

TOWN OF WELAKA
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

April 9, 2024, at 6:00 PM
Honorable Willie Washington, Jr. Town Council Room
400 4th 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: March 12, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes**
- 5. MOTION FOR SINE DIE**
- 6. SWEAR-IN of Council President Jessica Finch and Councilwoman Kathy Washington by Clerk of the Putnam County Court, Matt Reynolds.**
- 7. RECONVENE OF WELAKA TOWN COUNCIL**
- 8. ROLL CALL BY TOWN CLERK, Meghan Allmon**
- 9. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT**
- 10. APPROVAL OF CURRENT AGENDA**
- 11. RECOGNITIONS**
- 12. PRESENTATIONS / REPORTS TO TOWN COUNCIL**
 1. Events Committee
 2. Citizens Advisory Committee
 3. Charter Review Committee
 4. Tree Board

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.

- 13. PROCLAMATIONS**
 1. PROC 2024-03 Water Conservation Month is April
 2. PROC 2024-04 Historic Preservation Month is May
 3. PROC 2024-05 Mental Health Awareness Month is May
- 14. RESOLUTIONS**
 1. RES 2024-02 State Revolving Fund Loan Program
 2. RES 2024-03 Renaming Downtown Park to “Mason Newstead Memorial Downtown Park”

15. PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. ORD 2024-01 Welaka No Wake Zone - First Reading

16. CORRESPONDENCES

17. 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.

18. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS - None.

19. NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. TOWN MATTERS

- a. No animal dumping signs
- b. Mobile Food Trucks - Zoning Board Meeting was canceled on March 21st so this will be addressed on the April 18th Zoning Board Meeting Agenda.
- c. 5-year road paving plan

2. ZONING BOARD

3. CODE ENFORCEMENT BOARD

20. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT

2. UTILITY DEPARTMENT REPORT

3. POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL PORATH REPORT

4. TOWN ATTORNEY PATRICK KENNEDY REPORT

5. TOWN CLERK MEGHAN ALLMON REPORT

21. MAYOR & TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS

1. MAYOR WATTS

- a. FL Blue Health Insurance increased @ \$50 per employee
- b. Town owned properties - demo, clean-up and discuss what to do with these properties.
- c. Update on Grants

2. COUNCIL PRESIDENT JESSICA FINCH

3. COUNCILWOMAN TONYA LONG

4. COUNCILWOMAN KATHY WASHINGTON

5. COUNCILWOMAN KIMBERLY DUGGER

17. ADJOURNED

TOWN OF WELAKA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
March 12, 2024, 6:00 PM
Honorable Willie Washington, Jr. Council Room
400 4th Ave., Welaka FL 32193

MINUTES

(This meeting was broadcasted for view only on the Town of Welaka's Facebook page)

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

2. Everyone stood and said the pledge of allegiance and Pastor Dan gave the invocation.

3. **ROLL CALL** taken by Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon.

Mayor Jamie Watts - present, Council President Jessica Finch - present, Councilwoman Kimberly Dugger - present, Councilwoman Kathy Washington - present, Councilwoman Tonya Long - present, and Town Attorney Patrick Kennedy - present. Five council members are present. We have a quorum.

4. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES from 2/13/2024 MEETING**

Corrections – None.

Motion to adopt 2/13/2024 Town Council Meeting Minutes made by Finch and seconded by Long. Passed 5/0.

5. **APPROVAL OF CURRENT AGENDA**

Added # 7.4. to the current Agenda for Welaka Tree Board presentation.

Motion for approval to accept current 3/12/2024 Town Council Meeting Agenda, with addition, made by Dugger and seconded by Long. Passed 5/0.

6. **RECOGNITIONS**

1. Tyler Buford – Distribution 3 License received. He passed the test on 3/1/24. Watts congratulated Buford on his achievement. Buford was not present at tonight's meeting.

7. **PRESENTATIONS / REPORTS TO TOWN COUNCIL**

1. Discussion of former employee discrimination allegations.

Finch – received the gavel from Watts to start and stop this section.

Kennedy – wants to make it clear that this is an opportunity to understand the process that we've been going through for the past few years. It's not an opportunity to litigate these allegations. Be mindful that the former employee, the other party, is not here to defend themselves. This is an informative meeting so that the public can understand what the Council has gone through and from what the public has seen on the news coverage. Blanket statement up front, the way they've handled it is from Kennedy's direction as he handles all legal matters for the Town. This matter was handled with his direction. Please allow everyone to speak and keep this very orderly. Please do not speak out of order and public comment will be limited to 3 minutes. Council responses are not required unless they're comfortable answering a question. We want everyone to have an opportunity to speak if they have something meaningful to say.

Finch – 3 current Council members were on the Council when this surfaced. Would like to let the Council speak, starting with Councilwoman Long.

Long – she was the one that requested that this be put on the Agenda tonight. As a community, we'd like to

assure the public that we have not swept this under the rug. She's personally been accused of doing this. We've been advised to let the matter go through the process before they said anything because we never wanted to do damage to the Town. She was as outraged as anyone else was, when this first came out and took a step back to let the process go through what needed to happen. At this point, they were waiting for the attorneys to do what they needed to do. She's learned from this process and if it happens again, it should be handled differently. We should all be able to come into the room immediately when the allegation was made. Council should have been able to discuss it with the attorneys so that they all understood the allegations. Feels like she was in the dark not knowing what to do. Hope this doesn't happen again and would request that things be handled differently if so.

Washington -agrees with Long. In the midst, when it first jumped off, it was suggested and was implemented, we have a sexual harassment class and 2 other classes suggested for employees and the Council yearly. Suggested that in the 90-day time frame of a new employee coming on board. Cannot say who is innocent or not, she doesn't know, she is not a lawyer. She believes in the process that Long stated, and probably would handle this differently if it happened again. This has never been done on her watch. The Council is made up of 4 women and wouldn't want this done to a family member either. Again, not saying who appears innocent, because she does not know. Classes were implemented to take part of. Understands that this was moved forward in the latter part of 2023. We have at least moved forward to let someone know the process and at least the process to take.

Dugger – also heard from many residents about this issue. One person advised her to stay silent because speaking may have negative ramifications but each of us have to do what we think is the right thing. Follow our conscious and feel safe in expressing our opinions. She did a lot of soul searching. We work for the people. You deserve an open, honest and transparent government. A government you can put your trust in. It's her duty to respond to taxpayer's concerns, but as an elected official, she realizes that perception can become a reality as they are perceived by the public. Her past employer called her in and told her that she'd be more believable with her hair pulled back. She said he was right, it's perception. He said she would be more believable, and she hopes she is. What serves the greater good, what is the best for all of our citizens? Like all communities, we are not a perfect Town, but we dealt with it as a community, such as the side-by-sides. We dealt with the painful issue as a community and moved forward hopefully as a better community. Welaka is a beautiful place to live, and out people form the heart of Welaka. There's great restaurants and businesses, fishing and boating, pickleball, Friends of Welaka, community clubs, cart cruisers, churches, parks, sunsets, etc. Uniting as a community to make Welaka better will serve our greater good. Ended by reading a greater good quote.

Finch – closed the Council comments. She was notified at the same time as the Town Clerk via email with the demand letter. She communicated with the Town Attorney numerous times and discussed that having outside Counsel would be best, rather than having someone right here in Town to be perceived that actions/decisions were bias. She also has lengthy discussions with the outside Counsel also. It was recommended not to speak about it and let things play out. At hindsight, it may have been a good idea to have an executive meeting and discuss it further, but both attorneys did not recommend a public meeting about this. Does not like the light that this puts out Town in. Thinks that we're so ,much better than this and we have a lot of better things to focus on in going forward and wants us to focus on the good things that are going on in Welaka.

Long – there's nothing any of us can do, as this happened, and we cannot remove or punish the mayor at this level. Just wants everyone to understand that.

Kennedy – reiterated that he and the outside Counsel could not have an executive session just based on a demand letter. We did not have enough facts gathered. It would not have been allowed without knowing what we were talking about. An EEOC complaint was filed and the opportunity for an executive session was there. We were several months into it and everybody was fully informed of what the legal issues were, and the legal perspective

was not needed. In hindsight, having an executive session, all the Council Members could have gotten together to have a better understanding of the issue. It would have been helpful to them. The issue was brought up in public meetings but not discussed and it was not highlighted. He, an outside Counsel came to this decision and it's a sensitive topic and public meetings can get out of your control. He understands the idea of this Council getting together as a body, rather than talking to themselves to try do deal with this issue.

