

For Your Information

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF

July 16, 2021

Dates to Remember

July 19, 2021 – City Commission Meeting

July 20, 2021 – Special Magistrate Hearing

August 16, 2021 – City Commission Meeting

August 19, 2021 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting

Office of the City Manager:

Citizens, Business Owners & Other Interested Parties:

As I have previously advised in this space, the City of Clewiston in partnership with Hendry County is pursuing a number of federal and state grant opportunities to address priority capital project needs. The current largest City priority infrastructure need in terms of the amount of the requested funding is the upgrading of the City's aged wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The plant is currently consistently operating within permit guidelines to the best of its design capabilities and the City has been focused on ensuring continued compliance and the avoidance of prior regulatory findings consistent with an agreement with the State of Florida. The expected WWTP upgrade need is in excess of \$13 million based upon current projections and will involve a multi-year permitting and construction process. This week the City refined its grant application documents and submitted a request for full project funding to the state. Although these grant funds are always highly competitive, the City is encouraged by its prior success in getting grant funding of this nature and that available funding for this cycle of grants was significantly increased in the recently approved state budget. Whether this particular comprehensive grant application is favorably considered by the state or not, this will remain a high priority going forward for the City and is deemed essential to Clewiston's long term ability to meet requirements and future needs. Hopefully, a result of these efforts is that local cost share for the City's priority projects such as this can be minimized which benefits utility customers by avoiding the alternative of borrowing funds to make the required improvements and the associated costs which are impactful on utility rates going forward. City utility customer utility rates remain among the lowest regionally and throughout the state and City officials very much want to keep it that way.

To meet current state operating permit requirements and ever increasing wastewater treatment regulations, the City has for some time been formulating and pursuing plans to improve the wastewater treatment process and upgrade its WWTP facilities and operating permit to provide for achieving a higher degree of treatment processing that will have substantial long term positive environment implications and meet anticipated medium term future growth needs in the allowed level of treatment flow. As first steps to improve the overall wastewater collection and treatment system and the resulting impacts on WWTP conditions and operations, the City has for

the last couple of years been actively improving the collection system efficiency with the help of millions of dollars in previously received state grant and low interest loan funding to address long standing issues with inflow and infiltration of groundwater and surface water runoff entering the system. These efforts have already proven significantly impactful on the WWTP conditions in a positive way. Based upon recent reporting, the City's efforts have already reduced WWTP flows particularly those associated with increased rainfall events. In fact, the monthly report for June, 2021 reflects an unprecedented reduced level of WWTP treatment flow. This outcome results in reduced operating costs for the plant and frees up capacity under the current permit for additional growth in the customer base which would create additional wastewater treatment needs. This proposed project and the ongoing subsequent next phases of the current ongoing efforts will further result in improved system operating efficiency and cost avoidance until the longer term WWTP improvement project can be completed.

To complete this effort, the City is blessed with far-sighted and dedicated staff, very capable third-party engineering guidance and a supportive elected City Commission that is laser focused on the best interests of Clewiston, so I remain confident this team of leaders will achieve this important goal and ensure the long term stability of our community and its overall health and safety.

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

Randy Martin, Clewiston City Manager

Staff Reports

Community Development Director Travis Reese reports:

- Harbor Freight will be opening within the next month.
- Stantec and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council delivered the first portion of the Waterfront Master Plan. They presented the Site Analysis portion on Monday, July 12, 2021 at the Planning & Zoning Board Meeting.
- South Florida Water Management District has purchased 15 acres on Olympia Street where they intend to build their new office building.

Public Works Director Sean Scheffler reports:

- **NOTICE**: Irrigation systems must be turned **OFF** during the summer rains.
- **Mosquito Control Trap Counts**:

July	6	7	8	12	13	14
Okeechobee Blvd.	700	900	1000	400	600	700
Public Works	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saginaw	400	500	100	100	265	300
Golf Course	700	1000	900	500	600	500
Sports Complex	0	0	0	0	0	0

