



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



May 2021 News & Updates

Upcoming Meetings

Board of County Commissioners Budget Policy Workshop

-- Tuesday, May 25
-- County Courthouse (Commission Chambers)
--9:00 am
--Review workshop materials [HERE](#).

Blueprint IA Board Meeting

-- Thursday, May 27
-- City Hall (Commission Chambers)
--3:00 pm
--Review workshop materials [HERE](#).

Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting and Joint Comp Plan Public Hearing

-- Tuesday, June 8
-- County Courthouse (Commission Chambers)
--3:00 - County Commission Meeting
--6:00 Comp Plan Public Hearing

Leon County will be broadcasting the meeting on Comcast channel 16, Prism channels 16 & 1016-HD, the Leon County Florida Channel on Roku, the County's [Facebook page](#), [YouTube channel](#), [Twitter](#) and the

Hello,

I hope you and your families are enjoying the spring. The big talk around my house is about Sally, the Monarch butterfly, which my 7-year-old daughter Madeline raised from a wee caterpillar and released yesterday. She can't wait to take the chrysalis shell and photos to show-and-tell tomorrow. Thanks to [Esposito's](#) for its impromptu 'buy a milkweed plant, get a free caterpillar' deal and to [Native Nurseries](#) for selling its butterfly rearing cages.



The major countywide news, of course, is the progress we've made on **COVID-19 vaccinations**, the expansion of vaccine eligibility, and the CDC's **relaxation of mask guidelines** for those who have been fully vaccinated. In addition, on May 11th the County Commission voted to enter Phase 3 of Leon County's COVID-19 Re-Opening Plan. This is all terrific news, but we're not completely out of the woods yet. Please review [the Phase 3 details](#), continue to follow the [CDC guidelines](#), and respect the safety policies of our local businesses. And if you haven't been vaccinated, please consider [signing up](#) as soon as possible. For more info, click [HERE](#).

The **Citizens' North Monroe Task Force** is being created to make recommendations on how to revitalize the North Monroe corridor. The Task Force will focus on **reducing crime, addressing homelessness, and encouraging more investment along the corridor**. We're looking for a diverse group of applicants who care about North Monroe and its surrounding neighborhoods, so if you're interested, there's still time to apply! Please find details and a link to the application [HERE](#). **The application deadline is 2pm, Monday, May 24th.**

Below you'll find information about **Emancipation Day events** taking place later this evening, as well as Old Bainbridge safety improvements and a feasibility study for a multi-use path along

Thomasville Road. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions, comments, or suggestions about these items or anything else.

Thank you again for your interest in our community... it's a great honor serving you and the rest of Leon County.



Rick Minor

Commissioner, Leon County District 3

MinorR@leoncountyfl.gov

P.S. If you have friends and family who might be interested in receiving this newsletter each month, please ask them to sign up at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/RickMinor. Thank you!

TONIGHT: County's Annual Created Equal Event To Recognize Florida Emancipation Day



RESERVE YOUR "SEAT" HERE

Please join Rick **TONIGHT (May 20th)** at **6:30 PM** via Zoom for the sixth annual "Created Equal: Stretching Towards Freedom, A Conversation about Florida Emancipation Day". RSVP to attend Created Equal, by visiting www.LeonCountyFL.gov/CreatedEqual.

This year's Created Equal event commemorates Emancipation Day in Florida. Recognized on May 20, this holiday marks the first announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Leon County.

To honor the past and look to the future, Created Equal 2021 will highlight both local and state-wide historians as they discuss Florida's history of enslavement, civil rights and how we continue to stretch towards freedom today. The panel discussion will include:

Larry Rivers, a Distinguished Professor of History at Florida A&M University (FAMU) in Tallahassee. Dr. Rivers provides a rich background of knowledge on slavery and emancipation and is the author of "[Slavery in Florida: Territorial Days to Emancipation](#)".

Althemese Barnes, the founding director of the [John G. Riley Museum](#), and the founding director of the [Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network](#), a statewide professional museum association that serves as a resource in preserving Florida's African American culture. In addition to her leadership, Ms. Barnes is also responsible for 23 historical publications.

Paul Ortiz, the Director of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program and professor of history at the University of Florida. Dr. Ortiz brings a unique perspective to the panel being an accomplished author of works including "[Emancipation Betrayed: The Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920](#)".

The journey toward freedom that began 156 years ago on the steps of the Knott House continues today in our community. Across the years and across the state, attendees will be asked how we have and will continue to stretch towards freedom.

From Union General McCook's announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation to local Lunch Counter Sit-Ins led by Patricia Stephens Due, Leon County has been home to many vital moments in the stretch towards freedom and mirrors the greater struggles of black citizens across the state and country. In recognition of this state-wide history, Leon County Government is dedicated to continuing education and conversation on this topic through its Created Equal programming. In addition, on September 29, 2020 Leon County became the first county in Florida to officially recognize Florida Emancipation Day.

