

*Prepared for the City Commission, February 19-March 4, 2015*

## City Manager

- ✓ The Gainesville City Commission is seeking feedback from city residents on strategic initiatives and operational priorities. The **commission will hold a [town hall meeting](#) Monday, March 2 at 6 p.m. in the basement of the Hippodrome Theatre**, which is located at 25 SE Second Place in Gainesville. Comments and feedback obtained during the town hall meeting will provide elected officials with insight that will help shape their strategic budgetary decisions for the upcoming fiscal year. All residents of the Gainesville community are invited to come and join commissioners in an informal setting featuring round table discussion groups. The round table discussions at this forum will focus on:
  - Reimagining the provision of Development Services to streamline processes
  - Reimagining public access to 9-1-1 Emergency Services
  - Reimagining communications and technology tools to increase public access to government services
- ✓ Save the date for TEAM's fifth annual casino night! **Casino night will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 21** at the City of Gainesville/Alachua County Senior Recreation Center, which is located at 5701 NW 34<sup>th</sup> St. Doors open at 6 p.m., gaming begins at 6:30 p.m.
- ✓ The **[Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\) Program](#) is a combined effort with the United Way of North Central Florida and the IRS to help low to moderate-income working people keep more of their refund and not pay for income tax services.** Many lower-income households are owed a significant refund because of the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC, a federal income tax credit for low to moderate-income working people. United Way officials are hoping to find more local residents who are eligible for the EITC by offering VITA, a free service. Residents can find out more about the free program, make an appointment and find out what to bring to the appointment by calling United Way's 24-hour information line 2-1-1.

## Capital Projects

- ✓ **Construction of Phase 2 of the Main Street streetscape project started Dec. 8, with anticipated completion near April 2015.** The scope of the project includes brick paver installation between South First and Second Avenues on Main Street, public art, low-impact development stormwater treatment landscaping areas, street trees, benches and bikes racks. For more information, please visit <http://www.gainesvillepublicworks.org/projects-2/main-st-streetscape/> or contact [Stefan Broadus](#) at 352-393-8406.
- ✓ **Construction of the rail-trail landscaping project is expected to be complete around May.** The purpose of the project is to clear existing overgrowth along the rail-trail, and install landscaping and hardscaping to increase the use and appearance of the rail-trail in this area between Northwest Fourth Street and Northwest 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This project is consistent with the city's Comprehensive Plan's transportation mobility element to "provide a safe, convenient, accessible, comfortable, continuous, and aesthetically pleasing transportation environment that promotes walking..." that "is conducive to bicycling." For more information, please visit <http://www.gainesvillepublicworks.org/projects-2/w-6th-street-rail-trail-landscaping/> or contact [Stefan Broadus](#) at 352-393-8406.
- ✓ The Depot Avenue project contractor, O'Steen Brothers, is planning to **close Depot Avenue between Southwest Ninth Street to west of Southwest Sixth Street beginning Saturday, Feb. 28.** The road

will remain closed for approximately three months. During that time the effort will include the Tumblin Creek crossing and utility work. Between Southwest Sixth Street and Southwest Third Street, the roadway is anticipated to open to local businesses but remain closed to bike and pedestrian traffic. Additionally, **Southwest Third Street to Main Street will be closed to street, bike, and pedestrian traffic beginning Thursday, Feb. 12** for approximately four months to complete storm drainage, water line and roadway construction.

- ✓ A new discussion topic is open on **engageGNV regarding the construction of a signalized crosswalk to assist pedestrians with crossing Northeast Eighth Avenue in the Duckpond area.** The forum will be open for 30 days, and responses will assist the Public Works Department in deciding which crosswalk option will best serve the public interest. The topic can be accessed at [http://www.peakdemocracy.com/portals/169/Forum\\_501/Issue\\_2413](http://www.peakdemocracy.com/portals/169/Forum_501/Issue_2413) or for more information, contact Betsy Waite at 352-393-8405.

