

# **WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT**

## **TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA**

**By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager**

**February 6, 2025**

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

#### **Shoutouts and Acknowledgments:**

A huge thank you to **Julia Harris** and **Nancy Wilson** for their exceptional work organizing last Thursday's mock commission meeting. We received outstanding feedback from the Villages Charter School, with many saying it was the best organized meeting they've had in the past 10 years. This is a direct reflection of the hard work from all the Department Managers who participated, as well as those who stepped in for their colleagues, such as Butch Goodman and Joella LeDonne.

I'd also like to extend my gratitude to Mayor Freeman for his excellent presentation on the roles of both the Mayor and the Commission during the meeting. His dedication to engaging with everyone at events and police swearing-in ceremonies speaks volumes, and our staff appreciates his enthusiasm and continued interest in what we do.

Regarding the Farmer's Market, I had the pleasure of spending time with Mayor Freeman at his booth for the "Meet the Mayor" event on Tuesday. I had the honor of being the designated photographer for those wanting to take a photo with the Mayor. The Farmer's Market was steady, and I received numerous compliments on how well it was managed. Excellent work, Jackie and Julia!

On Wednesday afternoon, I had a productive meeting with Jason Pittman, the newly elected president of the Lady Lake Chamber of Commerce. It was a great conversation, and I look forward to many more discussions with him in the future.

Finally, a reminder that the Lake County Managers meeting will be held this Thursday in Leesburg. This will be another opportunity for a general discussion.

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

On Monday, a Local Planning Agency meeting and a Town Commission meeting were held. The minutes have been transcribed.

The Planning & Zoning meeting agenda for the February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting has been compiled and distributed. There is only one item on their agenda: a setback variance for a Walmart Neighborhood Market.

Work has begun on the February 19<sup>th</sup> Town Commission meeting agenda. So far it looks like it will be a light meeting. Items so far include: Annual Tree Raffle event approval, reappointments to the Parks Board and second reading of an ordinance regarding a zoning designation change.

The February Parks & Recreation Committee meeting has been cancelled.

Recommendations from The Villages for the next Lady Lake representative to sit on the Amenity Authority Committee should be delivered to the clerk's office in time for the March 3<sup>rd</sup> Commission meeting.

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

Communications hit the ground running to kick off 2025 with a record month on YouTube due to the bodycam video being released of the FBI's 10 most wanted fugitive arrest. We've also nearly tripled our Facebook followers since January 2024. Our website users grew in January to 8.6k from an average of around 5-6,000, with many visiting directly to view the LLPD arrest story.

Interestingly, the top referrers to our website are search engines, followed by Facebook, the county library page, and this month, CBS news. LinkedIn is growing slowly, and our livestreamed Commission meetings are getting around 30 viewers each – which is great!

The PD's FBI's Most Wanted arrest continues to get media attention, with the story published in news outlets in Canada, the UK, Hungary, France, and even as far away as ... Maine. The story was also featured in [Police Magazine](#) this week.

Susyn and I are working on our public relations and content creation planning for all of Parks & Recreation's exciting upcoming events. This includes press releases, Facebook events and posts, videos, photography, web content, community calendars, digital signage, media relations, text alerts, safety planning/messaging, and more.

This week's shoutout goes to Jackie for her dedication to the farmers' market and for her creative themes that keep it fresh each month.

I spent several hours at the market this week for Meet the Mayor at the Market, where shoppers got to know Mayor Ed Freeman. Residents from Lady Lake and even some visitors from Hawaii came out to chat with the Mayor, ask questions, and pose for selfies. Thanks to Jackie and Amy for their assistance in setting up. The event was previewed in [The Villages News](#).

Last week, I was far more nervous presenting to the middle schoolers during the Mock Commission meeting than when I was hosting the police press conference. Luckily, the students were easy on us. Expect to see a story in The Villages Daily Sun.

**FINANCE (Pam Winegardner):**

Finance is working on migrating to our new software, Springbrook. We are ahead of schedule in preparing our vendor and our fund account number list. We have inactivated all the old vendors and the fund account numbers that we haven't used in over three years. We are updating our fund numbers that need to comply with the Uniform Accounting System Manual for Florida Local Governments with the new software so the Town will be up to date.

