

WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

January 9, 2025

DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORTS (Bill Lawrence):

- **Shout Out to Aly Herman:** Congratulations to Aly Herman, the Library Director, for being recognized in *Lake and Sumter Style Magazine* as an up-and-coming leader. It's great to see local talent being celebrated!
- **Inspecting Town Facilities:** I have been visiting various town facilities, meeting with department managers, and will continue to do so in the coming weeks to ensure everything is running smoothly.
- **Library Expansion Progress:** The library expansion is moving forward, despite slight scheduling delays. The Children's Library will be finished first, with the move upstairs. Growth Management will be shifting to the former Children's Library space, and minimal construction work is expected for that department. The old finance offices will be transformed into the new offices for Communications, while HR will take over utilities billing. Excitement is building for the project's completion.
- **Wellness Presentation:** A great wellness program by Advent Health covered preventive exams and provided valuable information to the attendees.
- **Parks & Recreation Tree Committee Meeting:** The Centennial Event was a hot topic at the meeting on Wednesday, and commissioners have been invited to attend.

CLERK'S OFFICE (Nancy Wilson):

No report this week.

COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):

This week, Communications attended the Commission meeting and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting. On Thursday, we will attend the first Lake County Communicators Meeting of the year to discuss 2025 trends in communications, the wastewater plant tour and the swearing-in of Officer Ronnie Williams.

We had positive publicity this week in several publications including the wastewater plant featured in the Triangle News Leader, four print articles on the Farmers Market in the Daily Sun, and two articles in Lake & Sumter Style magazine: [Lady Lake Named Tree City USA for 20th Year](#) and [Lady Lake Is Officially Designated As A Purple Heart Town](#). We responded to

media requests and set up a wastewater tour for a newspaper reporter and photographer next week.

This week, we also spent a lot of time updating the website for the new year with current information and fresh photos.

I encourage everyone to grab their winter coats and come out for the newest town event [“Rock That Resolution”](#) this Saturday at Snooky Park! This is a great opportunity to solidify your goals for 2025 and find resources to help you do so.

Below are some interesting stats from our December analytics:

- YouTube Watch Time: 10.9 hours (increased by 39% over Nov. 2024)
- YouTube Content Type Views in Dec. 2024 vs Dec. 2023: Shorts are growing in popularity in 2024, making up 24% of the total viewing)
- Livestream: We had 51 viewers watching livestreamed meetings in December.
- Our Top Facebook post in December was in reference to the road closures for the Christmas parade, with 11.2 k impressions, indicating again the importance of safety messaging.
- We average between 5-6,000 users on the website each month, with October being an outlier with 14,000.

FINANCE (Pam Winegardner):

Customer Service Billing Department and the Finance Department look forward to a new year. We are setting our goals to show improvement each year and will start by creating policies that clearly outline Town rules and regulations including the Human Resource manual.

Both departments are also updating the website forms and information going into the new year. We are working with the IT department to better service our constituents as they access our information through our website through a smoother process.

Finance held two meetings this week about the new ERP software as we move forward in the planning process. Payroll has completed the W-2s for calendar 2024 along with all the month-end and quarterly reports.

Accounts payable is carefully watching and analyzing the direct buy process for the library renovation project along with paying the Well Expansion and the Reclaim projects that will soon come to completion. Direct buying saves the town a lot of money as we are tax-exempt and will save by not paying sales tax on a lot of the big-ticket items.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (Thad Carroll):

The Growth Management Department received revised improvement plans for Reserve at Hammock Oaks Phase 3. This phase proposes 157 single family lots on 60.19 acres. Revised plans for the Reserve at Hammock Oaks Amenity Center were also received. This center provides amenities such as a clubhouse, pool, splash pad, dog park, and pickleball courts to the residents of the Hammock Oak development.

The building department issued the permit for the exit trusses on the sales floor at Sam' Club located at 755 North Highway 27/441. This structure will be used to support signage and low voltage equipment at the exit of the store. The permit for the masonry wall at the rear of Teague Plaza was also issued. This wall will provide screening between the new commercial project and the residential properties behind it. Teague Plaza will be located at 1124 Teague Trail.

