

# WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

## TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

January 23, 2025

### DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORTS (Bill Lawrence):

**Shoutouts this week:** A special thank you to Chief Hunt and the entire Police Department for their dedicated recruitment efforts over the past year. Being short 10 officers in a 30-member department posed a significant challenge, especially as law enforcement recruitment struggles have been widespread across the nation. With the support of our Commission, Communications Director Elisha Pappacoda, and HR Director Tamika DeLee, we developed and executed a national recruitment strategy targeting experienced officers from across the country. The goal was to fill these positions within a year, and after twelve months, we successfully welcomed a group of officers with a combined 130 years of experience. These officers—Kyle Lawrence, Jim Dunagan, Amanda Hayes, Brian Campbell, Hashaam Choudri, Jeff Burns, Gustavo Eloy, and Ronnie Williams—come from various locations, including Florida and beyond. Fantastic teamwork all around!

### Accreditation Success:

Lt. Robert Tempesta recently participated in an onsite assessment for the reaccreditation of the City of Auburndale Police Department, serving as an assessor. Chief Terry Storie sent a letter commending Lt. Tempesta for his professionalism and expertise during the process. Lt. Tempesta did an outstanding job representing the Lady Lake Police Department, and we are proud of his contributions.

### Villages Meeting Update:

Gary Lester has retired from his position as Vice President of Community Relations. On Tuesday morning, I had the opportunity to meet with Josh Blake, the new Vice President, to discuss a wide range of matters. We look forward to collaborating with Josh in the future. It has been a pleasure working with Gary Lester, and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

### CLERK'S OFFICE (Nancy Wilson):

Nancy and Carol attended the Commission meeting on Wednesday evening and the minutes are being drafted. Carol also made final revisions for the Special Magistrate Hearing on Thursday morning with six cases to be presented, subsequent to the meeting, minutes will be drafted.

Nancy is working with both Carol and Jackie on the upcoming pre-agenda work for the Commission and Planning and Zoning meeting agendas in Civic Clerk. Carol and Jackie will be taking ownership of those meetings (respectively) with Nancy serving in an advisory role!

Nancy completed the City Stats Survey report for the Florida League of Cities. This survey is a means for municipalities to compare municipal operations, budgets, policies, and services to peer communities. The data collected is from FY2022 and FY2023.

The Amenity Authority Committee (AAC), a committee of The Villages Center Community Development District (VCCDD), is responsible for amenity services for properties north of CR 466. Amenity fees are paid to the Recreation Amenity Division which funds the following services:

Landscaping

Water Retention Areas

Community Watch

Recreation Centers and Activities

Gates and Postal Area Maintenance

Golf Courses

What does this have to do with us? The AAC consists of six members from five service areas. Recently, the member who represents the Lady Lake District resigned prior to the end of her four-year term. When a term expires after four years, the VCCDD holds an election to select a new member. However, when a representative resigns prior to the end of the term, the Town of Lady Lake Commission chooses a replacement to fill the open seat. In a short while, the District will forward the applications it has received and a recommendation by the resigning member of whom she thinks should replace her. At that time, the Commission will either accept her recommendation or review the applications. This will be placed on a future agenda.

Jackie and Nancy have been working on the presentation for the Mock Commission Meeting next Thursday about Clerk office responsibilities. This information needs to be tailored to a different type of audience so it has been a little nerve wracking.

The farmer's market was closed this week due to unfavorable weather. Unfavorable is an understatement!

All other duties occurred like clockwork.

**COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):**

This week, Communications attended a meeting with Growth Management regarding developing a digital quarterly newsletter. We also attended and live-streamed the Commission meeting and issued a press release on the police department's annual recognition awards and the introduction of new officers. Congratulations to all for the well-deserved accolades!

On Wednesday, I and the Parks & Recreation/Events staff attended an Emergency Planning for Special Events Working Group Meeting at the Lake County EOC. It was eye-opening to speak with our peers as well as law enforcement and fire professionals regarding security best practices for events.

On Thursday, Communications is attending the below crisis communications program:

*FPRA Lake is proud to present Resilience & Recovery, an in-depth discussion with communication leaders from SECO Energy. This engaging session will explore the critical lessons learned from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, two major storms that tested the organization's crisis communication strategies, operational resilience, and ability to recover effectively. Attendees will gain a behind-the-scenes look at how SECO Energy navigated these challenges to maintain transparency, foster trust, and deliver vital information to their communities during times of crisis.*

We also responded to several media requests and are expecting coverage of the wastewater treatment plant opening and the Purple Heart designation this week.

Communications continues to work on promotions/planning for the Centennial.

**FINANCE (Pam Winegardner):**

The Town is 33% through our fiscal year with all department budgets at approximately 25 to 28% of their budget. Budget % can be affected if a large capital asset has the funds encumbered with a purchase order which enables us to order the item. The purchase order appears in the system as claiming fund money so that the department cannot spend it on other items. Governmental accounting requires that funds be encumbered before purchases to prevent governments from overspending. This easily leads to financial distress and the state of Florida Attorney General's office will then take over governing the town, county, or city.

The town audit is progressing toward the end and one of the tests by the auditors is to look to see if we are paying our bills on time, are we meeting payroll timely among other tasks. The auditors also question all commissioners, the town manager, the finance director, and other

random department heads to see if there is any knowledge of shortcomings, related parties or legal matters that they should know about.

When the audit is finished, if something comes out after the audit with the government failing in financial areas, related parties, or illegal dealings, the auditors have it on record that staff and/or the people leading and guiding the town should have known but did not perform due diligence in asking questions, preparing for or performing their job.

