



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



January-February 2023 News & Updates

Upcoming Meetings

Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA)

- Tuesday, Feb. 28th
- 1:30 pm
- City Commission
Chambers
- Agenda will be posted
[HERE](#) on/about Feb. 21st.

Blueprint Board of Directors

- Thursday, Mar. 9
- 3pm
- City Commission
Chambers
- Agenda will be posted
[HERE](#) on/about Mar. 2nd.

Board of County Commissioners

- Tuesday, Mar. 21
- 3pm - Regular Meeting
- 6pm - Public Hearings
- 5th Floor, County
Courthouse
- Agenda will be posted
[HERE](#) on/about Mar. 14th.

Click [HERE](#) for the
complete Commission
calendar.

Hello Rick,

I hope you're doing well and have plans for a good weekend. My family signed up for Saturday's Apalachicola National Forest Cleanup and my 9-year-old daughter is particularly excited. During last year's cleanup, she loved removing coral ardisia (a highly invasive plant species), and she still talks about it. Between the forest cleanup, the Mag Lab Open House, the FAMU Harambee Festival, and the Leon County African-American Read-in, we're going to have a hectic weekend!

The past week has also been busy for us at the County Commission... during Tuesday's Board meeting, we reviewed a contentious rezoning issue along Capital Circle NW, and although I had concerns about its compatibility with the surrounding neighborhoods, a majority of the Commission approved the rezoning request. For details, please see the *Tallahassee Democrat's* story [HERE](#).

At the meeting we also discussed homelessness in Leon County and have made plans for a Board workshop in the coming weeks. We'll hear the results of the 2023 Point In Time (PIT) count of our homeless population and how we can further help those in need get off the street and into stable housing.

Finally... as you'll see, below is information on programs and upcoming events throughout the County. We hope you'll find it helpful! Some of the events listed below are taking place this weekend, and I apologize for the short notice but nevertheless, we wanted to make sure you knew about them.

All the best,

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!

Leon County Saves Residents Thousands on

Federally Required Flood Insurance



Leon County Government's continued work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will help unincorporated County residents required to have flood insurance save thousands of dollars upon their policy renewal.

Such work is part of a voluntary, federal program called the Community Rating System (CRS), which has generated premium savings for nearly 1,300 flood insurance policies, equaling about \$117,500 annually in community savings. The discount will be provided automatically, so property owners do not need to apply. The CRS also recognizes the County's efforts to enhance public safety, reduce property and infrastructure damage, and better protect the environment.

At a time when home insurance premiums are increasing, Leon County was able to work with FEMA to successfully move up from CRS Class 6 to CRS Class 5 while placing in the top 25 percent of participating communities in the state of Florida. In unincorporated Leon County, flood insurance premium totals often exceed \$700,000 annually. By participating in the CRS, unincorporated Leon County property owners who purchase flood insurance will save an estimated 25 percent annually.

The recent advancement to CRS Class 5 is in part due to the County's comprehensive emergency management procedures and policies, the extensive training of the County's Development Support and Environmental Management (DSEM) staff, and the County's steadfast dedication to protecting floodplains.

Since 1982, Leon County has participated in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Since then, the County has permitted responsible development in flood hazard areas, which has resulted in minimized flood damage and costs for local companies, residents, and the entire community.

For more information about Leon County's flood protection programs, visit LeonCountyFL.gov/FloodProtection. Specific questions regarding flood insurance policies and premiums should be directed to the property owner's insurance agency.

Lane Closure on John Knox Road



The City of Tallahassee announced that its Pinewood Drive, Delta Office Park Stormwater Outfall Project is underway. To safely facilitate a portion of construction, eastbound John Knox Road between Delta Way and Woodcrest Office Park has been closed. Local access will be maintained, and detour routes will be clearly posted using signs and variable message boards.

Detours will direct through traffic to use Monroe Street to Allen Road to Fulton Road / Grady Road / Henderson Road to N. Meridian Road. The second route will direct traffic to use Monroe Street to Bradford Road to N. Meridian Road.

Work hours for this closure will be Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Work is estimated to be complete by Monday, March 27, weather permitting. This project, when complete, will reduce roadway and residential flooding and erosion problems that have historically affected properties near Pinewood Drive and Delta Office Park.

This project represents an important investment in our community. For more information, please contact the City's Project Manager, Amelia Bryant, at 850-891-6842.

