

For Your Information
Weekly
FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF
June 10, 2016

Dates to Remember

June 13, 2016 – Library Advisory Board Meeting
June 16, 2016 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting
June 16, 2016 – Clewiston City Commission Workshop and Budget Workshop
June 20, 2016 – Clewiston City Commission Meeting
June 27, 2016 – Planning & Zoning Board Meeting

Staff Reports

Community Development Director Travis Reese reports:

- Director Reese is attending the 2016 Building Official's Annual Conference in Clearwater this week.
- With the rainy season upon us, we are seeing an increase in roof permit applications.
- There will be a Planning & Zoning meeting on 6/27 to review various applications and topics.

* * W A R N I N G! * *

If you do not intend to do work yourself and have been asked by someone without a contractor's license to pull the permit, you are at risk of financial harm.

Section 489.103 (7), Florida Statutes requires that when property owners act as their own contractor, they must supervise the work being performed. Any person working on your property who is not licensed must be employed by you, which means that you **MUST** deduct F.I.C.A. and withholding tax and provide workers' compensation for that employee.

Without workers' compensation insurance, you could be held liable for injuries incurred on your property. Typically, your homeowners' insurance policy will not honor your claim if the work being performed required a licensed contractor. You could end up responsible for thousands of dollars of medical bills.

NOT ONLY IS IT DANGEROUS, IT'S AGAINST THE LAW!

Section 455.277 (1)(j), Florida Statutes prohibits any person from aiding, assisting, procuring, employing or advising any unlicensed person or entity. Individuals who aid unlicensed persons may face fines of up to \$5,000.

When in doubt, please call your local building department **BEFORE** you apply for a permit or hire anyone to do work for you.

Community Improvement Officer Debbie McNeil reports:

- I have responded to various citizens' complaints including, but not all inclusive, public nuisance buildings, lawn maintenance including hedge height, signage, business tax receipt, commercial maintenance, unlicensed contracting and trash management.
- Operation Show Your Numbers continues throughout the City until compliance of commercial and residential structures is achieved. Thank you to Ricardo Martinez and the utilities crew who continue to be very helpful with this operation thus far.
- Our Magistrate Hearing was held on June 8, 2016 at 10:00 AM in the City Commission Chambers. The Magistrate heard 15 new cases, 2 fine assessments and 2 lien reductions.
- 25 new code cases were generated, 15 code cases resolved, 1 referred out and 7 rental inspections completed.

Hurricane Season June 1 thru November 30

Overall Message: #ItOnlyTakesOne.

It only takes one hurricane to change your life and your community. Hurricanes are one of nature's most powerful and destructive events that the nation faces; they've caused eight of the ten costliest disasters in U.S. history.

2016 NATURAL DISASTER GUIDE

HIRING UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS CAN BE DISASTROUS



Natural disasters, such as hurricanes, tornadoes and floods, have a great impact on Florida's businesses. Without creating a business disaster plan and taking the necessary precautions, businesses may be closed for days, weeks or even months after the storm has passed, threatening jobs and Florida's economy. For more information on how to prepare for natural disasters, visit <http://www.floridadisaster.org/DEMBusiness.asp>.

In the event of a natural disaster, remember that all repair work performed on your home or business should be completed by a licensed professional. Contractors travel from out of state to a disaster area and take advantage of the large amount of repair work to be done. Remember that even if they are licensed in another state to perform construction services, they must also obtain a state license from DBPR to perform those services on your home or business.

Unlicensed activity occurs when a person who is not licensed by the state performs or offers to perform a job or service that requires licensure in one of the professions regulated by the [Division of Regulation](#), [Division of Real Estate](#) and [Division of Certified Public](#)

Accounting. During a declared State of Emergency, the penalty for unlicensed construction activity becomes a third-degree felony.

Follow these steps to prevent becoming the victim of an unlicensed activity scam after a natural disaster:

1. Know what services require a state license.

Below are some examples of common storm-related services that may or may not require a state license from DBPR. These lists are not intended to be comprehensive, and any additional or detailed questions should be directed to the Department by calling 850.487.1395. Consumers should check with their local building departments to determine if there are additional permitting and/or licensing requirements for their area. For additional licensure requirements related to construction, click [here](#).

Services Requiring a License	Services Not Requiring a License
Roof Repairs	Trimming or Removing a Fallen Tree
New or Replacement Roof	Removing Debris
Installing New Windows	Placing a Tarp on a Roof
Plumbing Repairs	
Electrical Repairs or Rewiring	

2. Verify licenses before you hire or sign a contract.

Protect yourselves from unlicensed activity. Always **verify the** license online or call the Customer Contact Center at 850.487.1395. DBPR also has a free smartphone app that enables consumers to search for state licenses by name or license number. Download the app on [iTunes](#) or the [Google Play app store](#).