Ground Spray Mission: July 5

Air Spray Missions: July 2, July 12 and July 18

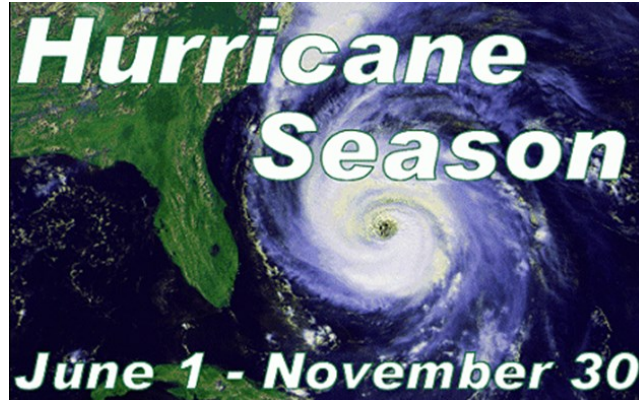
- **Parks Department Activities:**
 - The Splash Pad is open to the public. Hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10:00am-12:00pm and 3:00pm-5:00pm and Saturday and Sunday 12:00pm-5:00pm.
 - Staff is still in high gear trying to keep up with the grass cutting activities for adult & youth summer games and activities.
 - AYSO held an organizational meeting in the Beardsley Room on the 16th.
- **Street Division Activities:**
 - Mowing is the “big” push everyday now that the summer rains have returned.
 - The inlet at Olympia and Sagamore had to be rebuilt because heavy trucks were cutting the corner. The inlet walls were beefed up this time around.
 - All of the trees around the Sikes Building have been trimmed.
 - A new inlet was cut into a culvert running under the employee parking lot. This is to eliminate flooding.
- **Facility Maintenance:**
 - Air conditioners in several buildings have required frequent service and repair. Age and heavy humidity are causing air conditioners to work double hard.
 - Material ordered for some aspects of the Youth Center remodel has arrived and staff will be working again on the project. Contract pricing for other elements is being pursued cooperative with U.S. Sugar, our partner on the project.
 - Sikes Building was power washed.
- **Reminder:** DO NOT place debris offered for collection over or near any storm drain. DO NOT place anything on a canal bank. These are two of the most important requirements when it comes to storm drainage.

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.
- The second youth summer golf camp of the season will occur next week at the course. Forty-five children have registered for this session.

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

Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Clay reports:



Remove or enclose in a building all Openly Stored Items on Your Property before a Storm is Named

City of Clewiston Ordinance

Sec. 18-246. - Sanitation requirements.

(d) Care of premises. It shall be unlawful for the owner or occupant of a residential building, structure, or property to utilize the premises of such residential property for the open storage of any abandoned motor vehicle or appliance, icebox, refrigerator, stove, glass, building material, building rubbish or similar items. It shall be the duty and responsibility of every such owner and occupant to keep the premises of such residential property clean and to remove from the premises all such abandoned items as listed in this subsection, including, but not limited to, weeds, dead trees, trash, garbage, etc., upon notice pursuant to this division.

Sec. 18-203. - Definitions.

Nuisance or public nuisance means any one or combination of the following:

- (1) Any public nuisance known in common law or in equity jurisprudence or as provided by the statutes of the state or ordinances of the city.
- (2) Any attractive nuisance which may prove detrimental to the health or safety of children and others, whether in a building, on the premises of a building, or upon an unoccupied lot. This includes, but is not limited to, abandoned wells, shafts, basements, excavations, unused appliances, abandoned motor vehicles, and any structurally unsound fences or structures; lumber, trash, vegetation, such as poison ivy, oak, or sumac, which may prove a hazard for inquisitive persons. Abandoned buildings are attractive nuisances when they are unsecured or unendurable and when, by reason of abandonment or neglect, they contain unsound walls or flooring, unsafe wiring, fire hazards, or other unsafe conditions as further defined herein. Unsafe conditions may include such neglect of security that opportunities for criminal activity persist to the danger and detriment of the neighborhood....

The complete City of Clewiston Code of 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.

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.

Library Director Natasha Hayes reports:

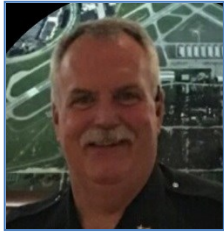
- **COVID-19 Continuation:**
 - **Operating Hours-**
Monday through Friday:
9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday:
CLOSED
 - Materials are no longer required to be returned via the drop box outside, but may rather be brought inside during operating hours. If you are returning items after hours, please continue 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, but are not required.
- 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, circulation activities, computer assistance, and programming such as our summer reading program Tails and Tales which occurs on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. with the last session being July 27th to 1,484 patrons during the month of June.
 - The summer program Tails and Tales has been a huge hit as families have enjoyed presentations:
 - Florida Department of Health (children made and enjoyed animal, carved creations from fruit)
 - Hendry County Sheriff's Department and the K9 Unit where they enjoyed various demonstrations between the officers and their K9 "Paw"tner
 - The Treasure Coast Animal Rehabilitation Hospital as they conducted a Show and Tell with their critters such as a gopher tortoise, crocodile, alligator, snake, owl, and red tailed hawk.
 - Showtime for Kids Magician and Storyteller had the audience laughing out loud as he performed various tricks and hilarious stunts for all to enjoy.

