

**TOWN OF WELAKA  
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

March 14, 2023, at 6:00 PM  
Honorable Willie Washington, Jr. Town Council Room  
400 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Welaka, FL 32193

*(This meeting will be broadcasted, for view only, on the Town of Welaka's Facebook Page)*

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & INVOCATION**
- 3. ROLL CALL BY TOWN CLERK**, Meghan Allmon
- 4. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**
  - a. February 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes
- 5. APPROVAL OF CURRENT AGENDA**
- 6. RECOGNITIONS**
  1. Tyler Buford, Utility Dept. Supervisor, passed his Wastewater Operator Test on February 28, 2023
- 7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**
  1. None
- 8. RESOLUTIONS**
  1. Resolution 2023-03 - Approving the Town of Welaka Water & Wastewater Utility Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans for the Town's Utility System Improvements
- 9. PROCLAMATIONS**
  1. Proclamation 2023-02 - Water Conservation Month
  2. Proclamation 2023-03 - Gamblers Anonymous Proclamation
- 10. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*A 'Request To Speak Form' shall be completed and submitted to the Town Clerk to officially address the Town Council. There will be no response to the speaker by Council or Town Staff, except the Council Members desiring to address a comment made during this part of the meeting may do so under Section 13 of this section. One specific issue per Form may be submitted, and you will have up to 3 minutes to address the Council.*

## **11. PRESENTATIONS / REPORTS TO TOWN COUNCIL**

1. Events Committee Update
2. Citizens Advisory Committee Update

*Presentations are scheduled by individuals or businesses to inform the Town Council of issues, projects, etc. The Council shall not take formal action upon issues or matters presented under presentations at the same meeting. If formal action is desired, such matters shall be deferred and scheduled for a subsequent or future Council Meeting for consideration. Council may, however, by a majority vote, act on items they deem necessary and appropriate. Items not requiring Council action shall be directed to the mayor for consideration and further action.*

## **12. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Sewer Credits for Businesses on Welaka Utility System

## **13. NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

1. **TOWN MATTERS**
  - a. Approval of Engineering Firm for new Wastewater Treatment Facility
  - b. Discussion on converting field of dreams to a pickle ball park
  - c. Preliminary discussion on BS&A Accounting Software for the Town
  - d. Town Feral cat problem - animal control
2. **ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS**
  - a. David Jeltis - asking for additional Board Member recommendations
3. **UTILITY MATTERS**

## **14. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

1. **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT: JOHN STUART, Supervisor**
  - a. Report on overall Maintenance of the Town
2. **UTILITY DEPARTMENT REPORT: TYLER BUFORD, Supervisor**
  - a. Report on Town Utility System

