

For Your Information

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF

December 9, 2022



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE CITY OF CLEWISTON,
AMERICA'S SWEETEST TOWN**

Due to the Christmas and New Year Holidays, there will be no solid waste service offered on Monday, December 26, 2022 and Monday, January 1, 2023. Solid waste collection service will be provided on Tuesday, December 27, 2022 and Tuesday, January 2, 2023.

Roll off bins will be placed throughout the community for residents to dispose of their Christmas debris. Please do not place construction debris, household garbage or yard clippings in these containers.

Dates to Remember

December 14, 2022 – Clewiston Firefighter Pension Board Meeting

December 15, 2022 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting

December 19, 2022 – City Commission Meeting

December 23-26, 2022 – Christmas Holiday – City Offices Closed

January 2, 2023 – New Year's Day Holiday – City Offices Closed

Office of the City Manager

Citizens, Business Owners & Other Interested Parties:

Borrowing a time honored phrase from a popular holiday song: **“IT IS BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS”** in Clewiston, Florida! The holiday season activities are ramping up and there is a buzz in the community that is quite frankly very exciting and which makes me happy that I live in such a wonderful place. Despite being scheduled early in the holiday season while not necessarily being considered a holiday event, the annual Clewiston Chamber of Commerce Dinner & Awards gala held on Tuesday was a wonderful kickoff for all the seasonal festivities to follow. Congratulations are in order to all the organizers and sponsors for a great event and to the Chamber honored businesses and membership who contribute so much to the private and public sector success of the Clewiston community. City public works staff and community volunteers did a festive themed successful decoration effort of Bond Street for the awesome outdoor gathering again this year. A special recognition and congratulation are in order for Clewiston's Outstanding Community Service Award winner announced at the dinner who was our recently retired Commissioner and former Mayor Kristine Petersen. Most in the community

are well aware of her decades of service in various capacities as detailed in the recognition Proclamation she received at the event.

Highlighting the holiday related items, U.S. Sugar's Santa Express literally delivered Holiday Cheer by rail this week in the form of toys for families across Glades, Highlands, Hendry, Palm Beach and Martin counties with stops in communities across the region with Santa aboard including Clewiston. The company annually partners with the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation's toy drive in this wonderful effort. Other events to build Christmas joy particularly among our youngest citizens are undertaken by a host of organizations including locally our civic clubs who partner with local schools. I congratulate all who plan and participate in such events. I know a number of local groups do numerous activities that I may not be aware of, but I want to acknowledge here plans of which I am aware. Last Friday, the Clewiston Christian School held a very nice and well attended Live Nativity event in a downtown park. On Monday of this week, my wife Sheila and I had the opportunity to join my fellow Rotarians in a shopping spree at Walmart with Clewiston area youth coordinated with local schools that was very well received with 60 children involved. Upcoming, the Clewiston Police Department, in cooperation with the Fire Department, will have Santa in town again this Saturday to kick off their annual "Shop With A Cop" event also at Walmart. Other seasonal civic type events include several local church bazaars, a Roland & Mary Ann Martin Marina sponsored fishing tournament also this week, the monthly community business sponsored Market on Bond Street event next weekend and the upcoming annual Wreaths Across America event.

In one of the most exciting holiday events I have ever had the privilege to personally participate in, Clewiston also hosted Santa last evening as the guest of honor at the 1st Annual Christmas Tree Lighting held in Civic Park with multiple complimentary activities to follow. With an exceptionally large gathering of citizens witnessing the historic event, Santa, Mrs. Claus and one of his trusty elves arrived via a Clewiston Fire Engine with a police escort clearing the way. Following welcoming remarks from all members of the Clewiston City Commission, recognition of the volunteers and city staff who participated in preparations, and a rousing countdown led by event organizer and Clewiston Recreation & Leisure Services Director Lauren McGinnis, Santa "flipped the official holiday switch" and the beautifully decorated Clewiston Christmas Tree on the hill in the center of the park was illuminated to the joy of the throngs present. Attendees were treated to hot chocolate, fresh popcorn on site, homemade treats, punch and cookies for those who stood in line for hours after the tree lighting to have personal visits with Santa in the nearby recently renovated and seasonally decorated youth center, as well as, those opting to also line up for complimentary rides on the trackless holiday train circling the area. Meanwhile, everyone was treated to a unique "winter wonderland" view from a snow blowing machine that simulated the more traditional seasonal "chill in the air" theme under the beautiful moonlit Clewiston sky over nearby Sugarland Park. Kids there enjoyed playing in a giant Snow Man shaped Igloo design bounce house while parents dined on nearby tables from excellent culinary offerings provided by food truck vendors or shopped at tents offering seasonal wares. Preliminary estimates are that between 1,200 and 1,500 participated in all the activities over the entire 2-3 hour event. For a first time activity, city officials were overwhelmed with the turnout far exceeding our expectations. WOW!

