

## *For Your Information*

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF

June 11, 2021

### **Dates to Remember**

June 14, 2021 – Planning & Zoning Board Meeting

June 21, 2021 – City Commission Meeting

June 24, 2021 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting

July 5, 2021 – Independence Day Holiday – City Offices Closed

July 6, 2021 – Tentative City Commission Workshop

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

Citizens, Business Owners & Other Interested Parties:

I am pleased to report that the City's independent auditing firm Mauldin & Jenkins, CPAs & Advisors have completed their field work and a draft of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 financial audit results. The final document is expected to be distributed very soon and will be presented to the City Commissioners at an upcoming regular meeting. Based upon a preliminary review of the results, the City financials continued improvement in the prior fiscal year as expected despite the adverse impacts on certain revenue sources resulting from the pandemic. I congratulate Finance Director Shari Howell and her staff for their efforts and all city departments for another successful year in terms of fiscal responsibility. Of course, management will continue to emphasize the pursuit of fiscal responsibility efforts to achieve additional improvements in the current fiscal year and beyond consistent with the previously identified financial goals and policies of the City as established by the Commission. This was a very high priority of the Commission when I began my duties as City Manager in late July, 2019, and I am very encouraged by progress to date and optimistic in terms of the fiscal outlook for the City going forward.

Another high priority of the City emphasized by previous and current members of the Commission is continued focus on capital improvements to the City's infrastructure. Recently, the City has made progress on several integral elements of the approved Capital Improvements Plan in this regard. At their June meeting, the Commission will be asked to authorize a contract to resurface and improve the section of East Ventura Avenue from Francisco to Deane Duff. This long awaited project is partially funded with a state grant and is expected to be complete before calendar year end. The Commission has also previously authorized a grant application for federal funding to continue improvements to the portion of Ventura Avenue from Deane Duff to W.C. Owen. If this funding is approved by Congress, the City is hopeful of addressing that section within the next fiscal year which will entirely complete this priority transportation

improvement that is so desperately needed. The City's federal funding request has been endorsed by our Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, so we eagerly await the outcome.

Another transportation priority that is sorely needed got a huge boost recently when the Florida Legislature agreed to fund additional grant monies to the City that will allow completion of the long planned C-21 bridge replacement which provides the lone access point to the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) within the City. Our request for the necessary additional funding was championed by Clewiston's legislative delegation in their recently completed session. Representative Lauren Melo introduced legislation requesting the full funding of the project in the House of Representatives and Senator Kathleen Passidomo likewise endorsed approval in the Senate chamber. The Governor has now signed off on the state budget providing the balance of the funding to complete the project which is estimated to cost \$5.652 million. To facilitate the City proceeding with the project, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and their contractor for the HHD improvements estimate completion within the next 60 days of the portion of the ongoing dike improvement project in the vicinity of the City's recreation area. This is almost a year earlier than previously anticipated for the City to be able to pursue actual construction of the new elevated C-21 bridge. Once the USACE accepts the HHD project as complete and releases the area to the City, the City will coordinate release of the grant funding with the state and seek bids for the C-21 bridge project. The City has already completed design and permitting for this project which should allow it to get underway this year with completion in 2022. The City's heartfelt appreciation is extended to all contributors for their support in getting the necessary funding approved for this major improvement project.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in the City of Clewiston.

Randy Martin, Clewiston City Manager

### **Staff Reports**

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

- **COVID-19 Continuation:** As libraries are continuing to emerge from the pandemic, the Clewiston Library has revised its latest operations to include the following:
  - **Operating Hours-**  
Effective as of Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021:  
Monday through Friday:  
9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday:  
CLOSED
  - Materials are no longer required to be returned via the drop box outside, but may rather be brought inside during operating hours. If you are returning items after hours, please continue to use the drop box as it is emptied daily. All materials will continue to be disinfected before being shelved.
  - As of June 1, 2021, all three libraries within the Cooperative returned to assessing fines-late fees for materials returned after their due date. If at any time you cannot return your items on time simply call the library and we can renew them over the phone.

- Interlibrary Loans (ILL's) have resumed. If there is an item that is outside of our library cooperative, we can help you locate and request it from any other participating library throughout Florida as we have always done.
- Courier Service has resumed which allows items to be circulated amongst our three branches here in Hendry County.
- The library continues to follow all CDC guidelines such as social distancing and requesting face masks to be worn while in the library.