**3. POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL PORATH**

- a. Update on Legislative Appropriation for Emergency Operations Building**

**4. TOWN ATTORNEY PATRICK KENNEDY REPORT**

**5. TOWN CLERK MEGHAN ALLMON REPORTS**

**15. MAYOR & TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS**

**1. MAYOR WATTS**

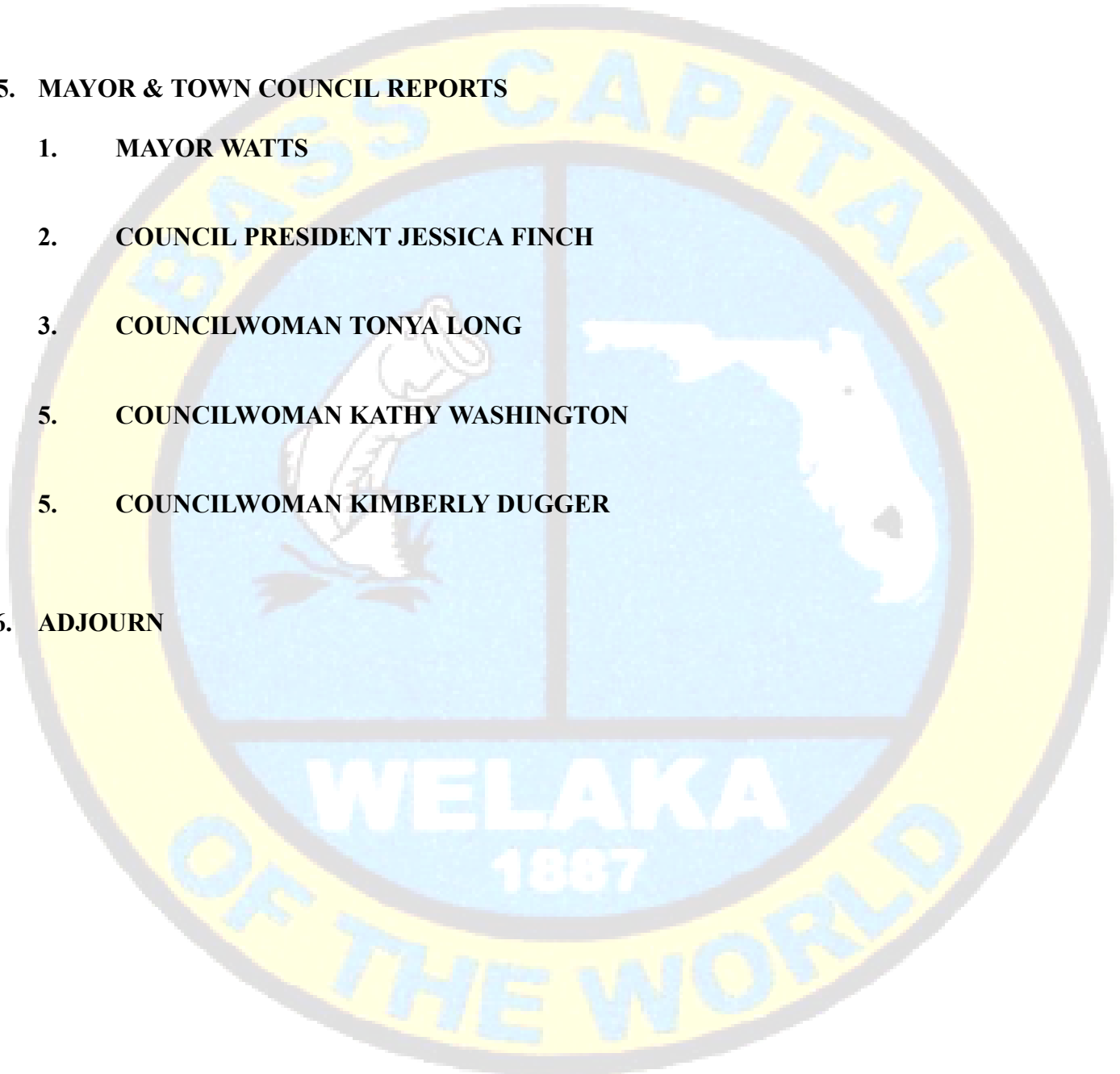
**2. COUNCIL PRESIDENT JESSICA FINCH**

**3. COUNCILWOMAN TONYA LONG**

**5. COUNCILWOMAN KATHY WASHINGTON**

**5. COUNCILWOMAN KIMBERLY DUGGER**

**16. ADJOURN**



## 2/14/2023 Town Council Meeting Minutes

1. Mayor called Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2.1. Everyone stood and said the pledge of allegiance.

2.2. Council President Finch gave the invocation.

3. Roll Call – all present. 5 Council Members are present. We have a quorum, Mayor.

4. a. Washington mentioned to correct the word “everyone” to “everywhere” in the last sentence of the 1/10/2023 Meeting Minutes.

Finch motioned to accept the corrected 1/10/23 Meeting Minutes and Milledge seconded. Passed 5/0.

5. Motion to accept current Agenda made by Milledge and Finch seconded. Passed 5/0.

6. None.

7. ORD 2023-01 – Town of Welaka Park Regulations Ordinance - Mayor read the header aloud.

Milledge made a motion to accept ORD 2023-01 on its Second Reading and Finch Seconded. Passed 5/0.