Finch – thanked Washinton for setting up the Sexual Harassment courses. Very informative and helped us through tis process. Opened discussions up to the public.

Kevin Finch – 805 Front Street – he's lived here for 20 years. 15 years he worked on the Code Board and worked closely with the old Mayor. Enjoyed their relationship, but in the past 4 years, our present Mayor has done more for this Town than the other Mayor has done in 15 years. Mistakes can be made, we all make mistakes. It takes 2 people. Asked the Town Attorney to please correct him iof he gets into verbiage he cannot continue with, since the other person is not here.

Kennedy – asked him to not get into any details.

Kevin Finch – he knows the players and sometimes, somebody plays the other, and you get caught up in it. When you're 42 years old, and you're flattered, mistakes can be made.

Glenn Hammond – What if it happens to be your own daughter, Kevin?

Kevin Finch – I'm sorry?

Glenn Hammond – you heard me.

Jessica Finch – we cannot have this.

Kennedy – this is exactly what we cannot have happening.

Glenn Hammond – I'm not going to do it, but his is wrong and you know it.

Finch – but I know both players and I can see it. She's somebody's daughter, ok, everybody's got a daughter.

Glenn Hammon – said ok and stood up and left the room to go outside.

Finch – said that's why he wanted to start this off because he is defending this mayor because mistakes can be made. People play each other and the mayor did not fire this person. She was fired because of cause.

Jessica Finch – we're not here to try this issue.

Kevin Finch – We're to see what this mayor has accomplished and not a mistake that was made because he was getting flattered by some young lady. He's been played recently, and he knows what it's like.

Jessica Finch – thanked him for speaking. Asked for any other public speakers to approach the podium.

Bob Trevor – 304 Sportsman – would like to know what happened? Explain the allegation.

Kennedy – short version, employee was terminated and filed claims of termination with discrimination and sexual nature.

Trevor – who did this?

Kennedy – a former employee of the Town filed these claims.

Trevor – who was the sexual harasser?

Kennedy - She was alleging the mayor was but there was no determination that was correct.

Trevor – what about the other 2 girls he's chasing around? Nothing to do with that?

Kennedy – no idea what you're talking about. We're here to talk about this one issue.

Pam Olson – it's the same issue.

Pastor Dan Holland – he's a pastor at the local church and has been here for 10 years. Anybody can say anything. At our church, we're always trying to be careful because a child can say that somebody misappropriately touched me in some way. Just because somebody makes a statement, doesn't make it true. We really have to be careful how we handle things. In our country, people are quick to jump on the bandwagon

before the facts are presented. Bringing it out to the public is a good thing and believes everybody already knows who the players are who made the mistakes. He also stands with the mayor. Thinks he's done an outstanding job. He's been here for 10 years and sees that he's done a lot. As far as his personal character, and who he is on the inside, well, he has to answer to God for who he is and for any mistakes he makes. He doesn't want to condemn him or condone him either. Wants to say to wait until everything plays out until you make a choice or a decision. Finch – thank him for speaking.

David Jeltos – 808 Front Street – he's extremely disappointed in all of this. Sorry mayor, disappointed in you. This shouldn't happen in this Town. When it gets into a manager and a subordinate, this should not be allowed. Moral ethics training and responsibilities should be presented. Disappointed this happened.

Pam Olson – been here for approx.. 7 years. Seen a lot go on in this Town, a lot. It was shocking, in fact, for a period of 7 years. She has been called out and you know, Pam Olson, you know, gets picked on a lot, and still does, and it's ok, truth must be said. Silence is agreement with evil. When a person in authority, that person is held to a higher standard of conduct, period, end of story. Whether this girl was a street walker, or whatever, it doesn't matter, I don't know what she is, or who she is, I don't know. If we had somebody walking this Town as a terrorist and decided to take a job in here, as leaders, you have to set those boundaries and they cannot be crossed. When you cross those boundaries, then you create the problem for yourself. You know, you can play the blame game with her, but you're held to a higher standard, it's an ethics problem. To her, ethics were violated, and she remembers something else, where Kennedy had to actually travel with him up there. She remembers that money was spent out of our account to pay for people's indiscretion, on a constant basis, and it's a pattern. When you don't take responsibility for your errors, and you say you know what, I have a problem, and you need to go take care of this problem. You continue to sit in that place of authority, then you use your place of authority for personal gain, for whatever it is. To me, we can blame the girl, you can say she's done this a million times, it doesn't matter. We should be above reproach when in authority. Responsibility to God to do what's right when nobody's watching. Responsibility to the people with the money, the personal life. Set your boundaries and keep them intact. That door should have never been opened. It's been opened before with other people in Town and those personal relationships should have never happened. Not here. What you do over there, and you want to go somewhere else, then go do it. Not here. TO her, it's a moral and ethics issue. To her, there's going to be, and there should be consequences for it. There has to be.

Finch – opened up to the Council. The Council is not blaming the other person/party. She hasn't seen that at all. Everyone on the Council is taking responsibility and knows that they're held to a higher standard. She's speaking for the rest of the people up there as well.

Sandra Walker – 724 Shell Street – disappointed when she listens. The Mayor, Jessica and the Lawyer were the first people to talk about it and make a decision bore the rest of the Council was informed about it. She told Finch that the letter was brought to her that day.

Finch – the letter was sent to the Council the same day though.

Walker – same day, but not the same time.

Kennedy – the demand letter was sent to Ms. Finch because she's the Council President and the allegations were against the mayor.

Walker – ok, it still happened, and she hadn't found out until the news people came and said this is what's going on. She had no clue. Not saying that the Town needed to say anything, but once the news people came, like Olson said, the mayor never asked the Council to sit down to talk about it to ease out minds as citizens. She has a lot of people that have texted her asking what's going on. She has no idea. It looks bad because it was on the news 3 times and each time they say, oh, we're waiting on the mayor. Things happen, she understands, it's unfortunate. It makes him look guilty just because he didn't say anything. Doesn't know what happened but she

did read the texts on the news and at first, somebody said it was sexual harassment, but if you're saying different stuff on there, like don't play with my heart, that means the other party was a willing party, that's not sexual harassment, you're entertaining what's being said. People are disappointed because the mayor didn't step out and say he wasn't allowed to talk about it, or just let the public know XYZ.

Finch – just wants to clarify that the letter was addressed to her, and she's not looking at her Town email 24/7, but the Town Attorney called Finch first because she is the Council President and it was addressed to her.

Kennedy said that as soon as he hung up the phone with her, he was going to call the remaining Council members.

Kennedy – they were all informed the same day.

Finish – they were all informed the same exact day and nobody made any decisions from what the attorney said.

Courtney Desouza – 500 5th Avenue – Thanked the Council. Would like to go on the record to say this because she is confident that we are live streaming, and it's being recorded. We made multiple attempts to speak to the news. When they came to the meet and greet, she invited the media to stay and ask anything they wanted to ask, and you left. We have sent emails to communicate, and they still go on the news and say you have not heard from us and that is a lie. It is a lie for the media to tell a narrative to fit their cause, their purpose, and she is hurt as a citizen that when she has tried to speak, replied in emails, and making phone calls, and the media, Emily Turner, still says she's not heard from us. That is a lie, and she's glad that she is on records and on camera saying that. She thanked the Council.

Finch – asked if anyone else would like to speak. Nobody responded so Finch asked Mayor Watts if he'd like to speak.

Watts – thanked Finch and everyone for the opportunity to speak on the issue of his text messages and also for the opportunity to respond. It's always tough when a political opponent tries whatever he can to drag you in the mud. Temptation is to throw mud right back. Watts said he is not going to that. However, to be clear, he has never abused his office as a mayor. He is very proud of his record and what the Town and Council have accomplished in moving forward. He has never been charged with anything relating to a romantic relationship. He admits that some romantic and semi-romantic relationships are some of the relationships that he wishes he never had, but don't we all. He is deeply disappointed that the attorney released his personal text messages to the press, but he understands why, because we are in a gray zone. He provided these text messages as proof that he has never used his office as mayor to gain an advantage for someone in a romantic relationship with him.

Unfortunately, some aspects of those messages were never meant for the public. With these first 4 points being said, that is all he is going to say. Now encourages us to go back to work for the people of Welaka.

Finch – No further comment? Nobody responded. Handed the gavel to the Mayor.

Watts – thanks Finch and moved on to the next Agenda section.

2. Events Committee

Desouza – why did the Food Truck Friday start in March this year? Snowbirds left and they wanted to start early so they could enjoy it.

Michelle Bomba – shouldn't this have been voted on?

