

*For Your Information*

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF

August 21, 2020

**Dates to Remember**

- August 24, 2020     **Special City Commission Meeting** – Beardsley Room, John Boy Auditorium at 5:00 p.m. Attendance and participation allowed in-person and via telephone conference call (863-254-4038, Conference ID 994729#).
- August 24, 2020     **City Commission Budget Workshop** – Beardsley Room, John Boy Auditorium, immediately following the Special Commission Meeting at 5:00 p.m. Attendance and participation allowed in-person and via telephone conference call (863-254-4038, Conference ID 994729#).
- August 31, 2020     **Tentative City Commission Budget Workshop (if necessary)** – Beardsley Room, John Boy Auditorium at 5:00 p.m. Attendance and participation allowed in-person and via telephone conference call (863-254-4038, Conference ID 994729#).
- September 9, 2020     **Tentative Millage & Budget Hearing** – Beardsley Room, John Boy Auditorium at 5:30 p.m. Attendance and participation allowed in-person and via telephone conference call (863-254-4038, Conference ID 994729#).
- September 15, 2020     **Special Magistrate Hearing** – Clewiston City Hall at 10:00 a.m.
- September 17, 2020     **Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting** – Clewiston City Hall at 11:00 a.m. Attendance and participation allowed in-person and via telephone conference call (863-254-4038, Conference ID 994729#).
- September 21, 2020     **City Commission Meeting** – Location and participation instructions will be included with the meeting agenda announcement.
- September 21, 2020     **Final Millage & Budget Hearing** – Location and participation instructions will be included with the hearing announcement.

**Office of the City Manager:**

Citizens, Business Owners & Other Interested Parties:

The heart of hurricane season is certainly upon us as evidenced by the recent uptick in the level of storm activity brewing in the Atlantic. Although we have been spared locally thus far, we need to all remain diligent in our planning and preparations for the possibility of direct impacts to Clewiston and Hendry County. Please refer to recommended preparation steps distributed by state and local authorities and heed all notifications and warnings. Specifically, be sure to keep your properties clear of debris or objects that could become airborne or damaged during tropical events when wind speeds reach tropical storm or hurricane force. Monitor state and local websites and social media platforms for updates and notices.

It is also budget preparation season for the city and county and all citizens and other interested parties are encouraged to stay informed and engaged on discussions concerning the municipal operating budgets for the coming fiscal year which begins on October 1, 2020. The budget process is always challenging in terms of balancing limited available resources to fund operations with the service needs of the community, but the City Commission and staff have been working on various aspects of this year's budget for several months to achieve the best possible outcome for the community and its taxpayers and customers. This fiscal year and the upcoming fiscal year have been made even more challenging than is customary due to the adverse impacts on revenue sources created by the economic outcomes related to the pandemic created by the coronavirus. In the case of the city, the reduced state shared revenues estimated have had and are expected to continue to have substantial implications for the city operating budget that must be factored into the proposed budget for FY 2020-2021. I encourage everyone to stay informed as the staff completes preparation of the proposed budget for the Commission's consideration at planned public meetings and hearings in September, 2020 prior to adoption of the final budget before September 30<sup>th</sup>. Fortunately for the city and its constituencies, the city has had considerable success of late in leveraging additional funding sources for capital and operating needs from state and federal sources to supplement traditional funding sources. The city in cooperation with the county is pursuing substantial additional dollars in the form of grants. A report was prepared detailing these efforts and presented to the City Commission in August, 2020. A copy of the report is available upon request and will be kept up to date and made available in connection with the budget process on the city website in September.

Lastly, the county is in the process of distributing federal CARES Act dollars to individuals and businesses impacted adversely by COVID-19. The Hendry County website has information on how to apply for this funding and all Clewiston citizens and businesses are encouraged to contact the county to pursue these funds which are grants and therefore do not have to be repaid.

In closing, thank you for your continued support and interest in the City of Clewiston.

