

# WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

## TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

February 5, 2026

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

#### Shout-outs of the Week:

A big shout out to **Howard Davis, Security Analyst**, for his successful Cybersecurity Workshop held at the library. The event drew more than 50 members of the public and proved to be an eye-opener for all who attended. Great job, Howard — your efforts in promoting cybersecurity awareness are truly appreciated!

#### In Memoriam: Commissioner John Gourlie

The passing of Commissioner John Gourlie this past week came as a shock to me, as I'm sure it did to many who knew him. My sincere condolences go out to his wife, Linda, and to his family and friends.

John and I spent time talking about Indiana, our shared love for music, and the fond memories he held of his mother — including the guitar he once purchased for her. While John and I did not always agree, we always respected one another. He made a meaningful difference in Lady Lake, particularly through his cleanup efforts alongside neighbors in his south side ward. His contributions and dedication will be remembered.

#### Joint Planning Agreement Meeting

This week, the Joint Planning Agreement (JPA) Meeting between Lake County and the 14 municipalities within the county took place at the Venetian Center in Leesburg. This was our third meeting.

In my opinion, the leadership within Lake County still struggles to bring their plan across the finish line—a challenge complicated by the fact that each of the 14 cities and towns has unique needs. As Commissioner Kirby aptly stated, “We need to clean up our own house first,” and I fully agree. Leadership begins with setting the example.

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

Big shoutout goes to Mark and Josh, and the Public Works team, who have been working on putting a fresh coat of paint on the office spaces here at Town Hall. We appreciate all the hard work and effort that goes into doing what you do for us. It's a total transformation, and there's

more to come. I would also like to say thank you to Ted for sending me the heater to keep our offices warmer. I'll be glad once the warm weather returns!

Our thoughts and condolences go out to the family of Commissioner Gourlie on the event of his passing so unexpectedly. We were very sorry to hear the news. His smile will be missed here in the clerk's office.

The clerk's office is preparing for the special election to be held on March 24<sup>th</sup> for the vacancy in Ward 2. There are many things to do to prepare in such a short period of time. The qualifying period will be February 17<sup>th</sup> at noon through February 19<sup>th</sup> at noon. Residents interested in running for office will need to contact the clerk's office Monday through Thursday, 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, for information on how to become a candidate.

This week, we attended the wellness presentation on Autism. Thank you to HR for educating us on important issues and health conditions that we may not know much about.

Lastly, we are happy to have Amber back after a brief absence to tend to her sweet little girl, who was feeling a bit under the weather!

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

We are deeply saddened and shocked by the passing of Commissioner John Gourlie. We issued an [announcement](#) on his death which was picked up by many media outlets, and received dozens of condolences from friends, family and constituents on Facebook. Congressman Randy Fine will be honoring Commissioner Gourlie on the House floor on Wednesday afternoon.

Communications livestreamed the conceptual workshop and Town Commission meeting on Monday, and attended Mayor at the Market on Tuesday and a vendor meeting with PD and the Wellness Program on autism on Wednesday.

We received positive publicity for the Mock Commission meeting in the Villages Daily Sun and are expecting a video on VNN.

Communications issued several PSAs regarding cold weather preparedness and attended Lake County's Emergency Operations Center Zoom meetings. We are grateful that The Villages News boosted our messaging: [Local expert offers preparedness tips for cold weather - Villages-News.com](#)

We created and sent invitations for the Library Open house. Press release is forthcoming.

On Thursday, our A/V vendor will be on site to work on the Town Commission and streaming studio equipment.

The Town is less than 100 people short of 4,000 followers on Facebook! In looking at our analytics for January, we found that the top three posts were regarding Lady Lake PD and garnered almost 92,000 total views.

After the Mayor's Black History Month proclamation this week, Susyn created a social media campaign highlighting Black historical figures from Lady Lake. I would like to share a comment from a resident showing why this gesture matters to our community:

*"Happy Black History Month.*

*I know this month is controversial for a lot of people. Some wonder why it's even allowed and why "we" (African American people) need it. I wouldn't say that we need it, but I am glad we have it, because we need to remember.*

*We need to remember the sacrifices that many African Americans made in past generations that allowed current generations to have more opportunities."*

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

Firstly - I would like to extend my sincere condolences to Commissioner Gourlie's family at this difficult time.

This week the auditors came for their yearly visit to review the Town's financials for FY2025. They ensure that we are adhering to all compliance and regulations. This is a great opportunity for the Town to identify any issues that need to be corrected or improve our internal controls to enhance overall operational efficiency. The Finance Department has had some major changes happen in FY2025. An audit is very helpful to allow us to better understand what happened, what is happening, and what needs to happen. Thank you everyone who has been part of this process. It is a learning experience for all of us. We know what we need to do to "Be Better".

