



Welaka Gazette

July 2023

From The Mayor's Desk

As we enter the month of July, I am pleased to share with you some important steps taken at the Welaka Town Council Meeting held on June 13, 2023. During the meeting, we took significant steps to preserve the small-town charm that makes Welaka so unique. Two pivotal ordinances, ORDINANCE 2023-02 and ORDINANCE 2023-04 were adopted, focusing on safeguarding our community's character.

Firstly, ORDINANCE 2023-02 was enacted to prohibit the establishment of medical marijuana dispensaries and various other types of businesses, such as internet gambling, adult entertainment, and adult product stores. This temporary prohibition, lasting until the completion of the new Welaka Land Development Code, was put in place to ensure that we make well-informed decisions that align with our Town's values and vision. Once the Land Development Code is in place, the Welaka Town Council will hold a series of hearings to allow the residents of Welaka to give their input on whether they think these types of stores should be allowed or if a permanent ban should be put in place. Our goal is to prevent commercial developers from rushing into activities that could damage the charm of Welaka. By carefully considering these matters, we can protect what makes Welaka so unique.

Additionally, the Town Council adopted ORDINANCE 2023-04, which introduced a set of architectural standards for commercial construction. This ordinance is a protective measure, ensuring that any new commercial buildings constructed in Welaka matches the look and feel that our community prefers. By implementing these standards, we aim to maintain our small-town charm and prevent any development that does not fit the community character.

I sincerely thank those Town Council Members who supported these two critical ordinances. Their unwavering dedication and commitment are essential in our efforts to protect and enhance the small-town charm that makes Welaka a wonderful place to live, work, and visit. With their support, we aim to ensure Welaka thrives while retaining its distinctive character.

On the topic of the Welaka Police Department, I would like to take this opportunity to address our commitment to your safety and the protection of our community. As the Town grows, our law enforcement department must remain prepared for the future. We are pleased to announce that the Welaka Police Department is close to hiring our 3rd police officer, a significant step towards enhancing our night patrols and maintaining a low crime rate.

Under the leadership of our Chief of Police, Mike Porath, his department has been actively working to secure resources that will enable us to serve you better. Chief Porath has successfully obtained a JAG Grant, covering 80% of the cost for two fully furnished patrol trucks. This grant amounts to an impressive \$100,000, requiring the Town to contribute only \$24,000. By acquiring these new vehicles, we aim to strengthen our capabilities and increase our overall presence throughout Welaka.

Our objective is to have three full-time police officers in place by mid-July, with plans to add a fourth officer after October 1st. This crucial step brings us closer to achieving our vision of a fully staffed, 24-hour police department. By strengthening our department, we can effectively address any potential increase in crime, ensuring Welaka remains a safe and secure community for all residents.

Your safety is our top priority, and we will continue to strive to provide the highest level of protection for you and your loved ones. Thank you for your ongoing support and trust in the Welaka Police Department.

Regarding infrastructure, I am thrilled to share some exciting news about the recent improvements in our Town's wastewater system. I am delighted to announce that the sewer line extension project on Beechers Point Drive has been successfully completed. This significant achievement will directly impact our community by enabling us to transition numerous homes with septic tanks on the St. Johns River to sewer. Our primary goal is to protect the health of our river and preserve its precious ecosystem.

In addition, I am pleased to announce that the design of our brand-new wastewater treatment plant is now 30% complete. This state-of-the-art facility will play a crucial role in ensuring the cleanliness and safety of our water resources. I am excited about the progress made so far, and we expect to secure the necessary permits for the project in November or December of this year.

Following the permit process, we plan to break ground on the construction of the wastewater treatment plant in January or February of 2024. This important project will bring us closer to our goal of creating a cleaner and healthier environment for everyone in Welaka.

On the Town events front, our Food Truck Fridays are in full swing, but we only have two more left before the season ends. So please mark your calendars and join us on Friday, July 7, at 6:00 PM at Jeffersons Smith Park for an evening filled with delectable food and fantastic music. It's an event you surely don't want to miss! But that's not all—we have something special planned for the grand finale. On Friday, August 4, we will host our second annual Fireworks on the River show right after the food truck extravaganza. Gather your friends and family for an unforgettable evening of dazzling fireworks illuminating the river-front sky. Events like these are more than just enjoyable; they play a vital role in strengthening our Welaka community. Let's come together, share a meal, and create lasting memories.

In conclusion, as summer begins to sizzle, I want to wish you a fantastic season filled with joy, relaxation, and countless unforgettable memories. Stay cool, my friends, and embrace the warmth of the sun. I look forward to the upcoming Food Truck Friday, where we can gather, enjoy delicious food, and reconnect as a community. Your unwavering support is a constant source of inspiration, and it is truly an honor to serve as your mayor. May this summer be a time of rejuvenation and unity. Talk to you again soon!

Very Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie D. Watts" with "MAYOR" written in small capital letters below the name.