## Communications Office

**Communications Office contact: Bob Woods – 352-393-8627**

- ✓ The **2014 Citizen's Report** was released at the **State of the City Address** in late January. The report covers the highlights of the past fiscal year. If you wish to receive a hard copy, please email your request to [rawsonle@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:rawsonle@cityofgainesville.org).
- ✓ The **2015 City of Gainesville photography contest calendar (pdf) is now available for downloading.** Photographs in the calendar are finalists of the Sixth Annual Gainesville Photography Contest, which was held in fall 2014. The pages are 8.5"x14" and cardstock is recommended. Please note, the size of the file is large since it is a printable, hi-resolution calendar. To download the pdf, please [click here](#).
- ✓ **Staff has started coordination efforts for Gainesville 101: the Spring 2015 Citizens' Academy.** This session will begin Wednesday, March 11 and will be held for seven consecutive weeks from 8:30 a.m.-12 noon. For more information, or to register, please visit <http://academy.cityofgainesville.org/>.

## Gainesville Fire Rescue

**GFR Administration and Operations contact: Interim Chief Jeff Lane – 352-334-5078**

- ✓ The **Gainesville Fire Rescue Strategic Plan and Standards of Cover** may be viewed on the **GFR page** of the city's website at [www.gfr.org](http://www.gfr.org).
- ✓ **GFR's second comprehensive Citizens' Survey** has been published to the GFR website and shows the comparison between the 2011 and 2014 results for GFR's services.
- ✓ The **application period for fire special assessment hardship assistance and fire flow (sprinkler) mitigation credits is open until May 1, 2015.** Please visit the [fire assessment Web page](#) for information and forms, or call 352-334-5078 to request a form.
- ✓ The **open data portal now has information on fire safety inspections and community outreach.** Please visit <https://stat.cityofgainesville.org/public-safety#operational> to view the information.

**GFR Risk Reduction Bureau contact: Asst. Chief JoAnne Rice – 352-393-8377**

- ✓ **GFR is now accepting applications for the Junior Fire Academy** (June 8-11, 2015) for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. The cost is \$50 for city residents and \$60 for non-residents. Applications are due Thursday,

April 30. Visit [www.gfr.org](http://www.gfr.org) for forms and information, or call Risk Reduction Specialist Krista Ott at 352-393-8461.

- ✓ **Winter safety information from the National Fire Protection Association is available** on the GFR [Risk Reduction Resources](#) Web page.
- ✓ **Project Get Alarmed helps those who cannot afford smoke detectors.** Applications are [available online](#) or by calling Risk Reduction Specialist Krista Ott at 393-8461.
- ✓ **Requests for car seat safety checks and installation** should be directed to GFR's Risk Reduction Specialist Krista Ott at 393-8461.
- ✓ GFR continues to host **crowd manager training** to enhance community safety. For information on **Safe Assembly Training classes**, please call 334-5065.

**GFR Support Services Bureau contact: Capt. Joseph Hillhouse – 352-393-8459**

- ✓ Gainesville Fire Rescue continues to provide **CPR and related course offerings to the community through its Operation C.A.R.E** or Citizens Aiding in Response to Emergencies. The program is being provided on a fee basis by the City Of Gainesville to increase the number of persons who can perform CPR, first aid and other skills during an emergency until help can arrive. For more information, please visit [gfr.org/community\\_training](http://gfr.org/community_training).

## Public Works

**Public Works contact: Chantel Thomas – 352-334-5070**

- ✓ [Active Streets](#) is a free, community event that transforms Gainesville's most iconic roadway into a vibrant destination full of activities led by local organizations and businesses and is open to any non-motorized activity including art, music, walking, bicycling, dancing, exercising, socializing and playing. Join your neighbors for this amazing event! **Active Streets will be held on University Ave. (between West Sixth Street and Northeast Boulevard) Sunday, Feb. 22 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.**
- ✓ **Between Saturday, Feb. 28 and Sunday, March 8, RTS will have its annual Spring Break reduced service.** There will be no changes to routes 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 15, 24, 25 and 75. No service will be available on UF campus routes, Later Gator routes or on routes 21, 27, 28, 38, 39, 41, 46, 62 and 76. Frequency of buses will be less on routes 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 23, 34, 35 and 36. There will be no service on route 43 after the 7:05 p.m. trip from Santa Fe. Service times for routes in service are marked by an "R" in the printed and online versions of the RTS schedule. Normal spring service will resume Monday, March 9. Please plan accordingly.
- ✓ The Gainesville Clean Water Partnership (GCWP) is a partnership funded by the City of Gainesville, Alachua County and the Florida Department of Transportation. GCWP is tasked with reporting, maintaining and involving the public in keeping our Gainesville creeks clean. The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Science Alachua County Agriculture Extension **is offering the following classes to all citizens.**
  - **Limited Commercial Landscape Maintenance** - Tuesday, Feb. 24, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Alachua County Extension Service: This class includes six hours of the required training for LCLM license applicants. Participants needing recertification can attend the first four hours of class, but are encouraged to take the Advanced Landscape Training Workshop instead. The LCLM license exam will be given the same day as the class. You must have all of your license application paperwork completed to sit for the exam. Continuing education units (CEUs) will be offered in the following categories: General Standards/Core, Ornamental & Turf, Private