Desouza – the Events Committee can vote on it and has nothing to do with the Council.

Bomba – nothing to do with the people?

Watts – a Resolution was created to create an Events Committee that the Council appointed members to so that they can trust in them. They have a budget, and they all met, and they made that decision. It was not something that needed to be brought to Council.

Bomba – this was not voted on and they added 4 extra months, not just 1 month. This FTF event hurts every establishment that serves food in this community. The ones that pay the real taxes in this community.

Watts – Let me stop you. If you'd like to say something, there's a time for public comment on the Agenda. We cannot go back and forth with the audience. We really need to stop this right now. You can have an opportunity to speak during the Public Comment section, if you wish to do so.

Desouza – Event Committee Meetings are posted and on social media and in the newsletter when they're going to have a meeting. No meeting this month. They had one in January to plan for the future months. No need to meet every single month. They plan in advance. Next event is the Community Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, 3/23/24, 10 AM – 12 PM.

3. Citizens Advisory Committee

Scott Turnbull – concern about 2nd Avenue. It could be turned into a freeway.

Watts – paved around trees, the natural road contour, like Interlachen. Was a concern and taken into consideration to follow the natural contour of the roads.

Turnbull – Finding of Necessity status?

Kennedy – not to that stage yet. Should have something by next week.

Turnbull – when CRA is established, is the homestead exemption going to increase? 3%?

Kennedy - CRA will not effect your homestead exemption at all.

Turnbull – wants violation signs for dumping animals here with prosecution.

Watts -it was cats, now it's dogs also. Concerns him. Asked Chief to design and price some signs and Watts will turn over to Chief..

Turnbull – thanked Public works for drain put in under the pavilion here. It's wonderful and works great after the storm Saturday. No standing water. They did a great job!

Watts – John, Kenny, and Jimbo all worked on it and it turned out great!

Allmon – used a jackhammer and pick-ax also. They did a great job!

Watts – fixing the bathrooms next with some new door thresholds.

4. Tree Board

Kenny Pagano – we have a very exciting and enthusiastic Committee. We'll talk about the updated ORD later tonight. Surprised it's gotten so far so quickly. Turned it in for the first reading. It's great!

There's a person that offered to donate and line 2nd Avenue with 100 oak trees. Waiting to see if the grant funding comes though. He met with Purcell and needs to wait a little bit so that when the 2nd Avenue renovations are done, he would want to incorporate this into the plan or look into alternate locations for the trees.

Watts – this grant didn't make it through the entire process. Will speak of this later. The Council has to make a decision on this in the future.

Pagano – met with John Stuart at the 2nd Avenue area. Looks like plenty of room, there's a 40-foot easement, a 12' road, etc. Looks like a good area for trees, utilities, sidewalks, drainage, vegetation, etc. It's definitely a doable project, especially if a large portion of it is free.

Pagano - also discussed permits. The Council asked the Tree Board to look in special items. This is a special item so they will look into this area of the ORD. Would like to re-do the permit process. When there's a building permit with a site plan involved, the Tree Board would like to review the site plan. One or more Tree Board Members would take the site plan and meet with the applicant at the site to decipher what trees are allowed to be removed and which ones need to stay. Maybe could shadow the office's permit process. Trying to be proactive rather than reactive. Trying to make it ways for the homeowner. Trees need to be marked. It's not that hard to mark the trees and see which ones need to stay and can go.

Watts – we use a new software program, Diamond Maps, for marking valves, etc.. John Stuart is going to use it for manholes, trees, etc. in the Town to identify the heritage trees. We don't have any heritage trees. We'll have

a map of the trees. We'd have to ask the property owners to enter the property to map them, if needed.

Pagano – Watts showed him the map previously and it's a great and accurate map to use. The park and street trees are the Town's responsibility, and it is a great program. He will try to shadow someone in the office to see the permit process. When a plot plan or site plan, they can review and then require a tree permit possibly. Some trees are cleared out before asking. Awareness needs to be known. Public education. The Tree Board can maybe have a sign at the Town entrances saying, 'Call Before you Cut' to remind people that we protect and value our trees here.

Watts – some of the vacant lots are cleared and we don't even know. The Utility Clerk can add the brochure into the welcome packet also. Some people don't know this process or regulations. Good opportunity to educate new property purchasers. People want to follow the rules, but some don't know.

Pagano – there's waste and debris from some tree removal. We shouldn't be having the Town clean this up unless it's small debris. People or licensed companies should be responsibilities for this. There are certain rules in place by Waste Pro. There always seems to be piles for the Town workers to clean up all throughout the Town.

Watts – during Hurricane Irma, people/companies were putting cut trees by the road, and this just kept going on and on. Waste Pro is supposed to pick up their piles first and then we come along to clean it up after.

Washington – are going to give the Council a questions/concerns section to discuss the edited ORD?

Watts – going to discuss this on the Agenda in the Public Hearings section tonight.

8. PROCLAMATIONS

1. PROCLAMATION 2024-02 – March is National Women's History Month

Finch read the entire PROC 2024-02 aloud.

Dugger made a motion to accept PROC 2024-02 and Washington seconded. Passed 5/0.

9. RESOLUTIONS – None.

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. ORDINANCE 2024-02 – Tree Ordinance (Update of ORD 2015-01) First Reading

Kennedy – permitting process concerns under section 6. We've changed the standard. We're going from the 30" down to the 24" diameter. Heritage used to be 30" in diameter. Just want to make sure you know that's a big difference. Also, the Tree Board should also locate regulated trees. Not sure if they can explain the order of operation here. Some require a permit.

Aaron Levine – no champion trees here. This entails the building plans.

Kennedy – the ORD should be consistent in both sections. We're stepping up the game.

Levine – heritage trees provide the shade in the Town.

Kennedy – let's get the permit process down so people can move quickly when they want to remove trees.

Finch – section 1.d., 8" in diameter is 34" in circumference?

Kennedy – yes.

Long – if someone comes in to wipe out trees, we should be stating that you should be re-planting so many trees if removing some. TO get their final CO, they should have to re-plant trees. In the future, new development, we should require this.

Levine – there's a caveat for this.

Long – if we don't do something about this now, her grandchildren and great grandchildren will not be able to enjoy these beautiful trees.

Kennedy – there is language in the ORD but it's lenient.

Dugger – make it required, not suggested.

Pagano – the original ORD had a definition for tree. It meant regulated tree. We decided to use regulated tree for a regulated tree. Further in the ORD, we kept the word “may” for a reason. To say “shall,” that means you have choices. There’s also a stipulation of the percentage of canopy. Some trees don’t belong. It states that you must maintain a 15% canopy on their site plan. If a developer has a whole plat, they should have a green space. They’re trying to get this and not get rid of all regulations. There are exceptions but have to be brought to the Board. There’s a lot in there that needs to be addressed.

Levine – the Arbor Day Foundation is useful and they use their site plan designs and documentation a lot also.

Watts – can the Tree Board have a joint Meeting with the Council?

Kennedy – yes, absolutely.

Levine – having the workshop helped going line by line.

Watts – suggests the Tree Board to meet with Kennedy to flush out any legal concerns.

Washington – suggests that they split it up in workshops for certain pages.

Leving – yes, of course.

Watts – our trees contribute to our rules of nature. Take away our trees and we become like other city with homes and no trees.

11. CORRESPONDENCES - None.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. Request To Speak - David Jeltos – 808 Front Street

51 McClure Street – made a presentation to Council back in 11/2021. Today, it is still being used as commercial storage and advertising. He submitted the Tell Town Hall and didn’t get a response. This is going on too long and needs to stop this. Really request that this be looked into. It’s a zoning and code violation.

Washington – asked Kennedy – home based business?

Kennedy – no home-business. There’s another complaint but it’s a different address.

Dugger – we’re accepting this, and any new developer may think it’s ok to do as this property is doing this.

Jeltos – CRA map – concerned of the blight areas. Seems like a land grab to him. Between 1st and 2nd street, he sees very little blight. Some areas are being looked at so that the downtown development can be pushed through.

Finch’s newsletter write-up was helpful. Keep in mind the CRA and the downtown development information.

Finch – said the street condition can be looked at in the blight determination. Does not have to be included but can be discussed.

Finch – another are other than this also?

Kennedy – went as far as 1st Avenue and if it’s included in the CRA, we can get funding to improve the road.

Jeltos – was surprised by the mapped areas.

Melissa Clemmons – 601 Oak Street – wanted a food truck in Welaka. Asked 3 months ago.

