



Welaka Gazette

January 2022

From The Mayor's Desk

As I sit and reflect on this past year, 2021 certainly brought its share of successes and heartaches. First, I would be remiss if I did not reflect on the tremendous loss of Mayor Gordon Sands and Councilman Willie Washington. Mayor Sands and Councilman Washington served our Town for over seventy-five years of combined service and with their passing, Welaka lost much knowledge both in Town government and in the history of our Town. It was nice to see a tribute to them both at our Christmas Parade last month.

This year, we have had much success as we have worked together to improve our Town government. First, we are very fortunate to have brought our new Town attorney, Patrick Kennedy, on board. Patrick has worked these past few months tirelessly as we have been updating our Town ordinances and reorganizing our Codes Enforcement and Zoning and Planning Departments. Also, I am pleased to announce that Pauline Kinney recently completed codes enforcement training and will be working with Town attorney Patrick Kennedy and our new Codes Enforcement Board as we endeavor to clean up some problem properties in the Town of Welaka. If there is a code issue you would like to bring to our attention, please use our new Town portal www.telltownhall.com to make a report. You can also use this portal to report road and parks issues or any other items that should be brought to our attention.

I am also excited by the addition of our new Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon, and our new Deputy Town Clerk, Cara McCoy. Meghan has an extensive background in accounting and is working diligently with our auditing firm to improve the accounting procedures of our Town and make them more transparent for our residents. Cara has an extensive background in government and is working update and organize our municipal records and ordinances. With their fresh talent, our Town finance and records departments will have a firm foundation going into 2022. We are very fortunate to have them on our team.

I am happy to announce that Municode has completed codification of our Town code, and it will be available in the next few weeks online. Our new Welaka Municipal Code makes it easier for our residents to search and understand ordinances passed by the Welaka Town Council. It has also allowed us to locate gaps in our Town ordinances that need to be filled. This codification makes our government more transparent, accessible, and streamlined.

It has been said that "The best government is that which governs least." While I believe rules and laws are essential to the function of our society, I also do not believe in the heavy regulation of people. The codification of our Town code will also help to ensure that we are not over regulating.

On a project's front, I am very excited about all the work we have accomplished this year in our utility department. It all started with the ten million dollar grant we received from the Florida Department of Environmental protection to build a brand new sewer plant. As many know, our sewer plant has needed replacement for many years. This new grant will allow us to increase our capacity from one hundred thousand gallons a day to one million gallons a day. It will also put us on a firm foundation as we move forward in the coming decades. I am also pleased to announce that the state of Florida has approved a hundred and fifty thousand dollar grant to allow Florida Rural Water to do a complete survey of our Water and Sewer system. They will be mapping and checking every valve, fire hydrant, and piece of equipment at our water, sewer, and vacuum stations. With this survey, we will have a five-year plan to maintain and repair our system thereby ensuring its solvency for generations to come.

As I close out, I want to take the time to acknowledge and thank the events committee for all their hard work this year on our Halloween and our Christmas Festivals. What they did with the short time they had was nothing short of a miracle. Our Halloween festival was the largest we have ever seen, with over five hundred in attendance. Our Christmas Parade and Festival were equally impressive with the largest parade participation we have ever had, along with all of the great events we had that day in our Downtown Park. Topping off the festivities was our annual boat parade with fourteen boats on display this year. It was truly a magical time in the Town of Welaka.

As we close out 2021 and move into 2022, I want to thank you again for the faith and trust you have placed in me to be your Mayor. We have a lot of hard work to do in the coming year—everything from improving our roads to expanding our infrastructure. But none of it could be accomplished alone; it is only through a combined effort of our entire Town that we have been able to accomplish so much, and it is only through a combined effort moving forward that we will get where we want to be for the future. Thank you for wanting to be a part of your Town government, and thank you for your support this year. I see nothing but good things on the horizon for the Town of Welaka for the future, and I am excited that you have allowed me to be a part of that by serving as your Mayor. May God bless you and your family in the coming year.

Best Regards,
Mayor Jamie D. Watts

From Our Council President

As 2021 comes to an end, we are yet again faced with a new year full of potential promise. Many people make New Year's resolutions only to later abandon them after a short time. While I avoid making New Year's resolutions, I do take time to reflect on the past year as well as the upcoming year. I like to focus on things that I can accomplish by simply putting forth some effort. To do this, I start with contemplating changes that I would like to see in my own life and putting together a short list of ways to realize those changes. Usually, I find that changes come easiest by creating a new positive habit or by eliminating a bad or nonproductive habit. Once I begin to make these changes, each time I reinforce a good habit or resist a bad habit, a new habit begins to take shape. A simple way of understanding this, is to reinforce these changes by making consistent choices that align with what you are trying to accomplish. For myself, an example of this would be making conscious decisions when I go to the grocery store. I have a weakness for salty, crunchy items such as chips. The conscious decision is to simply not purchase these items! If they don't make it to my house, then I won't be tempted to eat them. Every change you want to see, simply comes down to a series of choices, and changes come by one choice at a time, either a "to do" or "not to do". And when I fall short, rather than abandon the effort, I try to focus on restarting the effort.