In case you unfortunately missed the tree lighting event, do not panic. You can take a look at the many pictures posted on social media or of course you can still visit Civic Park which will remain decorated throughout the holidays. An early evening visit is especially rewarding when the lights are most visible. We encourage holiday themed photos of your family utilizing the lighting and displays as a backdrop. Please enjoy.

In closing, from your Clewiston city family, and from my personal family to yours, I wish all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Thank you for your continued interest in the City of Clewiston,

Randy Martin

Staff Reports

Recreation & Leisure Services Director Lauren McGinnis reports:

- With the 1st Annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting approaching we are excited to start what is sure to be a favorite tradition.
- We have loved seeing everyone come out and enjoy the beautiful lights and decorations in Civic Park! The family pictures that are posted have brought so much joy to our hearts! We hope you continue to take pictures and tag us in them!
- The continued support from the community at our building has been amazing! Every day we have more students coming in to enjoy all that we have to offer here at the Youth Center. We love getting to know the students and their friends who are enjoying all of the new games and electronics.
- Our hours for students are 2:30 PM – 6:00 PM Monday – Thursday and 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM on Friday. We invite all of our youth to come and enjoy all of the brand new board games, books, xbox game systems, and 3D printers at the Youth Center every day after school.
- We have brand new books, including test prep books for anyone to use and a large selection of board games for teens to enjoy.
- Our 3D printer runs each Thursday. If you would like to be a part of our 3D print club and/or volunteer for the club please call us to find out how.
- Be sure to follow us on Facebook for up to date information on all events and activities going on at the Youth Center.
- We are working on updating our facility rental process to make it a fully digital. We have a new information sheet that will help us best serve you for your events.
- Are you looking to have an event? Call the Youth Center today to get a new Facility Rental Information Request Form. We look forward to hosting your next event at one of our beautiful facilities or parks.
- We are always looking for volunteers to help with our clubs and activities here at the Youth Center, if you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering please call us at 983-1492 to find out how you can get involved.

Library Director Natasha Hayes reports:

- Library staff provided ready reference/computer assistance, circulation activities, and patron programming to 1, 369 patrons this month.
- This month's programming activities have included:
 - AWE Learning Stations were accessed and used by a total of 39 children. The AWE learning computer will allow young children the ability to learn about Literacy, Math, Science & Nature, Art & Music, and Writing & Computer Skills. Make sure to stop by and let the kids try it out!
 - There were 27 participants who completed November's scavenger hunt challenge. Be sure to try out our all new winter themed scavenger hunt!
 - Fall Diamond painting was held on Thursday, November 3rd with a total 13 participants.
 - Video Game Club was held every Tuesday and some Wednesdays with a total of 56 participants. Make sure to swing by the library and join the fun!
 - LEGO Club was held on Thursday, November 17th with a total of 15 builders. This month's challenges were to build anything and guess how many LEGO bricks in the jar. Congrats to McKinlee for winning the challenge.
 - On Tuesday, November 29th, The Green Thumb Garden Club came and decorated the library for Christmas with all-natural materials. We welcome the community to stop in and admire the beauty of all the naturally handcrafted decorations.



HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

- **Check our Craft corner this month:** Join the fun on Wednesday, December 7th at 3:30 p.m. for Christmas pom pom monster. Registration is required. Children ages 5-11 All materials will be provided.
- **Mistletoe Magic Show and Storytime & Pictures with Santa:** Mark your calendars! You will not want to miss this event scheduled for Wednesday, December 14th.
 - Join us at 5:30 p.m. for incredible Magic, laugh out loud comedy and snowball the bunny.
 - Come meet Santa at 6:30 p.m. This is a FREE program open to all families.
- **Christmas Photo Shoot:** Stop by the library anytime for a fun and FREE holiday photo shoot. We provide the holiday backdrop and some props. Please bring your camera and smiles. If you have any questions, please call the library.