Applicator Ag, Limited Lawn & Ornamental, Limited Landscape Maintenance and Commercial Lawn & Ornamental. The registration fee is \$30 and includes program materials, refreshments and lunch for the day. [Click here](#) for more information. Space is limited for the class; pre-register at least 3 days prior to class by calling 352-337-6209 (voice mail). This program is offered by Aparna Gazula, commercial horticulture extension agent and Barton Wilder, agriculture and natural resources agent.

- **Florida-Friendly Landscaping - Getting Ready for Spring:** Tuesday, Feb. 24, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Tower Road Library: This class will focus on putting the right plant in the right place, watering efficiently, the fertilizers to use and when to schedule their use. Space is limited, so pre-register at least three days prior to class by calling 352-337-6209. This program is offered by Wendy Wilber, environmental horticulture agent.
- **Florida-Friendly Landscaping – Lawns and Turf Alternatives:** Tuesday, March 24, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Tower Road Library: Learn how to shape up your grass in a hurry. This class covers mowing, watering, fertilizing and pest management. For more, [click here](#). There is no cost to attend. Space is limited so pre-register at least three days prior to the class by calling 352-337-6209. This program is offered by Wendy Wilber, environmental horticulture agent.
- ✓ The [Bicycle/Pedestrian Program](#) is participating in the following:
  - Thursday, Feb. 19 at 10 a.m.: Alachua County Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) meeting at the GTEC Building on Hawthorne Road
  - Sunday, Feb. 22 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.: Active Streets event along University Avenue
  - March 3: Kohl's (UF Health/UFPD) Annual Bike Rodeo & Safety Fair planning meeting

For more information, scheduling a bicycle/pedestrian event, questions or volunteer opportunities, please contact Dekova Batey, bicycle/pedestrian program coordinator at 352-334-5070 or [bikeped@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:bikeped@cityofgainesville.org). Visit [www.cityofgainesville.org/bikeped](http://www.cityofgainesville.org/bikeped).

## Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

### Recreation and Aquatics contact: Jeff Moffitt – 352-393-8732

- ✓ **Basketball for All is a free, adaptive program** is offered through a partnership with the non-profit corporation Noah's Endeavor, Inc., for children with special physical and developmental needs. The program teaches children to be comfortable on the field while they have fun and learn important safety skills. For additional information, please contact Noah's Endeavor at 352-275-9639 or [info@noahsendeavor.org](mailto:info@noahsendeavor.org) or visit their website at [www.noahsendeavor.org](http://www.noahsendeavor.org). Basketball for All is offered the remaining Sunday from 2-4 p.m.: Feb. 22.
- ✓ The **Foundations After-School Program aims to foster ethical values and teach academic and life skills for youth.** The program is offered through June 4, 2015. Participants will be involved in structured activities, such as tutoring, homework help, arts/crafts, recreation and sporting activities. All children are welcome, but pre-registration is required. Space is limited and is available on a first come, first serve basis. Please note, transportation is not provided for this program. The program is for kids in first-eighth grade with convenient locations at four recreation and community centers (Albert "Ray" Massey Recreation, Eastside Community, Clarence R. Kelly Community and Porters Community Centers). For full details, visit our [After-School Programs](#) page or call 352-334-5067.
- ✓ **Plan ahead for spring break (March 23-27) and check out the** several options offered by PRCA to make it a great week for kids, and convenient for busy parents. During camps, kids will enjoy games, activities and crafts that encourage achievement, a sense of community, good health and strong character!

[Earth Academy Day Camp](#)

**Location:** Morningside Nature Center, 3540 E University Ave.

**Hours:** Mon.–Fri., 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., with early drop-off and late pick-up services

**Cost:** City Residents: \$115.75, Non-City Residents: \$173.75

**Ages:** 1<sup>st</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> grade

[Recreation Day Camps](#)

**Hours:** Mon.–Fri., 7 a.m.–6 p.m.

**Fees:** City Residents: \$47.50, Non-City Residents: \$71.25

**Ages:** 1<sup>st</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> grade

**Locations:** Albert “Ray” Massey Recreation Center (1001 NW 34th St.); Eastside Community Center (2841 E. University Ave.)