Kennedy – has done nothing from the Zoning Board and they cannot focus on this in the Land Development Code. There are other similar things asked here also, medical marijuana, beer/wine zoning, etc. Asked the Council if they want to let the Zoning Board to discuss this.

Watts – a permanent food truck business is not allowed in the Town, but Clemmons wants a temporary one?

Clemmons – yes.

Finch – consider this?

Kennedy – the Land Development Code has to address this and the Council has to ask.

Finch – Marina St. Johns is looking to re-open and beer/wine was previously allowed at his property as a C1 zoned restaurant.

Watts – please clarify.

Kennedy – do you want to allow mobile food vendors on a permanent/semi-permanent bases here in the Town and would you like the Zoning Board to allow adding this to the Land Development Code?

Watts – it takes less to operate a food truck than a brick and mortar.

Kennedy – we need to deliberate on this because people are passionate about doing this.

Watts – put on the April Agenda.

Lenore Toole – 804 Front Street – questions for Watts. It's important for the Town people to hear this. She's concerned in order to vote for Mayor Watts for State Rep.

Kennedy – if it's regarding his political running for State Rep., then no, we cannot discuss this here.

Watts – happy to set up a meeting with Ms. Toole.

Toole – why did you drive your mother to the polls in Welaka and she voted here last year to vote for Watts?

Toole – why do you open up 40-acre park so that the side-by-sides could go driving at the middle of the night?

Our Town is at liability.

Toole – what you've been accused of, is that honestly and truthfully the only person you've been involved with in this Town since you've been Mayor?

Larry Pritchett – 99 Broad River Place – honored that he was accepted onto the Charter Review Committee as he volunteered to serve. He has a construction project in May in NC and a cruise planned in August. It didn't occur to him that these meeting dates would take so long.

Watts – will talk about this under his part and we are trying to schedule the meetings.

Trevor – how much does Welaka get in taxes? Any way we can get a sheet on this?

Watts – Town Clerk will give you the budget.

Stan Knight – concerned about the 2nd Avenue paving. Alarmed because we got the funding for this.

Watts – this funding was not received.

Knight – 309 will become more populated. If this parallel Street is paved, it will turn into an interstate. We love and cherish this Town and you'll destroy it. West of 309 should be as pedestrian as possible. It will be the expressway from Sportsman Harbor to the boat ramp.

Watts – we don't have the money for this.

Knight – do we have a visual plan for this?

Watts – we have no money for this so a plan has not been started.

Dugger – no plan to pave 2nd Avenue?

Watts – no.

Finch – no visual plan for this.

13. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – None.

14. NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. TOWN MATTERS

a. Approval of sewer pumps for Utility

Watts – explained the Quote and prepping for hurricanes.

Washington – if we have 1 pump here, when 1 goes down, the whole Town is down?

Watts – yes, there's 3 pumps needed and they're daisy-chained. These are lift station pumps. These are completely different pumps.

Washington – are these in the harbor?

Watts – one is on the top of the hill in front of the condos. #7. We need a redundant pump on the shelf In case we lose one.

Long – equipment budget?

Watts – yes.

Long – used Hudson in the past?

Watts – yes. Smaller dollar amount so didn't have to approve with Council.

Washington – delivery time?

Watts – 2-4 week.

Long – installation too?

Watts – we'll install ourselves.

Washington – which one is priority?

Watts – the line seemed to be stopped up and it was the priority. Then Lift Station 7 and 6.

Long – order all 3.

Finch – motion to approve 3 Hudson pump quotes for a total of \$26,835. Washington seconded. All approved, 5/0.

b. Approval of lawn mowers for Public Works

Watts – explained how he and the Public Works Dept. went to different mower dealers and met with the county also. They'd like to have a 72" and 60" mower for the larger areas, such as the 40-acre park.

One mower is almost 20 years old and if we trade one in, they'll give us \$4,000 credit for supplies and parts.

Dugger – likes that it's a state contract.

Dugger approved the \$25,745 quote from American Mower for 2 mowers. Finch seconded. All agreed, 5/0.

c. Approval of carport for Tractor

Washington – where is this?

Watts – the Public Works compound

Long – what we're purchasing, will this be enough room or should we go bigger?

Watts – hate to put this off another month. Maybe we should go up to \$10,000?

Finch made a motion to approve quote from Jackson Carports for up to \$10,000 for Public Works. Long seconded. All approved, 5/0.

2. ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS – None.

3. CODE ENFORCEMENT BOARD

a. Code Enforcement Officer / Zoning Tech needed

Chief Porath – cleaning up old ORD regarding ticketing. February 1st, Code Enforcement Officer stepped down to focus on her full-time utility position. She was only getting paid and extra \$1.50 per hour to do this, and more work was being given, especially with the Tree Board.

His police officers cannot do this line or work currently as being a sworn officer.

He spoke to Kennedy and Watts, and we don't have a budget to hire a F/T Code Officer and he can't be proactive at this point. Not getting so many complaints due to the new law where you cannot be anonymous anymore.

Cannot continue tasking employees with multiple duties/positions.

Kennedy – multiple jobs are here. A Zoning Tech/Code Officer is needed. Should look at this with the next budget cycle. There are consulting firms that can do both. It's a job that can be a P/T position and there's people out there for this. Someone to focus on zoning especially, this is busy right now.

Watts – there's nothing in the budget for this. Going to talk about insurance under his section.

Porath – spoke with Kennedy about 2 zoning items today and then civil matters, etc. all afternoon. If he can help with the trees, he can intervene, but sometimes these tasks can be very time-consuming. Possibly hire someone

P/T and blossom into F/T.

Kennedy – cannot get involved with Code Enforcement cases. He can give guidance only.

Dugger – agrees with Porath. Maybe not hire a Town Manager.

Porath – applied for JAG Grant for tire deflation devices and we’re only paying \$200 out of the \$1,250. He also has a \$22,000 grant and we closed out the books for this and we’re looking forward to hiring an Officer. Vetting someone takes a very long time.

15. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT – None.

2. UTILITY DEPARTMENT REPORT – None.

3. POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL PORATH REPORTS – None.

4. TOWN ATTORNEY PATRICK KENNEDY REPORTS

a. ORD 2024-01 No Wake Zone Discussion

Kennedy spoke with the county and there’s nothing different than what he’s presented. May have to hire someone with GIS planning capabilities. Clay and Kennedy cannot do it. Might not be too expensive, not sure.

Finch – can NEFRC help us with this?

Kennedy – possibly.

Finch – yes, if we can get assistance from them, she will reach out to NEFRC.

Dugger – agrees.

Washington – who is going to monitor this? People will get mad at the boaters creating a wake. FWC regulates this?

Long – against it. Not ever going to regulate the water. With the Bass Pro resort coming in to the area, wants to be as welcoming as ever. People will most likely stay in the channel.

Finch – this gives people a heads up that this side of the channel will be a no wake zone. Bass Pro already but their own No Wake Zone signs up entering their cove. Still wants to move forward with this.

Washington – how far are you going out into the river? You’re basically out on the water, you’re going to get wet. There’s going to be a wave.

Finch – there’s safety issues and a lot of money spent on the Town’s Bryant’s Wharf dock. We can at least do the minimum to protect our Town assets.

Long – we had 2 back-to-back hurricanes also.

Watts – let’s see what the cost to do this would be. He’s open to this idea and we must do it the proper way.

Finch – will contact the NEFRC.

Dugger – the flashing light, is that monitored?

Porath – it can be. Sometimes an Officer can sit near it to double check it.

Dugger – even people with fake cameras, it makes people more aware. Saves property and shoreline damage.

b. Town purchased 640 Palmetto Street; demolition can start now.

Kennedy – the Town is the proud new owner of this property. We can talk to the Building Dept. about obtaining a demo permit.

5. TOWN CLERK MEGHAN ALLMON REPORTS

Happy to say that we hired a replacement since Ellen is leaving. Kendra Quick is the new Town Clerk Assistant and is working out very well so far. Has government experience, worked in Crescent City, and loves the Town. Ellen agreed to help train her with what she knows.

The new BS&A software company is coming next week to have an informational meeting to gather info from us to design the program. They're coming from Michigan.

15. MAYOR & TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS

1. MAYOR WATTS

Wastewater Collections System in the Harbor Grant. DEP liked and approved the grant. Welaka will be Award \$4,996,000.00 to repair the Sportsman Harbor area. The county has no further plans to repair the streets there. The Town will move forward with our plans.