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

The Development Order for the Reserve at Hammock Oaks Phase 3 was issued on Wednesday. Phase 3 is located on just over 60 acres and proposes 157 single family lots and 5,305 linear feet of private roadways.

A variance application was received for the proposed Walmart Neighborhood Market. Due to additional right-of-way requirements from the Lake County Public Works Department, the applicant is seeking a variance for a setback encroachment of the northeast corner of the fuel canopy.

On Wednesday, the Town Commission voted 5-0 to approve Ordinance 2024-27, Ordinance 2024-28, and Ordinance 2024-29 at the second and final hearing. The ordinances provide for the annexation of the property, being approximately 0.87 acres, into the Town, as well as the assignment of a future land use and zoning designation. The property is located on the west side of Teague Trail, approximately 325 feet south of Oak Street.

A building permit application for a new 7,500-square-foot single-story medical office building on 151 LaGrande Boulevard was received this week. A total of fifty-one building permits or permit revisions were received, and thirty-nine permits were issued. Sixty-four construction-related inspections were conducted as well.

This week code enforcement opened four new cases, closed nine cases, and conducted seventeen inspections, and three signs were also removed from the Town's right-of-way. Officers Crain and Williams also continued preparing cases for January 23, 2025, Special Magistrate Hearing.

**HUMAN RESOURCES (Tamika DeLee):**

No report this week.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (John Pearl):**

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

The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Implementation Team (Finance, Andy, and John) met with vendor Springbrook on Tuesday morning to review various work task topics.

Staff met with the library renovation contractor McLaughlin on Tuesday afternoon to review the project status.

Kristyn and John conducted Network Administrator candidate interviews on Wednesday morning.

Public Works Utilities and IT staff have scheduled three days of on-site GPS collection training in early February with vendor SAM, Inc.

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.

**LIBRARY (Aly Herman):**

The chilly weather didn't keep people away from the library this week! Cold days are the perfect time to cozy up with a good book. Did you know we offer an online service called cloudLibrary? With cloudLibrary, you can download eBooks and audiobooks directly to your device. All you need is your Lake County library card number to get started!

I attended Wednesday night's Commission meeting, where Chief Hunt gave a presentation introducing our new officers and recognizing several others with awards. It was heartwarming to see so many officers there, supporting one another. Chief Hunt's outstanding leadership is evident in the dedication of the men and women who protect our community. Thank you, LLPD, for all that you do!

Nicole and Kourtney visited The Villages Elementary School of Lady Lake School today to share information about upcoming events on KVN News. Tomorrow, they will continue their outreach efforts with a program at Little Blessing Preschool.

Here are the youth program stats for this week:

- Tiny Tots: 28
- Family Crafting: 19
- Storytime:42
- Scavenger Hunt: 20
- Reading with Scarlett: 15

This Friday at 3:30 p.m., we'll host Lego Masters with a special guest, Dexter! Dexter is an Australian Labradoodle service dog visiting from Ohio. He makes an annual trip to meet and interact with our younger patrons, and we're excited to welcome him back. Don't miss it!

Library's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225](http://www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225)

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

No report this week.

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

We had a great evening at the Commissioner's meeting last night as we were able to introduce our eight new officers who came on board in 2024. These new officers have over 130 combined years in law enforcement experience. We also presented awards to several members of our team. We have been blessed by the support from the Commission, town staff, and members of our community in our effort to make Lady Lake PD the very best.

It seems that we are in constant motion here in the department. Administratively, there are always policies to be redeveloped, best practices to be vetted and implemented, training to be coordinated, and purchases to be ordered and paid. There never seems to be enough time in the day. Our patrol teams are doing great. While a few squads are still light and all the teams have been busy training new officers, their productivity remains high. In December we responded to over 700 calls for service in addition to another 700 self-initiated events (think directed patrols in neighborhoods and traffic details). 375 car stops resulted in 115 summonses and 268 written warnings. 32 people were arrested. All of these numbers have been very consistent throughout the year. We are working on a new project that I hope to roll out soon that will share calendar year statistics and information.

Stay warm, keep your hands to yourself, leave other people's things alone, and let's all try to be nice to one another. But no matter what, LLPD will be there.

**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.ladylakefl.gov/167/Town-Projects>

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):**

Continued monitoring of retention pond water levels throughout the Town.

The tub grinding contractor has completed grinding and hauling off the Hurricane Milton debris that was picked up by Town Staff and transported to the FDEP-permitted site at the Public Works Complex.

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

Removed and replaced sections of sidewalk on W Lemon St.

Cleaned up storm drains around the Town after the rain events this week.

Repaired the flashing LED lights on the Stop signs at the intersection of Del Mar Dr and Rio Grande Ave.

Serviced equipment, sharpened chainsaw chains, and mower blades.

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

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities. Repaired leak on the Community Building Roof and cleaned out the gutter drains. Trimmed trees and cleaned gutter drains at Town Hall. Trimmed trees at the Library. Put out insect “ants” bait at Town Hall. Unclogged sink at Public Works.

**Motor Pool (Billy Kohler - Lead Mechanic):**

Ongoing repair and maintenance of 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 the Town.

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

Completed 811 dig ticket location requests.

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 – Dual Certified Plant Operator)**

Phase Two of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Modifications Project is weeks away from the final closeout. Both plants are in service and are doing well. Currently, we are working on punch list items and final inspections.

Phase Two of the Well #4 and Well #5 Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project is also weeks away from final closeout. Final water sampling on well #4 is in process, which will be followed by flushing and testing of well #5 once power activation is completed.