Every single decision we make each day can, especially when compounded, have a great impact on our lives and our future. Building on good habits and eliminating unproductive habits go a long way towards improving the daily quality of our life, including greater productivity, and increased personal growth. This process, when followed, will change your outlook and empower you to continue.

The popular saying is "Be the change you want to see". I would also encourage you to "Make the change you want to see."

In Your Service,
Council President Jessica Finch

Town Committees & Meetings

The Town of Welaka Charter Committee will meet on January 4th and 18th at 5:00 PM as we continue the process for drafting a new Town Charter. All residents are welcome to come out and join them at Welaka Town Hall.

The Town of Welaka Citizens Advisory Board will meet January 14, 2022 at 9:00 AM as they continue to solicit ideas from the community on how we can improve Welaka. Their top priority currently is prioritizing our Town road for repair and resurfacing. All residents are welcome to come out and join them.

Upcoming Town Meetings

Attend a meeting in person at Welaka Town Hall, 400 4th Ave. or watch live on our Town of Welaka Facebook page!

January 11 - Regular Town Council Meeting at 6:00 PM**

January 20 - Zoning Board Meeting at 6:00 PM

January 25 - Code Board Meeting at 6:00 PM

**** All agenda items and attachments for the above meetings must be submitted to the Town Clerk by *no later than 5pm, January 5, 2022*. Late or incomplete submissions will be placed on the next agenda. Please contact the Town Clerk's office with any questions.**

January Meter Reading

Utility meters will be read on January 14th, 2022. If you have trouble with your water or sewer service, the Town Utility Department is available 24 hours a day at (386) 467-8677 or TDD (800) 955-8771. Please remember to do your part in conserving water.

Garbage Pickup

Garbage and recycling pick-up days will be January 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st. Yard debris will be picked up on January 10th and 24th. Please call Waste Pro at (386) 328-5445 if you have any issues with your garbage, yard debris or recycling pick up.

Pay Your Water Bill Online & Save Time!

Our utilities department now offers all citizens the option to pay water bills online! To take advantage of this convenient new service, register your water account at www.WelakaWater.com. From there you can track your monthly water usage and sign up for automatic bill payments so you'll never worry about late fees again.

For assistance with registering your water account online, please contact the Utility Department at (386) 467-9800. As always, payments may still be dropped into our secure wall drop box located on the right side of the front door of Town Hall.

Recognitions and Proclamations

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 Town Clerk Megan Allmond at (386) 467-9800 or by email at townclerk@welaka-fl.gov. We will be happy to recognize them at our next Council Meeting by public recognition.



**DO YOU HAVE NEWS FOR THE TOWN OF
WELAKA??**

**PUBLISH IN THE FEBRUARY 2022
EDITION OF THE WELAKA GAZETTE!!**

For more information please contact Welaka Town Hall.

TOWN OF WELAKA GOVERNMENT CONTACT LIST:

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

To report an issue or concern: www.TellTownHall.com

Town Council

Mayor Jamie Watts
(386) 467-9800 Extension: 101
Direct: 386-524-4009
jwatts@welaka-fl.gov

Council President Jessica Finch
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 2)
Town Hall Extension: 200
jfinch@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Marianne Milledge
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 3)
Town Hall Extension: 201
mmilledge@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Tonya Long
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 4)
Town Hall Extension: 202
tonyalong@welaka-fl.gov

Councilwoman Kathy Washington
386-467-9800 (Option 7, Option 4)
Town Hall Extension: 202
kwashington@welaka-fl.gov

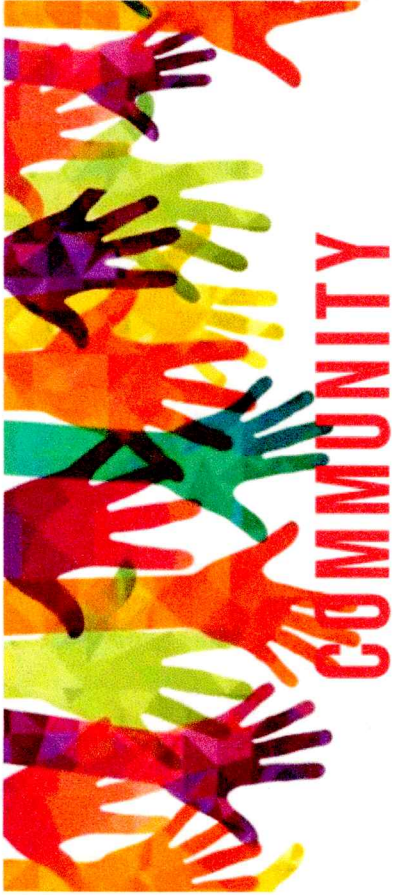
Town Departments

Michael Porath - Police Chief
Direct Line: 386-524-4015
Town Hall Extension: 107
mporath@welaka-fl.gov