The virtual Created Equal event will also include artistic performances from the Godby High School choir and Omega Lamplighters with a guest appearance of Royce Lovett.

To RSVP to attend Created Equal, visit: LeonCountyFL.gov/CreatedEqual.

Documentary Premiere



Also tonight (May 20th), at 9:00 pm, WFSU-TV will premiere the documentary, "**Invisible History: Middle Florida's Hidden Roots.**"

The "Invisible History" documentary project will shed light on the little-known history of plantations and the enslaved in North Florida. This visually compelling story explores the history of a people who contributed so much to what Leon County is today and it aims to advance a sense of place and identity for hundreds of thousands of African Americans. The program depicts the invisible history of slavery in Leon County and attempts to trace its economic, social and political effects on our community today.

The domestic slave trade in Florida was centered in Leon. At least two prominent slave traders operated in the area, Paterson and Hughes and T. R. McClintock. Leon County

was considered the heart of the cotton plantation belt in Florida. It contained a dense collection of medium to large plantations. In 1830, Leon was the most populated county in Florida with an approximately equal number of whites and blacks. By 1860 the number of enslaved would have risen to 70% of the population.

FSU professor Valerie Scoon collaborated with co-producer Theresa Marsenburg, veteran journalist at WFSU-TV/The Florida Channel as well as FSU Film School colleague and cinematographer Mark Vargo, Sound Mixer, Pete Winter and alumna and editor Sheree Chen on the film. The noted actress Tyra Ferrell ("White Men Can't Jump," "Empire") provided the narration, and Grammy Award-winning jazz musician Jahmal Nichols composed the score. The crew included students and alumni of FSU's Film School.

To learn more, click [HERE](#).

Leon County Holiday Closures and Service Changes for Florida Emancipation Day



Jarvis Rosier, a reenactor from the 2nd Infantry Regiment of the United States Colored Troops, walks to the Knott House before filming a segment for "Created Equal: Stretching Towards Freedom"

The following closures and service changes will occur in observance of the Florida Emancipation Day holiday today (Thursday, May 20th). Leon County is the first county in Florida to officially recognize Florida Emancipation Day and to commemorate this important holiday.

Closed today (Thursday, May 20):

- Leon County offices
- Leon County libraries
- Leon County Animal Control
- Leon County Solid Waste and Household Hazardous Waste Center

Remaining Open for the Holiday:

- Leon County Parks and Recreation facilities (parks, greenways, campgrounds and boat landings)

Additional Service Information

All LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library branch libraries will close on Wednesday, May 19 at 6 p.m. The LeRoy Collins Leon County Main Library will close on Wednesday, May 19 at 9 p.m. All libraries will resume normal operating hours on Friday, May 21.

The Solid Waste Management Center on Apalachee Parkway will close on Wednesday, May 19 at 5 p.m. and will resume normal operating hours on Friday, May 21. Solid Waste will be open for extended hours on Saturday, May 22, from 8 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Residential waste collection routes will be delayed one day for citizens whose normal pick-up day is the holiday. Waste Pro's holiday schedule can be found at Wasteprousa.com. For more information, call the Leon County Solid Waste Management Division at (850) 606-1800.

In the event of an animal-related emergency, service is available by calling the Consolidated Dispatch Agency at (850) 606-5800. Leon County Animal Control encourages residents to only use this service to report dangerous or aggressive dogs, sick or injured domestic animals and animal cruelty. Injured wildlife calls will be forwarded to the St. Francis Wildlife Association at (850) 627-4151.

COMING SOON: Old Bainbridge Road Safety Upgrades



At the last Board of County Commissioners meeting, the Board approved an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the construction of **safety improvements on Old Bainbridge Road from Interstate 10 to Capital Circle NW**. This project will address the high number of off road and rear end crashes along this segment and the end result will make the road safer for everyone who uses it.

During the design phase of the project, crash analysis data was conducted through the compilation of crash reports from 2015 to 2019. There was a total of 198 crashes during the five-year study period, which included 56 injuries and two fatalities. This is a 40% increase in crashes from the previous five-year study. 89 of the 198 crashes (45%) occurred during dark or low lighting periods. 41 of the crashes (21%) occurred with wet pavement or standing water noted as contributing factors.

The proposed improvements include adding pavement to eliminate a kink roadway configuration, radar feedback speed limit signs, new signage, upgraded pavement markings, delineators, and roadside ditch grading in limited circumstances.