This is a DEP grant and usually it's a SRF. They were given \$300,000,000 for Hurricane damage. This is a loan with 100% loan forgiveness. The financial documents are significant and not needed as it's forgiven. The grant application must be finished and submitted. The system will be sealed up and can run underwater with the new system. Our goal is to fix this. The INI comes in from the river and sits on top of the tank and it's taking sewage back out to the river. There's a current vacuum line there and we'll put a pod in place and can service up to 3 homes. It's a sealed pod and the vacuum can pick it up from the pods. The water can get up to 3' in the air to the top of the air induction pipe.

Dugger – could be a year from now?

Watts – realistically, yes. We would need to do an RFQ for this job.

FRDAP Grants – both grants were accepted and has fully funded these 2 grants for the Pickleball Park and Jefferson Smith Park grants. Could take about 6-9 month from now.

Joint grant with FRW and DEP. In 2017, the U.S. DEP did a rule that they want to see that every water meter line is not a lead pipe. It's a compliance rule and FRW contacted Watts and we applied for it and were approved for a \$40,000 grant. They'll look at the home-owner's side of the piping. Sometimes the joins are lead and can be replaced. 10/31/2024 is the deadline for the application to be submitted.

Mittauer – we are at 90% ready now. We can do direct purchasing and it'll save us over \$70,000 in sales tax. They may fund additional funds to help reduce the nitrogen levels in the river.

The flood vulnerability assessment Saltus Meeting will be re-scheduled within the next 30 days. Possibly considered a hearing.

Made the repair of the 6" line to the 2" line. We timed the pump. Normal cycle ran for 30 minutes and now it does it in 6 minutes. The amount of electricity saved will be very significant.

Charter Review Committee email will be sent out to all new members to set up meetings in the near future because it's a priority. They need to choose a Chairman because Watts cannot remain as Chairman as of right now.

Stan Knight - Last time he spoke to Watts at the Citizens Advisory Meeting, he said the Charter Meeting would be scheduled and he said Watts told him this 3 other times. Told the mayor to not look puzzled.

Watts – said he is not puzzled but he's said he's had 1 conversation with him in the previous meeting.

Knight – said the mayor would give it to the Clerk to schedule.

Watts – agreed, he did.

Allmon – apologized for the delay as her desk is overflowing with work. Will prioritize this and will email the Charter Members at 8:15-8:30 AM to get some dates and times that sync with everyone.

Knight – said he wouldn't take the heat for the mayor.

Allmon – asked Knight if he'd like to talk a walk back to her desk, she would show him all the projects that she's working on currently.

Knight – no, I have no problem.

Allmon – we just hired a new person in the office and I've been training her and the office is also in shambles because of renovations.

Knight – stood to go to podium to talk.

Watts – mentioned that this is not the Public Speaking section but said he will indulge what Knight has to say though.

Knight – when the January meeting showed that the Charter fell apart. The next meeting didn't have the Charter on it and Watts gaveled with no motion to adjourn and no second to adjourn. That is inexcusable. He said that Watts assured him that the Clerk was going to send out the email that week. That's why Knight asked him at the Citizens Advisory Meeting. It seems to him that we don't care.

Watts – we need a Town Manager and the Parliamentary Procedures binder states that a motion and second are not needed to close a meeting out. Also, the Public Speaking section is always # 12 on our Agenda. Once that section is closed, he does not open it up again.

Allmon – the minutes are posted in PDF and the video are all posted on the Town's website. Clerk welcomed Knight to review it or offered to review it for him.

Knight – said he has it on his cell phone.

Allmon – if the mayor had skipped a section, she would have interrupted him to remind him.

Knight - no, no, I didn't say that.

Knight – we have a Public Speaking section in the middle of the Agenda. He was politely waiting for the mayor's report to make his public comment, but there was no opportunity to do that.

Watts – that's how our Agenda is. Section 12 is the Public Speaking section.

Allmon – that's the one Public Speaking section that she knows of.

Watts – said he will finish his reports.

Knight – sure.

Watts – this is a Council decision, not a mayor decision. He met with Copperhead Paving Company on Friday, and they met with Citizens Advisory Committee, toured every single road in the Town to measure streets with Diamond Mapping to take measurements and create a schedule. A cost estimate plan will be designed by the Citizens Advisory Committee that will be ranked and prioritized.

Watts - Better Place Funds are available – around \$279,000 – which roads does the Council want to pave in the Town?

Allmon – we get around \$7-10,000 per month into the Better Place Funds.

Watts - As far as a plan, this is a form of the plan that we've put together. About 2 months ago, the Citizens Advisory Committee requested a paving schedule. He has put every road on this plan, including 2nd Ave. At least people can see this. People that live on this road should have the say-so if this should be paved or not.

Dugger – she walks the road every day. Not very many people live on 2nd Ave. People shouldn't have to go down the paths to get to their house. They'll go down the closest road.

Washington – took some company reps to show them different roads. Are we going to do the same thing with other companies?

Watts – this would go out for Bid. This Copperhead Co. has done the paving in Palatka. This company said we can pave over the lime rock that's there now and may need core level testing.

Kennedy – we have to put out a bid for this.

Washington – just wants the other companies to have this same Town tour of the streets to be fair.

Finch – spoke to Mr. Knight. 2nd Ave. should appear more like the Jim King Trail and not a paved road. Is there a visual plan for the 2nd Ave work?

Watts – if we move forward with this, we will get the visual. It's up to the Council.

Watts – signed the FDOT grant application today and will go out. We used some of the elements from the Harbor grants to help.

2. COUNCIL PRESIDENT JESSICA FINCH – None.

3. COUNCILWOMAN TONYA LONG – None.

4. COUNCILWOMAN KATHY WASHINGTON

May – Mental Health Awareness. Make a Proclamation for the April Meeting please.

Volunteers for about 4-5 people for summertime lunches after school is out. Please reach out to Washington.

Finch – any training needed?

Washington – No.

Watts – we'll put it in the newsletter to let volunteers know to reach out to her.

Washington - Aza Health building status?

Watts – RFP was done and nobody was interested.

Washington – downtown area, she doesn't want empty buildings.

Washington – Palmetto Road torn up?

Watts – the sewer line was repaired from 2" to 6". Completed yesterday and filled back in.

Washington – River Hill, water pressure low? Several homes are asking. One person is asking because they pay taxes, and it shouldn't be like that.

Watts – haven't heard anything about this. That should be the highest pressure because it's the closest to the water tower. Put a work order in with the Utility Department.

Allmon – any certain address we can look into or the whole area?

Washington – several people mentioned they don't have pressure in their bathrooms when opposed to their bathrooms.

Watts – may be a construction issue, but we will have the Utility Dept. look at this.

Washington – auction date soon? Looks like a junk yard over there.

Watts – we'll do our best to have an auction soon.

Washington – was informed that the Town is going to sell the property?

Watts – not selling the property, but we'll clean it up.

Washington – was informed that the Town has land. Empty property.

Watts – where?

Kennedy – we do.

Watts – on Front Street, nothing on it. The Town owns that. Also, we own property on Orange Street, at least we own 2 properties.

Washington – the question was asked, will the Town sell the property for revenue?

Watts – the Front Street property, no. The Orange Street property, the land was given to the Town and if it's ever sold, the money would go back to the property owner. The recent property we bought on Palmetto, we're asking the Building Dept. to obtain a demo permit. Maybe we can clean it up and sell it?

Washington – thought they spoke about turning it into a parking lot for the park.

Watts – the size may not be large enough. Less than 10,000 feet.

Kennedy – it's pretty small.

Finch – we were looking at both lots at one point.

Watts – we were. Agenda this for next month to see if we should do something with that. He's concerned about the other lot. Heard it may be renovated by the owner and it may still be sitting there in 10 years looking the same.

Kennedy – there is no active code case on that other property either.

Watts – would like to get with the current owner and possibly clear that entire corner out there.

5. COUNCILWOMAN KIMBERLY DUGGER

Water Meter Grant status?

Watts – grant is sitting in limbo with DOC waiting on an environmental study. Melissa Fox said it may be 6 months from now. We can talk to vendors and other municipalities to give us input for the auto-read meters and SW they use.

Dugger – asked the Citizens Advisory Comm. If they talked about a sidewalk from behind Sugar Mill down through the Town?

Scott Turnbull – it was never brought up.

Dugger – prioritize the road paving project?

Watts – correct. The Citizens Advisory Comm. can assist with this also and their input is a recommendation to the Council.

Watts – wants the Comm. to look into a sidewalk there also so the Sugar Mill residents can have access to the Dollar Store and other places.

Dugger – yes, please.

Finch – the Committee has some new members and they need to discuss.

Watts – a contractor is looking at the numbers and they'll have the info and can make a list next month at their meeting.