Randy Martin

## Staff Reports

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

- The Hampton Inn has received their City of Clewiston Business Tax Receipt and has formally opened for business. They were issued their Official Certificate of Occupancy on July 23, 2020.
- Sweet Lake Villas first 10 units has poured their tie beams and should begin installing the roof trusses next week. Construction on the second set of units will begin in the next few weeks.

### **Public Works Director Sean Scheffler reports:**

- Levee access is closed until the end of October.
- Mosquito Control Trap Counts:

	7/15	7/27	7/30	7/31
Okeechobee Blvd.	400	600	742	900
Public Works	300	200	200	300
Saginaw	300	300	400	400
Golf Course	600	500	900	1000
Sports Complex	150	300	245	300

Ground Missions: July 18, August 6 and August 14

Air Missions: July 21, July 25, August 4 and August 8

- **Grant & Project Updates:**
  - New sidewalk projects from Wendy's to San Luiz, San Luiz to Alverde & McDonalds to Berner Road funded by FDOT are being planned with projected construction start dates of FY 2022/2023. Staff is seeking funding for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of other sidewalk improvements through a FDOT Safe Route To Schools grant program for needed sidewalk sections near school sites.
  - The Ventura Avenue Rebuild Project is scheduled for 2020 construction. 60% plans and a permit application have been sent to SFWMD for review and permitting.
- **Parks Department Activities:**
  - Staff began repairing the east "T" dock in the Boat Basin.
  - Multiple applications of a broadleaf herbicide have started to show favorable results. The fields in the Sports Complex are starting to look much better.
  - Sikes Park received a fresh layer of mulch around the play equipment.
  - Sweetest Town Playground and the Boat Basin were sprayed for weeds/grass.
  - The dugouts at Trinidad Park are in the process of being moved to a location on the south side of the soccer field. They will be used for team benches.
- **Street Division Activities:**
  - Trimmed all of the palms on Royal Palm Avenue.
  - Repaired a sink hole on Arroyo that resulted from a rusted out metal culvert.
  - Replaced street markers at several locations.
  - The Golf Course sign was removed and is being redesigned and will be placed on Sonora at the main entrance to the Sports Complex.
  - The new Golf Course sign has arrived and will be scheduled for installation.
  - Trimmed trees that were blocking the view of oncoming traffic at intersections.

- Repaired, painted and reinstalled the park swings in Civic/Memorial Park.
- Staff sprayed over 50 gallons of herbicide around guardrails, sign posts and trees. The blue color is an indicator of what has been sprayed.
- Twenty more Canary Island Date Palms were trimmed on Circle and Via Del Aqua. The oaks on Esperanza and in the recreation common area are on the list to be trimmed as part of our ongoing hurricane preparations.

**Library Director Natasha Hayes reports:**

- Over the past several weeks with the re-opening of the library to the public, word is slowly being spread and people are excited to be able to come in and choose their own book, make copies, and fax. Still due to the uncertainty of the pandemic our hours of operation and opening procedures remains as follows:
  - Open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. daily. This will allow staff the opportunity to empty the drop box, sanitize returned items, and open branch safely in the morning while allowing an hour in the afternoon to provide an in-depth cleaning of the facility of our high touched surfaces and opportunity to empty the return bin again.
  - Phone assistance for reference questions and help with placing holds for materials is available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
  - Patrons will be on a first come, first served basis with a maximum occupancy of 10 patrons at a time.
  - Masks required for entry
  - No in-person or group meetings/programs at this time
  - Visits are limited to 1 hour
  - Practice social distancing at all times
  - Return of all materials will occur at the book drop box outside
  - All materials will be quarantined for three days prior to being checked in and returned to shelves
  - All library fines that have accrued during the pandemic time period will be waived until further notice
  - Study rooms, newspapers, and magazines are currently unavailable (duplicate newspapers are available for keeping on a first come, first served basis)
- This will be the last week to check out our virtual summer program through the Clewiston and Barron Library Facebook pages. This wonderful program is brought to you and paid for by our partnership with the Southwest Florida Library Network (SWFLN).
- Staff is continuing to do an amazing job with creating the libraries digital arts and crafts programs as well as keeping our Facebook page updated and full of fun things to do and read. This week, the digital craft was “Take & Make!” All materials for the event are provided by the library in the form of a small kit. Patrons pick up the kits on a designated day and time to ensure contactless transactions. Patrons will then create the craft on their own. Staff is doing a wonderful job with bringing stories alive through her virtual storytimes. All events are listed on our Facebook page.
- 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.