- ✓ **Need a place for your kids to go on teacher work days or school holidays?** [Out-of-School Days](#) is a convenient option for busy parents. Let's work together to give your child a foundation for success! During camp, kids enjoy games, activities and crafts that encourage achievement, a sense of community, good health and strong character! The **remaining dates for 2014–15 are:**
  - Friday, April 13, 2015 (teacher workday) and Friday, June 5, 2015 (teacher workday)

Camps are located at Albert “Ray” Massey Recreation Center, 1001 NW 34th St., and Eastside Community Center, 2841 E. University Ave. Hours of operation are 7 a.m.-6 p.m., and the camp is offered for children in first through eighth grades. Cost per day is \$5.50 for city residents and \$8.40 for non-city residents. Proof of residency, such as a GRU bill or voter ID card, is required at the time of registration.

- ✓ **Swim lessons are offered for children ages 6 months to adults.** The focus is on fun, safety and basic swimming skills. Swim lessons are available **this spring at the Dwight H. Hunter (Northeast) Pool**, which is located at 1100 NE 14th St., offering convenient evening sessions. Class times depend on which level the child is in. For more information, and a full schedule, please visit the [Swimming Lessons Web page](#). The fee is \$44.50 for city residents and \$67.75 for non-city residents. **Registration is now available.**
- ✓ **Aqua-Fit water aerobics** is a low/medium-intensity class offers more aerobic cardio and core training which also focuses on flexibility and total body toning. Aqua-Fit **classes begin March 2 at the Dwight H. Hunter "Northeast" Pool (1100 NE 14th St.)**. All instructors are certified.

**Times:** Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
**Ages:** 13 and older  
**Fee:** \$2.55 a class or buy 8 classes (\$20.40) and get 2 classes free!
- ✓ **Winter operating hours for municipal pools are as follows:**

<u>Northeast Pool</u> (spring hours begin March 16) M-F: 11:30 a.m.-7 p.m., Open Swim/Lap Swim SA: 12-5 p.m., Open Swim/Lap Swim SU: Closed	<u>Westside Pool</u> (closed for the season) <u>Mickle Pool</u> (closed for the season)
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**Environmental Education contact: Sally Wazny – 352-334-3326**

- ✓ **Environmental education programs resume at Morningside Nature Center** (3540 E. University Ave.)! The free, educational and fun-filled programs at Morningside Nature Center start in September and continue through May! For more information, please call 352-334-3326.
  - C’mon home to the Living History Farm and experience a time when the rooster’s crow and the rising sun, not an alarm clock, welcomed a new day! During **Living History Days**, interpreters portray day-to-day life on an 1870 Florida farm. Living History Days take place the first Saturday of the month from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The farm is open to the public from 9 a.m.-4:30

p.m., Tuesday through Saturday all year long. The remaining Living History Days dates are March 7, April 4 and May 2. Step back in time, enjoy nature, and experience Florida as it was!

- Morningside Nature Center has a farm, ee—i—ee—i—oh! On this farm, youngsters (with an adult) can meet and greet farm animals by helping staff with afternoon feeding on the Living History Farm. This program is free but the animals love donations of carrots, squash, apples, sweet potatoes, and melons (please give these items to a staff member and not directly to the animals). With a sheep here—and a cow there—learning about heritage breeds is fun! The **Barnyard Buddies Program** takes place Wednesdays at 3 p.m. at the Living History Farm.
- At the **Frogs and Friends Friday** program, children (with an adult) can join a Morningside Nature Center animal caretaker for an exciting and educational program featuring live amphibians and reptiles. Join the fun, get the facts! This free program begins at 2 p.m. in the Education Building. The remaining Frogs and Friends Friday dates are March 6, April 3 and May 1.