Dugger – wants to avoid not knowing about something.

Watts – maybe the Comm. can take it up and wrap it up or may need another month to look at it.

Watts – asked Kennedy – both roads are County Roads. How does this play into the Town for sidewalks?

Kennedy – Once we pave it, the road may be ours then. That's how they would consider it ours. Usually what happens, but not sure how it all works out. That's the way it was in Crescent City. They'll let us do it if we pay for it. The County would cooperate with us if there's some joint or grant funding.

Dugger – Town Council voicemail – how can we get these to work?

Allmon – has sent all Council Members invitations to join and access on the Xfinity website to see and hear the voicemails but cannot access on the phone. For some reason it does not work. Will have to call Comcast to try and figure this out again. They are not very helpful.

Long – she accessed it once.

Dugger – wants citizens to know she's not ignoring them. Can the Town voicemails be sent to their personal phones?

Kennedy – that would make your personal phones accessible for public records.

Allmon – she asked Comcast this and they said we'd have to do away with the extensions and change the whole phone menu.

Washington – buying bulk, can we get cell phone for the Council Members?

Dugger – could never keep up with two phones.

Finch – asked the Citizens Advisory Comm. to prioritize the road project or the sidewalk?

Watts – prefers the roads. Asked Kennedy about the sidewalks.

Turnbull – probably falls under the CRA.

Watts – doesn't think it goes out that far.

Kennedy – no, it doesn't. The CRA stops at Bryant. If it's connected to a CRA project, it could possibly leak out to that area.

16. ADJOURNED –8:57 PM

**CERTIFICATE OF COUNTY CANVASSING BOARD
PUTNAM COUNTY**

We, the undersigned, ELIZABETH MORRIS, County Judge, CHARLES OVERTURF, Supervisor of Elections, LEOTA WILKINSON, County Commissioner, constituting the Board of County Canvassers in and for said County, do hereby certify that we met on the First day of April, 2024 A.D., and proceeded publicly to canvass the votes given for the several offices and persons herein specified at the **Nonpartisan** held on the Nineteenth day of March, 2024 A.D., as shown by the returns on file in the office of the Supervisor of Elections. We do hereby certify from said returns as follows:

For Welaka Town Council Member, the whole number of votes cast was 461 of which

Jessica Finch	received	188 votes
Glenn M. Hammond	received	92 votes
Kathy Washington	received	181 votes

Elizabeth C. Morris

COUNTY JUDGE

Charles L. Overturf

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

Leota D. Wilkinson

COUNTY COMMISSIONER



*Town of Welaka Proclamation 2024-03
A Proclamation for the month of April as
Water Conservation Month*

WHEREAS, water is a basic and essential need of every living creature; and

WHEREAS, The State of Florida, Water Management Districts, and the Town of Welaka are working together to increase awareness about the importance of water conservation; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Welaka and the State of Florida has designated April, typically a dry month when water demands are most acute, Florida's Water Conservation Month, to educate citizens 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 citizen can make a difference when it comes to conserving water; and

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

WHEREAS, outdoor irrigation comprises a large portion of water use, the Town of Welaka will encourage citizens and businesses to focus on improving outdoor irrigation efficiency;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Mayor of the Town of Welaka and its Council members do hereby proclaim the month of April as

WATER CONSERVATION MONTH.

Welaka, Florida is calling upon each citizen and business to help protect our precious resource by practicing water saving measures and becoming more aware of the need to save water. For this, the 26th year of Water Conservation Month, there will be a special focus on improving outdoor irrigation efficiency.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Town of Welaka, Florida, to be affixed this 9th day of April 2024.

Jamie D. Watts, Mayor

Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk



Town of Welaka
Proclamation 2024-04
Historic Preservation Month

WHEREAS, local historic preservation is an effective tool for revitalizing neighborhoods, fostering local pride, and maintaining community character while enhancing livability; and

WHEREAS, historic preservation is relevant for communities across the nation, both urban and rural, and for Americans of all ages, all walks of life, and all ethnic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, it is important to celebrate the role of history in our lives and the contributions made by dedicated individuals in helping to preserve the tangible aspects of the heritage that has shaped us as a community; and

WHEREAS, the Fruitland Peninsula Historical Society and other community groups are participating in Historic Preservation Month during the month of May 2024; and

WHEREAS, the South Putnam community and the Town of Welaka has embarked upon a new commitment to preservation, historic and archaeological surveys, the nomination of significant cultural resources to the Local, State, and National Register of Historic Places, the protection of traditional neighborhoods, the integration of historic elements with redevelopment, and the recognition, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic properties.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jamie Watts, Mayor of the Town of Welaka, Florida, do hereby proclaim May 2024, as

Historic Preservation Month

and call upon the residents of Welaka to join their fellow citizens across the United States in recognizing the importance of preserving the history of communities and participating in this special observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Town of Welaka, Florida, to be affixed this 9th day of April 2024.

Jamie D. Watts, Mayor

Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk



Proclamation 2024-05
May, 2024 is Mental Health Awareness Month
in the Town of Welaka, Florida

WHEREAS, there is a proven connection between good mental health and overall personal health; and

WHEREAS, mental illnesses affect almost every family in America; and

WHEREAS, people with mental illnesses recover if given the necessary services and supports in their communities; and

WHEREAS, people with mental illnesses make important contributions to our families and our communities; and

WHEREAS, millions of adults and children are disabled by mental illnesses every year; and

WHEREAS, only one out of two people with a serious form of mental illness seeks treatment for his or her mental illness; and

WHEREAS, stigma and fear of discrimination keep many who would benefit from mental health services from seeking help; and

WHEREAS, research shows that the most effective way to reduce stigma is through personal contact with someone with a mental illness; and

WHEREAS, good mental health is critical to the well-being of our families, communities, schools, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, greater public awareness about mental illnesses can change negative attitudes and behaviors toward people with mental illnesses.

NOW, THEREFORE be it resolved that by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Mayor of Welaka, including the Town Council Members of Welaka, do hereby proclaim the month of May as:

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

I also call upon all Town of Welaka citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions and businesses to recommit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental illnesses, reducing stigma and discrimination, and promoting appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental illnesses.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 9th day of April, 2024.

STATE OF FLORIDA, COUNTY OF PUTNAM, TOWN OF WELAKA

Jamie D. Watts, Mayor

ATTEST:

Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk

RESOLUTION 2024-02

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF WELAKA, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; MAKING FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN APPLICATION; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN AGREEMENT; DESIGNATING AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES; PROVIDING ASSURANCES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Florida Statutes provide for loans to local government agencies to finance the evaluation, planning, design, and rehabilitation/construction of wastewater treatment facilities; and

WHEREAS, Florida Administrative Code rules require authorization to apply for loans, to establish pledged revenues, to designate an authorized representative; to provide assurances of compliance with loan program requirements; and to enter into a loan agreement; and

WHEREAS, the State Revolving Fund loan priority list designates Project No. 54050 as eligible for available project funding; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Welaka, Florida, intends to enter into a loan agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection under the State Revolving Fund for Planning Phase, Design Phase, and Construction Phase project financing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WELAKA, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I. The foregoing findings are incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof.

SECTION II. The Town of Welaka, Florida, is authorized to apply for a loan to finance the Planning Phase, Design Phase, and Construction Phase of the Project.

SECTION III. The Mayor is hereby designated as the authorized representative to provide the assurances and commitments required by the loan application.

SECTION IV. The Mayor is hereby designated as the authorized representative to execute the loan agreement which will become a binding obligation in accordance with its terms when signed by both parties. The Mayor is authorized to represent the Town in carrying out the Town's responsibilities under the loan agreement. The Mayor is authorized to delegate responsibility to appropriate Town staff to carry out technical, financial, and administrative activities associated with the loan agreement.

SECTION V. The legal authority for borrowing moneys to construct this Project is Florida Statutes §166.111.

SECTION VI. Conflicts. All Resolutions or part of Resolutions in conflict with any of the provisions of this Resolution are hereby repealed.

SECTION VII. Severability. If any Section or portion of a Section of this Resolution proves to be invalid, unlawful, or unconstitutional, it shall not be held to invalidate or impair the validity, force, or effect of any other Section or part of this Resolution.

SECTION VIII. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage and adoption.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 9th Day of April 2024.

ATTEST

**APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGALITY**

Jamie D. Watts, Mayor

Patrick Kennedy, Town Attorney

Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk

RESOLUTION 2024-03

A Resolution of the Town Council of Welaka, Florida, to Rename the 'Downtown Park' to 'Mason Newstead Memorial Downtown Park' in honor of Mason's memory and his enduring impact on the community.