- The Library Cooperative Board met at Noon at the Barron Library on Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Golf Course Director Robbie Rush reports:**

- Get all information of what’s going on at Clewiston Golf Course Facebook.
- Get on our E-mail list by going to the City of Clewiston Website. Go to the golf course division and at the bottom of the page you can sign-up on Constant Contact and get all Clewiston Golf Course information.
- There were 23 participants in the Clewiston Golf Course Junior Golf Camp this summer. Pictures are on the Clewiston Golf Course Facebook page.
- The greens have been patched with sod and are looking and putting better.
- Summer Rates last until September 30, 2020. If you pay for 18 holes you can play as many as you want in that same day.
- Golf Shop Hours are 7:45am-6:00pm. The first tee time is 8:00am.
- Golf Carts have to be in at 7:00pm.
- Walking play is permitted all day at the golf course now.
- Clewiston Golf Course has a driving range. The driving range has lights which means you can hit golf balls after (Night Time) hours. Tokens for the range ball machine can be purchased in the golf shop or at the Clewiston Police Department after hours.
- Golf lessons are available at the club from PGA Professional Robbie Rush. Contact the golf shop at 863-983-1448.
- The Clewiston Golf Course offers very competitive pricing on all golf gear the golfer needs.
- **For more information, call the golf shop at 863-983-1448.**

**Code Enforcement Officer Debbie McNeil reports:**

**IS YOUR SWIMMING POOL IN COMPLIANCE WITH CITY OF CLEWISTON ORDINANCE?**



**City of Clewiston Ordinance**

**Sec. 110-2. - Definitions and construction.**

**Swimming pool means a portable pool or permanent structure that contains a body of water 18 inches or more in depth of 250 square feet or more of water surface area and**

**intended for recreational purposes, including a wading pool. The term "swimming pool" excludes an ornamental reflecting pool, fish pond, or other type of pool, regardless of size, unless located and designed so as to create a hazard or be used for swimming or wading.**

**ARTICLE VI. - SUPPLEMENTARY DISTRICT REGULATIONS**

**Sec. 110-524. - Fences, walls and hedges.**

(18) Swimming pool enclosures. **All swimming pools must** be within a screened cage, **or shall** be enclosed on all open sides by a fence which is a minimum of four feet above the existing ground grade and a maximum of six feet above the existing ground grade. All gates which are part of a pool fence or screening cage **must** have safety locks.

**Florida leads the country in drowning deaths of children ages 1-4 years.**

**“Drowning deaths in Florida are up 70% when compared to this time last year, according to Water Smart Tots.”**

**Pool Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility**

**Police Chief Aaron Angell reports:**

The following is a brief synopsis of police department activity. It is not representative of all calls for service.

**July 30<sup>th</sup>**

*800 Block Sweet Lake Circle:* Officers were alerted to an emergency call for service in this area after observing deputies traveling through the City of Clewiston with lights and sirens activated. Officers inquired as to the nature and whereabouts of the call for service only to learn that the emergency and need for law enforcement response was at a location in Clewiston. Officers responded to the address along with deputies from the Hendry County Sheriff’s Office and Hendry County EMS. Once on scene they realized they had been provided with inaccurate information from the Hendry County Communications Center as to the location of the emergency. Once officers obtained the proper address they responded and provided the appropriate emergency services to those in need.