3. Use your best judgment when signing a contract and making payments.

Do not pay cash in full before the work is completed and be cautious of writing checks made payable to individuals, especially when dealing with a company. Get everything in writing, including a detailed description of the work to be completed, a completion date and the total cost. Be wary of individuals who only produce an "occupational license," or corporate filing. An "occupational license" only means that the person has paid a tax receipt to the local municipality.

4. Report unlicensed activity.

During a disaster DBPR may dispatch teams to conduct door-to-door sweeps in conjunction with law enforcement, building departments and other state agencies. Report unlicensed activity by calling the Department's Unlicensed Activity Program at 1.866.532.1440 or emailing ULA@myfloridalicense.com.

All Clewiston Code of Ordinances may be publicly accessed on Municode at the following link: https://www2.municode.com/library/fl/clewiston/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=14849

If you have any questions you may contact the Community Improvement Division at 141 Central Avenue, Clewiston Utilities Building. The public is encouraged to report code violations by contacting us at the above address or 983-1454.

Join us in our dedication to fight the blight in America's Sweetest Town.

Library Director Barrett reports:

- The Montura mini branch is doing very well. Already many Montura residents have been making use of the opportunity to borrow books and movies from that facility. The Summer Camp in the clubhouse is especially conducive to this as the children flock to the library after the camp is dismissed. Many other concerned residents have also been offering assistance in helping the children. A computer class has been started there by the library and is offered through the assistance of a Montura resident. Because of the limited number of computers, we were only able to register 6 students but we hope to offer this another time so we can accommodate others.
- Computer classes began in the Clewiston Library on Monday June 6, at 5:30 PM. All sixteen seats were registered. On the evening of the first class, many persons who turned up hoping we would have dropouts, left disappointed at not being able to get in. In fact, library staff, who had registered for the program, had to give up a seat so a customer could get in. If you are a City employee interested in really knowing and utilizing Microsoft Word on the job and personally, call the library and register for a daytime session with your supervisor's approval.
- The Library Summer School Program, which will be from Monday, June 13, 2016 to June 30th, 2016, for children in Grades 2-5, is already full to capacity with a waiting list. The program's back to school feature will be sponsored by US Sugar Corporation, and various sessions will be sponsored by other community agencies.
- **For information regarding any of our programs, please call the library at (863) 983-1493 and remember to visit www.hendrylibraries.org. Your library truly has a lot to offer.**

Golf Course Director Robbie Rush Reports:

- Get all Clewiston Golf Course news. Visit our website at www.clewiston-fl.gov and sign up under Constant Contact. You will automatically be put on the golf course e-mail.
- Get your grips re-done. Contact the golf shop at 863-983-1448.
- Golf lessons are available. Contact Robbie Rush at 863-983-1448.
- Clewiston Golf Course Summer Memberships are available now. June 1, 2016 to September 30, 2016 (\$180.00) which includes tax.
- Member Rate for unlimited holes the same day is \$19.00 plus tax.
- Non-Member Rate for unlimited holes the same day is \$28.00 plus tax.
- **SALE** - All pro shop merchandise is 20% off except golf balls and gloves.
- Clewiston Golf Course Summer First Tee Junior Golf Camps are June 13-17, 2016 and July 11-15, 2016. For more information, contact the golf pro shop at 863-983-1448.
- Clewiston Elks Lodge Golf Tournament is scheduled for June 11, 2016. Call the golf shop at 863-983-1448 to sign up. The Golf Course will be closed until 2:00 pm for regular play.
- The process has begun to renovate all 18 greens here at the golf course. We will be on the greens until July 5, 2016 and then on temporary greens until Labor Day weekend.
- **Responsibilities we have as golfers when we play golf:** 1) Keeping our golf carts off green and tee slopes; and 2) Letting faster players through.

- **Golf Tip of the Week:** When putting, keep your head down throughout your putting stroke and listen for the golf ball to go in the hole. This is a great way to keep your head still when putting.

Recreation Director Lance Ramer Reports:

- If you are interested in participating in an adult co-ed dodgeball league, summer co-ed softball league, or Summer K-5th AAU Track and Field, please contact Andre at 983-1492.
- Please visit www.clewistonrecreation.com to check us out and get information regarding all your recreational needs.

