive services. The field staff in the water department take these service orders and investigate any problems that the office staff have questions about.

The week after meter reading is disconnect day. Bills that were due the month before are disconnected on this day. The work starts the week before when all the accounts that are delinquent are contacted to remind them, they are about to be disconnected. This is a courtesy that a very busy billing department offers to our customers to avoid them being disconnected. The public should not count on reminder calls, door hangers or emails as it cannot be guaranteed that up to 200 customers cannot be timely called. The final list is usually pared down to about 60 to 80 individuals.

During the month while our billing staff is working on meter readings and disconnect day, they are also busy with turning the water on or off for customers (more commonly for apartment tenants), helping to resolve high consumptions and working ever-expanding on leak resolution, installing data for new accounts (our ever expanding growth) and answering questions on billing, the different methods to pay, creating legal paperwork for liens, handling trash questions and answering title company questions among other duties. A big thank you to our excellent staff in the office and in the field besides our exceptional IT department that keeps the system going.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (Thad Carroll):**

On Wednesday, the Growth Management Department presented four variances to the Town Commission in association with the Walmart Neighborhood Market proposal. A variance to provide three loading zones in lieu of the required seven was granted. Also approved was a variance to reduce the number of required parking spaces from 304 to 263, a reduction of 41 spaces. A variance to allow four signs on the building façade was tabled, and a variance for the removal of eight historic trees was denied.

A preconstruction meeting was held on Thursday with CHW Professional Consultants, Hughes Brothers Construction, and Kolter Development for Hammock Oaks Phase 2A, 2B, 2C, and 2D. A subsequent preconstruction meeting was also held for The Reserve at Hammock Oaks Phase I and II. Commencement of these phases is anticipated to begin in late February to early March.

This week, the building department issued the permit for the façade changes to Five Below, which will be located at 486 North Highway 27/441.

There were 119 building inspections conducted this week and 43 new permits were issued. This week code enforcement opened 4 new cases, closed 14 cases, and conducted 21 inspections on properties with open cases. Also, Code Officers Crain & Williams worked diligently this week preparing cases for the Special Magistrate Hearing which will be held next Tuesday, January 23, 2024.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES (Tamika DeLee):**

The Town of Lady Lake would like to welcome Amy Alicea and Kyle Lawrence to the team. Amy is the Park & Recreation Events Coordinator. Kyle is a new Police Officer for the Lady Lake Police force. Interviews were conducted on Thursday, January 11<sup>th</sup> for the Permitting Technician position. A conditional offer letter is currently pending. Five interviews were conducted on Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> for Police Officer positions. No candidates were selected for conditional offer letters. The HR team will present their fifth wellness presentation on "Exercise is Not Enough". The presenter is Ryan Booher from Vitality SarcoHealth. This presentation is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> in the chambers. The first presentation will commence at 10 am and the second presentation will commence at 3:15 pm.

#### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (John Pearl):**

Patrick resolved a GIS service delivery issue for Public Works staff on Tuesday.

Staff are involved in multiple ongoing enterprise software and information security projects. We resolved a difficult blocking issue on Wednesday.

John attended the Identity meeting on Wednesday.

Aly and John met with staff from Lake County IT on Wednesday to review the IT infrastructure plan for the Library Renovation.

Elisha, Leon and John met with vendor CivicPlus to review the new website launch plan.

## **LIBRARY**

On Wednesday, I attended a virtual meeting with John and Lake County IT to discuss their role in the renovations of the youth library. Our library computers and network are all run by Lake County. We just wanted to show them the plans and make sure they did not have any issues or concerns with the move of systems going upstairs.

This week's shout-out goes to Sam Williams. Sam has been actively involved in various projects, introducing creative ideas to our patrons. One recent initiative she started is the Monthly Adult Bingo. To our surprise, the event has gained tremendous popularity, prompting us to limit attendance. Winners at the bingo sessions have the privilege of choosing their rewards, which could range from book bucks redeemable at the Second Chance bookstore to small prizes provided by the Friends of the Library. Thank you, Sam, for your hard work.

Youth has been busy and has already secured all of the 2024 summer reading performers! Nicole did great finding new performers to give a variety to children and families.

Here are the stats for this week's youth programs.

Tiny Tots 42

Family Crafting 6

Storytime 44

Reading with Scarlett 13

[www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225](https://www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225)

## **PARKS AND RECREATION (Mike Burske):**

This week, the Parks and Recreation Department has been working with daily maintenance to include mowing and trash details. Scott has been working in the Caboose at Veterans Park to put new flooring down to replace the old carpet from when it was used as the library.

We are gearing up to have the playground shut down for the next couple of weeks to take down the old play structure in anticipation of a new structure to be completed. I will have proposals in the near future to replace the old structures that are being removed. We will be looking at an investment of around \$250,000.00. I predict that Parks and Recreation Impact Fees will be the funding mechanism for this project.

We have just turned over the applications of the candidates that we wish to interview for the Operator I and II positions. We had a very good response to these positions and anticipate we will get great people to join the Parks and Recreation Team.

I want to welcome Amy Alicea aboard as our new Events Coordinator. She has a lot of experience and I predict that she will add the much-needed events and activities for the Town. I do anticipate that we will be seeking an Assistant Events Coordinator Position in the future. This position is not one that a single person can easily perform.

Amy and I toured the new Mary Sue Rich Community Center in Ocala on Tuesday. The facility is one that the Town of Lady Lake is in dire need of. The facility, on a Tuesday, was heavily used as I predict and know that ours will be also. You should have an agenda item from me at the second Commission Meeting for a proposal of beginning a conceptual design of a new Recreation Center in Lady Lake.