Discussions: None.

8. None.

9. None.

10. Public Comment – Ray Roerick – speaking about the feral cat problem animal control. Trap, vaccinate, neuter & to reduce the cat population problem in the Town. People are dropping cats off in Welaka at different locations. The cost rose drastically also. It’s hitting the Friends of Welaka Committee hard. They spent \$2,500-3000 annually. He asked if the Town’s budget could include a line item for this expense. They spent approximately \$2,700 last year.

Washington – does any other municipalities have this problem and how do they pay for this?

Ray – yes, a lot in Florida, and all over the country. They try to have fund raisers and sell calendars to fund this project. He said Putnam County received a grant and there’s 25 grants handed out each year and the funds they received goes to the shelter in Palatka.

Mayor – Does this Council want to add this to the Agenda next month on 3/14/23?

Finch – said she cannot comment on this but it’s a huge issue and people are dropping pregnant cats off and non-feral cats off and it’s all volunteer efforts.

Mayor – asked again. Should we Agenda this?

Long – should the community want our money to go towards this? She needs more information from the Town residents to accept this.

Finch – there’s also a grant opportunity to investigate for this.

Mayor – under Public Comment, we cannot take action. We will put it in the Agenda on 3/14/23 to discuss further.

10. Public Comment – Bill Melcher – Welaka pickleball group. Would like to use the Downtown Park to suit their needs. The basketball court needs to be re-surfaced and repaired but they’d love to utilize this location.

Mayor – doing a pickleball that wasn’t on concrete?

Bill – yes, asphalt is the best on your legs and joints, rather than concrete. Jim King Trail Grant – can we use some of those funds since it’s on the Trail and has bathrooms and a storage area? The firehouse courts are taking a toll on their knees and the sun is right in their eyes at certain times, and they’d love to be able to play at the Downtown Park.

Mayor – we can Agenda this item with some ideas from the Town in the 3/14/23 Meeting. Mayor and Bill can meet with John to discuss also.

Bill – He got 4 estimates also for the other side of the dog park.

Town Attorney – Can we reconfigure the courts at the firehouse?

Mayor – not sure if we can switch the nets and reconfigure them or not.

Bill – There's not enough room with the nets and the court for safety and comfortable playing.

Finch – the Town Hall property, the basketball and pickleball courts are shared. Do you want to do the same here by the firehouse?

Bill – they use a temporary net at the Downtown park. If they put 2 courts in, they need another 8 feet and would have to eliminate the tennis courts and he doesn't want to do that.

Finch – Look at the Field of Dream area to do this?

Bill said they could fit 4 courts there and the Quote id around \$2,800 that he has.

Mayor – how many courts would you like?

Bill – Sometimes there's 35-40 people out there waiting to play. Before covid, they had 3 courts to play.

Mayor – wants to meet with Bill and John Stuart and get some ideas in moving forward.

Bill – we'll all teach you, come on out.

11.1.a. Katherine Van Zant, Saltus Engineering –she spoke of the Capacity Fee Study. It's exciting in Welaka and we want to keep the families and small Town charm.

11.1.b. Katherine Van Zant, Saltus Engineering – she went through the Capacity Fee Study PowerPoint presentation She accepted questions: Only for new users, not existing users. Finish – some areas are less dense outside of Welaka.

Would those cost less or more? Katherine – when there's a lot of people on septic (out of town), the rates are higher. We can relook at our capacity fees for our existing users. Look into this now since the times are changing.

Mayor – we were fortunate to have our new WWTP fully funded. If we need to extend the capacity in the future, we may have to take a loan out to enlarge the WWTP if the Town grows. Should the current residents have to have increased rates or just the new people moving in making our Town grow?

Katherine – it must get paid for, either way. The funding we are receiving right now is very unusual and we are handling it properly with future plans.