- **New Library Hours:**
 - Monday:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - Tuesday:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - Wednesday:** 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
 - Thursday:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - Friday:** 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- **Anime Club**
 - **In-Person (Open to 6th-12th graders):** Anime Club meets every Friday from 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. We will be watching anime provided courtesy of Crunchyroll and talking about your favorite manga.
 - **Via Zoom:** We invite tweens and teens to join us every Monday at 3:30 p.m. To register, email library@clewiston-fl.gov to receive Zoom log-in information. If you are under 18, please be sure to have a guardian's permission to participate in this online event.
- **Winter Scavenger Hunt:** Stop by the library anytime from 3:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. starting Monday, December 5th until Friday, December 30th for the scavenger hunt!
- **LEGO Builders Club:** LEGO Club meets again on Thursday, December 15th at 3:45 p.m. The library staff continues to bring in additional LEGO kits and building supplies.
- **Video Game Club:** Join us in-person for Super Smash Bro's challenge, a Mario Kart race, or see who can survive the longest in Minecraft! Open to all skill levels. Children ages 7 and up. Please be advised that space is limited. Please call the library for more information.
- **Book Club:** Our Friends of the library has decided on two different books for our December 5th discussion. The 2:00 p.m. group will read the "*Smallest Tadpole's War in the Land of Mysterious Waters*" by Diane Swearingen The 5:15 p.m. group will read "*One Thousand White Women: The Journals of May Dodd*" by Jim Fergus. New readers are always welcome.
- **Clewiston Public Library Holiday Hour Closings are as follows:**
 - December 16, 2022 – CLOSED by noon
 - December 23, 2022 – CLOSED
 - December 26, 2022 – CLOSED
 - January 2, 2023 – CLOSED
- There are no weekly activities from December 27, 2022 through January 6, 2023. Weekly activities will resume on Monday, January 9, 2023.
- SHINE (Serving health Insurance Needs of Elders) and Area Agency on Aging-Southwest Florida will be hosting virtual classes for anyone interested in learning more

about Medicare! To register for upcoming webinars, email library@clewiston-fl.gov or call 863-983-1493.

- Need a place to hold a meeting? What about a computer lab to host your organization's/company's training? The Clewiston Library offers a classroom and computer lab with a total of 16 computers for use. For more information or to secure the room, please stop in or call the library at any time.
- If you have not done so already, please join our Facebook page (Clewiston Public Library) in order to remain up to date on the library's events and programs.
- Please stop by the library to pick up a calendar with a list of events and programs so you can join in on the fun.

Recap of Upcoming Events:

- **Friday, December 2nd**
 - Video Game Club at 1:00 p.m.
 - Anime Club at 3:30 p.m.
- **Monday, December 5th**
 - Book Club at 2:00 p.m. & 5:15 p.m.
 - Anime Club Via Zoom at 3:30 p.m.
 - Scavenger Hunt Begins
- **Tuesday, December 6th**
 - Medicare 101 with Part B Enrollment Demonstration with SHINE at 12:00 p.m.
 - Video Game Club at 3:30 p.m.
 - Christmas Photo Shoot begins
- **Wednesday, December 7th**
 - Craft Corner: Christmas Pom Pom Monster at 3:30 p.m.
 - Video Game Club at 4:45 p.m.
- **Friday, December 9th**
 - Anime Club at 3:30 p.m.
- **Monday, December 12th**
 - Anime Club Via Zoom at 3:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, December 13th**
 - Video Game Club at 3:30 p.m.
- **Wednesday, December 14th**
 - Medicare Part C with SHINE at 12:00 p.m.
 - Mistletoe Magic Show at 5:30 p.m.
 - Storytime & Pictures with Santa at 6:30 p.m.
- **Thursday, December 15th**
 - LEGO Club at 3:30 p.m.
- **Friday, December 16th** – CLOSED by noon for an Employee Appreciation Holiday Luncheon
- **Monday, December 19th**
 - Video Game Club at 1:00 p.m.
 - Anime Club Via Zoom at 3:30 p.m.
- **Tuesday, December 20th**
 - Medicare Part D with Shine at 12:00 p.m.
 - Video Game Club at 1:00 p.m.