WHEREAS, Mason Newstead was a beloved member of the community of Welaka, known for his joyful spirit, boundless energy, and kind heart; and

WHEREAS, Mason tragically passed away at the age of four, leaving behind cherished memories of his laughter echoing through Downtown Park as he played on the slides and swings, expressing his exuberance for life through by spreading happiness with friendly waves and greetings to passerby; and

WHEREAS, Mason's love for life and his ability to connect with others through simple yet profound gestures of kindness and enthusiasm left a lasting impact on all who knew him; and

WHEREAS, Mason's intelligence, empathy, and eagerness to explore and learn about the world were truly remarkable, inspiring those around him to embrace the beauty of life with the same fervor and curiosity;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WELAKA, FLORIDA:

1. Downtown Park, located in the heart of Welaka, shall be renamed the "Mason Newstead Memorial Downtown Park" in honor of Mason's memory and his enduring impact on the community.
2. The renaming of the park shall serve as a tribute to Mason's joyful spirit, his boundless energy, and his ability to spread happiness effortlessly, reminding all who visit of the love and kindness that he brought into the world.
3. That appropriate signage and symbols reflecting the park's new name and purpose be placed in a prominent location within the park.
4. The Town Council shall work in collaboration with Mason's family and the community to organize a dedication ceremony for the Mason Liam Newstead Memorial Downtown Park, where his legacy will be celebrated and remembered for generations to come.
5. That this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Town Council of Welaka, Florida, this 9th of April, 2024.

ATTEST

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY

Jamie D. Watts, Mayor

Patrick Kennedy, Town Attorney

Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk

33 **Section 2.** PURPOSE. The purpose of this section is to regulate the speed and
34 operation of Vessel traffic on certain areas of the St Johns\'s River abutting the landward
35 boundary of the Town of Welaka around the Welaka Boat Ramp and Bryant\'s Wharf.

36 **Section 3.** DEFINED. As used herein "Idle Speed No Wake Zone" (a.k.a. the No
37 Wake Zone") indicates a boating restricted area which has been established to protect the safety
38 of the public wherein a Vessel cannot proceed at a speed greater than that speed which is
39 necessary to maintain steerageway. (See 68D-24.002(2), Florida Administrative Code.) All other
40 terms or terminology used herein are defined as provided in section 327.02, Florida Statutes, and
41 section 68D-24.002, Florida Administrative Code.

42 **Section 4.** WELAKA BOAT RAMP AND BRYANT\'S WHARF NO WAKE ZONE.
43 That portion of the St. John\'s River extending 500 feet of the Welaka Boat Ramp and Bryant\'s
44 Wharf in all directions, as shown in attached Exhibit B, is hereby designated as an Idle Speed,
45 No Wake Zone.

46 **Section 5.** PROHIBITION. It shall be unlawful for any Person in physical control of
47 a Vessel in the Idle Speed, No Wake Zone to operate the Vessel in violation of the Idle Speed, No
48 Wake Zone as defined herein.

49 **Section 6.** EXEMPTIONS. The restrictions created by this Ordinance shall not apply
50 to Vessels of any federal, state, county or municipal agency while operated by an officer,
51 employee, or agent thereof who is engaged in law enforcement or other necessary municipal or
52 governmental activity. Further, the restrictions created by this Ordinance shall not apply to
53 Vessels operated under emergency conditions during a legitimate emergency.

54 **Section 7.** SIGNS. Signs shall be installed and maintained to alert boaters to the
55 existence and boundaries of the Idle Speed, No Wake Zone. All signs shall comply with the
56 standards and regulations provided by state law. No Person shall be charged with a violation of
57 this Ordinance prior to the posting of the signs as required by this Section.

58 **Section 8.** ENFORCEMENT. This Ordinance shall be enforced by the Town of
59 Welaka Police Department, the Sheriff of Putnam County and his deputies, the Florida Fish and
60 Wildlife Conservation Commission and its officers, and any other authorized law enforcement
61 officer as provided by section 327.70 of the Florida Statutes, pursuant to the procedures and
62 citation forms provided for in sections 327.73, 327.731 and 327.74, Florida Statutes.

63 **Section 9.** PENALTIES. Violations of this Ordinance shall be considered a
64 noncriminal violation, and any person who shall violate any provision of this Ordinance, or any

65 of the restrictions, limitation or mandates herein set forth, shall upon conviction thereof in a
66 court of law, be punished by a fine that shall not be less than \$150.00 nor more than \$500, plus
67 court costs as provided in section 775.083, Florida Statutes, and such other penalties as may be
68 allowed under Chapter 327, Florida Statutes. Nothing herein shall prohibit the Town of Welaka
69 from enforcing this Ordinance by any other lawful means or from seeking damages to any
70 facilities maintained by the Town of Welaka that result from a violation of this Ordinance.

71 **Section 10.** SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this Ordinance are declared to be
72 severable and if any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is held to be invalid or
73 unconstitutional, such decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining sections, sentences,
74 clauses, and phrases of this Ordinance but they shall remain in effect, it being the legislative
75 intent that this Ordinance shall stand notwithstanding the invalidity of any part.

76 **Section 11.** EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall be effective 30 days from the
77 date of adoption.

78 Passed by the Town Council for the Town of Welaka on First Reading on the ___ day of
79 February 2024

80 Passed by the Town Council for the Town of Welaka on Second Reading on the ___ day of
81 March 2024

82 ATTEST

SIGNED

83
84 _____
85 Meghan E. Allmon, Town Clerk

Jamie D. Watts, Mayor

86
87 Approved as to form:
88 _____
89 _____
90 Patrick Kennedy, Town Attorney

Jessica Finch, Council President

91 EXHIBIT A
92 Welaka No Wake Zone Ordinance

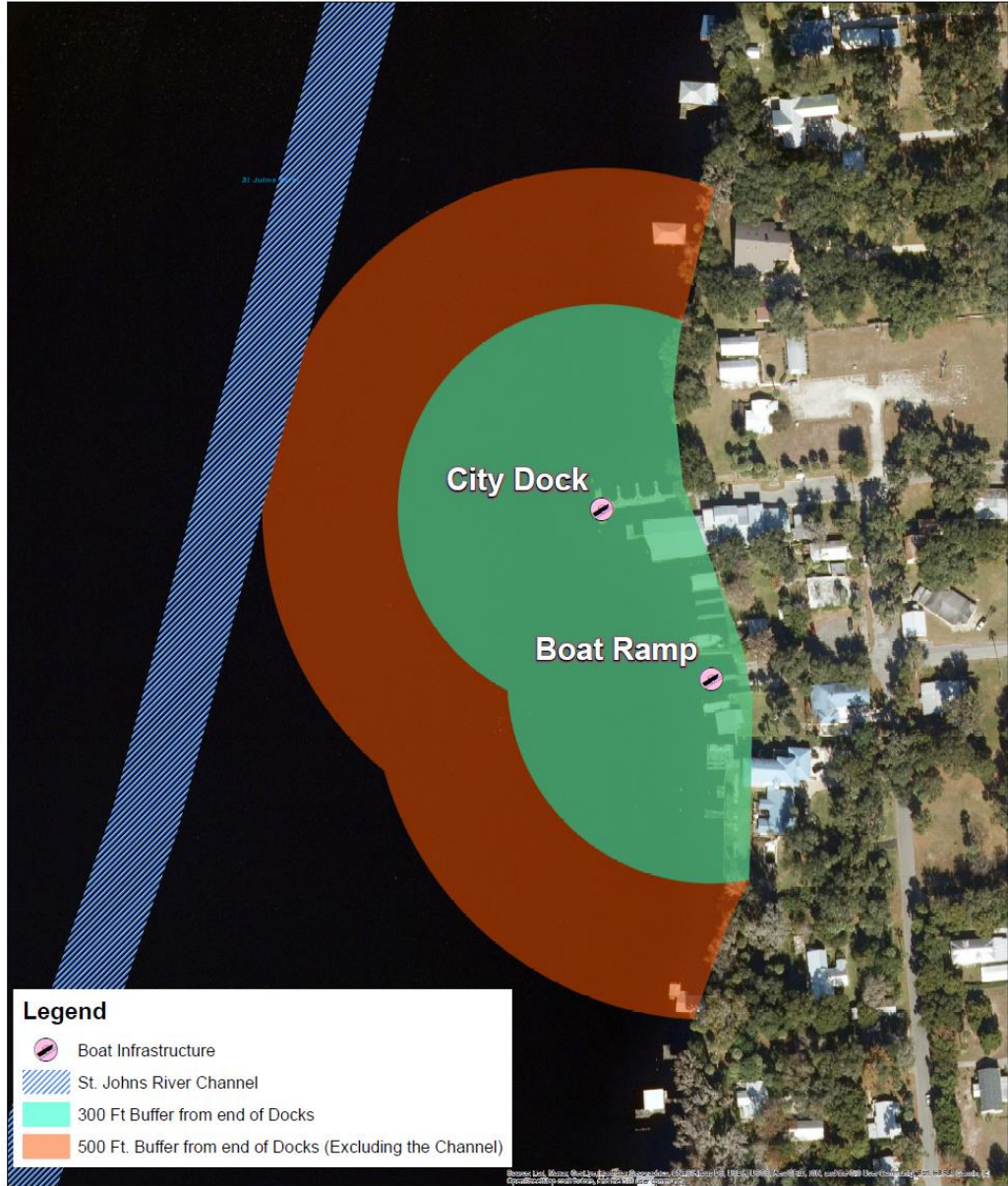


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Width of Waterbody in Area of Now Wake Zone