I am not in Chicago anymore BUT it certainly feels like it with the low 20s and wind chill. Our utility department has been making sure to have all water issues fixed due to this cold snap. You can check out our website or Facebook page to take preventative measures on keeping your water flowing.

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

On Monday, the Town Commission granted one landscaping and four commercial design Waivers for the proposed Rooms to Go. The plan includes a 41,800 square foot retail furniture store, 196 parking spaces, and landscaping, on 5.5 acres zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD), located at the intersection of County Road 25 and North Highway 27/441.

Revised plans were submitted this week for the new Walmart Neighborhood Market and fuel station. New permits were also submitted for alterations at Teague Plaza located on Teague Trail.

The building department received one hundred three permits or plan revisions, and one hundred five building permits were issued. A total of one hundred thirty-four inspections were completed.

A development order extension was granted for Elite RV and Boat Storage located on Teague Trail. The development order will expire in February of 2027.

Code Enforcement opened seven new cases, five of which were complaint driven, closed nine cases, and conducted twenty-eight inspections.

Just a reminder, by visiting the [Growth Management Online Service Portal](#), you can access online permitting and code enforcement services. You may search for permits or code complaints by using the search option at the top of the portal. You will be required to register with the Building Department before applying for any building permits.

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

The fifth wellness presentation of the year was held on Wednesday, February 4th. This month's topic, "Understanding Autism," was presented by Gesa Barto, BFA Autism Disorders Specialist, from the University of Central Florida (UCF) Center for Autism and Related Disabilities. Autism, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a developmental disorder that affects how a person interacts, communicates, and behaves. Symptoms typically appear within the first three years of life and can vary widely in severity and form. A total of 38 employees attended the session.

In recruitment updates, a conditional job offer has been accepted for the Parks and Recreation Operator I position and for Youth Services Library Assistant I. Additionally, interviews for the Utilities Distribution/Collection Lead position took place on Wednesday, February 4th, and two applicants were selected for the role.

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

Staff are involved in multiple ongoing enterprise software, infrastructure and information security projects.



Howard's public cybersecurity awareness training last Thursday was well attended and received. During his presentation he stressed a few specific and free actions that would significantly decrease the odds that one would experience a significant incident. These included using long pass phrases rather than passwords, using unique pass phrases, using a password vault, and using multifactor authentication. He also talked about being cautious with links and attachments found in emails and texts.

Apart from training, Howard continues to push our security program forward, making gains in several technical areas. Thank you, Howard.

Staff are meeting today to continue efforts to optimize our payroll module implementation.

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

**Monday:** Youth Services hosted *Alphabet Adventures* featuring the letter Q. Kourtney brought in two of her pet quails, which thrilled the kids! We had 35 attendees.

*Senior Chair Yoga* welcomed 32 participants.

**Tuesday:** I attended the *Meet the Mayor* event at the Farmer's Market and was happy to see community members engaging and having conversations with him. It's wonderful to have a mayor who is so open and accessible to the public. *Tiny Tots* had 20 attendees, and *Storybook Studio* welcomed 15 participants.

**Wednesday:** *Storytime* was exceptionally busy due to the cold weather, with 44 attendees.

Miranda launched a new *Dungeons & Dragons D&D Club* at the library. The first meeting had 6 participants, and she plans to host it monthly with hopes of continued growth. *Scarlett* was very busy as well, with 12 attendees.

**Thursday:** Lisa hosted a craft class where participants are making Valentine's heart mobiles. Twelve people have already confirmed attendance.

I attended the *Lake County Directors Meeting* in Minneola, which included a tour of the new Minneola Library that reopened in October. I'm excited to see the space.

We are also hosting *Estate Planning* and are hoping for a strong turnout.

**Friday: *Baby Sprouts*** (from last week) had 8 attendees. ***Video Games*** welcomed 5 participants.

**Additional Updates:** IRS instruction books have arrived; however, we have not yet received the tax forms. In the meantime, we are making copies for patrons and limiting distribution to two per person to ensure availability for everyone.

RSVPs are coming in for the library's ***Open House*** on Monday, February 23 at 9:30 a.m. The event will include refreshments, giveaways, and tours. We are very excited to showcase all the hard work that has gone into this major project.

**Shout-Outs:** A huge thank-you to the entire library staff. This past week was especially busy, and everyone stepped up to help keep things running smoothly. I am truly grateful for each and every one of them.

An additional shout-out to Human Resources and Tamika DeLee for being incredibly supportive of the library and our staff.

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

Our team completed dragging and preparation of the baseball fields in anticipation of spring practices. Despite very cold and chilly weather, the Farmers Market was held successfully and welcomed approximately 270 patrons.