If you have any questions, please call the library at 863-983-1493. Thank you for your understanding and patience during this time.

- Library staff provided ready reference assistance to 982 patrons during the month of May along with other routine services such as circulation of materials, computer assistance, and programming.
- Virtual programs have continued for all patrons. Programs vary monthly so be sure to check out our Facebook page to remain up to date on our upcoming activities. Below are the programs that occurred during the month of May (please note that all programs except the LEGO Club, come with a premade kit that has all the pieces needed for that day's activity):
  - Lego Challenge via Zoom: May 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup>
  - Take & Make Craft: May 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup>
  - Craft & Chat: May 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup>
- Others programs offered at the library during May:
  - Medicare 101: May 5<sup>th</sup>
  - Medicare Part B Enrollment: May 12<sup>th</sup>
  - Medicare Part C: May 18<sup>th</sup>
  - Medicare Part D: May 19<sup>th</sup>
  - Prolific Learning Corporation- hosted a 4-day work readiness program for their interns who will be employed throughout Hendry County this summer. During this training period, the interns learned fundamental workplace skills that they can carry with them in their future employment endeavors: June 1<sup>st</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup>
- The Adult Book Club met on May 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss, *The Four Winds* written by Kristin Hannah. Come join the fun at our next meeting on June 21<sup>st</sup> at 2 p.m. or 5:15 p.m., as we discuss our current book, *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman.
- Library Director attended the Southwest Florida Library Network board meeting on May 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Library Director registered and attended the Florida Department of State, Division of Library and Information Services' State Library Council meeting on May 26 and May 27, 2021. This meeting was held to review federal fiscal year 2021 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant applications.
  - The Southwest Florida Library Network (SWFLN) obtained full approval from this panel for their grant request of \$220,000.00 which provides free training for all members for the upcoming year. This is essential to the Hendry County Library Cooperative as staff are able to seek continuing education trainings and access SWFLN's Bits 'N Bytes to Borrow collection. This collection has a variety of expensive, hands on equipment that our libraries are able to use at our local branch for free. Items such as drones, 3D Printers, and coding equipment along with many other trending items that our patrons enjoy learning about during our library

programs. The best part of it, is that this collection is available to all member libraries for free.

○ EXCITING NEWS!!!!

- Florida Governor, Ron DeSantis, signed the 2021-2022 budget on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thankfully, SWFLN and the other 4 MLC's in the state received full funding for the upcoming year and therefore recovered from last year's veto. SWFLN and their member libraries are thankful and grateful for the Governor's decision to fund the MLC's in Florida as libraries desperately need the assistance that these entities provide throughout the year. SWFLN can now change their focus and move forward with serving all of Southwest Florida, especially rural Hendry County.
- Library Director, Natasha Hayes, would like to personally thank the Clewiston Library Advisory Board for their advocacy during this tumultuous time as they reached out and scheduled a meeting with Representative Lauren Melo on February 22<sup>nd</sup> to express their advocacy for SWFLN and our libraries. Although Representative Melo was unable to attend the meeting, she ensured her Legislative Assistant, Ryan Walker, attended. Our local board voiced their concerns about the veto for SWFLN funding for the 2020-2021 budget year. They explained to Mr. Walker the importance of SWFLN as it pertains to the libraries in Hendry County. Mr. Frank Harris, Clewiston Advisory Board Member, provided Mr. Walker with detailed accounts of how SWFLN has helped our rural county financially as well as educationally. Director Hayes would also like to thank Mr. Walker and Representative Lauren Melo for hearing our concerns and making our voices heard in Tallahassee as funding has been restored to SWFLN and the other MLC's in Florida for this upcoming year. Once again, thank you to all who have advocated for our libraries and SWFLN.
- This summer the library will be hosting the Collaborative Summer Library Program, titled *Tails and Tales*. This program is scheduled to be held on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. beginning June 15<sup>th</sup> through July 27<sup>th</sup>. This program is free and open to all children. We would also like to extend an invitation to all local daycares to schedule a fieldtrip to the library to enjoy our summer program as all are welcome. Children will enjoy stories, crafts, presentations, and hands on activities with the emphasis being about *Tails and Tales*... Who knows, maybe we'll have a critter or two stop by!
- The library will also be hosting Monday Movie Madness to the public at 2 p.m. beginning on June 14<sup>th</sup>. Stop by and enjoy a family-friendly movie along with fresh popped popcorn.
- **Upcoming Events-**
  - June 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>-Monday Movie Madness-2 p.m.
  - June 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup>-Tails & Tales Summer Program 10 a.m.
  - June 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>-Crafternoon Diamond Painting-in person @ 2 p.m. and on Zoom at 3:30 p.m.
  - June 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>-Lego Club -3:30 p.m.
- Need a place to hold a meeting? What about a computer lab to host your organization's/company's training? The Clewiston Library offers a classroom and computer lab 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.

