

# WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

## TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

September 11, 2025

DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORT (William Lawrence):

### Shoutouts & Acknowledgments:

#### Shout Out of the Week!

This week's shout out goes to **our incredible Library staff** who have endured months of **noise, dust, heat, and disruption** during the library expansion project — and they've done it **without a single complaint**.

Their patience and perseverance have been nothing short of remarkable. With the project nearing completion, we want to thank them for **keeping their eyes on the prize** throughout this challenging year.

#### A special thank you to:

- Aly Herman
- Kourtney Fehr
- Nancy Brock
- Nicole LeFrancois
- Serra Cook
- Donna Wolf
- Samantha Williams
- LeeAnn Elkins
- Ruth Patterson

Your dedication has not gone unnoticed — we appreciate you!

## Proposed FY 2025/26 Budget – Clarification

We'd like to address a recent letter in the Village News regarding the Town of Lady Lake's budget and tax process — and provide some clarity:

### ◆ General Fund Mil-Rate

- The **only portion of your tax bill** the Town of Lady Lake controls is the **general fund mil-rate**.
- This year, we **kept the mil-rate the same** as last year: **3.65**, which is still **one of the three lowest** among the 14 municipalities in Lake County.

### ◆ Decline in General Fund Revenue

- Despite keeping the mil-rate, the same, **general fund revenue is down** due to a decrease in overall revenues.
- **The Town does not control property values — these are determined by the Lake County Property Appraiser.**

### ◆ Third Part Imposed Assessments

Please note, the Town **has these assessments imposed on us**. The commission can vote them down but the alternative would cost you more.

- **Fire Assessment**
- **Waste Management Assessment**
- **Hospital Fees** and other special assessments the town has no say.

Yes, some of these have increased this year, but they are **not set by the Town of Lady Lake**.

### ◆ New Development Revenue

Regarding new development:

- Revenue from new housing **is not collected until homes are built and sold**.
- At this time, **that process is still ongoing**, and we are **not yet collecting revenue** from these developments.

### ◆ Commission Terms

- The **4-year terms** for commissioners were **approved by Lady Lake voters** through a **referendum last fall**.
- The Commission **does not have the authority** to set or change term lengths on their own.

For more information, visit [Understanding Your Tax Bill | Lady Lake, FL](#)

## Department Manager's Meeting (Tuesday at Public Works)

We had a productive meeting where we:

- **Reviewed the agenda** for the upcoming Commission Meeting on Monday, **September 15th at 6:00 p.m.**
- Kathy introduced **potential updates to the agenda format** for improved clarity.
- We also discussed **transparency** as part of our ongoing efforts in **communication improvement and team building**.

## IT Department Meeting

No report this week

### CLERK'S OFFICE (Kathy Rosado):

A big shoutout to **Carol Osborne**, who for the past several weeks has been taking on extra responsibilities as we find a replacement for the assistant to the town clerk. We have selected a candidate who has been offered the position pending background and reference checks. We hope to have her on board soon to fill the position. I met with **Elisha Pappacoda** this week to review our public records requests process and how we can better streamline and train employees on their role in fulfilling requests. In addition, we are reviewing how to better track these types of requests. At the managers' meeting we discussed transparency. My thought process was that of how we can be more transparent to our residents. Transparency to me means building trust with the stakeholders who are the residents. Ways we can do this are

- Clear communications,
- Engaging with the community,
- Demonstrating responsiveness,
- and acting promptly on concerns.

Being a newcomer, I've had the experience of seeing other municipalities and how they interact with their stakeholders. The staff at Lady Lake do an amazing job, they are professional, customer service friendly and transparency is displayed in all areas of local government. I'm proud to be a part of such a well-run organization. The clerk's office will continue to refine and improve the processes within our department.

### COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):

This week, Communications livestreamed the Planning & Zoning meeting and attended the Department Managers' meeting, in which we discussed transparency.

Thanks to Bill for continuing these conversations and making our team stronger. I'd like to share this quote from Howard Schultz, former CEO of Starbucks. "I think the currency of leadership is transparency. You've got to be truthful."