As of January 1, 2025, the updated building permit and land use fees are being assessed. The updated fee schedules are located on our website at, www.ladylakefl.gov.

A total of ninety building permits or permit revisions were received, and sixty-three permits were issued. One hundred twenty-three construction-related inspections were conducted as well.

This week, code enforcement opened eighteen new cases, closed nineteen cases, and conducted seventy-two inspections. Eleven signs were removed from the Town's rights of way. As a reminder, any signage placed in the right of way will be removed by Code Enforcement or Public Works. Signage may only be placed on private property and may require a permit. Please check with the Growth Management department prior to displaying any signage or promotional displays.

With the Town of Lady Lake being incorporated in 1925, this year marks an exciting time! Over the last 100 years, our Town has grown from roughly 200 residents to nearly 16,000! During this time, planning, zoning, and building regulations have played an important role in the Town's evolution and success. As the year progresses, stay tuned for information on the historic events in planning and building that have helped to shape our Town into what it is today!

HUMAN RESOURCES (Tamika DeLee):

No report this week.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (John Pearl):

The library renovation effort continued this week. Drywall began going up and the new entrance is also beginning to take shape.



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

Patrick, John, Robert, Jacob, and Tanner met with GIS vendor SAM, Inc. to review and optimize our GIS collection data dictionary in anticipation of beginning a new field verification effort soon.

Patrick, Jacob, and Richard completed the evaluation of the Hammock Oaks communication conduit installation on Tuesday.

Leon, Andy, John, Joella, Dawn, Debbie, and Michelle met with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) vendor Springbrook on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings to complete the Finance Discovery effort. This marked the beginning of our implementation effort.

As we begin the new year, staff have many goals for 2025 with different categories of projects planned or currently underway including projects involving data management, enterprise software, Geographical Information System (GIS) development, Governance Risk and Compliance (GRC), infrastructure, security, and training. Some projects of note include the ERP software upgrade, field verification of our water infrastructure, and the continuation of our Fiber Wide Area Network (FiberWAN) construction.

The IT Department currently has Systems Analyst and Network Administrator position openings. Please see the Town's website or contact Human Resources for more information.

We wish Leon farewell as he pursues a new opportunity. We are grateful for the contributions he made during his time with us.

LIBRARY (Aly Herman):

On Monday, the library held its first Senior Chair Yoga class. We are fortunate to have Jeanne Nickelson, a dedicated yoga instructor, volunteering her time to teach two classes every

Monday through the end of April. Due to limited space from ongoing construction, each class is capped at 12 participants and is currently full. We've asked participants to commit to the full 8-week session. The next class sign-up will open in mid-February.

Also on Monday, we relaunched our English as a Second Language (ESL) program. This is the first time we have been able to offer this service since March 2020, and we are thrilled to have it available for our patrons once again.

On Wednesday I attended a construction project update meeting.

Last Friday, I met with Jeff Hunt to review the final details he needs before submitting the furniture and equipment plans for the youth library. He expects to have the submittal ready for our next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, January 15.

Despite the cold weather this week, attendance at our programs remained strong. Here are the youth program stats for the week:

Tiny Tots: 13

Family Crafting: 13

Storytime:43

Scavenger Hunt: 18

Reading with Scarlett: 18

This Friday we have Lego Master at 3:30pm.

www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225

PARKS AND RECREATION (Mike Burske):

This week, the Parks and Recreation Department has been working on taking down the Christmas lights and park maintenance. Van and the maintenance crew have been working on the logistics for the first "Rock that Resolution" event this Saturday from 11AM till 2PM.

We have been brainstorming with Amy, our events coordinator, about the Centennial Celebration for 2025. Around March you will be seeing the propaganda go up about our 100-year anniversary. We will have educational materials at the events and the week of November 8th, 2025, we will have many events leading up to the big celebration. We had some input from the Parks, Recreation and Tree Board and the public at the January meeting.