Freezing overnight temperatures significantly impacted the irrigation system at the Guava Street Athletic Complex, creating a "winter wonderland" effect and resulting in flooding that affected the clay infields. Staff is monitoring conditions and addressing issues as temperatures normalize.

Ted from Public Works has the Hwy 466 corridor landscaping project underway and is enthusiastic about the anticipated results of the project. Additionally, coordination will be taking place with Brightview to add palm trees to the north side of the Log Cabin Islands.

The Town has formally accepted the 60-day notice from the Lady Lake Area Chamber of Commerce to vacate the Log Cabin after many decades at that location.

Thomas continues working with our playground equipment supplier to source replacement parts for the Pyramid Park Playground to ensure the equipment remains safe and functional.

This week, I communicated with the soccer league and baseball league presidents regarding field conditions, lighting, and related items to ensure coordination ahead of upcoming activities.

Finally, the Parks and Recreation Department would like to welcome back Oscar the Osprey, who nearly delayed our lighting project last summer. This year, she has chosen Harry Sacks Field as her nesting site, though she is having some difficulty keeping twigs and sticks in

place. We will continue to monitor the situation to balance wildlife considerations with field operations.

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

I previously mentioned the Mock Commission meeting with Villages Charter School; however, the report was written before it went to print. I wanted to take a moment to share what a great experience it truly was. We enjoyed a productive meeting, shared plenty of laughs over pizza, and had the opportunity to get to know one another better. We were also honored to provide a brief tour of the police department. The students were able to see our facilities, watch a drone demonstration, and meet the ever-famous and always popular K-9 Fast. They asked thoughtful questions about police work, and we always look forward to their visits.

I also participated in an interview with local media discussing mental health and wellness in police work, as well as the resources and support offered here at the department.

We were grateful to receive a wonderful meal from our friends at Mission BBQ. They continue to be outstanding community partners, and we sincerely appreciated the generous and delicious spread.

After reading a local news article that referenced another department's average age and years of experience, I became curious about our own statistics. Lt. Tempesta quickly gathered the information. The average age of a Lady Lake Police officer is 44, with an average of 15 years of experience. This compares favorably to the national averages of 40 years of age and 12 years of experience. We are extremely fortunate to have such wisdom and experience within our department (and I'm happy to report I'm not the only one with gray hair).

As always, it is an honor to serve this great community. We are incredibly proud to protect and serve you.

**PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES DEPARTMENT Administration (C.T. Eagle - Director and Kevin Anderson – Admin Assistant to Director):**

The extended hard freeze over the weekend and into Monday has wreaked havoc on numerous backflow prevention devices around Town, causing them to leak or even burst due to the extended freeze time. Notices and warnings were sent out well ahead of time by the Town, the Lake County EOC, and many news stories to remind residents to protect their exposed water service fixtures, such as backflow prevention devices. All backflow prevention devices are owned and maintained by the property owner since they are located on the service side of the water meter. The Town does not maintain anything on the service side of the water meter. Many of the failed devices around Town have been removed and not replaced by the property owners. A reminder that the backflow prevention devices are not optional, they are required and mandated by local, state, and federal laws. Failure to install

and have these devices properly inspected will result in penalties and may even lead to discontinuation of water service. The link to the Town's Code for the Cross Connection and Backflow Prevention Ordinance is found here:

[https://library.municode.com/fl/lady\\_lake/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR\\_CH7HESA\\_ARTVIIIICRCOBAPR](https://library.municode.com/fl/lady_lake/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH7HESA_ARTVIIIICRCOBAPR)



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 citizens regarding maintenance concerns.

Inspected streets after hard freeze event.

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

Inspected the Trucks and Equipment after the hard freeze event.

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

Removed damaged tree at E Hermosa St and Lake Griffin Rd.

Repaired two locations of sidewalk on Summit St.

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

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities. Started painting the hallway and investigated a possible roof leak at Town Hall. Moved furniture and set up heat for the IT Department. Repaired a toilet leaking at the Library.

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

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

Ongoing repair and maintenance on Town Vehicles and Equipment.

Repaired automatic gate at Public Works.

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

Responded to multiple issues at the treatment plants, lift stations, and customer concern calls caused by the hard freeze event. All systems remained operational, no major damage to Town facilities has been reported due to the event.

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 – Field Operations Manager; and Vacant - Lead Operator):**

Continued performing utilities walk-throughs and inspections for phases of the Hammock Oaks Subdivision and Boulevard Oaks Subdivision.

Responded to numerous customer concern calls due to the hard freeze event.

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

Responded to after-hours call out for alarms at the Treatment Plants.

Pressure-washed the dewatering boxes.

Wastewater Plants completed and submitted required compliance reports to FDEP. Continued running process control samples and making necessary plant adjustments.

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

Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) renewal project with St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), in coordination with SJRWMD staff pre-submittal. Projected completion of renewal is Fall of 2026.