I attended the Florida League of Cities' Quality Cities Webinar and had Communications meetings with Chief Hunt, Clerk Kathy, and Event Coordinator Amy.

This week's kudos goes to LLPD Sergeant Charles Gehrsitz, who graduated from the FBI National Academy. You can read more about his accomplishments in our [press release](#). The release has already been picked up by [Lake & Sumter Style Magazine](#), and I expect additional coverage.

We had local coverage this week in The Villages Daily Sun regarding PD's new drone. WESH 2 also mentioned on the news our upcoming utility rate changes, which feeds right into our transparency discussion. Is it glamorous or fun to talk about utility fees? No. But is it important to our residents? Emphatically, yes!

Susyn got a great Facebook compliment regarding her dog park video, in which one of our residents asked how we got a certain shot. When we transparently explained it was created with AI – he said, “best use of AI I’ve seen yet.” The [video](#) was a skillful mix of AI and local imagery.

Communications has taken over management of the marquee sign in front of Town Hall and created a content plan and schedule.

We want to wish the Events team success for the Father-Daughter dance this Saturday! The event got 46 hits in the media. Tickets are available in advance until Friday.

This week, we created Facebook events for the Farmers Market, Boo Bash and Spooky Park, and have begun scheduling promotional posts through October.

### **FINANCE (Joella LeDonne):**

No report this week.

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

This week, staff continued working closely with applicants to bring several residential and commercial projects to completion. Multiple site visits were conducted to verify project completion. In addition, staff collaborated with project engineers to address the remaining review comments for the Lady Lake Crossing Expansion and Lady Lake Warehouse developments, helping move these projects closer to final approval.

The Building Department received revised plans for the Paradise Recreation Center permit, and the permit for the Water Oak restaurant renovation was officially issued.

Over the course of the week, the department received a total of 84 building permit applications or revisions and issued 65 permits. Also, 110 inspections were conducted to verify code compliance and monitor ongoing construction activity.

In Code Enforcement, eight new cases were opened this week, including two initiated by resident complaints. Ten cases were closed, and a total of 54 field inspections were completed.

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

Human Resources is currently working on the upcoming wellness program. New topics and presenters have been selected for the upcoming fiscal year. Additionally, Human Resources is developing training initiatives for the new fiscal year.

### **Recruitment & Staffing Update**

- **Staff Assistant to Town Clerk**

- A conditional offer for employment has been made for the Staff Assistant to Town Clerk position.
- She will be here on Monday to sign.
- **Police Officer**
  - A conditional offer for employment has been made for Police Officer.
- **Administrative Assistant to Public Works Director**
  - Interviews are scheduled for September 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - Utilities Tech I position has been reposted.
- **Systems Administrator**
  - The background check process has been initiated for the candidate.

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

No report this week.

### **LIBRARY (Aly Herman)**

On Tuesday, we held our bi-weekly renovation meeting, and McLauchlin & Company confirmed that the project is still on track to be completed by mid-October. Soon after, we'll be welcoming our new neighbors, Growth Management, to the building—and we couldn't be more excited.

We're so excited to have our big meeting space back, and our staff is already filling the calendar with fantastic programs from October through December. Chair Yoga returns on Monday, October 6, with two sessions offered at 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM. Thanks to our renovated space, each class can now accommodate up to 40 participants. The 10:00 AM session is already full, but there are still a few openings in the 11:30 AM class. Please note: the instructor asks that participants commit to the full 8-week series.

Our Friends of the Library are looking for volunteers! We need helping hands both in the bookstore and in the backroom storage area for organizing. If you have some time to give, please stop by the circulation desk to pick up a volunteer form—we'd love to have you join us!

This week's shout-out goes to Miranda Hayes, our newest staff member, who joined us last month. In just a short time, Miranda has already developed a strong lineup of teen programs for the upcoming months. Her motivation and dedication are noticeable, and it is clear she is a wonderful addition to our team.

