



Welaka Gazette

June 2021

From The Mayor's Desk

The month of May has been busy. First, I would like you to join me in welcoming our newest Welaka Town Council Member, Kathy Washington. Our Council President shares a little history on Kathy in her section this month that you will enjoy reading. Kathy has a tremendous amount of knowledge to add to our Town Council, coupled with her military experience and long history of living in Welaka. I believe she will be a great asset to our Town Council.

On Town preparedness, our General Maintenance Department is continuing to clean out our stormwater drains and prepare our generators for Hurricane Season which starts on June 1, 2021. As we prepare for storm season I encourage every resident to have an Emergency Kit containing everything from water to food to medication. While I believe our Town is in good condition should we be hit by a hurricane I also subscribe to the idea of "plan for the worst but hope for the best." I am also pleased to say that we have been assigned a seat at the Putnam County Emergency Operations Center in Palatka. In the event of a major disaster I will be able to appoint a representative to that seat such as our Town Clerk who will be able to make critical requests from the State of Florida and the Federal Government on my behalf as I am in the field assessing our needs and making those requests. This will ensure that Welaka has a seat at the County, State, and Federal levels in the event of a major disaster.

On planning, one of my important responsibilities as your Mayor is to keep up to date on critical issues in Florida that face the Town of Welaka. One way I do this is through the Florida League of Cities, which is our advocacy group in Tallahassee. Recently I requested to be appointed to the Florida League of Cities Land Use & Economic Development Committee. I am pleased to announce that I have been appointed to the Florida League of Cities 2021 Land Use & Economic Development Committee.

My committee addresses policies specific to municipal concerns with community redevelopment, economic development, growth management, land use planning issues, annexation, eminent domain, tort liability, and property rights. Being a part of this committee will give me the additional knowledge I need to help set policy to ensure Welaka maintains its small-town charm.

Finally, I regret to say that we have decided to cancel our 4th of July Celebration due to a lack of participation. Our Deputy Town Clerk has been working hard on this event but the short time won't allow us to bring it together correctly. However, we will be holding our Christmas Parade and Celebration in December. We will work toward the 4th of July Celebration in 2022 and several other events including a possible monthly art walk in the

Downtown Park. I hope everyone has a safe and Happy Memorial Day, and I look forward to talking to you next month.

Best Regards,
Mayor Jamie D. Watts

From Our Council President

This month we will be welcoming our newest member, Kathy Washington to the Town Council. She will be sworn in at the end of May and take her seat at our June 8th meeting.

Kathy grew up in Welaka and graduated from Crescent City High School. Upon graduating, she left home and joined the United States Army serving our country for over 20 years. After retiring from the military she still had the urge to travel. She received her license as an over-the-road truck driver visiting all continental states in the process. She didn't stop there. She began attending college and received her master's degree in business administration. Missing her roots it was time to come back home to be closer to her family and in 2006 she moved back to Welaka.

I first got to know Kathy when she volunteered in Friends of Welaka's fledging after-school tutoring and reading program. The Woman's Club of Welaka opened its doors to us to welcome Welaka children after school. We began offering our one-day-a-week program by reading to the smaller children, playing games and for the older children, tutoring. This is where Kathy stepped in and offered her services in math of all things! I can tell you that no one else wanted that job! But Kathy took on the challenge and quickly established a rapport with her young student he was excited about math for the first time!

That program ended after a short time because of the arrival of Covid. However, I often saw Kathy at other events, especially in support of Helping Hands. I knew that she loved our community and had a desire to serve.

When her father, Willie Washington passed it was untimely and no one expected it. When the initial shock and grief wore off and we were faced with appointing his replacement I immediately thought of Kathy.

During her initial interview, she was asked to name three words to describe herself. She chose integrity, honesty, and perseverance. I can think of no better qualities for a council member! Welcome Kathy!

In Your Service,
Jessica Finch
Council President



On behalf of the Mayor's office and the Welaka Town Council we would like to acknowledge the brave men and women who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Their sacrifice can never be repaid. We hope everyone has a safe and happy Memorial Day!

Did you know? Each year on Memorial Day a national moment of remembrance takes place at 3:00 p.m. local time.

Our Community



Florida Bass Federation's
Junior Anglers State Championship
Hosted by the Town of Welaka, FL
June 6, 2021

Once again, the Town of Welaka will host the Florida Bass Federation's Junior Anglers State Championship on June 6 at the Welaka Boat Ramp and Park. The anglers competing for the State title are ages nine years old and up to the 8th grade. The winning two angler teams will represent the State of Florida at The Bass Federation's Junior World Championship this summer in Quad Cities, IL on the Mississippi River.

The teams will take off from the Welaka Boat Ramp early in the morning. They return for the weigh-in ceremonies at 2:00 pm. On behalf of the Bass Capital Junior Bassmasters from Putnam County we invite and

welcome you to watch our weigh-in ceremonies.

On behalf of the Town of Welaka and the Mayor's office I encourage our Town residents to join us that day to support these important youth activities.

COVID-19 Vaccine Drive



I am pleased to announce that our COVID-19 Vaccine Drives were a major success. In the two drives the Florida Department of Emergency Management vaccinated over 68 residents in the Town of Welaka. It was a pleasure working with the Florida Department of Emergency Management and the Putnam County Health Department to make this happen. I want to thank everyone who came out and got their shot to do their part in helping slow the spread of COVID-19.