Meghan Allmon - Town Clerk
Direct Line: 386-524-4010
Town Hall Extension: 102
townclerk@welaka-fl.gov

Kendrea Welch - Utility Clerk
Direct Line: 386-524-4016
Town Hall Extension: 103
kwelch@welaka-fl.gov

Justin Morris - Building Department
Direct Line: 386-524-4013
Town Hall Extension: 105
building@welaka-fl.gov



CLEANUP

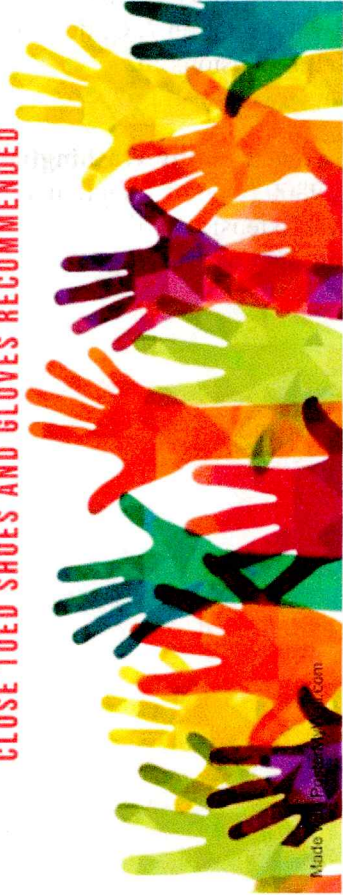
Saturday, January 8th, 2022

Join

Friends of Welaka
at the Town Hall Pavilion

COFFEE AND PASTRIES AT 8 AM ~ PICKUP BEGINS AT 9 AM

CLOSE TOED SHOES AND GLOVES RECOMMENDED



January 15, 2022

10am-4pm

Arts & Crafts Festival
Food Vendors
Bounce House

The Church

638 CR 309

Welaka, FL

386-467-3251

C-GypSea Art presents:

Welaka

3rd Saturdays

MAKER'S

MARKET

Jan. 15

Feb. 19

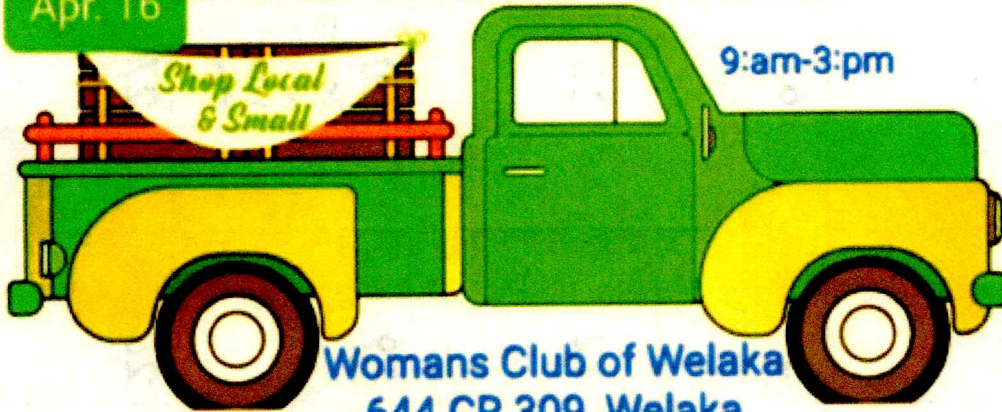
Mar. 19

Apr. 16

Artisans, Crafters
& Flea Market Finds

*Shop Local
& Small*

9:am-3:pm



Womans Club of Welaka
644 CR 309, Welaka

Food*Bake Sale*Vendors

Vendor Info: 754.281.5373

JANUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 New Year's Day
2	3 Recycling Pickup Yard Debris Pick-Up	4 Charter Review Committee Meeting 5:00 PM	5	6	7	8 Community Cleanup 8:00 AM Welaka Town Hall
9	10 Trash Pickup & Recycling	11 Welaka Town Council Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	12	13	14 Citizens Advisory Board Meeting 9:00 AM Welaka Town Hall	15 WinterFest 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Makers Market 9:00 AM to 3:00PM
16	17 ML King Day Recycling Pickup Yard Debris Pick-Up	18 Charter Review Committee Meeting 5:00 PM	19	20 Zoning Board Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	21	22
23	24 Trash Pickup & Recycling	25 Code Enforcement Meeting 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	26	27	28	29
30	31 Recycling Pickup Yard Debris Pick-Up	1	2	3	4	5