Annual County Commission Retreat



At this year's annual retreat, the Board of County Commissioners reviewed and updated the County's Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2026 Strategic Plan with the addition of 25 new or amended strategic initiatives that advance the organization's strategic priorities in the areas of Economy, Environment, Quality of Life and Governance.

At the retreat, Rick requested - and had approved - the following three initiatives:

- Engage local, regional, state and federal partners to **encourage the restoration of passenger rail service** along the Gulf Coast by leveraging federal dollars under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Develop an interactive community web-based tool that documents the **planned improvements, tracks investments, and identifies enhancement strategies for the North Monroe Corridor area.**
- Have an intensive multi-day design charette that would work with the community to identify and evaluate a variety of **land-use and planning strategies and other proposals for the continued improvement of the North Monroe Corridor Area.**

In addition, as a part of the retreat, the Board received an overview of the County's continued investment in critical health care services provided by local partners to ensure that uninsured and underinsured low-income residents have access to quality health care in the community.

As part of the update, Commissioners reviewed the progress towards reaching the bold goals and five-year targets outlined in the FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, highlighting successes in the following areas:

- Connecting 3,700 students to skilled job opportunities through Leon Works and other talent development initiatives;
- Attracting 16 state, regional and national championships across all sports to Leon County;
- Securing \$25 million in federal, state and local benefits for Leon County veterans and their families;
- Supporting 135 community events, festivals and cultural programming that attract thousands of visitors and residents;
- Offering 100% online permitting for licensed contractors, engineers, and architects;
- Diverting 795,000 pounds of household hazardous waste from the landfill;
- Increasing the number of fully electric vehicles in the County's fleet by 275%;
- And much more.

The FY 2022-2023 Strategic Planning Retreat materials can be found [here](#).

The strategic priorities and initiatives discussed at the retreat were ratified by the County Commission during its February 21st meeting.

Building a relationship with Amazon beyond the fulfillment center



In case you missed it, Rick wrote an opinion piece that appeared in the *Tallahassee Democrat* on February 5th. In that piece, Rick asserts that:

“There’s been a lot of talk about the economic boost of Amazon’s fulfillment center, and that’s understandable. However, in the long-term view, collaboration with Amazon Web Services in workforce development might be an even bigger opportunity.”

To read the piece in its entirety, click [HERE](#).

New WeatherSTEM at Lake Jackson



WeatherSTEM weather stations are high resolution weather cameras that provide weather health/safety alerts and notifications, lightning detection and high heat monitoring, and real-time and future-cast radar.

Lake Jackson recently got a WeatherSTEM with livestream. The station serves as a severe weather emergency alert system, contributes to our understanding the water budget of the lake at the Porter Hole sink basin, and promotes outreach of the lake hydrogeology and ecology through the public website, with two live camera views. You can check it out [HERE](#).

Mag Lab Open House



The MagLab Open House is a free, annual event where the public is invited to explore the world's largest & highest-powered magnet lab, engage with nearly 100 hands-on demonstrations & activities, and meet magnet science experts.

This year's Open House will be on Saturday, February 25, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. at the National MagLab Headquarters (1800 E. Paul Dirac Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32310).

All of your favorite classic MagLab Open House demonstrations will be back, including the Quarter Shrinker, Potato Launcher, Cryo Flowers, and Einstein's Ice Cream. This year will also feature one-of-a-kind game-themed experiences including cranium brain games, magnet skee ball, an exploration of the pixels powering your cell phone games, MagLab CandyLab and a special hosted Game Show at the foot of the 45 T magnet.

Learn more about this great event [HERE](#).

February is Black History Month



Throughout Florida's history, the Capital Region has been impacted and shaped by the immense triumphs of Black Americans. Filled with struggle, perseverance, achievement and a legacy that includes art, music, literature, architecture and more, Leon County celebrates Black History all year long – but especially each February – when Leon County commemorates the history and heritage of those trailblazing individuals, movements and historical sites that shaped our society and honors their contribution to American history in Leon County.

This February, learn more about our history and heritage at [local historical sites](#) and visit [Black-owned businesses and restaurants](#).

In addition the Leon County Public Library will host an **African American Read-In** on Saturday, February 25 at 1 p.m., Leon County Main Library. This event brings the community together to build literacy skills by enjoying children's stories by African American authors read aloud by local speakers. Audience members will also be invited to read from a selection of books provided by the library. Rick will be one of the featured speakers. Light refreshments will be provided.

See a complete list of resources and events from the Leon County Public Library at LeonCountyFL.gov/BlackHistoryMonth.