- We look forward to the two remaining sessions which consists of a PAWSOME Storytime with the City of Clewiston Mayor, Kristine Petersen and her “Paw”tner, Annie Oakley (ESA Support K9) which will be held on July 20th at 10 a.m. Then we will be wrapping up the summer program on July 27th at 10 a.m. with the Okeechobee Animal Education Outreach.
- 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 from this month:
 - Lego Club: July 17th and 24th
 - Crafternoon-Diamond Painting-Take & Make Craft (in person classes were held at 2 p.m. and virtual opportunity for this event was held at 3:30 p.m.): June 16th, 23rd, and 30th
- The Adult Book Club met on June 28th to discuss, *Anxious People* written by Fredrik Backman. Come join the fun at our next TWO meetings: August 2nd at 2 p.m. and 5:15 to discuss the newest book club title, *Thirteen* written by Steve Cavanagh and then on August 23rd at 2 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. to discuss *The President's Daughter* by Bill Clinton and James Patterson. With lively discussions, this group truly enjoys their meetings as they exchange their thoughts about each new title.
- The library will also be hosting Monday Movie Madness to the public at 2 p.m. beginning on June 14th. Stop by and enjoy a family-friendly movie along with fresh popped popcorn.
- The Library Director would like to extend a huge **Thank You** to Hato Potrero Farm Inc., for their generous donation of their delicious yogurt, smoothie drinks to the library each week. These smoothies are a major hit with the attendees of the library's Monday Movie Madness and Tails and Tales programs.
- **Upcoming Events-**
 - July 19th -Director to attend SWFLN Board Meeting in Fort Myers
 - July 12th, 19th, and 26th -Monday Movie Madness-2 p.m.
 - July 13th, 20th, and 27th -Tails & Tales Summer Program 10 a.m.
- Needing a computer at home or a laptop to travel with? The Clewiston and Barron Libraries have partnered with Komputers for Kids which is able to provide you an entire desktop computer for as low as \$40 (tower, flat screen monitor, mouse, and keyboard included)-wifi card is available for only \$15 and laptops as low as \$75.00. Stop in at either branch to check the inventory that is available.
- 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.

**Interim Police Chief Tom Lewis reports:
Police Department Employee Additions**

The department has been busy interviewing candidates for open positions for police officer, evidence technician, and kennel technician.

On July 8, 2021, the department welcomed Daniel Brophy, a long-time law enforcement officer. Formerly the Deputy Chief of Police for the Lee County Port Authority, Dan has been in law enforcement since 1982 and was hired as the new Support Services Commander to oversee our Evidence and Property function, Animal Control, Records, and other ancillary functions. Dan will play a significant role in our future efforts to gain accredited status.



There are several other applicants in varying stages of the hiring process and we are hopeful to have more quality applicants on-board in the near future.

Animal Control

The police department has updated policies with regards to Animal Control Services and Shelter Operations. Many of these policies are already resulting in enhanced services to the community, increasing officer safety, and ensuring a higher level of accountability.

On June 17th, Sheriff Whidden supplied Animal Control with several inmates to assist in a deep cleaning of the facility. Inmates pressure washed the exterior kennels and sidewalks while other inmates cleaned the inside kennel rooms, hallways, and office areas. An Animal Control Officer was on-scene to ensure proper chemicals and cleaners were used in the project. A huge thank you to the Sheriff!



On July 6, 2021, the agency hired Bethany Miller as the newest Animal Control employee. Bethany will start as a part-time kennel technician caring for our animals and maintaining the shelter.

In the month of June 2021, Animal Control reported the intake of 2 stray cats and 6 stray dogs. There were a total of 67 animal-related calls-for-service in the month of June (32 outside city limits). There were a total of 4 citations written (2 outside city limits).

Training

On June 15th and 16th, the department hosted Amy Stafford, the Hendry County Fire and EMS Operations Chief. She graciously trained our Police Officers and Animal Control Officers in the use of Narcan, the substance used to counteract the effects of an opioid drug overdose and supplied our agency with the product. We now have another life-saving skill in the hands of our officers.



On June 23, 2021, Officers and Reserve Officers completed Use of Force training including Active Shooter scenario-based training on a simulator. As the nation deals with the aftermath of many high-profile police use of force incidents, we are ensuring that our officers are using best practices and staying focused on de-escalation techniques.



Other News

Sheriff Whidden graciously provided the Clewiston Police Department with dozens of Tasers (Model X26), batteries, data cables and the like. This will not only provide our officers with the equipment, but will save the citizens of Clewiston thousands of tax dollars. This is yet another great example of a strong partnership with the Hendry County Sheriff's Office.



On June 22, 2021, Communications Supervisor Tunisia Cohens visited Communications International in Naples to configure the new dispatching consoles as we move forward with a new 800 MHz radio system. On June 28, 2021 and June 29, 2021, installation of the new mobile radios into the city's existing patrol vehicles was completed. On July 14, 2021, the dispatch console hardware and server room hardware was scheduled to be installed. Testing on the entire system is schedule is set for July 15th – 16th with go-live/completion date expected on or before July 19th.

On June 25, 2021, with the assistance of the City Public Works Department, two parking spaces at the police department were designated in honor of our community heroes.