Monthly Town Meetings

All meeting are at Welaka Town Hall

Located at 400 4th Ave. Welaka, Fl. 32193

June 8, 2021

Zoning Board Meeting 5:30 PM

Code Enforcement Meeting 5:45 PM

Town Council Meeting 6:30 PM

All three will be live streamed on our Town of Welaka Facebook Page and on our YouTube Channel

June Meter Reading

Will be reading water meters June 16th. If you have any issues with your water or sewer remember the Town Utility Department is available 24 hours a day at (386) 467-8677 or TDD (800) 955-8771. We ask you to please do your part in conserving water.

Garbage Pickup

Garbage and Recycling pick up will be June 1st, 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th. Yard debris pick up will be June 1st, 14th 28th. Please remember to 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

You can now pay your water bill online using our Online Utility Bill pay system. To get started go to www.welakawater.com and create your account. In your account you can track your monthly water usage and even set up your account for auto pay so you never have to worry about a late charge again. If you need assistance setting up your account online please call our Utility Department at (386) 467-9800 option 4. You can also drop your payment by Town Hall anytime using our Utility Payment drop box located to the right of the front door of Town Hall.

May's Recognitions and Proclamations

Town of Welaka Resolution 2021 -04

**Naming the Pavilion At Welaka Town Hall in Honor Of Mayor Gordon L. Sands, Jr.
Passed Unanimously by the Welaka Town Council**

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 a turning 100 years old, please contact our Town Clerk Jennifer McDaniel at (386) 467-9800 or by email at jennifermcdaniel@welaka-fl.gov. We will be happy to recognize them at our next Council Meeting by public recognition.

St Johns River Historical Facts

Before European involvement in North America, the St. Johns River was called Welaka — or river of lakes, a name of Seminole-Creek origin.



In the early 1500s, Spanish seamen called the river Rio de Corrientes — or river of currents. In 1562 almost 50 years before the settlement in Jamestown — the French established Fort Caroline on a high bluff overlooking a river they called Riviere de Mai (River of May) because they arrived there on May 1. In 1565, Spanish soldiers marched north from St. Augustine, captured Fort Caroline and slaughtered the

French. The Spanish renamed the river San Mateo to honor the saint whose feast followed the day they captured the river. Later, the river was renamed Rio de San Juan after a mission near its mouth named San Juan del Puerto. The English translation of the name Rio de San Juan — St. Johns River — lasted through English, Confederate and American possession of the river and remains today. Soon after England acquired Florida in 1763, King George III sent botanist John Bartram to explore Florida. His son, William Bartram, stayed in Florida and published his book *Travels* in 1791. It describes his exploration of the river as far south as Lake Harney. In the 1800s, steamboats made the St. Johns River a popular winter destination for northerners. By the 1860s, several steamers were making weekly round trips from Charleston and Savannah to Jacksonville and Palatka, and other settlements. Transportation has always been an important use of the St. Johns River. When William Bartram sailed down the river, he stopped briefly at an Indian village on the very spot where Palatka is located. Into the 1830s, the area was a trading post, until Fort Shannon was built there in the early 1840s to secure the strategic location during the Seminole Indian Wars. In the 1850s, Palatka became a port of entry into the interior of the state. Steamboats brought tourism and were vital to the City's economy until the 1920s. (Photos above Welaka Park on the St Johns River, 1896)

Join Us On Facebook

We are pleased to say we are now broadcasting all of our Town of Welaka meetings on Facebook and on YouTube so you can attend our meeting even if you cannot come in person. I encourage you to watch our Town meeting to help stay up to date on what is happening in our Town. Broadcasting our meeting is just one way to keep you involved in our government and maintain transparency in everything we do. Just go to Facebook or YouTube and search for the Town of Welaka and be sure to like our page to be kept up to date on all the great things happening in our Town.

2020 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for the Town of Welaka

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 groundwater from wells which are chlorinated and aerated for disinfection purposes and draw from the Floridan Aquifer.

In 2018, 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, 2020. Data obtained before January 1, 2020 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

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)	4/2018	N	1.8	N/A	0	10	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium (ppm)	4/2018	N	0.0048	N/A	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Chromium (ppb)	4/2018	N	0.2	N/A	100	100	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4/2018	N	0.089	N/A	4	4.0	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories. Water additive which promotes strong teeth when at the optimum level of 0.7 ppm
Nitrate (as Nitrogen) (ppm)	5/2019	N	0.12	N/A	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	4/2018	N	40	N/A	N/A	160	Salt water intrusion, leaching from soil

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.

Stage 1 Disinfectants and Disinfection By-Products

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)	1/2019 – 12/2019	N	1.36	1.05 – 1.53	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4.0	Water additive used to control microbes

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.

Stage 2 Disinfectants and 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
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (ppb)	9/2019	N	15.85	N/A	N/A	80	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	9/2019	N	3.62	N/A	N/A	60	By-product of drinking water disinfection

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)	7/2017	N	0.024	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 ensuring 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.



Community Events

The South Putnam Lions Club is forming a new club that will be meeting at Shrimp R Us on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 12:00 noon. They are in the process of adding new members. If you are interested in joining please contact Carl Harrell at (386) 336-6553