- 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.

**Public Works Director Sean Scheffler reports:**

- **Mosquito Control Trap Counts:**

	6/2	6/3	6/7	6/8	6/9	6/10
Okeechobee Blvd.	800	700	300	400	700	800
Public Works	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saginaw	400	300	86	164	350	300
Golf Course	500	600	200	400	600	700
Sports Complex	0	0	0	0	0	0

Ground Spray Mission: June 7

Air Spray Missions: June 5 and June 11

- **Parks Department Activities:**
  - Fields in the Sports Complex got the second round of fertilizing.
  - Three “Volts” were installed around “well heads” giving us access for well monitoring.
  - The High School Art Class finished the mural on the east wall of the pool house. Pooh looks great! Thank you High School Art Class.
  - The Splash Pad was power washed and all systems checked out.
  - Park inspection found two broken children’s “saddle swings”. Both were replaced.
- **Street Division Activities:**
  - Road shoulders were addressed at locations where motorists leave the travel surface eroding the edge of the travel surface.
  - Staff repaired and beefed up an inlet at Sagamore and Olympia Street. Truck traffic is cutting the corner and running over the inlet.
  - The Street Sweeper ran this week.
- **Facility Maintenance:**
  - Several lights in the Library were upgraded to LED.
  - The pavilions in the Sweetest Town Playground were power washed. Tables and bench tops will be replaced.
  - Security has been upgraded in the City Hall with the installation of a half-door in the entrance to the City Manager’s assistant’s office.
  - A urinal had to be repaired after being vandalized in the big quad.
  - Repaired roof leaks at the Library and power washed front of building.
  - The interior of the Boat Basin bathrooms were painted.
  - Repaired roof leak at the Youth Center.
  - Repaired AC at the Substation and Electric crew office.
  - Benches and tables got a fresh coat of paint.
  - Several minor repairs were done in the Animal Control Building.
- **Reminder:** The summer rains will soon be falling and will turn all of our yards green and make our flowers bloom. Let me remind you of what items should be placed in your tipper carts for pickup on Mondays and Thursdays and what items should be placed by the road for pickup.

- Small amounts of yard debris can and should be placed in your tipper cart for disposal.
- Boxes of any kind should not be placed by the road for pickup; they should be broken down and placed in your tipper cart.
- Plastic mulch bags and plastic pots from plant material should not be placed by the road for pickup; they should be placed in your tipper cart.
- Never place debris within 5 feet of a sign post, light pole, water valves or storm drains.
- Never place debris on a canal bank. This debris can be blown into the canal potentially causing a blockage at the pump station and flooding.

**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.
- Golf Shop Hours are 7:45am-5:30pm. The first tee time is 8:00am. Tee Times are required. The Golf Shop contact number is 863-983-1448.
- Golf Carts have to be in at 7:00pm.
- Clewiston Golf Course has a driving range. The driving range has lights which means you can hit golf balls after hours (Night Time). 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. To schedule, contact the golf shop at 863-983-1448.
- The City of Clewiston is taking applications for three vacant jobs at the golf course now. Pro Shop Clerk, Part-Time Bag Room Attendant and Part-Time Groundskeeper.
- Summer Memberships are available.

**For more information call the golf shop 863-983-1448**

**Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Clay reports:**



**Garage sale** means and includes all general sales, open to the public, conducted from or on residential premises in any residential zone for the purpose of disposing of personal property,...

**Personal property** means property which is owned, utilized and maintained by an individual or members of the residence and acquired in the normal course of living in or maintaining a residence....