- **Wednesday, December 21st**
 - Video Game Club at 10:00 a.m.
- **Friday, December 23rd – CLOSED**
- **Monday, December 26th – CLOSED**
- **Monday, January 2nd – CLOSED**

Golf Course Director Robbie Rush reports:

- Get all information of what's going on at Clewiston Golf Course Facebook.
- Get on our E-mail list by going to the City of Clewiston website. Go to the golf course division and at the bottom of the page you can sign-up on Constant Contact and get all Clewiston Golf Course information.
- Rates have changed for the season for non-members \$45.00 plus tax for 18 holes and \$22.50 plus tax for 9 holes.
- Group rates are available and we run a Monday Special after 12pm. Call the golf shop for more information.
- Walking is permitted all day.
- Golf shop hours are 7:15am-5:00pm. The first tee time is 7:30am. Carts are due in at 5:30pm daily. The golf course is open 7 days a week.
- Advertise a tee sign out on the golf course. If you are interested in advertising your business at the golf course call 863-983-1448.
- The driving range is open daily until 4:00pm.
- Golf lessons and club repair are available at the club from PGA Professional Robbie Rush. Contact golf shop at 863-983-1448.
- Clewiston Golf Course can supply all your golfing needs. You can inquire in the golf shop for whatever merchandise you need.
- Thanks to Sugarland Masonic Lodge, Clewiston Rotary Club and His Vision Our Hands. They all recently ran successful fundraising golf tournaments at Clewiston G.C.
- Ladies Day 8:30am Tuesday's
- Senior Men's Group 9:00am Tuesday's and Friday's
- Men's Group Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Call golf shop for times.

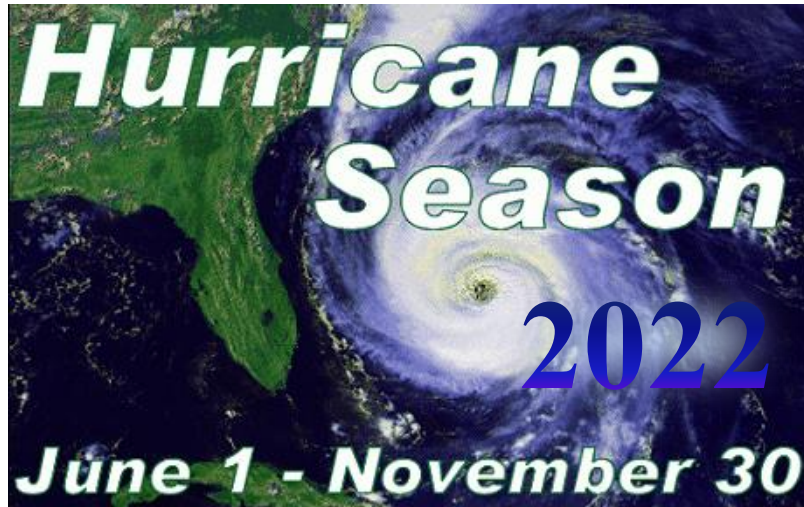
For more information call the golf shop 863-983-1448

Community Development Director/Fire Chief Travis Reese reports:

- Big Lots is getting closer to opening its doors; they have final inspections planned for early December. Big Lots will occupy 30,000 square feet of new retail shopping space.

Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Clay reports:

At Last We Say So Long.....



And to those storm shutters covering our windows!

Sec. 110-530. - Residential development and improvement.

(d)Shutters, storm panels and storm rollups. Shutters, storm panels and storm rollups shall meet the following design standards:

(1)Permanently installed shutters:

- a. Shutters shall be painted to match either the principal color or the trim color of the structure to which they are attached.
- b. Permanently installed hardware for storm panels and storm rollups shall be painted to match the principal color or the trim color of the structure to which is attached, according to which will make such hardware the least noticeable

.c. No permanently installed plywood panels are permitted.

(2)Storm shutters and panels which are not permanently installed shall meet the following utilization standards:

- a.They may be put in place or closed not more than 72 hours before and 72 hours after a storm event;
- b.They may be put in place or closed for two periods of up to 15 days each between June 1 and November 30 (the hurricane season) when the owner is absent; and
- c.They may be put in place on rear windows during any period of time.

