

WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

May 1, 2025

DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORT (William Lawrence):

Shoutouts & Acknowledgments

This week marks Pam Winegardner's final days as Finance Director, as she will be retiring on May 1st. We will be celebrating Pam's 19 years of dedicated service to the Town of Lady Lake on Thursday afternoon at 1:00 p.m.

Pam has been instrumental in maintaining the Town's strong financial health. Under her leadership, we've preserved healthy reserves and have remained debt-free. Pam also managed the FEMA storm reimbursement program—a task that requires diligence and resilience. Her guidance has helped steer many projects by identifying viable funding sources and ensuring compliance with financial regulations.

Congratulations, Pam, on a well-earned retirement. We wish you all the best in this exciting next chapter of your life!

Department Manager's Meeting Recap

The Department Manager's Meeting was held Tuesday morning in the Commission Chambers.

Topics included:

- Review of the upcoming Commission Meeting Agenda for May 5th at 6:00 p.m.
- FY 25/26 Budget Preparations
- Legislative updates from Tallahassee, particularly regarding property tax proposals
- Our ongoing public education campaign on how property tax revenues are allocated

FY 25/26 Budget Calendar & Deadlines

- May 1: Department budget submissions due to Finance (includes operating expenditures, personnel changes, and overtime)
- May 15: Capital asset requests due
- June 3: Town Manager reviews submitted budgets
- June 5: Budget meetings between Town Manager, Finance, and Department Heads

- June 30: Lake County Property Appraiser provides Certification of Taxable Value
- July 9: Budget workbooks distributed to Commission (two weeks prior to budget workshop)
- July 24: TRIM sign-off test for non-ad valorem taxes
- July 31: Tentative Budget Workshop
- September 3: Tentative Budget and Millage Rate Hearing
- September 15: Final Budget and Millage Rate Hearing

CLERK'S OFFICE (Nancy Wilson):

Today is a sad day for the town but a happy day for Pam. I tried to capture my feelings on paper but could not find words any more apt than John Pearl's: I will miss her "comforting sense of stability." She has done the town proud, and I will miss her terribly. Don't forget us, Pam; we sure won't forget you!

COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):

I was inspired after meeting with area communicators last week, where we discussed various social media algorithms. It gave me some new ideas, which our community will see on our social media starting week. It also confirmed that we are following many of the best practices recommended by our peers, and as outlined in County Communications Director Levar Cooper's presentation, noted below:

"Facebook: What Works: Live videos and Reels (short videos) get extra love – Facebook Reels outperform static content. Content that sparks conversation (e.g., community questions, feel-good stories) extends reach." (Our views over the last 28 days is 71,024. Watch our page for a funny, and hopefully engaging reel on Thursday with some of your favorite people.)

"YouTube: What Works: Well-produced explainer videos, how-tos, or human-interest stories from your agency. Keep intros snappy (first 5-10 seconds matter for retention). Use keywords in titles, descriptions, and tags for search visibility. *Example:* A city planning department might upload a 'How We Built This New Park' video – with a compelling thumbnail and title – to engage citizens and be found via search by those curious about park projects." (Susyn has been instrumental in creating engaging PSAs and has created 51 shorts this year.)

If you have any fun and creative ideas to help promote your department, please let us know.

This week, we made several requested updates to the website, including on the Police and Growth Management pages. The May issue of Lady Lake Link will be released on May 1 and for the first time, will also be posted on the website as it is ADA compliant. We continue to work on several

ongoing projects. We attended the Department Managers' Meeting, worked on the budget, met with the Police Chief, and will attend Pam's retirement party. Again, Pam, thank you for your years of dedication, service, professionalism and stewardship. You will be missed.

This Saturday, Communications will gather content during Survivor: Mother/Son edition at Snooky Park.

Our shoutout goes to Julia. Over the past few weeks, she has organized and/or supported several employee and volunteer-focused events, and her efforts do not go unnoticed.