A big thank you to Dawn for keeping us on track and working with the following: to Debbie for her quick work in inactivating funds and for her advice in aiding the rest of us and Michelle for inactivating vendors so smoothly. I also want to recognize Andy for helping us resolve printer issues and getting a new printer but also for helping us by learning COSNOS and helping us with the conversion. He is so thorough in not only fixing problems, but he teaches himself the processes we perform so he can fix it in the correct manner. He is very versatile.

We are close to being finished with our FEMA claims for Milton. We currently stand at getting reimbursed for \$259,950 with a few additional expenses that we need to receive invoices for that will be added. FEMA pays overtime labor costs but does not reimburse regular budgeted hours labor. We do get reimbursed for the time any equipment of ours is used during regular or overtime. The town, particularly Public Works, saved money again (as they did in Hurricane IRMA) by using our own labor and equipment instead of using outside labor. The town's debris was picked up quickly but with necessary overtime to service our town residents. This Finance Director has seen a big decrease in expenses from 2007 tornado expenses per hour vs IRMA and Milton hurricanes due to staff doing more with less.

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

On Tuesday, a new site plan application was submitted for a proposed self-storage facility on Griffin Avenue, west of County Road 25. This project consists of one three-story mini-storage warehouse and six single-story mini-storage warehouses on three acres.

On Monday, the Town Commission voted 4-0 to approve Ordinance 2024-25 upon its first reading. The ordinance proposes a rezoning of land to add 35.93 acres to the Planned Unit Development of Lady Lake Crossing, for a total of 67.73 acres, located southwesterly of U.S. Highway 27/441, and north of Oak Street. The property will be developed by the Benchmark Group.

The Commission also approved the first reading of Ordinances 2024-30 and 2024-31, a Large-Scale Future Land Use Map Amendment and Rezoning for property being approximately 52.2 acres located at Hartsock Sawmill Road. The ordinances propose to reduce the entitlements which allow for 185 recreational vehicle sites with amenities, to an agricultural residential designation which will be limited to two residential structures. The Commission tabled

Ordinances 2024-32 and 2024-33, a Small-Scale Future Land Use Map Amendment and Rezoning for property being 18.5 acres on Rolling Acres Road, to the meeting of March 3, 2025.

This week, building permit applications were received for “vanilla shell” (how a commercial building is delivered to a tenant for a future interior buildout) buildings located at 871 Highway 466 Suite 402 and Suite 802. An application was also received for first floor sales and information suite renovations at the Citrus Exchange building located at 1120 Main Street. The scope of work includes modification of restrooms, offices, and other reconfiguration of spaces. There will also be replacement of doors and windows, replacement of some equipment and fixtures serving the same purpose.

On Wednesday, I met with SECO Energy to conduct a review of our Town Boundary Map. Every two years the meeting is held with their staff to confirm that our municipal boundaries are consistent with their tracking map based upon the annexation ordinances that we provide them over the reporting period. This communication helps SECO plan for future service to commercial and residential developments in our area.

Sixty-eight building permits or revisions were received this week, and forty-three permits were issued. Two hundred and twenty-nine building inspections were conducted in the field. Code Enforcement opened seventeen new cases, closed twenty-three cases, and conducted forty-nine inspections.

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

The fifth wellness presentation was on February 5<sup>th</sup>, the topic was “Heart to Heart.” Presenters included Dr. Gary Allen, who is a board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon who specializes in treating patients with various disorders of the lungs, heart, and great vessels (aorta, pulmonary trunk, pulmonary veins and vena cava). Also presenting was Dr. Vatsal Inamdar who is a board-certified cardiologist and electrophysiologist. Both doctors are a part of the Advent Health network. A total of 46 employees attended this presentation.

Interviews were held on Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, for the Mechanic position. Three applicants were selected. Interviews were also held on Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, for the Staff Assistant to Police Department (part-time) position.

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

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

Public Works Utilities staff and Patrick completed three days of on-site GPS collection training this week with vendor SAM, Inc.

Howard and John attended the annual Florida Government Information Systems Association Winter meeting in Orlando this week. This meeting is typically focused on various information security topics. It was good to reconnect with some peers to compare notes.

John is meeting with industrial control system vendor Blue Automation on Friday to continue a work effort at the Public Works campus.

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):**

Last Friday, Kourtney and I met with Jeff Hunt from Library Interiors to select the colors and finishes for the furniture and shelving in the youth library. We chose vibrant colors that will create a modern and inviting space for young readers.

I also completed an online library leadership class, gaining valuable insights that I plan to implement in my own leadership approach.