POLICE DEPARTMENT (Chief Steve Hunt):

I attended the Villages District Directors quarterly meeting along with the Lake County Sheriff's Office.

Officer Ronnie Williams was sworn in and will begin his field training session next week. We currently have one patrol officer position yet to be filled. The first round of interviews for the patrol lieutenant are scheduled for next week as well.

The public works crew have been assisting us in making a few minor renovations to “repurpose” our old holding cell area into a more useful workspace. Space is at a premium and we are working hard to utilize what we have in an efficient manner.

I participated in the law enforcement panel for the Lake County Leadership program along with the other law enforcement agencies with our county.

I attended the Florida Police Chief's Association's winter conference held in Orlando. Training topics ranged from lessons learned at Uvalde, Hurricanes Helene/Milton and the Boston Marathon. Other topics of note were Elder Abuse, upcoming legislative matters, and wellness. I was fortunate to network and learn from my peers on current best practices.

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

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

Goals for 2025:

1. Completely close out Phase Two of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project and put the new plant and old plant in service.
2. Completely close out Phase Two of the Well #4 and #5 Project/Water Treatment Plant #3 Project and put the new infrastructure in service.
3. Completely finish out the FDOT US 27/441 Road Widening Project and Town owned utilities relocation as a part of the project. This project took almost 5 years to complete, and we are all looking forward to it being over. The Town's original estimated costs for utilities relocations was \$1.5 million. Working hand in hand with the engineers and highway contractor, making field adjustments and plan revisions, the actual cost was \$843,000. Saving the Town \$657,000. These funds were held in escrow by the State and will be returned to the Town upon project closeout, hopefully soon.
4. Continue to focus on planning ahead and stay on top of future potential residential and commercial developments. Water supply and Wastewater Treatment capacities are top priority. Master Plans for water, sewer, and reuse will be completed and presented to Town Commission this year. The Master Plans will give us a plan to stay ahead of growth with suggested projects, timelines, and budgetary recommendations.
5. Coordinate and negotiate with the City of Fruitland Park on future wastewater treatment needs, costs, and operations. The goal would be to put into place a mutually beneficial

- agreement/partnership to ensure both municipalities have ample room to grow without breaking the bank and playing catchup every time a new development is proposed.
6. Coordinate and negotiate a new Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with FDOT for the US 27/441 Corridor once the road widening project is completed, and if approved by Town Commission. The MOA will give funds to the Town to maintain the corridor on behalf of FDOT as we did in the past.
 7. Continue street sign replacements throughout the Town.
 8. Continue updating and implementing the Town's very successful Pavement Management Program. Continue to aim for high levels of Pavement Condition Ratings by resurfacing the roads that need it and utilizing a variety of different resurfacing types to get the best bang for your buck.
 9. Coordinate with the Finance Department and submit all documentation needed for the FEMA reimbursement application for Hurricane Milton. Tub grind and remove the 20,000 cubic yards of debris collected by Town staff during the hurricane cleanup efforts townwide.
 10. Maintain full staffing levels and hire quality personnel for the new positions.
 11. CDBG Grant Funds were awarded to the Town a few years ago in the amount of \$750,000 for the submitted improvement project in Skyline Hills. Once approved to proceed by the State, staff will work through the required steps to get this project bid out and under construction.
 12. Continue to assist in anyway needed for the Library Renovation Project, which includes offices for the Growth Management Department in the current children's library, newly constructed space for the children's library on the second floor of the library, and new offices for the IT Department on the second floor as well.
 13. Prepare for the Town's Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) renewal with St. John's River Water Management District that is due for renewal in 2026. This permit regulates the amount of ground water we can pull out of the Floridan Aquifer to supply residents with potable water and is a very big deal indeed. The Town's last permit was approved in 2006, it was a 20-year permit. One of the last 20-year permits approved by St. John's. New permits are for a 10-year term. We will work closely with our Engineering Consultant and St. John's to ensure we have enough water allocation to supply our current and future potable water supply needs.