Here are the youth program stats for this week:

-Little Sprouts: 27

-Lego Masters 13

-Craft Corner: 30

-Teen Anime Film: 2

-Tiny Tots: 29

-Family Crafting: 10

-Storytime : 40

-Reading with Scarlett: 8

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

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

The Parks and Recreation Department had an aggressive week once again. We have seen Scot and Thomas continue their work on the scoreboards for the soccer fields. Brad and Thomas did a great job in prepping the baseball fields for the Fall Season. Brad once again knocked it out of the park with the job he did putting new stone on the Heritage Park parking lot.



***Thomas and Brad work on the field clayz Vicky did a great job on the grass for the season?***

This week marks the first working week of Christmas lights at the Log Cabin. Sam asked for the new hangers so he could install them on the train cars to eliminate the need for tape on the cars.

Also, kudos to Sam as he was the one who recommended that we re-gravel the parking lot that Brad just finished. Thomas and I met for the placement of the new swing set that we will have coming to Pyramid Park. Thomas is a certified playground inspector and checks the facility at least monthly.

Amy has been working on the Father Daughter Dance along with the preparations for the Haunted Trail at Snooky Park. We will have a very aggressive event schedule this Fall, and we believe that we will give the residents a Fall to remember.

The Parks and Recreation Director is finishing up his goals for the 2024-2025 Budget Year. We will see the Gazebo at Heritage Park get a new roof next week and this week I am putting the finishing touches on automating the lighting in all the parks. All the ball fields except for Harry Sacks Softball Field will be able to function remotely via phone or computer. The goals set for this year should be completed today or early tomorrow. The 466 Landscaping Project will roll over to next year due to Lake County recommendations for plant placement. The money has been budgeted from donated Tree and Beautification Funds so as soon as we get the permit, we are a go. Thanks to the Town Manager and all of those who assisted Parks and Recreation this fiscal year. We had a fun and aggressive year!

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

- We conducted interviews for our final sworn police officer position and have extended a conditional job offer to one candidate. The next steps include a background check and additional testing.
- Buddy Anliker has joined our team as a part-time Staff Assistant. Buddy is a retired police officer, and his primary responsibilities will include fulfilling records requests for reports and camera footage.
- Later today, we will hold our monthly Command Staff meeting with all supervisors.
- Last week, Deputy Chief Brough and I traveled to Quantico, Virginia, to attend the graduation of Sgt. Gehrsitz from the FBI National Academy. Our Communications Department prepared a well-written press release highlighting several impressive aspects of this significant achievement.
- Today is September 11 — a day of remembrance and reflection. Twenty-four years ago, our nation was attacked, and the loss continues to grow.
  1. The death toll of first responders has now exceeded 400, including those who have passed from 9/11-related illnesses. It is vital that the phrase "We Will Never

Forget" is not just spoken, but truly lived — through our words and actions, and in the hearts of all Americans.

- I am deeply saddened by the hate and division that persist in our world today. Yet, I remain resolute in standing for what is right and in pushing back against injustice. Here at the Lady Lake Police Department, we are fully committed to that same mission — to serve with integrity, to uphold justice, and to be a force for good in our community.

**PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES DEPARTMENT (C.T. Eagle and Peggy Smith – Admin. Assistant to Director):**

FDOT has contacted the Town to propose a new MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) for the maintenance of the US 27/441 corridor. The Town did have an agreement in place for many years with FDOT which included mowing, edging, blowing, and weed control for the segment between Lake Ella Rd and Griffin Ave. FDOT terminated the agreement with the Town when the recent road widening project started in or around 2020 when they again took over maintenance activities. The proposed agreement does include payment amounts to the Town for the requested activities. The corridor is approximately 4.26 miles of 6 laned roadway now, with sidewalks on the entire length of the corridor on both sides of the road. The previous configuration was 4 lanes with only portions of sidewalks on the north end of Town. The required maintenance activities have increased due to the handwork required for edging, blowing, and weed control on the new sidewalks and curbing. The average vehicular speed has increased significantly with the new lane configurations, which causes some work safety concerns for the workers, and will require a stronger MOT (Maintenance of Traffic) presence while work is being performed. The Town does have options. The levels of service and costs to the Town vary significantly with the options. **Option one** – the Town does not enter into an agreement with FDOT, FDOT retains maintenance responsibility, no cost to the Town, lowest level of service, potential resident concerns on upkeep will be received. **Option two** – the Town enters into the agreement with FDOT and then contracts out the work to a third party, the Town pays the difference in costs, better level of service, other municipalities (i.e. Leesburg, Tavares, Clermont, etc..) have this in place for safety, staffing, and costs for the level of service concerns. **Option three** – the Town enters into the agreement with FDOT and performs the work in-house as we did in the past. The Town absorbs the difference in what monies FDOT pays to the Town and the costs associated with the activities, this is the highest level of service but comes with the highest price tag and the workers' safety and staffing concerns remain. The agreement along with the Town's options and the costs associated with the options will be presented to the Town Commission at a near future meeting for consideration.