Mayor – our Utility System is our largest asset the Town has and we have to maintain it.

Mayor – asked Town Clerk to forward Katherine's email to the Council if they have an questions

11.2.a. Patrick Dangelo, FL Rural Water – Spoke of the Asset Management Plan (Drinking Water)

11.2.b. Patrick Dangelo FL Rural Water – Spoke of the Asset Management Plan (Wastewater)

Review of both plans at the same time. Next month the Council can vote on it, and if they're done reviewing, do the 2 RESOLUTIONS on 3/14/23.

FRW has over 1,000 members strong all over FL. Managers, field workers, finance members, DEP and engineers as well. Asset Management is a living, breathing aspect of Utility. Growth, replacements, capital future plans, etc.

Town staff and FRW went all over the Town and entered the GIS and data information into Diamond Maps, manholes, lines, hydrants, valves, etc. Diamond Maps will be a great tool for the Town to use.

Red Plan can incorporate all the data they collected and insert into the program.

Benefits of this: reduced down-time and we can remotely see all the GIS and accurate locations of errors to be fixed. The Asset Management system will use Diamond Maps and the Red Plan together.

They're working to revamp Section 7 on the finance side with Dyana at FRW. This will include rate increases and adjustments and Dyana is working with Town Clerk, Meghan, and will be presented to the Council separately from this.

Patrick is very satisfied with the help from the Mayor, Tyler and Meghan. FRW will be here the whole time helping us make lists.

Patrick will be happy to answer any questions and Town Clerk will share his email with them.

Mayor – Page 12 of Wastewater Packet – Talks about wells, water tanks, distribution systems, etc. It's worth an estimated 2.7 million. If we replace the water side, it's over 9 million and over 9.8 million for wastewater.

Mayor – go to Page 28 of the Drinking Water packet. To replace a hydrant is \$3,500 and that is not the labor to install.

Patrick said these figures are very low now also. They're most likely higher now.

Mayor – mentioned that the INI, all the rain flow that goes into the sewer system from drains and manholes, costs a lot more to process at the WWTP.

Dyana Stewart with FRW – we have two State Revolving Loans, so the Council needs to remember this when they make their decision.

Patrick – all their services were free and could cost up to \$50,000 each side (Water & Wastewater).

Mayor – We made repairs and upgrades, but we need to know what condition the Utility Systems is now, so we know what direction to move in the future.

11.3. The Citizens Advisory Committee – Michael Anthony spoke – the last meeting was spent on pushback of the NEFRC Workshop. Everyone thinks this is what is set in stone, but the grant is opening the door so that we can gather the info we want and to start fresh.

Use ARPA Funds and conduct a survey or questionnaire of the Town residents. The NEFRC is doing a cookie-cutter plan and it would cost much more to hire engineers.

Mayor – what would the questionnaire look like? What would be on it?

Michael – ARPA Funds can be used to do this survey to receive feedback.

Golf cart crossings on 309, relocating the boat ramp/parking issue, community center would be great, tree ORD needs to be updated and the Tree Board Members need to be appointed.

Milledge said that we need to update the ORD and the Board hasn't gathered since 2014 approximately.

Town Attorney said we need to set volunteer member term limits for Town Boards also.

Swearing in night we could appoint members.

ARPA Funds – pickleball courts could possibly use this money?

Mayor – asked Fred Fox to not accept one of the grants and he needs to contact the DEP.

Michael – said maybe this can be part of their questionnaire.

Mayor – he said he doesn't include himself due to govern in the sunshine law.

Finch – the Citizens Advisory Board Meeting on this past Friday, people said they felt their voice wasn't heard. Possibly 60 people showed up. Some people said they did not want to do the survey. The Council cannot add their influence in the survey. Possibly the NEFRC could mail them out and it should cost under \$500.00. We just cannot continue to mail out surveys for everything the Town wants.

Mayor – we just want a plan in place because developers are contacting Town Hall weekly. Success attracts success and Money attracts money. Our Zoning plan needs to be refreshed and ready for this growth.

