

## *For Your Information*

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF

November 15, 2019

### **Dates to Remember**

November 18, 2019 – City Commission Meeting

November 21, 2019 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting

November 28-29, 2019 – Thanksgiving Day Holiday – City Offices Closed

### **Office of the City Manager:**

Citizens, Business Owners & Other Interested Parties:

In previous FYI City Manager updates to the community, I have covered topics such as: evolving economic development strategies; community revitalization efforts including code enforcement tools and analysis efforts underway; efficiency initiatives aimed at streamlining local government services and improving customer interactions; as well as, the city's fiscal condition and financial planning efforts. Although considerable work remains to be done in each of these areas, I am very pleased with the pace of progress achieved thus far in the last four months. In reflecting on my brief tenure in Clewiston recently, I had the opportunity to speak to one of our community's pillar civic organizations which is the Clewiston Lions Club.

I was invited to speak to the organization with a free hand on my topic, so I focused the majority of my remarks on what I perceive as some of the priority matters that need attention based upon my observations thus far. I commented about the community's best asset in my opinion being its quality people and how the community by my assessment is less transitional in terms of the portion of the citizenry that is from somewhere else as compared to much of the state of Florida and areas in other states where I have worked.

Local ties run deep and that is I believe an asset or strength and encouraging to me personally and professionally. Of course, a challenge that often arises is the reluctance to change or the ability to put some of the challenges faced in perspective because of the lack of experiences in other comparable areas of the state or region. I also sense that past adversities have promoted an often less optimistic view of the state of affairs locally and the tendency to be overly pessimistic about the potential for positive outcomes in the future. I addressed these observations by saying that it is incumbent on the leadership of the City to establish clear municipal goals and to plan diligently going forward to improve our chances of being successful while striving to make this community a better place during our opportunity as public servants with the privilege of being in leadership roles.

Some of the specific topics and initiatives I shared with the group to this end were: a) **intergovernmental cooperation** – by most accounts, I perceive that we are making some historic progress in this regard. A case in point being the recent trip to the Legislature during

which representatives from Clewiston, LaBelle, Hendry and Glades Counties joined forces to lobby legislative and state administration leadership as one unified group for priorities, projects and funding assistance on several topics of mutual interest and benefit. Based upon the reaction of several legislators this effort was unprecedented in modern times and very well received; b) **economic development** – on this topic, I shared with those present the strategies that I reviewed in detail in my last FYI update on November 1<sup>st</sup>; and, c) **community revitalization** – I mentioned some of the previously developed plans and an identified strategy I am in the process of refining which I will now dub as P.I.E. This is my first Clewiston acronym creation which stands for “Plan, Incentivize and Enforce”. This initiative is aimed at systematically upgrading aspects of the community that are in need of revitalization going forward.

I completed my presentation with my personal **OPTIMISTIC** view on Clewiston and the state of affairs in our community. I am convinced it is crucial to our crusade for achieving established goals that, to the maximum extent practical, we collectively maintain a FOCUS on priorities and goals. I closed with my long held belief that also critical to achieving success is the importance of **ATTITUDE**. To emphasize this belief, I shared the following quotation I have kept with me for most of my career which is attributed to Mr. Charles Swindoll:

### **ATTITUDE**

*“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes.”*

Thanks for your continued support and interest in the City of Clewiston,

Randy Martin

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Community Development Director Travis Reese reports:**

- Issued Certificate of Occupancy for 2, 3 bed/2 bath homes in Orchard Park. They average 1850 sq ft.
- Temporary Certificate of Occupancy has been issued for 13 units at 710 S. W.C. Owen Avenue.
- Clewiston Fire Rescue hosted students from Eastside, Central, and Westside Elementary as they toured the fire house and had a talk on the importance of fire safety.

#### **Library Director Natasha Hayes reports:**

- Stop in and celebrate Native American Heritage Month throughout the month of November. We have two very special programs coming up this month. On Monday,

November 25<sup>th</sup>, Native American Artist Elgin Jumper will take us on a one of a kind event titled, *Elgin Jumper's Storytelling Circle*. This program will begin at 6 p.m. and consist of his personal accounts of the Seminole Indians, readings of his own stories and poetry, and musical entertainment via a violin bow.