FINANCE (Joella LeDonne, Assistant Finance Director)

This is my last weekly report from finance. It has been a good 19 years, and I have been fortunate to work for the town. I have experienced great teamwork within the finance and customer service billing team but also with each department. We work hard for our residents, joked and fought like siblings and always at the end have produced a lot of great ideas, wonderful projects and continue to strive for excellence. Our town manager pushed us to new outside-of-the-box thinking and all staff excelled.

I gladly hand the baton in this race to the next finance director and hope they enjoy a long tenure as I did. There are a lot of projects and activities in the planning and I as a Lady Lake resident look forward to seeing these come to fruition. If the public looks at the number of years staff have been with the town, they will see long years of employment, we are blessed to be working for this town.

A big thank you to Dawn, who is the lead in the new software process as she pushes our finance team to be ahead of schedule and to create data that will take us from our old software to our new. Andy has worked tirelessly to figure out the programming to pull our current data out, so Dawn has numbers to work with and he solves all our computer glitches with a wave of his hand. I will never forget Andy's famous words to solve most glitches, "did you reboot".

Another big thank you to Debbie, who has been here 30 years and is a history book of Lady Lake finance, to Michelle Sloan aka stalker who pays our bills but leaves no question, no stone unturned in verifying these expenses.

An attaboy to Joella who keeps the contractors and staff on point by watching every dime spent on the library construction and allows no deviation from agreements.

Our customer service billing team, Mena, Rhonda and Latricey, do so much with a lot of interruptions, software glitches, a huge influx of new housing and meters and yet keeps showing up every day with a smile on their faces and greeting customers by name.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT (Thad Carroll):

This week, staff received a Minor Modification application for The La Salle Building façade remodel. This modification is also a part of the overall streetscape project for the Square at Spanish Springs.

Plan review comments were sent for the Chase Bank site plan application. The project is located within the proposed Lady Lake Crossings Phase 2 expansion, located south of Fennell Boulevard and west of Highway 27/441. The site plan proposes a 3,490 square-foot bank with a drive-up window.

The site plan application for the Lady Lake Crossings Phase 2 site grading and infrastructure improvements also received review comments this week. The development proposes an expansion of the existing in-line stores and five additional outparcels.

Review comments were sent for the Boulevard Oaks Final Plat application. Boulevard Oaks is located on County Road 25/Teague Trail just south of the Marion County line. This subdivision was approved in June of 2024 for 160 homes. Site work is currently underway.

The building department received revised plans to add additional restrooms at the Church of Christ, located at 1421 Oak Street. Also received were revised building plans for the new 7,100 square-foot single-story medical office building, located at 151 LaGrande Boulevard. Plan revisions were also submitted for the 46,222 square-foot Walmart Neighborhood Market located at 1220 Highway 466 just east of Cherry Lake Road.

One hundred and sixty-five building permits or revisions were received this week, and forty-seven permits were issued. One hundred and sixty inspections were conducted in the field. This week code enforcement opened five new cases, closed thirteen cases, and conducted thirty-seven inspections. Nineteen signs were removed from the Town's right-of-way.

Farewell and best wishes to Pam Winegardner, Finance Director, as she closes her career this week with nineteen years of service in the Town of Lady Lake. Thank you, Pam, for your hard work and dedication. Enjoy the leisure of retirement and the years ahead; you've certainly earned it.

HUMAN RESOURCES (Tamika DeLee):

No report this week.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (John Pearl):

Congratulations to Pam on her retirement. She has been a great coworker and collaborator over the years and provided a comforting sense of stability. She will be missed.

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

Shout out to the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Implementation Team, especially Dawn and Andy. They have been hard at work leaning into the data migration effort and are making good progress.

Patrick continued GIS field collection this week of the Town's water infrastructure.

The FiberWAN construction project continues. Most of the activity over the next few weeks will be noticed on the 27/441 corridor.

Howard is continuing preparations for the security-related lunch-and-learn series beginning later this month. Hourly staff, please check with your Department Heads for approval to attend prior to RSVP'ing.

John will be attending the Central Florida Digital Government Summit conference in Orlando today. Topics include artificial intelligence, modernization, workforce, and security.