Milledge - Workshop on 3/21/23 from NEFRC is coming up.

Finch – time sensitive survey that needs to get out quickly from the NEFRC since we cannot put it together ourselves.

Milledge – said a very simplified survey can be done.

Finch – NEFRC's final decision is in May but we do not have to use their plan.

Finch – 3/21/23 NEFRC will meet at 11 AM at the Div. of Forestry with each state agency. Lunch at Town Hall for lunch, and then a golf cart/walk around tour with the state agencies. Wrap that up around 2:00 PM.

Ray Roerick – has not heard of any survey and doesn't do Facebook.

Mayor – Finch listed it in newsletter and it is on the website and we have copies printed here at Town Hall.

Washington – digital sign status? Town Clerk said she paid for ½ of this last month, \$16,000 so far and had to submit the permitting paperwork from the building department. Town Clerk will check the ETA and let the Council know.

12. Sewer Credits – Finch described how a calculation is made for a sewer credit for local commercial businesses and pool

filling and pressure washing.

Milledge made a motion to accept sewer credits. Finch seconded. Passed 5/0.

13.1. None.

13.2. None.

13.3. None.

14.1.a. John Stuart – absent.

14.2.a. Tyler Buford is absent.

14.3. Chief Porath spoke – \$15 million dollar Appropriation submitted to Bobby Payne’s office last week as the deadline was this week. Everything right now is tight so we’re hoping to get approved.

Public Works radio repeater should be swapped out tomorrow and they can have their loaner back.

Lighting survey was completed around the Town. FPL said they did a study in 2018/2019 also and the Council would have to approve new lights/poles, etc. FPL can give us a cost to update the Town’s lighting with possibly just new LED lights.

14.4. Town Attorney – RFQ for WWTF are going to be restarted on the whole process. A meeting with the engineers can be done and we can hold a Town Special Meeting.

Allen Scott estate still trying to ask for a reimbursement of attorney fees. Complaint against him is not a reimbursable expense and we may have to ask a judge to step in. The issue was not a Defense Attorney

14.5. Town Clerk – None.

15.1. Mayor spoke – Road project will be pushed out a week due to the PS&A machinery issues. We rented the cold-planer machine and John and crew will tear up the asphalt to be replaced by PS&A.

\$983,000 Jim King Trail requested funds for.

Utility District push-back from the county, regarding our boundaries. Mayor had a meeting with them to start a plan with them to not duplicate it. The County wants to provide water to our area over Dunn’s Creek. Mayor said if you provide water, then they should provide wastewater also. That’s the more expensive side of utilities.

We need to ask the County for their actual plans since we didn’t get any.

Town Attorney – PDN Display Ad needed of the Utility District and adoption. We’re trying to establish a boundary outside of our district. The County’s service was from 2021 and only went up to the Hoot Owl Ridge area.

Mayor – they’ll have to get with FGUA to go across the SJR at the Dunn’s Creek. They only want to run the water and not the wastewater opportunity. We received the DEO Job Growth Grant that was specific for this utility district.

Town Attorney – ORD will be reviewed, and we can do a 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> reading all over again and correctly advertise in PDN. Possibly do a Memorandum to be adopted also.

Mayor – asked if Council was ok with this and Town Attorney can bring it back in the next following months.

15.2. Council President Finch – L&A test was done today at the Supervisor of Elections Office in Palatka. All went well. Code issue they’re having, Washington and Finch discussed.

Mayor – A temporary Moratorium will be started and put into place for the Town since our Planning & Zoning ORD is being updated now. Specific adult entertainment, pain management clinic, etc.

Town Attorney – It must be an ORD and we can do a Moratorium first and we can make a listed use list to regulate businesses coming in.

Mayor asked the Council for their opinions. Finch mentioned that we should have this doc on the 3/14/23 Meeting Agenda. Mayor and all agreed.