Black Business Expo of Tallahassee 2023



According to the Wall Street Journal, 40% of Black businesses went under in the first 90 days of the pandemic. In addition, Forbes Magazine states that "only 20% of Black businesses that applied for PPP loans got them."

Fortunately, connecting with chambers of commerce, local government, and agencies can help Black businesses find opportunities that increase their access to capital, generate revenue and sustain jobs.

Meet face-to-face with local financial institutions, major contractors, elected officials, local agencies, and industry professionals to obtain the resources required to grow your business in Tallahassee-Leon County.

\$15,000 in grants (to include cash and cash value) will be awarded!

Learn more and register [HERE](#).

County Hits Homerun with Baseball-Themed Playground at Canopy Oaks Community Park



Leon County Government proudly announces the installation of new and improved playground equipment at Canopy Oaks Community Park, 3250 Point View Drive. Located directly beside Canopy Oaks Elementary School, the park is a familiar space for children and families in the area. Designed to support and encourage expressive play, the baseball-themed area fits seamlessly into the park and enhances the community's quality of life through outdoor recreation.

The community's first baseball-themed playground is sure to be a "hit" with users.

Designed for children ages two to twelve, the playground features turf play surfaces and uses colors complementary to the Northwest Little League baseball teams that call the park home.

In addition, the playground includes two baseball-shaped bouncers and a large baseball etched into the synthetic turf play surface. A new water fountain and seating area are now in place next to the playground for easy accessibility. Other park amenities include covered picnic tables, two baseball fields, a multi-purpose field, and two tennis courts.

Lake Jackson Updates



Caitlyn Snyder, Manager of the Lake Jackson Aquatic Preserve, has provided us with the following updates on Lake Jackson:

- Landing Access – All 9 landings are open to walkers, birders, and fishing. Paddlecraft can be launched easily at Miller, Jackson View, and Crowder (it is still dormant season so there is less vegetation to navigate!). Small jon boats, mud boats, and airboats also have had success launching at these landings. Carr Lake (part of LJAP) has water, and now that duck season is closed, outboard motors, etc. can be used to fish there.
- Porter Sink at Faulk Landing is currently inundated with water after recent rain events. However, the lake level still remains very low following the 2022 drought period in fall and early winter. Lake Jackson rebounds significantly in water level following heavy, concentrated rain events, such as a stalled winter front or tropical system. Otherwise, lake levels are maintained by rainfall events over long periods of time, although water is always leaving the lake through evapo-transpiration, bottom leakage, and multiple sinkholes in the bottom. Dry downs may last from weeks to months to years if short and long term precipitation is not adequate.
- Lakefront residents are encouraged to manage a healthy buffer zone bordering the water, during both dry down and normal lake level periods. A buffer zone will help reduce impacts of runoff in the lake by reducing sedimentation (and turbidity), nutrients, and pollutants from reaching the lake by both slowing down and filtering water. The Leon County Comp plan encourages residents to leave a 50 ft buffer zone while allowing for an access path to the lake. Residents can maintain buffer zones with prescribed fire, invasive plant control, encouraging native plants for pollinators, and by obtaining an Aquatic Plant Permit through FWC.

Thank you, Cait! For more of Cait's updates on Lake Jackson, please click [HERE](#).

Prescribed Burn at Lake Jackson



This week, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), in partnership with Tall Timbers, conducted a prescribed burn of 100+ acres of Lake Jackson's dry lakebed. This burn will foster the growth of native prairie lake grasses, fight back on invasive tree and plant species, restore the native lake bottom, and promote more fish spawning when the water returns. Thanks to FDEP and Tall Timbers for their planning over the past several weeks and for all of their hard work this week!

The area of the lake adjacent to Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park is also planned for prescribed fire, depending on weather conditions.

Poets Reading Their Poems About Lake Jackson - at Rhoden Cove Landing



Thank you to Sandy Beck for gathering the poets and to Kris Bass-Peterson for creating the video. These poems about Lake Jackson can be found in the *Writing the Land-Currents Anthology*, which includes a section of poetry, photographs, and information about Lake Jackson.

Learn more about how you can get a copy of *Writing the Land-Currents Anthology* - and become a member of the Friends of Lake Jackson [HERE](#).

City-Wide Super-Clean Sweep

SUPER-CLEAN SWEEP

MARCH 4



WITH THE HELP OF VOLUNTEERS LIKE YOU...

We are going to clean up the roads, parks, trails, neighborhoods, and woodlands of Tallahassee!