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

LIBRARY (Aly Herman):

This week has definitely been one for the books! On Monday morning, I attended the monthly Friends of the Library meeting. I requested \$1,000 to support promotional items for our upcoming youth library grand opening, and they were more than happy to contribute.

A patron recently left their dog in the car while visiting the library. Thankfully, we were able to locate the owner quickly and offer water to the dog. As a reminder, this time of year brings extreme heat, and temperatures inside a parked car can rise rapidly—even with the windows up. Leaving a dog in a hot car is extremely dangerous and can be fatal. Please keep your pets safe and never leave them unattended in a vehicle.

This morning, I'm attending our monthly county directors' meeting. While we usually meet in person, this month's meeting is being held virtually.

Shout out to Lisa Woolf! She's been creating our adult take-and-go crafts, and the quality of her work is absolutely fantastic. Patrons truly love what she puts together.

Lastly, Bill has been encouraging the department heads for the past two years to improve communication with one another. While we've made progress, it takes continued effort and work not to slip into old habits. Consistent communication is key to becoming stronger leaders and providing excellent service to our community.

Nicole and Kourtney got approval on Monday from our Friends of the Library to start ordering supplies and reward incentives for the 2025 summer reading program. The ladies have been hard at work making sure they get the best items for the kids.

Here are the youth program stats for this week:

- Scavenger Hunt:12
- Little Blessing: 24
- Craft Corner: 30
- Tiny Tots: 22
- Family Crafting:7
- Storytime: 53
- Reading with Scarlett: 4
- VELL:800
- New Worlds Reading:15

www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225

PARKS AND RECREATION (Mike Burske):

The Parks and Recreation Department had a maintenance week this week. We prepared the fields for play and mowed where necessary. We are in dire need of rain to keep the dust down and to let the grass green up.

Amy has been working with all of those who are involved in the Survivor Event this weekend. We will have roughly the same number of participants this year as we had last year. As with last year it was a fun event. Scott and Thomas are out setting up the games as I write this, and Brad and Thomas were on task on Wednesday as they set the stage back up after the Easter Egg Hunt.

Sam, Vicky and Nick have been working on taking down the shrubs on the south end of the soccer fields. The shrubs were planted 21 years ago and due to age and being under the trees that I planted about 12 years ago, their health was beginning to decline. The trees are a much better plant life to have in the park than the shrubs as they offer shade whereas the shrubs only acted as a barrier to the fence. We have had many compliments on the clean look of the park now, but did have one concern voiced that we may be disturbing the nesting of birds in the shrubs. No active or abandoned nests were found in the shrubs.

The Parks and Recreation Director has been working with next year's budget for the department. We will have the resurfacing of the courts at the Guava Street Athletic Complex as our biggest

investment next year. I will be putting \$350k in my budget for the repaving/resurfacing of the courts. I propose to eliminate tennis and have a total of six pickleball courts. Our tennis court is sparsely used and when it is, pickleball being played on it.

I do want to end this report by wishing Pam, our Finance Director a great and well-earned retirement. You have been a great support and friend over the years, and you will be missed. You managed to perform one of the most stressful jobs in Lady Lake all while keeping a calm and inviting demeanor about you. Seeing someone who has been with the Town almost as long as I leave is going to be tough but know that you have left a great legacy for the Town. Parks and Recreation wishes you a great new chapter in your life!

POLICE DEPARTMENT (Chief Steve Hunt):

After a several-year hiatus, our 2025 *Shred It and Forget It* event made a triumphant return—and what a comeback it was! The event saw an incredible turnout, serving nearly a thousand participants and successfully processing hundreds of cars through a carefully coordinated traffic flow.

This year's success was made possible through a fantastic new partnership with the American Legion Post 347. When approached by the ALP #347 Auxiliary about a potential collaboration, they enthusiastically agreed and brought in additional support from the American Legion Riders and Sons of the American Legion. Together, these organizations not only helped organize and volunteer but also financed and contracted with the shredding company. The American Legion generously offered their grounds and rallied volunteers to assist throughout the day.