Our Code Enforcement personnel will continue focused enforcement in December 2022 on this ordinance as well as continued enforcement of all City of Clewiston Ordinance.

The complete City of Clewiston Ordinances is available online and may be accessed utilizing the City of Clewiston website: <https://www.clewiston-fl.gov/> or Municode Library website: https://library.municode.com/fl/clewiston/codes/code_of_ordinances

If you have any questions about how to achieve/maintain compliance with this or any other City of Clewiston Ordinance you may contact our office at 863-983-1454 extension 309 or Code Compliance Supervisor:

debbie.mcneil@clewiston-fl.gov

**Police Chief Tom Lewis reports:
Police Department**

The police department has a very proud partnership with the Clewiston High School Criminal Justice Program as they train local youth for future careers as law enforcement officers and law enforcement dispatchers. Currently, 75% of our police dispatchers are graduates from this program. These employees come to us fully-certified, saving our agency time and money. We were made aware that the program's vehicle (a 1999 model) where students practice safe and legal traffic stops, DUI investigations, effective communication skills, tactics, and a host of other areas/coursework was no longer usable. The City of Clewiston Commission stepped-up and approved the donation of one of our exiting police car units to be transferred to them. On November 7, 2022, Chief Lewis handed over the keys to a white 2014 Dodge Charger (former Police Unit #1408). We couldn't be more proud to partner with the community's youth!



Traffic Stop Leads to Drug Seizure Headed to State Prison – On November 8, 2022, at

approximately 2:00 am, Sergeant Salgado conducted a traffic stop on US27. The driver, Claudelle Philistin, had an active warrant from Orange County, Florida on narcotics charges as well as introducing contraband into a correctional facility. After being arrested for the warrant, officers discovered marijuana and other items hidden inside what appeared to be artificial grass inside his vehicle. Also found were several cell phones, cell phone chargers,



lighters, rolling papers, and razor blades. Sergeant Salgado, a previous correctional officer, noted the packaging was consistent with items being attempted to be smuggled into a prison setting. To confirm his suspicions, Sergeant Salgado discovered the suspect's cellphone had an active GPS mapping route. The destination address was South Bay Correctional Institution.

In addition to the warrant, Mr. Philistin was charged with Possession of Marijuana More than 20 Grams, Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Distribute, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, and Attempted Introduction of Contraband into a Correctional Facility.

On November 28, 2022, the police department responded to a vehicle crash on US27 and train tracks near Lewis Blvd. A semi-truck had collided with the US Sugar train, killing the driver of the truck. The crash also caused six train cars to derail. Traffic was rerouted for approximately 14

hours. Due to the nature and complexity of the crash, experts from the Florida Highway Patrol agreed to assume the crash investigations. Patrol units, assisted by the Hendry County Sheriff's Office, and members of the Florida Department of Transportation assisted in traffic control until the reopening of the roadway. Future information will be disseminated from FHP when appropriate.



Animal Services

In the month of November 2022, Animal Services reported the intake of 33 cats and 72 dogs.

On November 5, 2022, Chief Lewis and Commander Brophy attended the Caloosa Humane Society's annual *Peace, Love and Paws* gala at the River Bend Resort. The fundraising event supports our animal rescue partner to raise money for the community's homeless animals.

Highlighted Training

Beginning on October 31, 2022, Officer Conyers attended a 4-day Less Lethal Instructor course hosted in Havana, Florida. Officer Conyers is now certified to conduct in-house training to our staff on Chemical Agents (pepper spray variants), Less-Lethal Munitions (40MM launcher options), and Distraction Devices. This will add to our de-escalation options.

On November 21 and 22, 2022, Sergeant Tom Levins attended an AR15 armorer's course hosted at the South Daytona Beach Police Department. On November 22, 2022, Sergeant Demetrius Scruggs attended the Glock armorer's course hosted by the Broward County Sheriff's Office. This will allow the agency to properly maintain newly purchased handguns and AR15s in-house, and save the taxpayers money should a need for a repair happen.

Beginning on November 29, 2022, Sergeant Tom Levins attended a 4-day Less Lethal Instructor course hosted by the Palm Bay Police Department. Sergeant Levins is now certified to conduct in-house training with Officer Conyers to our staff on Chemical Agents (pepper spray variants), Less-Lethal Munitions (40MM launcher options), and Distraction Devices.

