

Town Manager Report - December 2022

This month proved to be interesting and was the beginning of the holiday season.

The Town had one water line break on Studio Road which was repaired. The Town also has to call in a service to clean out a sewer line due to grease build up on Lewis Avenue and Caroline Blvd. This happened on Christmas Eve and I was here for the duration of the clean out.

Most of the month was spent repairing some vandalism happenings around town. The Town has invested in six (6) remote cameras that were placed in different areas of town and moved around to try and catch the people creating the problems. It has proved to be a successful deterrent, because most of the mischief has basically stopped. The Clay County sheriff's Office (CCSO) has cooperated with the town and increased their patrols throughout the town. All residents need to notify the Town Hall immediately when any incident happens and report all incidents to the CCSO, when they happen.

The Town received a notice from Governor's office which stated the Town will receive the \$600,000.00 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) which it applied for. The Town should receive the official letter in the next couple of months and begin the process of replacing some of the old water lines.

There were meetings held with the developer's attorney regarding the Hunter's Ridge Estates subdivision project, on the east end of Town, to discuss what is left for the developer to do to get this project completed.

I have attended all of the scheduled and required town meetings for the month and I hope everyone had a great Christmas holiday!

2022 YEAR IN REVIEW –

This year began with me being in the hospital with COVID Pneumonia and I was out of the office for the entire month of January. I still handled urgent town business from home and thanks to the great staff everything was handled.

A collapsed storm water drain was repaired on Morton Street.

One of the car wash lift station pumps was repaired under warranty.

The Town implemented a new policy for all new construction items under 100 square feet located in floodplain areas of Town. The new policy was required by the State to be in compliance with State Floodplain guidelines and is now part of the building department requirements.

The Town's Museum had its Grand Opening earlier this year. It was an advertised event with County Commissioners speaking at this event. This was a project several years in the making.

The Town's water tower tank has been completely emptied and cleaned, disinfected, and resealed on the inside. This took about three and half weeks to complete and gets done every ten years. The Town has a contracted service that maintains the outside of the tank two times a year.

There was another water line break on Clark Avenue and State Road 16 which was repaired.

The palm trees on Poling Blvd were completely trimmed by the public works staff.

The meter on Well #2 was replaced and both well meters were raised up, out of the pit to ensure safe meter readings. A new culvert pipe was installed at the second gate at the water tower building area to be able to drive through it. All new LED lights were installed inside the water tower building.

All storm water items have been recorded into the Diamond Map program.

Pump #2 at the master lift station had to be pulled out and repaired under warranty.

The Town's Annual Audit was completed and again there were no findings. Thank you town staff for a job well done. 9 in a row! Way to go!

The Town's 2021 Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) was hand delivered to all utility customers and the report showed no issues with the Town's water utility system.

There was a water line break at the New Hope Baptist Church which was repaired.

There were many meetings held with the developer of the re-plat process for the Hunters Ridge Estates Subdivision. The initial Concept Review was presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) in July and recommended to the Town Council with conditions. The Town Council approved the initial plans with conditions. The staff worked with the Town's Planner and Town Attorney on this project and is still working on it.

The Town's Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) finished their review of the Town's Comprehensive Plan (CP) and have sent questions and updates for the Town's planner to review. In addition, the P&Z started the process of reviewing the Town's Land Development Regulations (LDR's) to check for any needed updates and to make sure the LDR's are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. There were two combined meetings held with the Town Council to discuss the progress and goals of the Town's documents, so far.

The Town's public works and I upgraded to new mobile phones by T-Mobile. This resulted in better service and cut the mobile phone bill in half.

The Town's Storage Room shelving was ordered and installed in the new climate controlled storage room. The Town staff will now be able to organize the Town Files/Maps and building permits. This will take some time, due to their heavy workload, but the goal is to have this room completely organized by the end of this year.

The Town applied for a new Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and conducted the required public hearings to replace part of the last loop of old water lines. The Town recently received a letter

from the Governor stating that Penney Farms did get approved for this grant. The work for this project is set to begin in the spring of 2023. The Town advertised for an engineer as required by the grant and the winning engineer firm was Infrastructure Consulting & Engineering. Mr. Jerry Dabkowski has been a great addition to the Town for engineering issues.

New caution signs were installed on Palmetto Avenue to warn pedestrians and drivers of the nearby ditch.

Portions of a dead oak tree hanging over the road, on Booker Avenue was removed for safety concerns.

Property was purchased on Caroline Blvd. by Joe Wiggins Construction and Mr. Wiggins is exploring putting duplexes there. There should be more information on what Mr. Wiggins intends to do with this area in the coming months.

The Jax/Palatka and Reinhold Corporation are looking into closing some platted streets.

The Town held the National Night Out event in Kohler Park and every year this event gets bigger and better. Despite the rainy weather, there was a nice turn out with hotdogs and refreshments. Residents got to meet and talk to our Community Officer, Deputy Bryan Maylon.

The Town's VIPS Program started back up this year and the volunteers are happy to return. The CCSO is working on getting the golf carts repaired and running safely.

The Town staff prepared the new fiscal year budget providing quotes, researching and assessing the Town's needs for the coming year. The Town Council met and with their suggestions, approved the budget. The required advertising and public hearings were held with no opposition.

The Town Council renewed my contract to be Town Manager for another five years. I intend to serve the Town as long as my health stays good and they want me to.

The Town Hall hosted two national elections, one in August (Primaries) and one in November for the National Mid-terms. There was a great voter turn-out as usual and the Clay County Supervisor of Elections was grateful for the accommodations and cooperation with the Town staff to make things run smoothly.

The Playground Park upgrades have begun and should be completed by spring of 2023. Portions of the fence was replaced, new water fountains were installed, the pavilion was rescreened and the new playground equipment has been ordered. There will be a new swing set and a new large slide, as well as new wood fiber groundcover.

In September, Blue Stream Fiber came into town and began installing cable and internet services to the Penney Retirement Community campus. Blue Stream was incredibly professional and met every requirement the Town asked them for. The digging portion of this project is finished.

The Town Hall back hallway renovation was started and completed at the end of December. This will be the space for the staff's office supplies and the location of a large scanner/printer to be purchased in the future to electronically scan town documents, building permit plans and town maps.

The Town came through two hurricanes this year with little to no major damage and we are grateful for that. The public works staff worked quickly to clean the town up after each storm.

A new fire hydrant was installed at the East end of State Road 16 following a traffic accident earlier in the year.

The Little Dairy Road water line repair was completed which took several months of planning for the necessary water pipes and fittings. This repair is instrumental in helping with water loss and lowering the unaccounted water for reporting.

The above items mentioned were just the highlights of some of the work being done here in Penney Farms and are in addition to the normal weekly, monthly, and quarterly reporting and meetings held that have been done for the Town. I can not express my appreciation for such a hard working staff. In the last year, the Town Hall had some personnel changes and welcomed three new employees to the staff: Megan Trexler, Administrative Assistant; George Jacobs, Public Works Technician and Clayton Ceballos, another Public Works Technician.

I am looking forward to this new year of steadily moving forward and continuing to serve the Town of Penney Farms.

BY: David Cooper
Town Manager