



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



November - December 2023 News & Updates

Upcoming Meetings

Board of County Commissioners

- Tuesday, December 12
- 3pm - Regular Meeting
- 6pm - Public Hearings
- 5th Floor, County Courthouse
- The meeting agenda can be viewed [HERE](#)

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

Hello Rick,

CHAMPIONS!! So proud of the FSU and FAMU football teams and the FSU Women's soccer team for incredible seasons! I have some choice words for the College Football Playoff committee, but I've got to keep this newsletter family-friendly.

Of course, along with all of this great football is the holiday season. My daughters are at peak ages (9 and 5), so they insisted on putting up our Christmas tree on Thanksgiving Day, and each morning they're prying open a new chocolate from their advent calendars. We've talked about getting an elf for our shelf, but they're flatly rejecting that kind of surveillance. :-)

It's also a busy time for us at the County. Please see below for some of our recent activity, as well as upcoming events. In addition, over the coming weeks, our District 3 office will be supporting the Sheriff's office for the next round of business crime watch meetings, and I'll be continuing to walk up and down the North Monroe corridor, talking with neighbors and businesses about the possible expansion of Blueprint's North Monroe Gateway project. Stay tuned for more updates.

Thank you once again for the incredible honor of representing you at the Leon County Commission. My Chief of Staff, Jodi Wilkof, and I take this responsibility seriously, so please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any suggestions, comments, or questions about community issues.

Best wishes to you and your family this holiday season. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy Kwanzaa!

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!

2023 Leon County Annual Report Now Available



In 2023, Leon County Government continued to make great progress and serve our citizens, all while striving to set the standard for performance, fiscal stewardship, and best practices for local governments everywhere.

While addressing the critical needs of the citizens we serve, we remained focused on executing our long-term strategy of building and diversifying our local economy by opening Amazon, which brings more than 1,300 full-time jobs to our community and \$114 million annually in local economic impact.

Thanks to our continuous efforts to grow our local tourism economy, we had another record year, with \$1.23 billion in economic impact and nearly 2.35 million visitors. To keep this historic momentum going, we opened the County's one-of-a-kind Visitor Information Center downtown in the renovated rail station that will grow tourism and support the County's leading efforts in celebrating our community's Bicentennial in 2024.

And we did this and so much more in 2023, never losing focus of our ambitious targets and bold goals for the organization and the community, including growing our local tourism economy, addressing pressing issues like homelessness and hunger, protecting our precious environment, and so much more.

Through the vision and leadership provided by the Board of County Commissioners and the hard work of our dedicated County employees, we at Leon County remain committed to listening to the people we serve, addressing the challenges we face together, and striving to be a place like nowhere else.

Please learn more about all of Leon County's efforts this year on behalf of and alongside our community in the 2023 Leon County Annual Report at LeonCountyFL.gov/AnnualReport and [watch the video summary here](#).

Leon County obtains approval for two policy

priorities at Florida Association of Counties' Legislative Conference



Each year, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) develops its statewide policy priorities for the upcoming legislative session. County Commissioners from around the state convene to debate the issues and form a consensus on legislative policies that will benefit their constituents.

At the FAC Legislative Conference in Tampa last month, Rick spearheaded the development of and obtained unanimous approval for two policy proposals:

1. an anti-human trafficking proposal that would require state and local government contractors to attest that their operations do not involve human trafficking, and
2. a housing proposal, developed in close partnership with Alachua County Commissioner Ken Cornell and Director of Community Support Services Claudia Tuck, that would increase the flexibility for counties to use SHIP funds for rental properties and rental assistance.

These two policies are now part of FAC's 2024 legislative agenda. Already Rick has had encouraging discussions with Rep. Allison Tant (HD9) and Sen. Corey Simon (SD3) about the anti-human trafficking proposal, and he'll be joining FAC to advocate for both items during session.

Congratulations to Leon County EMS on its 20th Anniversary



On December 31, 2003, Leon County EMS began providing lifesaving care to the people of Leon County. Twenty years later, our EMS team has completed 775,000 calls for service and transported more than 500,000 patients.

We are so grateful to the men and women of Leon County EMS who are there for us when we need them most. Thank you to each and every one of you for your dedication to delivering unparalleled emergency medical care in service to the community.

Check out [this video](#) celebrating the 20th Anniversary of our amazing Leon County EMS team.

Congratulations to the Friends of Lake Jackson on Their 25th Anniversary



Congratulations to the Friends of Lake Jackson on their 25th Anniversary! Rick was pleased to be able to join the group in its celebration and to serve on a panel discussing the lake, its past, and its future.

The Friends of Lake Jackson, Inc. was formed in 1998 to organize the efforts of informed and concerned citizens who share a desire to protect Lake Jackson from further adverse effects. This group works with local, state and federal governmental officials to arrest the further decline of this key piece of our natural heritage.

To learn more about this group and how you can get involved, [click here](#).

North Monroe Business Crime Watch Networks



Over the past few months, Rick has partnered with the Leon County Sheriff's Office to host three breakfast meetings for businesses and neighbors along the North Monroe corridor.