Beginning on November 30, 2022, Officer Louis-Pierre attended a 2-day course for certification to install and repair after-market lighting and equipment on patrol vehicles. These repairs can be costly and can render an emergency vehicle out of service while the department waits for service. This training will allow us to perform repairs in-house, thus saving the city money and time.

General Services Director Williams reports:

- **Electric Crew Activities:**
 - Replaced damaged distribution poles on Sagamore and Trinidad Avenue
 - disconnected service to a structure to be demolished
 - repaired street lights
 - removed vegetation from lines
 - replaced 300 feet underground power lines in Civic Park for the Christmas light decorations
 - replaced transformer in Harlem Gardens damaged by a vehicle crash
 - repaired underground service to customer on Del Rio Avenue
 - restrung two spans of conductor wire on Berner Road.
- **Water Sewer Crew Activities:**
 - Collected field data for upcoming Advanced Metering Infrastructure water meter change outs;
 - repaired six water breaks on 1” and ¾” lines,
 - installed starter on liftstation in the Community of Harlem;
 - rewired and installed 2.4 HP pump at liftstation;
 - installed filter kits in water line serving customers on Della Tobias Avenue;
 - assisted South Shore Water Association repair ¾” poly line break;
 - relocated water meter at 313 Commercio St. to improve water pressure,
 - assisted contractor to scope large water meter replacement at High School,
 - repaired a 4” line break for the Golf Course sprinkler system,
 - repaired a 1 ¾” line on East Alverdez Avenue with hydraulic cement,
 - reattached pipe to pump at the Ridgewood Avenue lift station,
 - completed 5 locates for water and sewer lines for various contractors,
 - put new coupling on water meter for Bayberry Loop residential customer.
- **Customer Service Department**
 - Your Utility partners with customers to bring renewable power to the electric grid. If you’d like to learn more about net metering, please visit the FTC consumer information site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0532-solar-power-your-home> .
 - Please remember to register with CodeRed (Reverse 911). This system allows us to contact you in case of an emergency or with other informational announcements. You may register by clicking on the CodeRed link at the bottom of the City’s website page www.clewiston-fl.gov . You may update your information at any time through the same link.
 - If you are considering replacing your air conditioner or attic insulation, remember the City offers a rebate program for those items. Most local contractors participate in the program and can give you more information. You can also visit our website at www.clewiston-fl.gov or call our office.
 - *IT’S LIGHTNING SEASON!* Don’t forget to sign up for your meter based surge protection! Visit our office today.
 - ONLINE BILL PAY IS AVAILABLE on our web site at www.clewiston-fl.gov or www.municipalonlinepayments.com/clewistonfl.
- **Facility Maintenance:**

Items completed this month:

 - Made minor plumbing repairs at the Police Department

- (2) air conditioners repaired
- repairs to the ice machine at the Youth Center
- installed a new electrical outlet at the Library for the IT Manager
- repaired the timer switch at the tennis courts
- repaired and painted Sweetest Town playground equipment and gazebos
- prepared for Hurricane Nicole
- assisted with set up of Christmas decorations for the holiday season
- assisted with site preparations for AMI meter installations
- **Street Division:**
 - Maintained our neighborhood street signs.
 - Assisted with Hurricane Nicole preparations
 - Returned shopping carts to store owners
 - Continued filling pot holes throughout our City
- **Solid Waste:**
 - The Clewiston transfer station has reopened for business and we have resumed normal collection routes
 - Please remember that a fee will be imposed for removal of excessive volume or difficult to collect items.
- **Ball Fields:**
 - Fields are ready for the High School soccer season.
- **Recreation:**
 - Performed maintenance to parks and Splash Pad to ensure safety.
 - Maintained the John Boy Auditorium for all of its events and made as needed repairs.
 - Assisted with Hurricane Nicole preparations.
 - Assisted with site preparations for AMI meter installations next year.
 - Pressure cleaned the CS Mott Pool and the Sweetest Town Playground.
- **Central Garage:**
 - Fleet vehicles are kept operational, despite current supply chain difficulties.
 - Performed maintenance on all emergency generator city units to ensure proper operation