- On November 21<sup>st</sup>, the library will be showing the Native American movie *Smoke Signals*. Come out and enjoy this free event while immersing yourself in the Native American culture while enjoying this movie and free popcorn.
- Be sure to stop in and marvel at the beautiful Native American displays within the library. In the display case you will find handmade, authentic Seminole beadwork, patchwork, sweetgrass baskets, and more. There are also various pieces of clothing on display that were made right here in our local area. Pieces include hand sewn jackets, skirts, and childrens items provided by the Brighton Seminole Reservation. Mr. Jumper has also provided one of his own paintings for display this month which can be found near the Seminole attire. I would like to extend a huge thank you to Ms. Debbie Johns and her family for providing our display items and to Mr. Jumper for providing the largely anticipated program on the 25<sup>th</sup>. For additional details, please call the library. We look forward to seeing the public on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> as we celebrate Native American Heritage Month.



- Within the last two weeks, the library was accessed for normal operating business as well as serving the community as a meeting place with a total of 33 individual meetings being held.
- Outreach Storytime was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at Discovery and Covenant Daycare/Preschools to 35 children.
- The LEGO Club was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> with a total of 24 children and 6 adults.
- Library staff provided ready reference assistance directly to 99 patrons along with daily routine services which include circulation of materials, computer assistance, and programming.
- If you have not done so already, please join our Facebook page (Clewiston Public Library) in order to remain up to date on the library's events and programs.
- After school homework help continues to be a success. Ms. Bautista provided homework assistance to 9 students on Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. As all spots are currently filled, we encourage parents to still register their child and place them on the waiting list as demands and attendance will fluctuate. This will help us quickly refill vacant student positions and allow us to serve as many students as possible in the community.

- After school coloring club was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> with a total of 3 children, 2 teens, and 2 adults participating in this event.
- On November 7<sup>th</sup>, Family Initiative Incorporated held two meetings in the library as they hosted Hendry/Glades Autism Spectrum Focus Groups. Both sessions were highly attended with a total of 31 participants.
- The Clewiston Library Advisory Board met on November 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 for their bi-monthly meeting.
- On November 8<sup>th</sup>, a census informational session was held.
- AARP Smart Driver Course was offered at the library on the 8<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.
- Teen Sewing Club was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> with 13 participants.
- Crafternoon was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> with 8 children and 5 adults participating in this activity.
- Need a place to hold a meeting? What about a computer lab to host your organization's/company's training? The Clewiston Library does have a classroom and computer lab available with a total of 16 computers for use. For more information or to secure the room, please stop in or call the library at any time.
- Remember you can get your e-books free at [www.hendrylibraries.org](http://www.hendrylibraries.org).
- For information regarding any of our programs, please call the library at (863) 983-1493.
- Please stop by the library to pick up a calendar with a list of events so you can join in on the fun.

Upcoming Events: Homework Help-18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> from 4-6 p.m.; Medicare Presentation-18<sup>th</sup> from 5-7 p.m.; Outreach Storytime-19<sup>th</sup>; Play-Doh Play Date-19<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-4:30; Outreach Storytime-20<sup>th</sup>; Board Game Bonanza-20<sup>th</sup> from 3:30-4:30; Lego Club-21<sup>st</sup> from 3:30-4:30; Native American Movie Night-21<sup>st</sup> from 5:30-7:30; Elgin Jumper's Storytelling Circle-25<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 p.m.; Closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday-28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>. The library will reopen on Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9 a.m. A few December events to note would be *Storytime with Santa* which will be held on December 19<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 p.m. as well as the *Kwanzaa African American Celebration* on Saturday, December 28<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.