96
97
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EXHIBIT B
Welaka No Wake Zone Ordinance
Idle Speed No-Wake Zone Boundaries



Welaka Boat Dock and Ramp 300 ft. and 500 ft. No Wake Zone



99

Mike Porath

From: Dave Blevins <davestopsandtrim@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 3, 2024 2:10 PM
To: Mike Porath
Subject: Re: Sign Quote

Here is the proof with pricing sir
Let me know if you'd like to make any changes or if you approve
Thank you,
Jacey

(4) 12x18 \$25pc



**DUMPING OR ABANDONING
OF ANIMALS IS
STRICTLY PROHIBITED
TOWN OF WELAKA
ORDINANCE 2023-03-SEC. 17
SUBJECT TO FINE UP TO
\$500.00**



615 N. Palm Ave.
Palatka, FL 32177

TOWN OF WELAKA

5-Year Road Paving Plan

Available Better Place Funds as of 4/3/24 \$258,857 with additional \$7,000 to \$9,000 per month.

Year 1

4th Avenue, from Broad to Palmetto

Estimate: \$148,500

2nd Avenue, from North to Elm

Estimate: \$130,000

Year 2

Orange Street, from 3rd Avenue to Gate at East End

Estimate: \$77,000

Year 3

Oak Street, from Front to 7th Avenue

Estimate: \$112,500

Year 4

Shell Street, from unpaved section to Siesta Circle

Estimate: \$80,000

Year 5

1st Avenue, from Orange Street to Palmetto

Estimate: \$68,000



EMPLOYEE GROUP HEALTH BENEFITS (RENEWAL PLANS AND RATES)

Group Name: TOWN OF WELAKA
Group Number: E6790
Anniversary Date: 04/01/2023
County Name: Putnam

BENEFIT	PLAN OPTIONS	
Plan Name/Family Name # Metal Category	BlueOptions / All Copay 14002 Platinum	
	In-Network	Out-of-Network
Deductible	\$0/\$0	\$500/\$1,000
Coinsurance	100%/0%	50%/50%
Out of Pocket Maximum	\$3,500/\$7,000	\$7,000/\$14,000
Value Choice PCP	\$0 Copayment	NA
Value Choice Specialist	\$20 Copayment	NA
Family Physician	\$15 Copayment	DED + 50%
Specialist	\$30 Copayment	DED + 50%
Virtual Visits – Family Physician	\$0 Copayment	NA
Inpatient	Option 1: \$300 per Day / \$900 max/ Option 2: \$300 per Day / \$900 max	DED + 50%
Outpatient	Option 1: \$250 Copayment/ Option 2: \$300 Copayment	DED + 50%
Emergency Room	\$150 Copayment	\$150 Copayment
Rx Benefit	\$10/\$30/\$50/\$150	Not Covered
Age	Rate	
0-14	\$409.89	
15	\$446.32	
16	\$460.25	
17	\$474.18	
18	\$489.19	
19	\$504.19	
20	\$519.73	
21	\$535.80	
22	\$535.80	
23	\$535.80	
24	\$535.80	
25	\$537.94	
26	\$548.66	
27	\$561.52	
28	\$582.41	

Health insurance is offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., DBA Florida Blue. HMO coverage is offered by Health Options, Inc., DBA Florida Blue HMO, an affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc. Dental, Life and Disability are offered by Florida Combined Life Insurance Company, Inc., DBA Florida Combined Life, an affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc. These companies are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



Your local Blue Cross Blue Shield

4800 Deerwood Campus Parkway
 Jacksonville, Florida 32246
 floridablue.com

BENEFIT	PLAN OPTIONS
Plan Name/Family Name # Metal Category	BlueOptions / All Copay 14002 Platinum
29	\$599.56
30	\$608.13
31	\$620.99
32	\$633.85
33	\$641.89
34	\$650.46
35	\$654.75
36	\$659.03
37	\$663.32
38	\$667.61
39	\$676.18
40	\$684.75
41	\$697.61
42	\$709.94
43	\$727.08
44	\$748.51
45	\$773.70
46	\$803.70
47	\$837.46
48	\$876.03
49	\$914.07
50	\$956.94
51	\$999.27
52	\$1,045.88
53	\$1,093.03
54	\$1,143.93
55	\$1,194.83
56	\$1,250.02
57	\$1,305.74
58	\$1,365.22
59	\$1,394.69
60	\$1,454.16
61	\$1,505.60
62	\$1,539.35
63	\$1,581.68
64	\$1,607.40
65+	\$1,607.40

Note: The renewal process begins 90 days in advance of the group's renewal date, any changes occurring (adds/terms) will not be reflected in the monthly premium estimate.

Health insurance is offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., DBA Florida Blue. HMO coverage is offered by Health Options, Inc., DBA Florida Blue HMO, an affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc. Dental, Life and Disability are offered by Florida Combined Life Insurance Company, Inc., DBA Florida Combined Life, an affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc. These companies are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

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Group Number: E6790
Anniversary Date: 04/01/2024
County Name: Putnam

BENEFIT	PLAN OPTIONS	
Plan Name/Family Name # Metal Category	BlueOptions / All Copay 14002 Platinum	
	In-Network	Out-of-Network
Deductible	\$0/\$0	\$500/\$1,000
Coinsurance	100%/0%	50%/50%
Out of Pocket Maximum	\$3,500/\$7,000	\$7,000/\$14,000
Value Choice PCP	\$0 Copayment	NA
Value Choice Specialist	\$20 Copayment	NA
Family Physician	\$15 Copayment	DED + 50%
Specialist	\$30 Copayment	DED + 50%
Virtual Visits – Family Physician	\$0 Copayment	NA
Inpatient	Option 1: \$300 per Day / \$900 max/ Option 2: \$300 per Day / \$900 max	DED + 50%
Outpatient	Option 1: \$250 Copayment/ Option 2: \$300 Copayment	DED + 50%
Emergency Room	\$150 Copayment	\$150 Copayment
Rx Benefit	\$10/\$30/\$50/\$150	Not Covered
Age	Rate	
0-14	\$446.27	
15	\$485.94	
16	\$501.11	
17	\$516.27	
18	\$532.61	
19	\$548.94	
20	\$565.86	
21	\$583.36	
22	\$583.36	
23	\$583.36	
24	\$583.36	
25	\$585.69	
26	\$597.36	
27	\$611.36	
28	\$634.11	

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BENEFIT	PLAN OPTIONS
Plan Name/Family Name # Metal Category	BlueOptions / All Copay 14002 Platinum
29	\$652.78
30	\$662.11
31	\$676.11
32	\$690.11
33	\$698.87
34	\$708.20
35	\$712.87
36	\$717.53
37	\$722.20
38	\$726.87
39	\$736.20
40	\$745.53
41	\$759.53
42	\$772.95
43	\$791.62
44	\$814.95
45	\$842.37
46	\$875.04
47	\$911.79
48	\$953.79
49	\$995.21
50	\$1,041.88
51	\$1,087.97
52	\$1,138.72
53	\$1,190.05
54	\$1,245.47
55	\$1,300.89
56	\$1,360.98
57	\$1,421.65
58	\$1,486.40
59	\$1,518.49
60	\$1,583.24
61	\$1,639.24
62	\$1,675.99
63	\$1,722.08
64	\$1,750.08
65+	\$1,750.08

Note: The renewal process begins 90 days in advance of the group's renewal date, any changes occurring (adds/terms) will not be reflected in the monthly premium estimate.

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