

# MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN COMMISSION MEETING TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

March 4, 2026

The special meeting of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida, with Mayor Freeman presiding. The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

## CALL TO ORDER

## ROLL CALL

| Commissioner (Ward) | Present |
|---------------------|---------|
| Regan (Four)        | YES     |
| Roberts (One)       | YES     |
| Sage (Five)         | YES     |
| Freeman (Three)     | YES     |

## STAFF PRESENT

Bill Lawrence, Town Manager; Kathy Rosado, Town Clerk; Thad Carroll, Growth Management Director; Becky Higgins, Senior Planner; C.T. Eagle, Public Works Director; Mike Burske, Parks and Recreation Director; Lady Lake Police Chief Steve Hunt; Elisha Pappacoda, Communications Director; Joella LeDonne, Finance Director; Brandi Carson, Assistant Finance Director; Butch Goodman, Utilities Supervisor; Tamika DeLee, Human Resources Director; and Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk.

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll explained how the Town determines its ability to support new developments. He explained that when an application is received, the Public Works director reviews it along with the land use amendment and rezoning applications to determine if the tanks' current flow can accommodate the projected need. He stated the school board also reviews the application to determine if there is capacity for the projected new students. If the plat progresses through the process from preliminary plat, to improvement plan, to final plat, the capacity is encumbered in perpetuity.

Mr. Carroll stated that many developments do not come to fruition. Therefore, the capacity is not encumbered until the time of payment by the applicant, at which time the town is obligated to service that project.

Mr. Carroll explained the town's current average daily flow rates and capacity situation:

- 614,338 average daily flow of sewer.
- 686,070 average daily flow of sewer outstanding with platted development.
- 631,285 reserved through agreements.
- Town has permitted capacity of 1.2 MGD in current plant.
- Town has 400,000 gpd through agreement with the Villages (i.e., 1.6 MGD is available on paper).

Other Considerations:

- Expansion and/or upgrades to water and sewer systems will be required even in no growth scenarios. Capital investment will always be needed.
- Treatment costs will continue to increase over time, as do gas prices and the prices of other utilities. Thus, fees are adjusted over time. Users will incur these costs, not every taxpayer of the Town.
- Timing of the construction of a new plant is important. If it is built too early the percentage of necessary flow (roughly 30%) may not be enough to keep the plant operational; further, if construction halts, the revenues needed to finance the debt may not be collected.
- Construction of a new plant will likely be financed by a variety of funding sources, including grants, State Revolving Fund, and bonds. Repayment of these financing instruments will likely be from the new development (impact fees) and utility revenues.

Mr. Carroll stated that though not being considered at the present time, should a small amount of supplemental financing be required from reserves, it could be argued that in some capacity all Town residents indirectly benefit when businesses who utilize our central utility choose Lady Lake. The vision of the plant expansion in 2006 opened the door for commercial development, including Village Crossroads, Lady Lake Crossing, Lady Lake Commons, Sam's Club, and many professional and medical offices along the CR 466 corridor. These developments have created numerous local jobs and offer a variety of opportunities for shopping and dining that can be enjoyed by all.

**A. Presentation – Water, Wastewater, and Reclaimed Water Planning Update and Recommendations. (Jason Shepler, Town Engineer, CPH)**

Town Engineer Jason Shepler reviewed historic water and wastewater flows from December 2010 through January 2026. He also reviewed the current and future development projects. He stated that all these totals include Fruitland Park.

### **Water System Capital Improvement Recommendations – Water Treatment Plant 4**

- Two Groundwater wells (16"/1,000 gpm/EA)
- Two 0.40 million gallon (MG) ground storage tanks (GST)
- Three high service pumps (750 gpm/EA) with expansion capabilities
- Associated support components (Electrical, instrumentation, generator)
- \$15.3Million; Complete by 2030; Determine Funding Approach
- Start property acquisition review (2026-2027)
- Consumptive Use Permitting in Process
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) Monitoring

### **Reclaimed Water System Capital Improvement Recommendations**

- System interrelated to Wastewater System/Effluent Disposal.
- Monitor reclaimed water demands. Reclaimed Water Service Area (RWSA) maturation process underway.
- Wet-weather disposal capacity increase required. 40 acres estimate pending geometry, setbacks, geotechnical review. Start property acquisition review (2026-2027).
- Reclaimed Water Transmission Main Extension to be coordinated with development activities. \$1.5M capital estimate.
- Reclaimed Water Operational Storage Expansion. Part of Wastewater System Expansion Project. 5 million gallon target. 1.2 million gallon existing capacity.