Keep Tallahassee Beautiful, Tri Eagle Sales, and the City of Tallahassee are joining forces for the **28th Annual Super-Clean Sweep** to rid our city of litter and beautify the community. The Super-Clean Sweep is our local effort to support Keep America Beautiful's Great American Clean Up™.

Supply Pick-Up:

7:30am - 9am at
Lake Ella front
parking lot

Cleanup of Tallahassee:

8:30am - 11:00am

ARE YOU READY TO JOIN?

Help the Clean Sweep effort by signing up to pick up litter, plant trees/shrubs/flowers, paint over graffiti, or any other idea you have to make Tallahassee and Leon County a more pristine community!

We will provide the guidelines, bags, gloves, and locations; you can provide the caring spirit to make our area a better place in which to live.

To sign up, email the below info to keeptallahasseebeaut@comcast.net by March 3rd. Please call Diana Hanson at 850-545-6507 with questions or for a list of suggested clean up sites.

- Contact Name, Phone, Email & Address
- Location Where You Want to Work
- Activity You Will be Doing
- Number of Volunteers in Group
- Category of Participants (business, individual, school, club, organization, association, neighborhood, other)





Exhibitor Registration Now Available for 2023 Leon Works Expo

County Helps Bridge Skilled Workforce Gap of the Future



Leon County Government and the Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality will host the eighth annual Leon Works Expo on Friday, April 28, 2023, at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center. The Expo will connect hundreds of local high school students to employers and academic institutions, creating opportunities to explore careers in the skilled workforce.

By 2026, over 70,000 jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree will be available in Leon County and the surrounding region. Looking to bridge the skilled workforce gap, the County's Leon Works Expo provides high school students with the opportunity to explore skilled careers in the areas of creative, health, trade, business, information technology, and more. While students explore skilled careers available to them beyond high school, employers utilize the Expo to meet their future workforce and develop their talent pipeline.

At the Expo, exhibitors may customize their booths and provide materials to students that

demonstrate what their organization has to offer. The Expo provides exhibitors the opportunity to share positive experiences about their field and provides students with hands-on, interactive learning opportunities. In addition, the Expo will feature an outdoor demonstration area, giving exhibitors space for larger demonstration items, such as trucks, vehicles, and other equipment.

The Leon Works Expo has connected nearly 5,000 high school students to skilled career opportunities since its inception in 2015, with the latest event in 2022 reaching more than 750 students.

The deadline for exhibitor registration is Friday, March 31, 2023. Exhibitor registration costs start at \$50. Space is limited.

To learn more and register for the Leon Works Expo, visit LeonCountyFL.gov/LeonWorks.

Spring Seed Library Kickoff



The Seed Library Program was launched in February 2015 and is a collaborative effort between the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System and UF/IFAS Leon County Extension.

The Seed Library Program promotes fruit, vegetable, and herb seed planting in Leon County and encourages residents to grow their own nutritious food.

Beginning Saturday, February 18, 2023, visit any Library branch location and check out up to five seed packets each month while supplies last. No need to return them, they are yours to keep. Learn more about the Seed Library Program at LeonCountyLibrary.org/SeedLibrary.

Earn a Paycheck While Gaining Hands-on Experience in a Skilled Career Field

Leon County is now accepting applications from all Leon County High School Juniors and Seniors attending a Charter, Private, Public or LCS Virtual School!



The Leon Works Junior Apprenticeship Program is an opportunity for Leon County high school juniors/seniors to prepare for a skilled career – those jobs requiring more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree.

By the year 2026, over 70,000 skilled jobs will be available in the Leon County area. To prepare students to fill these jobs, Leon County Government is partnering with CareerSource Capital Region and Leon County Schools to provide students with job readiness training and work experience!

For one semester, selected students will work in a Leon County department as a Junior Apprentice shadowing and assisting a County staff member in a skilled career field that the student is interested in pursuing. Junior Apprentices will also complete CareerSource Capital Region's LEAP training to prepare them for entering the workforce after graduation. In addition to gaining valuable work experience and training, Junior Apprentices earn an hourly salary and elective credit toward their high school diploma.

The County is now accepting applications for the Leon Works Junior Apprenticeship Program for the fall 2023 semester through Friday, March 31, 2023, at LeonCountyFL.gov/JRApprentice.

Tire Amnesty Days Continue



To help prevent breeding grounds for mosquitoes, Leon County Government, in partnership with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, is hosting its award-winning Tire Amnesty Days event.