**August 6<sup>th</sup>**

*1000 Block W. Sugarland Hwy:* A Hendry County Sheriff’s Office deputy observed a paintball incident and contacted the Hendry County Sheriff’s Office, instead of the Clewiston Police Department who dispatched deputies instead of notifying the Clewiston Police Department. Deputies from the Hendry County Sheriff’s Office responded at which time the individuals fled. Deputies did make contact with the suspect vehicle later in the evening; however, the outcome is unknown to us as the Hendry County Sheriff’s Office did not share this information with the Clewiston Police Department.

*1000 Block W. Sugarland Hwy:* Officers responded to this area a second time regarding a crowd in the area. When they arrived it was discovered that some of our very own Clewiston Tigers were holding an impromptu track and field meet. We are unsure of the final standings, but it was reported that they were “fast.”

### **August 7<sup>th</sup>**

Officers initially responded to the area of North Berner Rd. in reference to the report of someone being attacked. When officers arrived in the area they were flagged down by a taxi driver who immediately directed their attention to a female who had exited the cab without paying her fare. Officers made contact with this female and a subsequent investigation revealed that this female had in fact failed to pay her fare and she was subsequently arrested. Following her arrest the suspect was found to be in possession of heroin for which she received additional charges.

Officers responded to a local lodging establishment in reference to a disturbance complaint. When officers arrived they learned that a guest had been fighting in his room, during which he destroyed property in the room. The guest was no longer on scene when officers arrived.

Officers responded to another local lodging establishment after being alerted to a possible overdose. When officers arrived they found a male subject who was in need of medical services and who was subsequently transported from the scene by Hendry County EMS. Subsequent investigation led to the discovery of both heroin and fentanyl in the room.

### **August 8<sup>th</sup>**

Officers were summonsed to a local lodging establishment in regards to an individual being at the pool who was not a guest of the hotel. When officers arrived they found a female subject enjoying the use of the establishment's pool who was in fact not a registered guest. Officers asked the individual to leave the property at the request of management and she complied.

Officers responded to a local lodging establishment about guests shooting paintballs at vehicles. When officers arrived they spoke with other guests who confirmed their vehicles had in fact been shot with paintballs. Officers did find evidence of this; however, those responsible were no longer on scene. A short time later officers received notification that those believed to be responsible had returned. Officers responded a second time and further investigated the incident. During the course of their investigation officers were unable to determine whether in fact these individuals were responsible for this.

Later during the evening officers were alerted to a group of teenagers loitering in the parking lot of another local lodging establishment. When officers arrived they did in fact observe a group of individuals whom they spoke with. Officers initiated contact with the group and learned that the group had attempted to rent a room for the night but had been denied service by the establishment's management. The group was asked to leave the property at the request of management and they complied.

### **August 10<sup>th</sup>**

*700 Block Orchard Park Dr.:* Officers were dispatched to what was originally reported to the police department as a male subject lying in his yard with an injury. When officers arrived they learned there was much more to the story. On scene investigation revealed that the subject had been in a verbal altercation with a family member who had stabbed him as the verbal altercation escalated into a much more violent confrontation. The victim was treated for his injuries and the

suspect was located and taken into custody for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. He is innocent until proven guilty.

*400 Block W. Sugarland Hwy:* Officers were notified that a female subject was causing a disturbance in the area. When officers arrived they discovered a female subject who is known to them on the property of a local business from which she had received a trespass warning. After being taken into custody for trespassing she was found to be in possession of narcotics and paraphernalia. She was charged with additional narcotics related offenses and delivered to the Hendry County Jail.

### **August 12<sup>th</sup>**

*300 Block E. Alverdez Ave.:* Officers responded to the report of an unconscious male lying in his front yard. Upon arrival officers did in fact find an unconscious and unresponsive male subject lying in his front yard. Medical Services were summonsed who were able to revive the subject. It was determined that the male subject had overdosed on a form of opiate, which rendered him unconscious and in the state he was found.

### **August 15<sup>th</sup>**

*1000 Block of W. Sugarland Hwy –* Officers were alerted of a theft in progress at one of our local retail establishments. When they arrived they were met by loss prevention staff who had apprehended two individuals stealing from the establishment. Staff recovered nearly \$300 dollars of merchandise from the two suspects. Both subjects were arrested, however, prior to being transported from the establishment a search was conducted, which yielded another \$250 in merchandise the pair were concealing.

