

# WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

## TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

March 28, 2025

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

#### Shoutouts & Acknowledgments:

This week, we want to give a big shoutout to the Parks & Recreation Department for organizing an amazing spring concert series this past Saturday at Snooky Park. It was clear from the crowd's energy and the conversations I overheard that everyone had a fantastic time. People were praising the great food from the vendors, and the music provided by *A Piece of Woodstock* was a hit! Special thanks to Mike, Amy, Van, and the entire crew for all their hard work – from planning and set up to attending to the audience and handling the cleanup. You all made the event a success!

**Community Building Make Over:** The landscaping out front has been completed by Parks and Recreation and a special thanks to Ted Williams and his crew for the new paint job on the inside. These kinds of updates really make a difference in how people experience the building.

I wanted to share a recent article I wrote on LinkedIn and why we do this weekly report.

#### **Increasing Transparency in Local Government: A Simple, Cost-Free Solution**

By Bill Lawrence

In the realm of local government, one of the key elements to fostering a positive relationship with the community is transparency. It builds trust, encourages accountability, and ensures that the public is well-informed about how their taxpayer dollars are being spent. But how can a local government improve its transparency without incurring any additional costs? The answer is simple: **the weekly manager's report.**

#### **What is the Weekly Manager's Report?**

The weekly manager's report is a document that outlines the activities and progress of each department within the local government over the past week. It's a straightforward and cost-effective way to increase transparency and communication both internally and externally. Here's how it works:

#### **Department Managers Submit Weekly Reports**

Each department manager submits a brief summary of their department's activities to the clerk's office on a weekly basis.

### **Consolidated into One Document**

The clerk's office compiles these reports into a single document that is published on the local government's website.

### **Public Access and Shout-Outs**

The report is publicly accessible, allowing taxpayers to see what their local government is working on. Additionally, department managers can use this opportunity to recognize staff contributions through shout-outs.

### **Communication on Upcoming Issues**

The report also serves as a space to inform elected officials and staff about any upcoming challenges or important issues that may arise.

### **What Does the Weekly Manager's Report Achieve?**

#### **1. Building Trust:**

When government activities are made visible to the public, it fosters trust. Residents can see the effort and dedication of local government staff in addressing their needs.

#### **2. Showing Value:**

Recognizing the hard work of staff members not only boosts morale but also demonstrates to the community that employees are valued and contributing to the success of the government.

#### **3. Getting Buy-in from Staff, Elected Officials, and the Public:**

A weekly report helps keep all stakeholders informed, ensuring that everyone from elected officials to citizens understands what's happening and why it matters.

#### **4. Accountability by the Department Manager:**

Each department manager is accountable for their department's performance, which is reflected in the weekly report. This transparency makes it clear to the public how each department is fulfilling its responsibilities.

#### **5. Better Communication:**

By consolidating all the departments' reports in one place, the weekly manager's report serves as an effective communication tool, reducing misunderstandings and increasing clarity.

#### **6. Team Building:**

Regular updates help foster collaboration between departments, as they can see how each team is working toward common goals. This promotes unity and collective responsibility.

### **Why This Works**

The best part of the weekly manager's report is that it costs *nothing* to implement. It's a simple process that leverages existing staff resources to enhance transparency and communication.

Posting the report on the local government website ensures that anyone can access it at any time, making it a permanent, visible record of the government's work.

In conclusion, the weekly manager's report is a small but impactful way to increase transparency in local government. It promotes accountability, builds trust, and keeps everyone in the loop without incurring additional costs. If you want to improve your local government's transparency, consider implementing this simple, non-cost solution.

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

- The clerk's office is drafting ordinances to dissolve the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee, the Tree & Beautification Advisory Committee and the Parks, Recreation & Tree Advisory Committee. This will require changes to both the Code and the Land Development Regulations. The decision was made because the committees meet infrequently, often only two or three times a year. Throughout the years, the committee members have been a huge asset to the town and have supported Mike in his mission of holding quality events and creating a comprehensive tree plan to protect Lady Lake's precious commodity – green areas. Huge thanks go to Betty Cantelmo, Rick "Doc" Jones, Chryle Lowery, Doris Turlo and Fred Weber.
- Thad Carroll and Becky Higgins discovered missing material in the Land Development Regulations, Chapter 5, Section 5.4. Though an ordinance containing correct information was sent to Municode in 2011, sections covering Planned Unit Developments and Public Facilities Districts were inextricably omitted from online content. This is particularly baffling because the hard copy version is correct and property reflects verbiage from Ordinance 2011-17. This will most likely boil down to improper codification.
- Carol documented the monthly Special Magistrate hearing where seven cases were presented. She also compiled the LPA agenda packet and the large agenda packet for the April 7<sup>th</sup> Town Commission meeting.
- The Farmer's Market season is winding down and will be over at the conclusion of the April 8<sup>th</sup> event. At the March 25<sup>th</sup> market, 482 people attended to shop at 31 vendor sites. Entertainment was provided by the Flying Golf Cart Stunt Pilots.

**COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):**

WKMG's Erik Von Ancken interviewed Chief Hunt and Evidence Technician Scott Kolb for the weekly series "Getting Results." The story will air next week, and we look forward to more positive coverage for PD. This is the second time we will be featured on this show.

We responded to several media requests last Friday and this week regarding the strong-arm robbery in the Target parking lot.

I joined PD staff at the American Legion to discuss logistics and promotions for a future shredding event. I am also working on laying out the police department's mock accreditation report.

Communications created the graphics for the water conservation merchandise, with the slogan "A Century of Water Conservation," tying it to our Centennial branding. We look forward to the outreach and education that will continue this year, and especially the children's water conservation poster contest judging next week.

Congrats to Amy and Parks & Recreation for a successful first Spring Concert! We look forward to the next one on April 5.

I was also privileged to do a test run of the Adult Easter Egg Hunt. The clues are clever and challenging! This is going to be a fantastic inaugural event, and I encourage anyone interested to grab their tickets ASAP! Details are on our website: [Lady Lake to Host First-Ever Adult Easter Scavenger Hunt](#).

Communications also began pushing out [Survivor: Mother-Son Edition!](#) on the website, Facebook and in community calendars.

Susyn analyzed nearly 20 government organizations' meeting livestreams, looking at everything from hosting to the number of cameras to the room layout. This type of research helps us to continue improving and providing the best possible product to our community.

Susyn is also working on the final touches for the April public newsletter.

#### **FINANCE (Pam Winegardner):**

The Town has a few properties that are outside of Lady Lake jurisdiction but have access to our water system. Two of our commissioners this week were in Tallahassee looking out for our Lady Lake residents and wanted to speak about issues that affect Lady Lake.

One of the issues that was addressed in a House Bill concerns how much a government can charge for utility services that are outside of the government's jurisdiction. We currently charge 125% of our regular water/sewer/reuse charges for this benefit, or in other words, we charge 25% more than our Lady Lake customers. The commission has stopped allowing outside property to have this access due to the time and money it takes to build and expand our plants. It appears that the new HB will establish a new cap of 110% which will result in Lady Lake losing about \$40,000 in revenue.

The other issue that is being bantered about is doing away with property tax as a source of revenue for each Florida governmental entity. The Town of Lady Lake's budget for the Fiscal Year

2024-2025 for the general fund shows that (taking out the transfers between departments), property tax, aka Ad Valorem, comprises 37% of our revenue. When you remove grants out of the budget, property tax encompasses 39.3% of our revenue. Due to Florida not having an income tax, there is talk about shifting some of the losses by increasing the sales tax rate. When one buys a vehicle or other high-ticket item, however, that would greatly impact and discourage purchases. Our two commissioners kept their eyes and ears open to this subject and it appears that for the time being, it is just being talked about.

We applaud our commissioners for going to Tallahassee and wanting to have a voice, hearing firsthand issues that affect Lady Lake and keeping us informed. This is your government protecting your town.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT (Thad Carroll):**

This week plan review comments were sent for the Water Oak Sales Center Conversion site plan modification. The modification includes the conversion of three sales center models into residential units which include a carport, golf cart garage, and a porch or lanai.

On Thursday, March 20th, a new minor site plan modification was submitted for the La Reina Restaurant Patio Façade in Spanish Springs. The plans propose changes to the existing outdoor patio, building façade, and adjacent sidewalk at the corner of Alvarez Avenue and Alonzo Avenue.