From The Council President

If you attended the May Town Council meeting, you heard a presentation by San Mateo resident, Tim Houtaling, regarding the disappearance of the eelgrass in the St. Johns River and his efforts to save it, at least in his backyard. During this meeting, the mayor asked that the Citizens Advisory Board take this topic on and present findings or recommendations to the Town Council.

Two days later, I was fortunate enough to attend a Putnam County Waterways & Trails meeting where Dr. Erich Marzolf, Director of the Division of Water and Land Resources for the St. Johns River Water Management District, was making a presentation to the committee on this very topic. I found the presentation to be not only educational, but interesting as well, so much so that I invited him to present to our Committee on

Friday, July 7th at our next Citizens Advisory Committee meeting. If you are concerned about the disappearance of SAVs (submerged aquatic vegetation) and the health of our most vital resource, the St. Johns River, please plan on attending this informative presentation. The meeting will begin at 9 AM and he will be presenting first on the agenda.

In Your Service,

Jessica Finch, Welaka Town Council President



Need A Meeting With Your Mayor?

To schedule a meeting with your Mayor, please go to www.MayorWatts.com and select the date and time that works for you.



Do You Have News for the Town of Welaka? PUBLISH IT IN THE WELAKA GAZETTE!

For more information, please contact the **Welaka Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon**, at TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov



If you would like to recognize a Town of Welaka resident for dedicated community service to our Town, a local student with exceptional grades, or to nominate a Town resident who is celebrating a landmarked birthday such as turning 100 years old, please contact our **Welaka Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon**, at TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov. We will be happy to recognize them at our next Council Meeting by public recognition.



Eyeglass Recycling – How You Can Help

South Putnam Lion Club would like to remind you that you can drop your unused glasses by Welaka Town Hall in the drop-box in the main hallway. Donate glasses and change someone's life. Imagine if you could help a child read, an adult to succeed in their job, or a senior citizen maintaining their independence. Help to provide our community with more opportunities to grow and thrive.



Need To Report An Issue or Make A Town Code Violation Complaint?

Need to report a street or parks issue? Report online at www.TellTownHall.com
Or make a Codes Enforcement Complaint? Email codes@welaka-fl.gov



Helping Hands of Welaka Toy Drive

Helping Hands of Welaka is collecting toys to give out to the children who attend the Welaka Christmas Parade & Festival in December of this year. If you would like to donate, please contact **Harriet Vanslyke** at **(631) 764 - 2308**

Sponsor an Event

The Events Committee is seeking sponsors as they plan new events for the future. Some of the events include having a fireworks show at one of our events. Like all things, these things cost money. While the town sponsors these events, we do not have it in the budget to do everything we want to do. If you know anyone who would like to sponsor any of our events, please reach out to our Events Committee at events@welaka-fl.gov



**2022 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report
for the Town of Welaka
2544392**

We are pleased to present to you this year's Annual Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the quality water and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water. Our water source is ground water from wells which are chlorinated and aerated for disinfection purposes and draw from the Floridan Aquifer.

In 2022, the Department of Environmental Protection performed a Source Water Assessment on our system and a search of the data sources indicated no potential sources of contamination near our wells. The assessment results are available on the FDEP SWAPP website at <https://fldep.dep.state.fl.us/swapp/>.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact the Town of Welaka at (386) 467-9800. We encourage our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings. They are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall, located at 400 Fourth Avenue.

The Town of Welaka routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations. Except where indicated otherwise, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2022. Data obtained before January 1, 2022 and presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with the laws, rules, and regulations.

In the table below, you may find unfamiliar terms and abbreviations. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum residual disinfectant level or MRDL: The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants. **Maximum residual disinfectant level goal or MRDLG:** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter (µg/l): one part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l): one part by weight of analyte to 1 million parts by weight of the water sample.

Water Quality Results

Inorganic Contaminants- Results in the Level Detected column for inorganic contaminants are the highest average at any of the sampling points or the highest detected level at any sampling point, depending on the sampling frequency.

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo/yr)	MCL Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Arsenic (ppb)	3/2021	N	0.4	N/A	0	10	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium (ppm)	3/2021	N	0.0064	N/A	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	3/2021	N	110	N/A	N/A	160	Salt water intrusion, leaching from soil

Stage 1 Disinfectants- For chlorine, the level detected is the highest running annual average (RAA), computed quarterly, of monthly averages of all samples collected. The range of results is the range of results of all the individual samples collected during the past year.

Disinfectant or Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo/yr)	MCL or MRDL Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL or MRDL	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine (ppm)	1/2022 – 12/2022	N	1.2	0.3 – 1.3	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4.0	Water additive used to control microbes

Stage 2 Disinfection By-Products

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo/yr)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Haloacetic Acids (HAAs) (ppb)	9/2022	N	4.30	N/A	N/A	60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (ppb)	9/2022	N	17.66	N/A	N/A	80	By-product of drinking water disinfection

The Annual Disinfection Byproduct were due to be sampled in the month of September according to the Annual Monitoring Plan, but they were collected early in June. Results from the June sampling were in compliance. Future sampling events will be collected in the correct month.