I am working with Amy and discussing the events that we have coming up including the Lady Lake Easter Egg Hunt which will be held at Snooky Park on March 23<sup>rd</sup> and the Blues Festival which will be held on April 6<sup>th</sup>. We are going to be kicking off the Centennial proposals soon. I predict this will be made up of many events throughout the year.

#### **POLICE DEPARTMENT (Chief Steve Hunt):**

Officer Kyle Lawrence began his orientation and will be assigned to a Field Training Officer next week. Officer Aseir Bakar should begin his orientation in two weeks. We currently have three other candidates in the final stages of the hiring process, and we are hopeful for their success.

We held another round of interviews for police officer candidates with five potential applicants. Unfortunately, none met the standard to go forward in the process. We are trying to involve others within the department in the oral board stage. It is my desire to have members of the patrol division included on the panel. I was extremely pleased to see the response when we asked for volunteers. I believe this is an important step toward making this “our” department.

Three new patrol cars are almost ready to be deployed. This process takes so much time between just being able to find cars, working with the various vendors (think radio, computers, cages, lights, etc.) but our folks are amazing. Thank Billy, Ted, as well as our team here at LLPD, the Rob and Rob crew for making it happen. We have also taken three cars out of service as well.

I attended the Quarterly Public Safety meeting with the Villages Community Watch. This is a great opportunity to interact with the watch program folks and with the other police agencies. The Watch program does a great job, and they are a wonderful asset to the police department.

Our friends at Mission BBQ treated us to a fabulous buffet lunch this week with all the “fixings”. We are so grateful to MBBQ and to Dani for their continued support. I am so thankful to work within such a supportive community.

This week we celebrated the life of Martin Luther King, I will leave you with one of my favorites of his quotes “Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.” I hope we all choose a path towards love.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES DEPARTMENT (C.T. Eagle)**

Administration (C.T. Eagle -Director and Peggy Smith – Admin Assistant to Director):

Information regarding current Town Projects can be found here:

<https://www.ladylake.org/departments/public-works/town-projects/>

Public Works has job openings, please see the Town’s website, or contact Human Resources for more information. <https://www.ladylake.org/departments/human-resources/>

Updated information regarding the FDOT US 27/441 Road Widening Project can be found here <https://www.cflroads.com/project/238395-5>. Questions and concerns can also be submitted via the website.

#### **Maintenance Department (Ted Williams, Supervisor):**

Performed driveway apron inspections, coordinated with residents on concerns, and coordinated with contractors and vendors.

#### **Streets (Kon Scott, Travis Lacey, and Justin Wallace - Lead Operators):**

Crews performed normal duties including patching potholes, litter pickup along roadways, cleaning storm drains, mowing right of ways, tree trimming, and patching road cuts.

Removed and cleaned up after a large stump and roots on Rosemary Avenue.

Continued townwide street sign replacement project.

Re-graded Oak Street and Brevard Ave.

#### **Facilities Maintenance (Truman Henson, Lead Operator, and Phillip Perna, Operator I):**

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities. Repaired lighting, urinals, and toilets at the Library. Ran electrical line to the gas pumps behind Town Hall.

Continued performing mowing and landscaping activities at Town Hall, Public Works, and the Library.

#### **Motor Pool (Billy Kohler, Lead Mechanic):**

Continued servicing the Town’s equipment and fleet vehicles.

**Utilities — Water and Sewer (Thomas “Butch” Goodman, Supervisor):**

The water distribution system suffered a low-pressure event for approximately 5 to 10 minutes Wednesday evening due to a sudden high demand for water in the north end of Town. The entire system pressure did not reach critical levels, however, some customers experienced low pressure on the south end of the system. The cause of the sudden high demand is not currently known, but Town staff is investigating the situation. No boil notices were issued since there were no water quality concerns.

Completed Utilities Availability Requests from prospective developers, Utilities Connection Quotes, project plan reviews, Certificate of Occupancy close out requests, Backflow device verification audits, purchase orders, Monthly Operating Reports for the regulatory agencies, review of Right of Way Utilization Permits, and work orders.

Future potential and already approved development projects coordination is ongoing with the Growth Management Department.

Ongoing coordination on the Town's annual backflow device testing program.

**Distribution and Collection Systems Field Operations (Robert Barnes, Lead Operator):**

The supervisor and field staff are in continuing and ongoing coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation contractors (Southland) and engineers (Metric) regarding the US 27/441 Road Widening Project.

Completed numerous 811 dig ticket location requests and coordinated GIS mapping.

Performed weekly fueling and testing of emergency equipment and generators.

Completed meter change-outs, new meter installations, work orders, distributed cut-off notice door hangers, re-connects, and performed service line repairs.

**Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants (Daniel Myklejord – Lead Water Plant Operator, Darryl Flanders – Lead Wastewater Plant Operator, and Steve Pfouts – Dual Certified Plant Operator)**

Completed wastewater plant and water treatment plant required regulatory agency compliance items and performed required sampling events. Coordinated and submitted lab results to FDEP. Performed process control sampling and made necessary plant operational adjustments.

Phase Two of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Modifications Project is in process, is progressing, is on schedule, and is within budget. The projected completion date is the Summer of 2024.

Phase Two of the Well #4 and Well #5 Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project. Work is in process, is progressing, is on schedule, and is within budget. The projected completion date is by

the end of June 2024. The ground storage tank contractor, PreCon, continued work on the construction of the new 400,000-gallon ground storage tank at Water Treatment Plant #3.