FDOT will provide funding of \$378,700, which is anticipated to cover the full cost of the project. It is expected that the construction bid will be advertised by early June 2021, with construction from July to September 2021. ***During the construction phase, Old Bainbridge Road will remain open with intermittent lane closures during the day.***

The agenda item for this project, along with supporting documentation, can be found

[HERE.](#)



The Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study is being conducted to explore the possibility of constructing a paved 10- to 12-foot multi-use path adjacent to Thomasville Road between Betton Road and Metropolitan Boulevard.

This study will also identify the best option for connecting this path through the Market District to Maclay Road. This path would address a significant bicycle and pedestrian gap between Midtown and the Market District, while providing connections to parks and other trails in Tallahassee and Leon County. This feasibility study also will determine to what extent, considering costs and impacts, can a shared-use path be accommodated along this corridor.

The Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study was initiated in January of 2020 and focused on the collection of existing conditions along the corridor. The public engagement phase started in January of 2021 and includes the Virtual Project Room, which will be open until May 25th. To enter the Virtual Project Project Room, please click [HERE.](#)

There will also be a virtual meeting for Q&A on May 24, 2021 at 6 p.m. To access this meeting please click [HERE.](#)

As the project moves forward and you have questions or comments, please contact [Jack Kostrzewa.](#)

You can also access the project page [HERE](#) and follow the project on Facebook [HERE.](#)

Covid Vaccines

Don't let lack of transportation prevent you from getting your Covid vaccine.

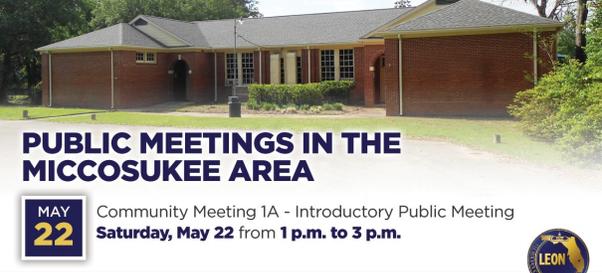
[Elder Care Services, Inc.](#) is now transporting seniors to and from vaccination sites. Seniors in need of transportation or in-home vaccination assistance may call Elder Care at (850) 921-5554 to request support.

Find the latest information about vaccine and testing sites on the Leon County Vax Map: leoncountyfl.gov/covid-19/Vax-Map



Miccosukee Community Center

Leon County Government will host



PUBLIC MEETINGS IN THE MICCOSUKEE AREA

MAY
22

Community Meeting 1A - Introductory Public Meeting
Saturday, May 22 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.



These meetings will afford the public an opportunity to provide input and discuss community needs.

upcoming Public Meetings in the Miccosukee Area to receive community input on the plans for and development of the new Miccosukee Community Center, and discuss the associated timetable for transition. The first introductory meeting is this Saturday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Miccosukee Community Center, 13887 Moccasin Gap Road, Tallahassee, FL 32309.



Conservation Award Winners

Congratulations to District 3 residents Jim Stevenson and Tara Tanaka for receiving the 2020 Florida Wildlife Federation Conservation Award.

At the next Board meeting, Rick will present this couple with a proclamation thanking them for their contributions to the natural values of Leon County and commend their longstanding commitment to sensitive stewardship and protection.

Learn more about their efforts [HERE](#).

Bike Ride with a Planner

BIKE MONTH 2021
Saturday, May 22nd | 10am

BIKE RIDE WITH A PLANNER

Meet at Smokey Hollow Memorial
550 E Pensacola St.

Join Planning Department staff for a leisurely and educational roll to explore local bike infrastructure

Register in advance at BikeTallahassee.com

Please join the Planning Department staff on Saturday for a leisurely and educational roll to explore local bike infrastructure.

Participants will meet at Smokey Hollow at 10 AM for a casual bike ride through some of Tallahassee's best bike amenities. While we ride, staff will share pieces of information about the different types of infrastructure and other Tallahassee tidbits. Please bring a helmet and a mask.

For more information about the route, click [HERE](#).

The ride will go at an easy pace with several shade stops to rest and share information. The entire round trip ride is around 4 miles.

E-bikes may be available for those who wish to rent them for the ride. If you would be

interested in renting an e-bike, please send an email to julie.christesen@talgov.com or jacob.fortunas@talgov.com.

Registration is free, but organizers would like to get an idea of how many will be joining, so please register [HERE](#).



Rental Assistance

The Florida Department of Children and Families recently released a new website called OurFlorida.com to help direct over \$800 million in federally-funded emergency rental assistance to support residents and businesses as they continue to recover and rebuild after the pandemic.

Applications are open now. To qualify you must:

- Rent your home, apartment, or other residential dwelling in Florida.
 - Earn an income at or below 80% of the area's median income (AMI).
 - Have qualified for unemployment, experienced a loss of income, incurred significant costs or faced financial hardships due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
 - Are at risk of losing your home, experiencing housing instability or are living in unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
-

The Legal Aid Foundation of Tallahassee Presents

The Take Back Your Rights Sealing and Expungement Educational Community Workshops

Empowering people with knowledge to help improve their lives!