15.3. Councilwoman Milledge – None.

15.4 Councilwoman Long – None.

15.5 Councilwoman Washington – Building Permit – people coming to her stating they don't get the info feedback. Online or the speed of it?

Mayor – asked what's the issue?

Washington – people called and ended up coming up here to get his permit package. Town Attorney said this person was the one requesting a larger fence and Town Clerk said he's on the Zoning Board Agenda to ask his concern.

River Hill – the contractor garbage is a mess on the side of the road.

Town Attorney – possibly a general nuisance complaint? Milledge said to speak to the contractor. The Chief asked them to cover the trash bins pre-storm and was assured they'd be covered but they were not.

Mayor – we need a Developers Agreement in place. He will call Joe, the manager at River Hill.

Washington – when can we get paid and start, the WWTP construction? Mayor said we have the money. Town Attorney said probably around 18 months or so.

Town Attorney said when the project is more than 4 million, we should have done the RFQ's a different way and be more involved. We'll re-do the RFP process and do it correctly this time.

Mayor – we're not doing upgrades to the WWTP to waste money, but we're fixing things daily.

Mayor met with the Auto-Read Meter company. We're going to do an RFQ process for this also. Melissa Fox said let's do this and then we can get our funding letter.

16. Adjourned 8:01 PM.



## RESOLUTION NO. 2023-03

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF WELAKA, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE TOWN OF WELAKA WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITY ASSET MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY PLANS; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, TOWN CLERK AND UTILITY SUPERVISOR TO TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EFFECTUATE THE INTENT OF THIS RESOLUTION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

*WHEREAS*, Florida Statutes provide for financial assistance to local government agencies to finance construction of the utility system improvements; and

*WHEREAS*, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection State Revolving Fund (SRF) has designated the Town of Welaka Utility System Improvements, identified in the Water and Wastewater Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans, as potentially eligible for available funding; and

*WHEREAS*, as a condition of obtaining funding from the SRF, the Town is required to implement a Water and Wastewater Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans for the Town's Utility System Improvements; and

*WHEREAS*, the Council of the Town of Welaka has determined that approval of the attached Water and Wastewater Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans for the proposed improvements, in order to obtain necessary funding in accordance with SRF guidelines, is in the best interest of the Town.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Town of Welaka Commission** the following:

**Section 1.** That the Town of Welaka Commission hereby approves the Town of Welaka Water and Wastewater Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans, attached hereto and incorporated by reference as a part of this Resolution.

**Section 2.** That the Mayor, Town Clerk, Utility Supervisor, and designated staff are authorized to take all actions necessary to effectuate the intent of this Resolution and to implement the Water and Wastewater Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans in accordance with applicable Florida law and Council direction in order to obtain funding from the SRF.

**Section 3.** That the Town will annually evaluate existing rates to determine the need for any increase and will increase rates in accordance with the financial recommendations found in the Water and Wastewater Asset Management and Fiscal Sustainability Plans or in proportion to the Town's needs as determined by the Board in its discretion.

**Section 4.** That this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

***APPROVED AND ADOPTED*** by the Town Council for the Town of Welaka at its Town Council Meeting assembled this 14<sup>th</sup> day of March 2023.

**Town of Welaka, Florida**

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**Jamie D. Watts, Mayor**

**Attest:**

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**Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk**

**Approved as to form and legality:**

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**Patrick Kennedy, Town Attorney**



*Proclamation 2023-02*  
*Designating the Month of March as*  
*Water Conservation Month in the*  
*Town of Welaka*

*WHEREAS*, water is a basic and essential need of every living creature, and water conservation is becoming more critical across our great state; and

*WHEREAS*, the State of Florida, St. Johns River Water Management District, and the Town of Welaka are working together to increase awareness about the importance of water conservation; and

*WHEREAS*, residents are encouraged to keep their home leak-free by fixing broken sprinkler heads and repairing dripping faucets, toilet flappers and showerheads; and