Tuesday was a very busy day. Nancy Brock and I attended the funeral of our dear patron, Mr. Joe. He and his wife, Barbara, volunteered at the library for many years, and he was well known for his work in the pro shop at Water Oak. He will be deeply missed.

Later in the day, I had a 2 PM virtual renovation meeting, followed by a visit from the Mayor, who stopped by for a tour of the renovation progress. I then attended another virtual meeting with the county at 3:30 PM.

Wednesday was a catch-up day, wrapping up the library stats. We had over 17,000 visitors in January.

Today, I'll be attending my monthly Lake County Library System meeting in Mt. Dora from 9 AM - 12 PM.

Need tax forms? The library has you covered! We have the forms and the 1040/1040-SR instruction books available near the front desk.

This week's shoutout goes to Sierra Cook. She has been creating some of our wonderful displays. Sierra joined our library about 6 months ago.

On Friday, Kourtney and Nicole will visit the Villages Elementary of Lady Lake (VELL) Pre-K class for a fun story time and to share all the exciting things the library has to offer!

Here are the youth program stats for this week:

- Tiny Tots: 21

- Family Crafting: 9

- Storytime:46
- Scavenger Hunt: 10
- Reading with Scarlett: 15
- Video Games:12
- School VELL: 35

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

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

This week, Sam, Vicky and Thomas did an excellent job in clearing out a section at Heritage Park for the addition of several different fruit trees. Scott and Brad have been working to secure the fence at the tennis courts. As fences get older, they will begin to buckle up at the bottom with repeated ball hits

We are in the process of ordering centennial banners for the upcoming celebration. A huge shout out to Elisha for her help working with a vendor to get a final design. We will be ordering 115 banners; we will begin putting them up around March.

The Farmers and Craft Market went very well this week with 41 vendors and 536 patrons coming through the gate. The weather was impeccable. I want to thank the mayor for coming out and being an active part of the event.

I have received the parts supply list and the scope of the job for the Rolling Acres Soccer Fields Lighting Project Phase II. This project will begin after soccer season is over. We will then have three lighted soccer fields in place for the 2025 fall season. This lighting has been needed for over 20 years, and I am past happy that it is going up.

I had a phone meeting with Ted as I will be working with him on revamping the landscaping on CR 466 which includes irrigation, installation of grass where mulch and plants currently are and the addition of palm trees. This will improve the appearance and take out the labor-intensive landscaping currently in place. We do not have a start date as of now. We will be working with Brightview Landscaping by piggybacking off the City of Leesburg.

I will be meeting with Thad and Neel Schaffer Engineering as we will be getting a proposal to start doing a streetscape on Old Dixie Highway. This is part of Growth Management's Master Plan that was recently implemented.

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

We conducted a Physical Assessment Test for new officers with five candidates participating in the process. Those who passed will proceed to an oral board interview.

The Town Manager and I conducted secondary interviews with candidates for the Lieutenant positions. A selection and announcement will be made soon.

Additional interviews were conducted for the part-time staff assistant position. A decision will be made in the coming days.

Two new police cars have been received and are about to be put into service. We are awaiting the delivery of two more that we hope will arrive soon.

Deputy Chief Brough attended an FDLE course on Officer Discipline in Lake Mary. The course focuses on mandatory reporting requirements and the current best practices regarding internal affairs investigations.

Officers Williams and Eloy are rapidly progressing through their field training and will be assigned to squads soon.

We continue to receive comments regarding the FBI Top Ten Most Wanted arrest. I am thankful that such a positive light has been shed on the work the officers all do every day here at Lady Lake Police Department. I am thankful for the dedication and professionalism they display on a constant basis. Keep up the good work.

#### **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. The projected close out for this project is March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

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

Continued monitoring retention pond water levels throughout the Town.

Coordinating preparations for the removal of the Boy Scout Hut.

Coordinated with the contractor for leveling the floor prior to new carpet install at the PD.

Continued coordination with Mike Burske on installation of new landscaping along the CR 466 corridor.

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

Cleaning up lay down lot at Public Works after Hurricane Milton debris grinding and removal. Separating piles of materials and preparing pile of old asphalt to be sent to asphalt plant for recycling.

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

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities.

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

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.

**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 final closeout. Both plants are in service and doing well. Substantial Completion Letter issued by the Engineer. Only punch list items and final inspections remain.

Phase Two of the Well #4 and Well #5 Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project is also weeks away from final close out. Well #4 is has some remaining electrical issues to address prior to activation. Final water sampling on well #5 is in process.