Now through May 26, 2023, citizens can drop off up to 25 tires for free at the Leon County Solid Waste Facility from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday, or at one of the Rural Waste Service Centers on Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Learn more at LeonCountyFL.gov/Mosquito.

County Commission Considering Increasing Notice Time for Rent Increases



Leon County Commissioners are considering an ordinance that would require that landlords provide tenants with **60 days notice** when they plan to raise rent costs by **5% or more**.

To be clear, the proposed policy does NOT consider rent control. The Commissioners have stated that they are not moving toward enacting rent control measures.

Rick is very interested in hearing your thoughts on this propose measure. Are you a tenant who has experienced a large rent increase in the past 1-2 years? Or, are you a landlord who would like to provide your perspective?

American Heart Month



February is American Heart Month and an opportunity to highlight the importance of preventing heart disease, maintaining a healthy heart, and learning how to perform CPR and use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

In the recent NFL game between the Bills and the Bengals, the world witnessed the unfortunate incident where Damar Hamlin went into cardiac arrest after making a tackle. The trainers, staff, and EMS went into action quickly with prompt CPR and use of the AED. This quick, quality CPR and early defibrillation undoubtedly saved his life.

In the United States, 350,000 cardiac arrests happen each year. The best chance of survival for these victims is you, the bystander, who starts CPR immediately and promptly uses the AED. If it's been a few years since you've had CPR training or you've never had it, we encourage you to watch this 30 second video to learn how to save a life: <https://www.nyp.org/cpr>.

Jimbo Jackson Gymnasium Dedication



Rick was pleased to join other elected officials - along with friends and family of the late Jimbo Jackson - for the dedication of the gymnasium named after him: The Jimbo Jackson Gymnasium at Fort Braden School.

Jackson attended Fort Braden as a student and returned to serve as a P.E. teacher and principal. The Jimbo Jackson Gymnasium features a new sign out front and Jackson's signature on the polished floor near the entrance.

Rick Honored with Award from STAC



Rick was honored recently with the 2023 Imagine Freedom Gratitude Award from the

Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center (STAC). Rick received the award for his work in fortifying our community against human trafficking, empowering survivors, and educating our community. Among other things, the award recognized Rick's help in creating STACPRO, a robust online training program for all workplaces and businesses.

Rick Featured on WFSU Story: *Could Federal Infrastructure Money Bring Amtrak to North Florida at Last?*



Story by Margie Menzel:

Local elected officials are gearing up for another try at bringing passenger rail to Tallahassee. It's still a long shot, but there's new federal money this time.

Amtrak service east from New Orleans hasn't operated since Hurricane Katrina battered the Gulf Coast in 2005. But while the tracks and bridges have been repaired along the old Sunset Limited route, the trains no longer make stops in North Florida.

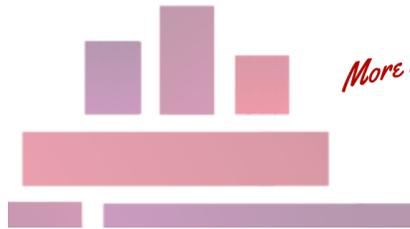
[Read More and Listen to the Story Here](#)

Leadership Tallahassee Applications Open

Available Now!

CLASS 41 APPLICATION

Applications Due by Monday, April 3, 2023



More info here



Leadership Tallahassee is now accepting applications for Class 41!

Leadership Tallahassee is a year-long program that prepares participants for community leadership through leadership service. This is a competitive selection process that ensures members of each Class represent or reflect all sectors of the community, including business, government, education, and not-for-profits.

The program is designed to provide a foundation for a commitment to effective leadership by educating and challenging area executives and managers on key issues in Tallahassee. The end result is a network of leaders dedicated to understanding and improving the quality of life in Tallahassee and our region.

Applications are due by **5:00pm on April 3, 2023**. For more information on how to apply, click [HERE](#).



*Rick and his daughter with some friends from
Honor Flight Tallahassee at the Robert A Wise Annual Chili Cook-off.
(February 18, 2023)*



In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we share Alan Niedoroda's [obituary](#). Alan passed away peacefully in his home on the shores of Lake Jackson on December 10th.

Alan was Rick's appointee to the Leon County Water Resources Committee and he was also a former president of the Friends of Lake Jackson.

Alan was a wonderful source of information and help to our office - not just with issues related to Lake Jackson, but with many issues.

He was a good man who cared very deeply for Lake Jackson and this community. And he will be sorely missed by many. RIP, Alan.

Leon County Commission, District 3 | 301 S Monroe St, Tallahassee, FL 32301

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