**Cultural Affairs contact: Russell Etling – 352-393-8532**

- ✓ The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Department is pleased to announce the **next Jewel Box Concert at the Thomas Center Thursday, March 12**. The concert **features Lonesome River Band, one of the most respected names in bluegrass music**. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Lonesome River Band performs at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$20 at the door - cash or check only.
- ✓ It is with great pleasure that we announce the **third season of [Jest Fest!](#)**, Gainesville's newest signature event. This year, Jest Fest! is moving to our cultural center at the Historic Thomas Center and Gardens. With the move, there will be five stage locations, both indoors and out, and all of the wonderful entertainers will be performing on one fun-filled festival day. The lineup this year's features the Flying Wallendas, plus last year's smash hit Johnny Peers And the Muttville Comix dog show, silent clowns Avner the Eccentric and Arsene Dupin, Magical Mystical Michael, comic cellist Rushad Eggleston, one-man-band Marc Dobson and introducing 12-year-old ventriloquist Cole Tucker, plus many more! **Jest Fest! is Sunday, March 29 from 12-6 p.m. at the Historic Thomas Center, and is free and open to the public.**
- ✓ **[Thomas Center Galleries](#): *INSIDE OUT: The Spectacular World of Mr. Eddy*** is in the Main Gallery Jan. 9-March 14. ***ALACHUA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Visual Arts Program Showcase – Secondary*** is in the Mezzanine Gallery Feb. 21-March 28.

## Economic Development & Innovation

**Economic Development & Innovation contact: Erik Bredfeldt – 352-393-8614**

- ✓ On Thursday, Feb. 19, the Economic Development and Innovation Director will attend a **First Step meeting associated with an ALDI grocery store** proposed for Northwest 13<sup>th</sup> Street. In addition, the Economic Development and Innovation Director will attend a **grand opening of the Optym offices** on Tower Road. This company, formerly Innovative Scheduling, was a long-time tenant in the GTEC building, and has successfully graduated into the larger community.
- ✓ On Monday, Feb. 23, a **joint meeting of the Public Safety and Economic Development University Community Committee** is scheduled to review a proposed draft ordinance regarding transportation networking companies and vehicles for hire.
- ✓ On Tuesday, Feb. 24, the Economic Development and Innovation Director will attend a **First Step meeting for a proposed distillery and restaurant** near downtown.

- ✓ On Thursday, Feb. 26, the Economic Development and Innovation Director will meet with **Santa Fe College representatives regarding status of the GTEC program**. In addition, the Economic Development and Innovation Director will attend the **monthly meeting of the Gainesville Alachua County Regional Airport Authority (GACRAA)** at the Gainesville Regional Airport.
- ✓ On Wednesday, March 4, the Economic Development and Innovation Director will communicate with the **Florida Institute for the Commercialization of Public Research in order to gain a performance update on activities associated with the institute's work**.

## Planning and Development Services

**Planning and Development Services contact: Steve Dush – 352-393-8690**

- ✓ **Two notable First Step meetings** are scheduled for mid-February. One proposes a **new Fire Station no. 1** on South Main Street and the other proposed a **new ALDI (food market)** on Northwest 13<sup>th</sup> Street near Northwest 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This will be the first ALDI in the Gainesville area.
- ✓ The **Building Department staff is busy collaborating with other city departments and GRU staff to promote and implement ProjectDox**. ProjectDox is an electronic plan review program that will reduce plan review, process time and paper, which will benefit both staff and our customers.
- ✓ The Building Department's staff held a **pre-construction meeting** with Landmark Properties' project team for **the construction of a multi-family residential development (188 units)** located at the corner of Southwest 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Southwest 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## Gainesville Police Department

**Gainesville Police Department contact: Officer Ben Tobias – 352-393-7525**

- ✓ The [Gainesville Police Department Community Calendar](#) provides information on crime watch meetings and other community meetings, such as the Black-on-Black Task Force. Please view the calendar for meeting dates and locations.
- ✓ **Forensic Crime Unit Investigator Bret Starr is having a retirement ceremony Thursday, Feb. 19** at 1 p.m. in the GPD Hall of Heroes. Please come and wish Investigator Starr well on his future endeavors.
- ✓ **The Police Advisory Council will meet Thursday, Feb. 26 at 6 p.m.** The Police Advisory Committee meets every month to discuss current issues involving the police department and national issues. It is a committee that is comprised of leaders in the community who volunteer their time to this committee. The Committee welcomes everyone to come to the meeting and discuss issues in their neighborhood with them and Chief Tony Jones. The meeting location is TBD. Please check GPD's website for the location.
- ✓ **The monthly Black-on-Black Crime Task Force Meeting will be held Wednesday, March 4** at 5:30 p.m. at GPD's Hall of Heroes.

*The next report will cover March 5-18, 2015. Items for submission to the report are due to the Communications Office no later than Thursday, February 26. For more information, please contact [Laura Rawson](#) at extension 8740.*