### **Wastewater System Capital Improvement Plan Recommendations**

- Collection System Action Plan (CSAP); FDEP Compliance Requirement
  - Annual expenditure to survey collection system.
  - Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey (SSES)
- WRF Expansion, Phase 3; 3.0 MGD (AADF)
  - \$90.415M; Multi-year process; recommend starting the design and permitting
  - Offsite RIB Expansion
  - Monitoring Reclaimed Water system Demands
  - 3.0 MGD AWT WRF

- Membrane Bioreactor (MBR)
- Maximizes existing tankage
- Three alternatives evaluated
- Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) Compliance
  - Septic Tank Phase Out (STPO) projects
  - 10 Total Project Areas; \$61.376M for near-term compliance (STPO 1 thru 6)
  - Springs BMAP – Silver Springs, Silver Springs Group, and Upper Silver River
  - Nutrient Reduction BMAP – Upper Ocklawaha Basin
  - Focus on nutrient reductions
  - Town submitted BMAP Remediation Plan to FEP on July 2024
  - Septic tank or onsite sewage treatment and disposal system abatements
  - Higher nutrient reductions at WRF
    - Anticipating eventual advanced wastewater treatment requirements
    - Targeting Total Nitrogen <3 g/L and Total Phosphorus <1 mg/L (key regulatory requirement)
- Lift Station 1 Expansion and Improvements
  - \$7.42M estimated
  - Wet Well Expansion; Pumping Improvements; Resiliency Improvements

**Complete buildout and total cost estimate - \$164,963,000**

#### **Key Regulatory Considerations**

- Coupled with consumptive use permit (CPU) requirements
- Non-essential (irrigation) demands to be addressed via reclaimed water
- Wet-weather and drought condition management requires capital projects

**Funding Sources** — FDEP State Revolving Fund; FDEP Water Quality Improvement Grants; FDEP Alternative Water Supply Grants; FDEP Springs restoration Grants; Legislative Appropriations; Utility Bonds.

Commissioner Sage stated that the town commission voted to extend the agreement with Fruitland Park for two years, yet they are included in this proposal. He inquired if the town will be processing their wastewater in 2030.

Public Works Director C.T. Eagle replied affirmatively and explained that a new agreement with Fruitland Park is currently being drafted.

Town Manager Bill Lawrence advised that Town Attorney Derek Schroth has been negotiating a new agreement with Fruitland Park. He stated the final draft will be presented to the commission at an upcoming meeting.

Mayor Freeman inquired if Fruitland Park has begun planning for the construction of their wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Lawrence stated that they have begun developing a master plan.

Mr. Eagle stated that he has been in contact with the Fruitland Park's engineer for the project, which is how they obtained the figures included with Mr. Shepler's presentation. He concurred that the commission extended the agreement to 2028 and realistically it is not enough time to build a wastewater treatment facility within that timeframe.

Commissioner Sage stated that this issue has been discussed frequently and inquired if they have made any progress toward beginning this project.

Mr. Shepler stated that they are currently in the planning stage.

Mr. Lawrence clarified that the 10-year contract with Fruitland Park will end in September 2026. The commission extended it two additional years. He reiterated that it is not enough time to complete a project of this size.

Commissioner Sage stated that the town's LDRs stipulate developers are required to have the reservoirs throughout a development. He inquired if one 40 acre parcel would be sufficient for the reclaimed water requirements.

Mr. Shepler stated that what is presented looks similar to the rapid infiltration basin. The District no longer allows reclaimed water and stormwater to comeingle these facilities. He stated that these are the stormwater management facilities for the development. One 40 acre parcel would accommodate this project, divided into up to four sections. This property's functionality, in part, would encompass reject storage and effluent disposal.

Commissioner Regan inquired how many town residents have a septic system. He verified with Mr. Shepler that these residents are required to connect to town utilities when the wastewater lines are constructed. He inquired how it would be funded if a resident cannot afford the connection.

Mr. Shepler replied affirmatively noting that there are approximately 1500 properties currently that have septic systems. He stated that there may be grants available to aid with the connections, among other options such as the town absorbing the costs.

Commissioner Roberts referred to Mr. Shepler's comment that the town may not qualify for certain funding based upon the financial level of the residents of this area. She inquired if this applied to all Lady Lake residents or the residents of Lady Lake that utilizes the town utilities. She stated that The Villages portion of Lady Lake has their own water system, which alters the financial component.

Mr. Shepler stated that The Villages portion of Lady Lake will be excluded. He stated they will identify the low to moderate income for the service territory by reviewing the census records.

Commissioner Sage inquired if the town could provide financing to the residents who must connect to town utilities.

Mr. Shepler stated that there are several affordable options. He stated that the town attorney would advise the commission of the legal restrictions.

Commissioner Roberts stated that the projected revenues and debt coverage tables indicate a significant increase in 2029-2030.

Mr. Shepler stated that the totals are reflective of the rate increases. The significant increase is the beginning of the rate increase when the debt service is collected.

Mr. Eagle stated that proposals for a wastewater impact fee study and water and sewer rate study are forthcoming. He stated that the most recent increase in wastewater impact fees was in 2020. He stated that it is imperative to begin the engineering and design for the wastewater plant, along with locating property for the projects.

**Upon a motion by Commissioner Roberts and seconded by Commissioner Sage, the Commission approved the Water, Sewer, and Reuse Master Plans and Clean Water Facilities Plan as presented by CPH. Motion carried 4-0.**

**ADJOURN**

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.



Kathleen Rosado, Town Clerk



Ed Freeman, Mayor