*WHEREAS*, the Town of Welaka and the State of Florida have designated the month of March historically a dry month when water demands are most acute, as Water Conservation Month to educate residents about how they can help save Florida's precious water resources; and

*WHEREAS*, the Town of Welaka has always encouraged and supported water conservation through various educational programs and special events; and

*WHEREAS*, every business, industry, school and resident can help by saving water and thus promote a healthy economy and community; and

*NOW, THEREFORE, WE*, the **Town of Welaka Council**, do hereby proclaim March 2023 as:

**“WATER CONSERVATION MONTH”**

and call upon each resident and business to help protect our precious resource by practicing water saving measures, following the county's lawn watering ordinance, and becoming more aware of the need to save water.

*Dated this 14th Day of March 2023*

ATTEST:

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Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk

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Jamie D. Watts, Mayor



*Proclamation 2023-03*  
*Designating the Month of March as*  
*Problem Gambling Awareness Month in the*  
*Town of Welaka*

*WHEREAS*, problem gambling is a serious public health issue affecting one to three percent of the general adult population and often results in personal, financial, familial, legal, and other costs, including a high risk of suicide; and

*WHEREAS*, it is estimated that over 200,000 Florida adults of diverse age, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status suffer from past-year gambling problems, and 700,000 more are at risk of developing such difficulties, constituting 4.7% of the adult population ages 18 and older; and

*WHEREAS*, it is further important to note that these statistics do not account for youth, who are increasingly and deceptively exposed to gambling concepts and are at an increased risk for developing gambling-related problems; and

*WHEREAS*, it is also essential to recognize problem gambling as a societal issue, with 8-10 additional people adversely impacted by an every problem gambler, increasing the affected population by an estimated additional 1.5 million individuals, with conservative projected social costs amounting to more than \$9 billion nationally each year; and

*WHEREAS*, problem gambling is treatable for those who seek help, which minimizes the harm to Floridians and to the State as a whole; and

*WHEREAS*, any individual, professional, or other organizations dedicated to assisting those in need can participate in raising awareness and preventing problem gambling by promoting the statewide, confidential, toll-free, and 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline, 888-ADMIT-IT; and

*WHEREAS*, the Florida Council on the Compulsive Gambling's public awareness campaign, provides an opportunity to educate the public, policymakers, educators, businesses, mental health and criminal justice professionals, and others, about the potential adverse effects of gambling, as well as social, legal, financial, and emotional impacts and available supports; and

*WHEREAS*, any individual, professional, or other organization dedicated to assisting those in need can participate in raising awareness and preventing problem gambling by promoting the statewide, confidential, toll-free, and 24-hour Problem Gambling Helpline 888-ADMIT-IT; and

*WHEREAS*, the Town of Welaka can demonstrate its support in addressing problem gambling by raising public awareness through a declaration of proclamation of the month of **March 2023 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month** in the Town of Welaka.

*NOW, THEREFORE, WE*, the Town of Welaka Council, do hereby proclaim the month of March 2023 in the Town of Welaka, as:

**“PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH”**

*Dated this 14th Day of March 2023*

ATTEST:

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Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk

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Jamie D. Watts, Mayor



# TOWN OF WELAKA

## Grand Total Scoring Sheet for Welaka Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion RFP # 2023-01

### GRAND TOTAL SHEET

FIRM NAME: Mittauer & Associates, Inc.

TOTAL SCORE: 427

FIRM NAME: Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc.

TOTAL SCORE: 390

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS EACH : 500

### FIRM RANKING

FIRM 1: Mittauer

FIRM 2: Weston & Sampson

Town Clerk Signature: *Meghan E. Allmon*

Printed Name: Meghan E. Allmon

Date: 3/10/2023

*Mittauer*

*Weston & Sampson*

91.00	+
87.00	+
80.00	+
95.00	+
74.00	+
<u>427.00</u>	*
0.00	*
88.00	+
52.00	+
85.00	+
84.00	+
81.00	+
<u>390.00</u>	*
0.00	*