In partnership with The Office of the State Attorney 2nd Judicial Circuit, Jack Campbell, State Attorney; The Law Offices of the Public Defender, Jessica Yeary; The Leon County Clerk of Court; and the Greater Bond Neighborhood Association.

Wondering if you can erase your criminal record? Wanting to start fresh but don't know how? Join Us!

If you or a family member has an arrest history making it difficult to obtain employment, receive benefits, get housing, or otherwise acts as a barrier come and learn about the sealing and expungement process and how we can help!

Attendees will learn:

- ✓ Types of records that can be sealed or expunged
- ✓ Eligibility criteria
- ✓ How to navigate the process on your own
- ✓ How to apply for assistance through the Sealing and Expungement Project, which includes help with FDLE application, coverage of fees, and a one-stop-shop clinic!

Space is limited please go to www.legalaidtallahassee.org/take-back-your-rights to reserve your spot today! Walk-ins will be welcome based on space.

Monday, May 24th
5:30pm-7:30pm
Lincoln Community
Center

Monday, June 7th
5:30pm-7:30pm
Walker Ford
Community Center

Thursday, June 10th
3:30pm-5:30pm at
Lincoln Community
Center

Saturday, June 26th
9:00am-1:00pm at
Jack Mclean
Community Center



LEADERSHIP TALLAHASSEE
A PROGRAM OF THE GREATER TALLAHASSEE CHAPTER OF COMCAST

The Legal Aid Foundation aims to educate individuals in our community through community education workshops. Attendees will learn the types of records that can be sealed or expunged, the eligibility criteria to receive a sealing or an expungement, how to navigate the process on their own, and how to apply for assistance through the 'Take Back Your Rights Sealing and Expungement Project', which includes assistance completing and submitting the FDLE application, coverage of the FDLE application fee, and a one-stop-shop clinic to finalize the sealing or expungement!

There will be four opportunities to attend a workshop:

- Monday, May 24th 5:30pm-7:30pm at Lincoln Community Center (GYM)
- Monday, June 7th 5:30pm-7:30pm at Walker Ford Community Center (GYM)

- Thursday, June 10th 3:30pm-5:30pm at Lincoln Community Center (GYM)
- Saturday, June 26th 9am-1pm at Jack Mclean Community Center (GYM)

The presentation will be conducted by several local volunteer attorneys including Former Public Defender Nancy Daniels, Tiffani N. Brown of Tiffani N. Brown, PLLC, and Thomas Schulte of Ausley McMullen. State Attorney Jack Campbell will be available to answer questions relating to the project. After the educational presentation, Legal Aid Foundation of Tallahassee volunteers and Public Defender Jessica Yeary will be available to run an eligibility check for any individuals present.

More information can be found [HERE](#).

It's Kitten Season!

During warmer months, unneutered and unspayed cats begin reproducing, leading to a huge influx of kittens in shelters and rescue groups. If you can, consider fostering or donating supplies to help. If you find kittens, it's important to follow the steps below:

FOUND KITTENS! now what?

Kittens are much better left with their moms until at least 8 weeks old.

The shelter is **NO PLACE** for kittens unless it is absolutely necessary. They are very susceptible to getting sick when introduced to small spaces that house other cats as well.



1. OBSERVE

- Count the number of kittens, if possible.
- **Do Not** handle the kittens.
- **Leave the kittens where you found them**, mom is probably close. (unless they are in an unsafe high traffic area, you may move them close by, but very carefully).
- Watch from afar for mom making her visits.
- Put food and water out for mom but away from the kittens and remove it at night.
- If the kittens disappear mom has moved them, or is in the process of moving them, **don't panic!** This is completely normal.



2. ASK FOR HELP

- **If mom does not return**, kittens will need to be bottle fed. Bottle feeding foster parents are not always available but we can train you and provide you with the proper supplies.
- **If mom and/or kittens are showing signs of being sick**, injured, or threatened in some way, **ask for help!**
- **If mom and kittens are thriving** and are now old enough (8 weeks) to need further care such as vaccines, spay or neutering, and or adoption, resources are available to assist you.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE



Tallahassee Animal Services
tal.gov.com/animals
850-891-2950



Leon County, FL
AldridgeC@LeonCountyFL.Gov
850-606-5400



It's Meow or Never
itsmeowornevertally@gmail.com
850-974-9596



Keeping our community cat population safe, happy, healthy, and less of a nuisance to the public starts with you!
Be a part of the solution. Make a difference in the life of a deserving cat or kitten today by volunteering!