Lead and Copper (Tap Water)

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo/yr)	AL Exceeded (Y/N)	90th Percentile Result	No. of sampling sites exceeding the AL	MCLG	AL (Action Level)	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper (tap water) (ppm)	6/2020	N	0.0057	0	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Town of Welaka is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- (A) Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems,

agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

- (B) Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- (C) Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- (D) Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- (E) Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

In our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply, it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Rate adjustments may be necessary in order to address these improvements.

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply, we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit all our customers. These improvements are sometimes reflected as rate structure adjustments.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

We at the Town of Welaka would like you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to insuring the quality of your water. If you have any questions or concerns about the information provided, please feel free to call any of the numbers listed.

VBS

Teaching Truth and Grace to
Our Kids
TAG Kids' Club

Monday – Friday
July 10-14, 6pm -8pm
Dinner will be served.

Saturday, July 15
10am – noon
Family Fun Finale

The Church of Welaka
638 CR 309
386-467-3251

TOWN OF WELAKA BOARD & COMMITTEE MEMBER VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS

If interested, please inquire with the Town Clerk or visit the Town's website main page to apply for the Welaka Code Board, Zoning Board, Charter, Events or the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Website: www.Welaka-fl.gov
E-Mail: TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov



A REGISTRATION STICKER IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO DRIVE YOUR GOLF CART IN WELAKA

**Please bring your driver's license, proof of insurance
(with golf cart listed) and \$25.00 to the Town Hall
New registration stickers will be available starting August 15, 2023**

Fireworks Donations



August 4, 2023 Food Truck Friday River-Front Fireworks Show

★ Platinum Sponsors: \$2,500 ★

★ Silver Sponsors: \$1,000 ★

★ Bronze Sponsors: \$500 ★

★ Resident & Non-Resident Sponsors/Donations Welcome! ★

If anyone wishes to donate, we will be accepting financial support through July 31, 2023!

THANK YOU!

Town Of Welaka invites you to

FOOD truck

BAKED GOODS

Fridays

April 7th May 5th June 2nd
July 7th August 4th
6:00 Pm - 9:00 Pm

Jefferson Smith Park, Welaka

TASTY COLD

TOWN OF WELAKA CONTACT LIST

WELAKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Michael Porath - Police Chief

Direct Line: (386) 524-4015

(386) 467-9800 ext. 107

mporath@welaka-fl.gov

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Mayor Jamie Watts

(386) 467-9800 ext. 101

Direct: 386-524-4009

jwatts@welaka-fl.gov

WELAKA MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Meghan Allmon - Town Clerk

(386) 467-9800 ext. 102

townclerk@welaka-fl.gov

WELAKA TOWN COUNCIL

Council President Jessica Finch

(386) 467-9800, ext. 200

jfinch@welaka-fl.gov

Ellen Dickason - Assistant Town Clerk

(386) 467-9800 ext. 104

edickason@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Kimberly Dugger

(386) 467-9800, ext. 201

kdugger@welaka-fl.gov

WELAKA UTILITY DEPARTMENT

Emma Sledge - Utility Clerk

(386) 467-9800 ext. 103

esledge@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Tonya Long

(386) 467-9800, ext. 202

tonyalong@welaka-fl.gov

Welaka AFTER HOURS Call Center

(386) 467-8677 / TDD: (800) 955-8771

Councilwoman Kathy Washington

(386) 467-9800, ext. 203

kashington@welaka-fl.gov

WELAKA CODE DEPARTMENT

Pauline Kinney

(386) 530-0336

codes@welaka-fl.gov

Town Attorney, Patrick Kennedy

TownAttorney@welaka-fl.gov

WELAKA BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Mark Criswell - Universal Building Inspector

(386) 467-9800 ext. 105 or Option 4

building@welaka-fl.gov

Events Committee: events@welaka-fl.gov

Waste Pro: (386) 328-5445

It is our pleasure to serve the Town of Welaka!



July

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Trash & Recycling Pickup	4 TOWN HALL CLOSED in Observance of Independence Day	5	6	7 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting 9:00 AM - Town Hall Food Truck Friday 6 - 9 PM Jefferson Smith Park	8 Town-Wide Clean-Up 7 AM Coffee & Snacks 8 AM Clean-Up Town Hall Pavilion
9	10 Trash, Recycling & Yard Debris Pickup	11 Welaka Town Council Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	12	13 Welaka Fire Board Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Fire Station	14 Town Water Flush Day (May experience low water pressure)	15
16	17 Trash & Recycling Pickup Meter-Reading Day	18	19	20 Zoning Board Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	21	22
23	24 Trash, Recycling & Yard Debris Pickup	25 Code Enforcement Board Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	26	27	28	29 Backpack Giveaway 10 AM - Lunch Provided Helping Hands of Welaka Jefferson Smith Park
30	31 Trash & Recycling Pickup					

• **Summer Food Service Program: Free Lunch (1-18 years old): June 5th – July 25th, Welaka Town Hall Pavilion, Monday – Thursday, 11:05 AM**