**Permit required.** No garage sale shall be conducted without first obtaining a permit from the city. **A resident seeking to conduct a garage sale shall file a written application for this permit with the City Community Development Department.**

Advertising signs, one sign shall be permitted on the premises where the garage sale is being conducted, two directional signs shall be permitted off the premises; no directional signs are permitted if the garage sale premise is located on a major thoroughfare. **Under no circumstances are advertising signs for yard sales allowed on city right-of-way or city property.**

A garage sale may not be conducted more often than once every three months from the same premises. The total period of the sale must not exceed 48 consecutive hours, and **must be conducted only during daylight hours between sunrise and sunset.**

Our Code Enforcement personnel will begin focused enforcement on this ordinance as well as continued enforcement of all City of Clewiston Ordinance.

The complete City of Clewiston Ordinances is available online and may be accessed utilizing the City of Clewiston website: <https://www.clewiston-fl.gov/> or Municode Library website: [https://library.municode.com/fl/clewiston/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](https://library.municode.com/fl/clewiston/codes/code_of_ordinances)

If you have any questions about how to achieve/maintain compliance with this or any other City of Clewiston Ordinance you may contact our office at 863-983-1454 extension 309 or Code Compliance Supervisor: [debbie.mcneil@clewiston-fl.gov](mailto:debbie.mcneil@clewiston-fl.gov)

### **Interim Police Chief Tom Lewis reports:**

#### **Department Employee Changes**

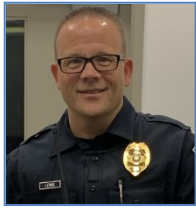


On May 12, 2021, Wilmer “Tico” Salgado started as our newest police officer. He has 17 years of prior law enforcement experience, is bilingual, and has been a life-long local resident.

On May 20, 2021, Isabel Rodriguez started as our newest dispatcher. She has more than a year of prior experience with the Glades County Sheriff’s Office, is bilingual, and is a proud graduate of the Clewiston High School E-911 CTE program.



We are happy to have these great additions to the team.



On June 1, 2021, Police Chief Aaron Angell and Assistant Police Chief Marci Vandhuynslager resigned from the department. We wish them all the best in their new endeavors. Sergeant Tom Lewis has stepped into the Interim Chief of Police role as the city searches for a permanent replacement.

On June 8, 2021, staff held several applicant interviews for vacant positions for police officer and evidence technician.

### **Police Explorers**

Our police explorers unit met recently and completed a two-hour Interviews and Interrogations Course with now-Interim Chief Lewis and a subsequent role-play exercise with Sergeant Roberts. The program was a tremendous success.

### **Animal Control**

In the month of May 2021, Animal Control reported the intake of 6 stray cats and 19 stray dogs as well as the transfer of 53 cats and 22 dogs to local rescues.

### **Other News**

On June 4, 2021, police department staff was able to move the remaining property from the former police department, located at 205 West Ventura Avenue. You may notice POD storage containers at the current police department for a little while.

On June 8, 2021, Communications International delivered our new portable radios and installed a communications antenna at the police department as part of the first phase installation of a new 800 MHz radio system. The system is anticipated to be up and running in about three weeks.



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

Negotiations with Contractor SENSUS for a Smart Meter implementation and managed service contract are going well. We hope to present a final agreement for consideration by the Board of Commissioners this month.

- **Electric Crew Activities:**

- Repaired 10 street lights;
- removed vegetation from power lines;
- disconnected service on Mississippi Avenue for removal of old trailer;
- installed three new transformers and secondary wire for new power line serving city wastewater plant;
- installed new underground service on W Sugarland Circle;
- converted overhead to underground service on W. Ventura Ave.;
- operated switches in substation for FPL to do work and testing at McCarthy substation;
- poured asphalt pad at operations for equipment parking;



- set new pole at golf course and Olympia Ave. to replace rotten poles;
- answered service complaints from five customers;
- replaced 5 sport light fixtures at sports complex;
- installed new lights at golf course driving range;
- repaired primary power line to Clewiston Christian School;
- repaired flag pole rope in civic park.
- **Water Sewer Crew Activities:**
  - Serviced six lift stations; Kentucky Avenue lift station (broken riser), Fairgrounds lift station (repaired check valve), Commerce Park lift station (installed pump), Harlem Gardens (breaker trip), Clewiston High School (motor failure), Arkansas (breaker trip)
  - Repaired three ¾” water line breaks located at Maryland Ave., Bond Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Court caused by old cracked pipe failure.
  - Replace water meter for commercial customer.
- **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>.
  - 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).