We also owe special thanks to our own Public Works experts, Kon and Travis, whose enthusiasm and hard work were instrumental in keeping the event running smoothly.

Members of our police team worked together to plan and execute a successful operation. The event provided valuable insights into what worked best and areas where we can improve. Thanks to the overwhelming community support and the strength of our new partnership, we're excited about the possibility of making *Shred It and Forget It* an annual tradition once again.

The police department was able to support our neighbors in Leesburg by sending officers to the Bikefest event on Friday and Saturday. I was able to participate as well on Saturday evening to see firsthand the planning required to coordinate the security for such a large-scale event. Many of the area police departments also sent officers to assist Leesburg PD. I received numerous compliments of thanks and comments of the professionalism of our officers.

The weekend was steady, a couple of DUI arrests, a few Baker Acts, and a meth arrest after a K-9 hit were a few of the highlights.

Detectives recovered one of the two golf carts stolen last week. Charges are pending on those involved. Marion and Sumpter County Sheriff's departments assisted on the case.

We wanted to inform you that the police department has contracted with a private vendor to manage requests for private off-duty police services. This vendor is currently used by LCSO and several neighboring departments, and the transition has already improved our efficiency, transparency, and accuracy in handling these requests. Recently, we had increased our hourly rate and added a \$20 administrative fee per event. However, with the new vendor now managing scheduling, invoicing, and recordkeeping, we have removed the \$20 administrative fee. Instead, a small service fee is applied directly to the requesting party based on the method of payment:

6% if paid using ACH

7% if paid by credit card

8% if paid by check

These service fees are paid directly to the vendor for their services.

(Example, a 3-hour detail at \$60 per hour=\$180 paid using ACH would incur at service fee of \$10.80 for a total bill of \$190.80. The vendor keeps \$10.80 and \$180 is paid to the town).

The Administrative team was busy working on next year's budget as well as meeting with a few technology vendors to explore ways we can be more efficient and proactive in all we do at the police department. There never seems to be enough time in the day but I can honestly say we are all trying to bring the highest and most professional level of service to our extremely deserving community!

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

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

We would like to wish our Finance Director, Pam Winegardener, all the best in her retirement after working for the Town for the last two decades. It's been a wild bumpy ride at times, but you stood fast and did a great job ensuring that the Town's taxpayers' money was protected and went to good use. Please enjoy your well-earned retirement. Thank you for all the years of dedicated service and know that you will be missed!

We have 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>

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):

Performed driveway apron inspections.

Worked on upcoming budget requests, gathering quotes and coordinating with other departments.

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 on Clay Ave, Oak Street, and in the Skyline Hills area.

Assisted with setting up Pam's retirement event.

Completed repair of sidewalk on Fennell Blvd.

Assisted with the PD at the shredding event.

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

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities.

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

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):

Met with the Town Engineer, Jason Shepler with Mittauer and Associates, on Water, Wastewater, and Reuse Master Planning progress updates. Jason has enough information ready to present the findings to the Town Commission regarding wastewater treatment capacities and potential future needs. A workshop meeting with the Commission will be scheduled in May for discussion and direction for future planning.

Working on upcoming budget requests.

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.

Working on the annual CCR, (Consumer Confidence Report) and Revised Lead and Copper Sampling Plan as required by the regulatory agencies for the Potable Water System.

Conducted interviews for open positions.

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.

Performed service line repairs at the American Legion.

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.

Rebuilt water meter banks. See picture below.



Pulled well pump and rebuilt Well #1. See picture below.



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

Water, Wastewater, and Reuse Systems Master Planning Project in process by the Town Engineer. Final results will be presented to the Town Commission for consideration of approval this Fiscal Year. These master plans outline current and projected system needs and potential projects, for continued operations levels of service and to keep up with known and potential future demands due to growth.

Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) renewal project with St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), is nearing the submittal phase to the regulatory agency for review. Projected completion of renewal is by the end of this year or early 2026. The Town received the last permit in 2006, a 20-year permit which allocates the maximum amount of ground water that may be used to supply the potable water system. Known and potential future growth contribute to the requested and granted water allocations.