Public Works Director Sean Scheffler reports:

- Mosquito Control: Trap counts in quadrants of town are as follows:
NE trap: 150 NW trap: 150 Harlem: 200
We are continuing to run our program with ULV applications on Tuesday and Friday nights. Residents are reminded to call the Public Works Office at 983-1471 with comments or complaints.
- Street Maintenance: (1) The gate on San Luiz south of the Railroad track got a nice coat of yellow paint. (2) Staff ran pot holes and made a driveway repair last week. (3) The mulch around the palms on Bond Street was replaced. (4) Sign work continues.
- Building Maintenance: (1) The water heater in the John Boy Auditorium building was replaced. (2) A requisition for the repairs of the windows on the west wall of the Utility Building has been approved. The contractor has been notified and work should begin soon. (3) The permit for the fence at the Utility Building was issued and work on the “shadow box” fence has begun.
- Tree trimming: We have dodged the Tropical Storm making waves in the Gulf. Local residents are encouraged to protect their property from possible storms. **Don’t forget!** If you plan to trim any trees, call the Public Works Department at 983-1471 and set an appointment to have the trees evaluated. If approved, the City will haul the debris at no charge. If you are not “pre-approved”, you could be charged for a “Special Pick Up Service”.
- Fourth of July: All arrangements for this year’s fireworks show have been completed and the show is secured. Please check the Chamber of Commerce website for information about a “Family Fun Day” of games and food.
- Solid Waste Collection: Residents are reminded to place their cart at the edge of the pavement with the wheels away from the street the night before service. There is no set time service at your home will be provided. We have had calls requesting service after the truck has passed. NOTE: Repeat offenders will be assessed a special pick fee of \$25. This fee will be charged to your Utility bill.

Police Chief Gutshall reports:

- Officers responded to a report of someone driving recklessly through the 10 acre field near East Del Rio. A juvenile was found operating the vehicle and was detained. He and the vehicle were eventually turned over to his parents.
- An attempt to defraud was reported at Seacoast Bank. The suspect has been identified and charges are pending.

- Citizens in the area of WC Owen and El Paso reported a vicious dog which was harassing and terrorizing people in the area. Officers arrived and were able to capture the animal. The large dog was later turned over to Animal Control.
- A home on West Alverde was broken into sometime late Monday - early Tuesday. Several TV's and some jewelry were reported stolen. The scene was processed for prints and evidence, but there was no sign of forced entry.
- Patrol was called to East Highway 27 at the San Gabriel Intersection. A victim at the scene reported he had been assaulted by Torrence Cobbins. The suspect was later arrested and the victim was transported to HRMC for treatment.
- Following is a brief synopsis of the week's activity:
 - 993** Commercial / Residential Security Checks
 - 606** Complaints Investigated
 - 18** Arrests Made
 - 64** Traffic Citations Issued
 - 69** Merchant Escorts Provided
 - 22** Alarms Responded To
 - 3** Traffic Accidents Investigated

Utilities Director Williams reports:

- **Hurricane Season Tip:** Generator safety: DON'T run a generator in the house or enclosed garage. DON'T plug the generator directly into your home's main electrical system which can send an electrical charge back into the power grid endangering utility workers. Run generators in a well ventilated area and plug individual appliances directly into the generator.
- Water Sewer Activities
 - Made water tap and ran the service for the new water line on East Royal Palm.
 - Replaced pumps in lift stations at Bass Capital, Anglers Marina and Cricket Cellular.
 - Repaired water line on North Berner Road.
- Electric Activities
 - Ran new electric service at 314 N Francisco that was damaged by falling tree.
 - Testing equipment and made repairs at Clewiston Substation.
 - Installed arrestors at Golf Course.
 - Made street light repairs and changed out a transformer.
 - Trimmed trees at the Golf Course and Harlem.
- Please remember to register with CodeRed (Reverse 911). This system allows us to contact you in case of an emergency or with other informational announcements. You may register by clicking on the CodeRed link at the bottom of the City's website page www.clewiston-fl.gov. You may update your information at any time through the same link.
- If you are considering replacing your air conditioner or insulation, remember the City offers a rebate program for those items. Most local contractors participate in the program and can give you information. You can also visit our website at www.clewiston-fl.gov or call our office.
- DON'T FORGET TO SIGN UP FOR YOUR METER BASED SURGE PROTECTION! Visit our office today.

- **ONLINE BILL PAY IS AVAILABLE** on our web site at www.clewiston-fl.gov or www.municipalonlinepayments.com/clewistonfl.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF UTILITY PAYMENT SCAMS: Scam artists are calling Utility customers posing as employees of Clewiston Utilities and threatening disconnection of services if payment is not made immediately. Please be aware:

- 1) **Clewiston Utilities will NEVER request you to purchase money cards or gift cards to pay your account over the phone.**
- 2) **Clewiston Utilities will NEVER contact our customers on the weekend and threaten disconnection of services.**
- 3) **Clewiston Utilities will NEVER speak to our customers in a threatening tone.**

If you feel you have been a victim of this scam, please contact Clewiston Utilities to verify the call or the Clewiston Police Department and file a report.