We have multiple positions open here at Public Works; open positions can be found here:

<https://www.ladylakefl.gov/210/Human-Resources>

Information regarding current Town Projects can be found here:

<https://www.ladylakefl.gov/167/Town-Projects>

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

Performed driveway apron inspections.

Met with residents regarding stormwater issues and tree trimming concerns.

**Streets (Kon Scott, Travis Lacey, and Justin Wallace - Lead Operators; Todd Foster – Operator II):**

Performed litter pickup along roadways in Town. Continued cleaning or replacing street and stop signs townwide. Cleaned storm drains. Patched potholes and road cuts. Mowed Town maintained rights of ways.

Monitored retention ponds after rain events.

Trimmed trees on St Andrews.

Re-graded Oak Street.

Cleaned up storage lot and cleaned landscaping beds at the Public Works Complex.

Picked up TV at Best Buy for HR.

Cleaned up and sprayed landscaping bed along CR 466.

**Facilities Maintenance (Mark Walls - Lead Operator, Joshua Fitchpatrick - Operator II, and Phillip Perna – Operator I):**

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities. Moved desk in the Clerk's Office.

Sealed around HVAC unit at the PD. Replaced faucet and repaired a toilet at the Library.

Cleaned wet ceiling tile at the PD. Replaced batteries in the weather station on the PD's roof.

Continued performing groundskeeping at Town Hall, PD, and the Library.

**Motor Pool (Billy Kohler - Lead Mechanic, and Jim Richards - Mechanic):**

Welcome Jim Richards, our new Mechanic. Jim comes to us with many years of experience and is a welcomed relief to Billy, who has been a one man show in motor pool for quite a while now. Welcome to the Team Jim!

Ongoing repair and maintenance on Town Vehicles and Equipment.

**Utilities — Water and Sewer (Thomas “Butch” Goodman – Supervisor, and Mary Levesque - Staff Assistant to Supervisor):**

Coordinated with multiple contractors, engineers, vendors, developers, and other departments regarding future and current in process projects going on around Town.

Current project coordination with Hammock Oaks (Multiple Phases), Boulevard Oaks, Lake Ella Estates, and Green Key Village phases 5 and 6.

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

Responded to customer concern calls.

Coordinate and complete various work orders, working on new accounts, meter reading, meter replacements, non-pay disconnects, and re-reads.

Completed 811 dig ticket location requests. Coordinating new fiber optic line locations.

Completed FDEP submittals, Water/Sewer/Reuse physical availability requests, Utility Quotes, CO inspection requests, and required back-flow device verification audits.

Performed weekly fueling and testing of emergency equipment, pumps, vehicles, and generators.

**Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants (Daniel Myklejord – Lead Water Plant Operator, Darryl Flanders – Lead Wastewater Plant Operator, and Steve Pfouts – Treatment Plants Operations Manager.)**

Running process control samples, making necessary plant adjustments.

Water, Wastewater, and Reuse Systems Master Planning Project and newly approved Water Facilities Plan Project, required for SRF funding, are in process by the Town Engineer, Jason Shepler with Mittauer-CPH. The results and recommended infrastructure projects will soon be presented to the Town Commission for consideration of approval.

Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) renewal project with St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), is nearing the submittal phase to the regulatory agency for review.

Projected completion of renewal is by the end of this year or early 2026.