**Public Works Director Sean Scheffler reports:**

- **If you have any recreational needs or questions, please drop by City Hall from 8:00am to 5:00pm or call 863-983-1484.**
- **Mosquito Control:** Trap counts for this period: Saginaw 380; Okeechobee Blvd. 800; Elks Field 125; Golf Course 650; and Harlem Community 245. A ground mission ran on November 1 and another is scheduled to run on November 18. Please call 863-983-1471 if you are having mosquito problems or have any requests or questions.
- **Project Updates:**
  - The new Ventura Sidewalk Project has not yet broken ground.
  - The concrete block planter bases for the new "Welcome to Clewiston" signs have been built and are getting the brick veneer installed.



- Work on the Levee Cut Off Wall is scheduled to start this month. City staff and a contractor did a video survey of the route to and from the work site on Thursday.
- Sidewalks on US27 from Wendy's to San Luiz and from San Luiz to Alverde have a projected construction start date of FY 2021/2022.
- **Parks Department Activities:**
  - Staff set up for the Veterans Day event that took place on November 11 in the Civic – Memorial Park.
  - Staff relocated soccer goals and striped the High School football field. The High School Boys Soccer Team will play the remainder of their games at Cane Field.
  - DAVCO replaced 23 lights that were not working. We had them check the “controller” that communicates between the City and MUSCO again and found a couple more issues that were addressed. Hopefully this has taken care of all the lighting issues we have been contending with for the last couple of weeks.
- **Street Division Activities:**
  - Staff began working on Christmas decorations. The goal is again to be lit by the day before Thanksgiving.
  - Mowing pass was made through town.
  - Potholes were addressed. Thankfully less rain has slowed and reduced the number of holes requiring a patch.
- **Facility Maintenance Activities:**
  - Repaired A/Cs at City Hall, John Boy Auditorium, Public Works and the Library.
  - Mowed, sprayed and removed clutter at the Operations Yard.
  - Cleaned and stowed all storm shutters away from City buildings.
  - Stripped and waxed the floors in the Operations Building over the Veterans Day holiday.
- **Reminder:** As Fall becomes more of a reality, residents are reminded to place raked up leaves in “paper” recyclable bags. Plastic shopping bags should never be placed in a recycle bin; they wind up in moving parts and cause costly down time and expensive parts replacement. These bags should be returned to the store you got them from on your next visit.

**Golf Course Director Robbie Rush reports:**

- Get all information of what's going on at Clewiston Golf Course Facebook.

- The Clewiston Rotary Club Tournament is scheduled for November 16, 2019. The golf course will be closed for regular play until 2:00pm.
- His Vision Our Hands Golf Tournament is scheduled for December 7, 2019.
- Gators vs World Tournament is scheduled for December 13-15, 2019.
- Seminole Tribe of Florida will be having their Chairman Cup December 18, 2019.
- Clewiston Golf Course Men's Club Championship is scheduled for December 28, 2019.
- Golf Shop hours are 7:15am-5:00pm. The first tee time is 7:30am.
- Golf Carts must be in by 5:45pm.
- November 25, 2019 the golf course will be open on Monday's for the season.
- Our new season merchandise is starting to come into the golf shop. We also have a sale going for the remaining ladies clothes in the golf shop.

**Utilities Director Danny Williams reports:**

- **Electric Crew Activities**
  - Replaced underground service at 203 Harlem Gardens;
  - repaired underground service 600 block West Ventura Avenue;
  - set pole and transformer at Aztec address;
  - installed new security light;
  - repaired underground service at lot 40 Fairgrounds Park;
  - removed vegetation from power lines;
  - installed new transformer at Hampton Inn on Sugarland Highway;
  - repaired pump electric service at Wastewater Treatment Plant;
  - repaired three streetlights;
  - installed new service on El Paso Avenue.
- **Water Sewer Crew Activities**
  - Repaired lift station pumps at various locations;
  - Installed water and sewer service.
- **Customer Service Department**
  - We offer several bill paying options; please visit or call the office at 983-1454 if you'd like to learn more!
  - **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](http://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](http://www.clewiston-fl.gov) or call our office.
  - **Don't forget to sign up for your meter based surge protection!** Visit our office today.

**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.**