One hundred and nineteen building permits or revisions were received this week, and thirty-six permits were issued. Two hundred and fourteen building inspections were conducted in the field. This week Code Enforcement opened nine new cases, closed eleven cases, and conducted forty-two inspections. Officers Crain and Williams also continued to prepare their cases for the Special Magistrate Hearing, which was conducted this morning.

Special thanks this week to Connie Kimbel and Lori Crain, who, with myself, were part of the crew of three on Monday due to employee illnesses and scheduled employee leave. While you can't anticipate these things, nonetheless, you must deal with them as they come. Thank you both for your patience and flexibility in getting through the workday. Also, thank you to Becky Schneider who returned on Tuesday to help the team catch up by jumping back into her prior role as a building permitting technician. I feel fortunate to have employees who can wear many hats and do whatever is required to keep the department operational. You are greatly appreciated.

**HUMAN RESOURCES (Tamika DeLee):**

Audrey Richards from the Human Resources department attended the Lake-Sumter SHRM March meeting. The presenter was Marisa Benson, who is a Consolidated Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist and a Local Veteran Employment Specialist from CareerSource Central Florida/Florida Commerce. Her presentation was about integrating the latest workforce statistics, insights on

veterans in the workforce, and current best practices for HR professionals. She has been with CareerSource for ten years as a business services consultant for eight years and has spent the last two years as an advocate for veterans who want to continue their service in the civilian sector. She has a degree in human services and is a Certified Workforce Development Specialist. She is a proud parent of three sons, one who is deceased, and a grandmother to two wonderful girls.

Kristyn Evens from the Human Resources department attended a benefits workshop presented by Public Risk Management of Florida.

Conditional offer of employment letters were declined for the Staff Assistant (part-time) to PD and Systems Analyst. The staff assistant to the PD (part-time) position will be reposted. A conditional offer of employment for Network Administrator was accepted.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (John Pearl):**

No report this week.

**LIBRARY (Aly Herman):**

The youth library was closed this week to serve as an early voting location. We appreciate our patrons and community for their understanding and patience. The youth library will reopen on Tuesday, April 1st.

On Monday, I attended a virtual E-Rate meeting with the county, where I applied for reimbursement of 90% for our internet services.

On Monday, I also attended the Friends of the Library Annual Meeting, where officers were elected. I would like to congratulate the following individuals.

Marsha Brinson- President

Shirley Schley- Vice President

Sue Boulais-Secretary

Barbara McCarthy- Treasurer

The Friends of the Library (FOL) play a vital role in our library, generously volunteering their time and giving back through programs, the bookstore, and financial support. Six new attendees joined the meeting on Monday and expressed great interest in becoming Friends of the Library members.

On Tuesday, I attended an Orange Blossom Lions Club meeting, where I shared updates about the library and the exciting new things we have in store. I also expressed my gratitude for their generous \$500 donation in support of our Children's Summer Reading Program.

On Wednesday, I attended a meeting regarding the credit card machines we are using. Currently, the Town covers the credit card fees for each transaction. However, starting Tuesday, April 15,

patrons using a credit card will be responsible for the transaction fee, which will be a small percentage, not exceeding 3.5%.

We did not have any youth programs this week.

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

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

The Parks and Recreation Department had a great week last week preparing for the Spring Concert Series at Snookie Park. We had around 500 patrons come through the gates during the concert. We had more compliments and thank you for hosting the event than we can count.



Vicky and Sam did an incredible job of revamping the sign at Heritage Park. We have the old signs like this one at Heritage Park, Town Hall, and the Library. I spoke to Aly at the Library and our Town Manager about painting the other two in similar colors. The before and after photos are incredible and this has really changed the sign and was at a minimal cost.

I met with the Dog Park representatives this week and will be doing some work at the facility. We will see tree trimming soon and we will be putting Morganite out to fertilize the park. As always, the Dog Park is a fun group to work with.

I met with the Lady Lake Driving Range on Tuesday and spoke about issues going on at the range. We have people going out into the middle of the range during business hours and hitting balls

back towards the berm. We are still seeing people walking their dogs in dangerous areas of the range during business hours with one gentleman who has a rather large dog that he lets dig substantial holes in the field and leaves feces on the field. We spoke to him this morning and he was not interested in hearing our concerns. Unfortunately, we will have to work with the police next time we see this and ask them to trespass him. A photo of one of the holes is below. There are multiple holes left, and when someone gets hurt by falling into them, the Town will be liable. The hole in the photo is over a foot deep.