### **August 16<sup>th</sup>**

*100 Block of North Berner Rd.-* Officers responded to a local business in reference to a disturbance. When officers arrived they were met by an irate customer who was extremely upset that store staff had accused him of stealing. Officers were able to calm the individual and restore peace. A subsequent investigation revealed that no crime had taken place, however, the individual was trespassed from the location at management's request.

### **August 18<sup>th</sup>**

*400 Block of W. Sugarland Hwy –* Officers were alerted of a fight in progress at a local lodging establishment. When officers arrived they spoke with a female guest who did confirm she had in fact been involved in an "aggressive" verbal altercation with her significant other. Subsequent investigation by the officers revealed that there was an active protection order prohibiting the male subject from having contact with the female. He was subsequently arrested pursuant to the protection order and transported to the Hendry County Jail.

*600 Block of W. Aztec –* An officer observed a vehicle being operated in a careless manner prompting him to stop the vehicle for the multiple infractions he had witnessed. During the stop the officer noted the odor of marijuana coming from within the vehicle prompting the officer to conduct a search of the vehicle. During a search of the vehicle the officer located not only marijuana but cocaine. The driver and sole occupant of the vehicle was subsequently arrested for possession of both cocaine and marijuana.



## **August 20<sup>th</sup>**

*400 Block of W. Sugarland Hwy* – An officer observed a vehicle leaving one of the local lodging establishments commit a traffic infraction. Before the officer could stop the vehicle for the observed infraction the occupant of the vehicle discarded a plastic bag containing narcotics onto the roadway. Once the officer stopped the vehicle contact was made with the driver who after investigation was arrested for numerous narcotics related offenses, including possession of cocaine, possession of methamphetamine, and possession of heroin.

### **Utilities Director Danny Williams reports:**

- **Electric Crew Activities**
  - Repaired pole at Virginia Avenue due to lightning damage;
  - Repaired pole top and changed arrester and fuse due to lightning, replaced two broken pole top pins;
  - Removed old three phase transformer bank, replaced with single phase behind old Ford Dealership;
  - Straightened pole on 11th Street;
  - Removed vegetation from power lines;
  - Changed connectors at residence on Louisiana Avenue;
  - Repaired street lights;
  - Removed service to house on Del Monte Avenue for customer to repair damaged meter wires;
  - Transferred two services to new pole on Lopez Street and removed old transformer;
  - Replaced four old underground services with new installations on Lopez Street;
  - Replaced underground service to three apartments in Harlem Garden Apartments;
  - Replaced red light on Ventura Avenue and WC Owen Avenue.

Your Utility partners with customers to bring renewable power to the electric grid. If you'd like to learn more about net metering, please visit the FTC consumer information site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0532-solar-power-your-home> .

- **Water Sewer Crew Activities**
  - Replaced twelve water meters;
  - Repaired two water breaks;
  - Repaired three lift stations.

A sewer rehabilitation project is currently underway in the city. The \$2.3 million dollar project, with \$1.784 million funded with grant monies, will identify defects in the gravity sewer and the service lines, and make designated approved repairs. The city has contracted with **American Infrastructure Technologies** for this project. If they are working in your neighborhood, you may be asked to limit your water usage for a few hours. We apologize for the inconvenience. If you have any questions, please call our office at 863-983-1454. You may also call American Infrastructure Technologies directly at **256-739-4747 ext. 5**.

- **Customer Service Department**

- Your Utility partners with customers to bring renewable power to the electric grid. If you'd like to learn more about net metering, please visit the FTC consumer information site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0532-solar-power-your-home>.
- The public Utilities building drive-through service will remain open to customers during normal office hours.
- 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.
- *IT'S LIGHTNING SEASON!* 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](http://www.clewiston-fl.gov) or [www.municipalonlinepayments.com/clewistonfl](http://www.municipalonlinepayments.com/clewistonfl).