The Farmers Market is gearing down for the season with only a couple of weeks left. The Team did a great job this season and Jackie kept it exciting with different ideas for entertainment and other events at the Market. We had just under 500 patrons come through the gate this week.

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

Last Thursday, Sgt. Gehrsitz and I had the honor of visiting with a great group from Recreation Plantation. We had a wonderful turnout, and I was blessed to share all the developments within the police department over the past few years. We discussed some of the latest scams, recent crimes, and had a lively conversation about golf cart rules and accessibility. I always enjoy my visits with this group. They are spirited, passionate, and just a lot of fun to be with—though

sometimes, I think they want my head on a platter! Communication, collaboration, and consideration of others can solve a lot of problems in this world.

This week, FDLE conducted a routine scheduled audit of the department, reviewing our security protocols relating to the building, policies, and information technology. We were found to be in compliance in all categories, which is a significant achievement. This speaks to the attention to detail of Deputy Chief Brough, who oversees all aspects of this undertaking.

A small group of us have also been meeting with our friends at American Legion Post #347 to collaborate on an upcoming project. We'll be sharing the details soon.

Evidence Technician Scott Kolb and I were interviewed by WKMG's Erik Von Ancken for the station's series called "Getting Results." We were able to showcase the great work Scott and others have done in managing our evidence system.

On a related note, our records division has been tasked with a mandatory conversion in crime reporting to the FBI. What was once called UCR (Uniform Crime Reporting) is now referred to as NIBRS, with a Florida version called FIBRS (Florida Incident-Based Reporting). What used to be a dozen or so offense categories is now 56, with a completely new computer format. The transition to this new system has been extremely taxing, to say the least. A special thank you goes to Mary Mullin for overseeing what has been described as a "herculean effort." This is just one more example of the behind-the-scenes work done by our dedicated team.

I also had the privilege of attending the recent promotional ceremony at the Lake County Sheriff's Office. We are honored to share a great relationship with our law enforcement partners, and it was a pleasure to celebrate the success of their team.

I also attended a farewell luncheon for Clermont Chief Chuck Broadway, who will now be serving the citizens of Kissimmee. Chuck has been a great friend and source of support, guidance, and education. We are happy for him but will certainly miss his presence here in Lake County. I am incredibly thankful to Chuck and the many other area chiefs who have been so kind to lend a helping hand to me and our department on a routine basis. The cooperative spirit between all the departments in the area is truly unique and something we all cherish.

Again, it is an honor to serve this fine community. We truly appreciate all of your support. We do not take it for granted, and we will continue to work hard to maintain and earn your trust. Call us if you need us—we'll be there.

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

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

Reminder to any Town Commissioner who wishes to be a judge in the Water Conservation Poster Contest for the Villages Elementary School to please RSVP to the email sent out by Peggy or call our office here at Public Works. The judging will take place on Monday, March 31st at 10:00 AM in the Town Commission Chambers. It is always a fun time, and it is always impressive to see the talented student submissions.

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. FDOT has added additional work to the project, and closeout has been pushed back at least a few months.

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

Coordinated repair of fire sprinkler dry heads in the ceiling at Public Works and received a passing report from the Fire Inspector.

Continued monitoring retention pond water levels and storm drains throughout the Town. Responded to residents' stormwater concerns.

Coordinated with the buyer of the Boy Scout Hut, they are adding a 4<sup>th</sup> axle to haul it off this Friday.

**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.

Trimmed trees at Second Street and CR 466.

Assisted with painting the interior of the Community Building.

Weeded mulch beds at Public Works.

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

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities. Repaired chair for the Finance Department. Converted parking lot lights at the PD to LED. Refitted a door in PD. Made tree plates from a log at Public Works.

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

Assisted with painting the interior of the Community Building.

**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.

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):**

Coordinate and complete various work orders, working on new accounts, meter reading, 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 – Dual Certified Plant Operator)**

Phase Two of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Modifications Project is approaching final closeout. Both plants are in service and are doing well. Currently, installing a new PH probe is required by the new FDEP operational permit. Continued work on punch list items and final inspections.

Phase Two of the Well #4 and Well #5 Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project is also approaching final closeout. Well #4, Well #5, the new high service pump, and the new ground storage tank are in service and continue to work great. Operational and system adjustments continue to be performed by the operators to tweak the system.