The goals of these meetings were:

- To establish three North Monroe business crime watch networks with all businesses and nonprofits located on or near the area.
- To provide these businesses with an update on crime in their area, and how we can work with them to keep their customers and employees safe. This includes cracking down on human trafficking, which is a serious problem for this section of North Monroe and which contributes to other types of criminal activity.
- To provide an update on homelessness, and how we can help people on the street find safe, stable housing.

Sheriff Walt McNeil and his team, Property Appraiser Akin Akinyemi and his team, representatives from TPD, and STAC Executive Director Robin Hassler Thompson attended as well.

If you would like to be added to the list of folks we keep updated on news related to North Monroe, [please let us know](#).

Sugar Spun Fun For All Ages During County's Fifth Annual Community Gingerbread House Competition



Margaret Johnson's gingerbread house entry (above) won in the Adult category.

Leon County Government recently hosted its fifth annual Community Gingerbread House Competition at the LeRoy Collins Main Library, and once again Rick served as one of the judges. This year had some outstanding entries!

Judges selected one winner and honorable mention from each category and attendees selected the People's Choice award winner and honorable mention. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to everyone who competed!



The Gingerbread House Competition judges (L to R): Leon County Commissioner Rick Minor, food critic and writer Amy Rogers, COCA Arts Education Manager Sahara Lyon, and Celebrity Chef Leon C. Brunson.

Explore Winter Wonderland of STEM Activities at County Library Events



The magic of winter meets the wonders of science during Leon County Government's Winter Wonders: Exploring Science at all LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System locations throughout December and January.

The whole family can ignite their curiosity with engaging and educational hands-on activities and crafts centered around science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The community can experience Winter Wonders: Exploring Science at the following library locations:

- Saturday, December 9, from 1-3 p.m. – Dr. B.L. Perry, Jr. Branch Library, 2817 S. Adams Street
- Saturday, December 16, from 12-3 p.m. – Bruce J. Host Northeast Branch Library, 5513 Thomasville Road
- Saturday, January 6, from 1-3 p.m. – Jane G. Sauls Fort Braden Branch Library, 16327 Blountstown Highway
- Thursday, January 11, from 4-6 p.m. – Woodville Branch Library, 8000 Old Woodville Road
- Saturday, January 13, from 1-3 p.m. – Lake Jackson Branch Library, 3840-300 N. Monroe St.
- Saturday, January 27, from 1-3 p.m. – Eastside Branch Library, 1583 Pedrick Road

Learn more about Winter Wonders: Exploring Science at LeonCountyLibrary.org.

Leon County Celebrates Three Home Replacements and Welcomes Families Home



This month, Leon County Government welcomed three families to their new homes during Home Replacement Housewarming Ceremonies. During the ceremonies, each family received keys to their new homes as well as other housewarming gifts. The homes were replaced through the Leon County Housing Services Home Replacement Program with State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) funds.

The three original homes had significant deficiencies, including collapsing floors, leaking roofs and fixtures, ineffective plumbing and electrical systems, and asbestos. In instances where the costs associated with rehabilitation are expected to exceed 50% of the current value of the home, home replacement becomes a viable option. Due to the extent of the damage, Leon County Housing Services staff determined that it would be best to replace the original homes with new site-built, single-family homes. Home replacement is a comprehensive way to maintain the existing supply of affordable housing while allowing families to continue living in the communities they love.

Located in unincorporated Leon County, the homes were built using a portion of the County's \$1.1 million fiscal year 2024 SHIP allocation. In addition to home replacements, the funding supports Leon County Housing Services programs including down payment assistance for first time homebuyers and housing repair, rehabilitation, and replacement.

Rick was pleased to participate in the District 3 ceremony.

"It's heartwarming to see these families settling into their upgraded, livable homes," said Rick. "This program goes beyond just housing; it's about preserving the very essence of our neighborhoods and strengthening the fabric of our community."

Leon County Housing Services is committed to providing safe, sanitary, and affordable housing to low-income residents in the unincorporated areas of Leon County. Leon County Housing Services reviews applications, verifies applicant eligibility, and ensures compliance with the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and other programs.

Adopt-A-Tree

LEON COUNTY
**ADOPT-A-TREE
PROGRAM**

TREE SPECIES

- Easter Redbud
- Winged Elm
- Southern Magnolia

TALLAHASSEE - LEON COUNTY
1824 2024
**200
BICENTENNIAL**

**Help Us Plant 200 Trees
for 200 Years of Leon County**

APPLY BY JANUARY 31, 2024
Learn more at LeonCountyFL.gov/AdoptATree

Leon County is proud to offer the 2024 Adopt-A-Tree Program. Applications are now being accepted through January 31, 2024, on a first-come, first-served basis. If you live inside Leon County but outside of Tallahassee city limits, you may qualify to have a tree planted on your property for free. With a goal of planting 200 trees in honor of the Tallahassee-Leon County bicentennial in 2024, Leon County is encouraging residents to be a part of this green endeavor.

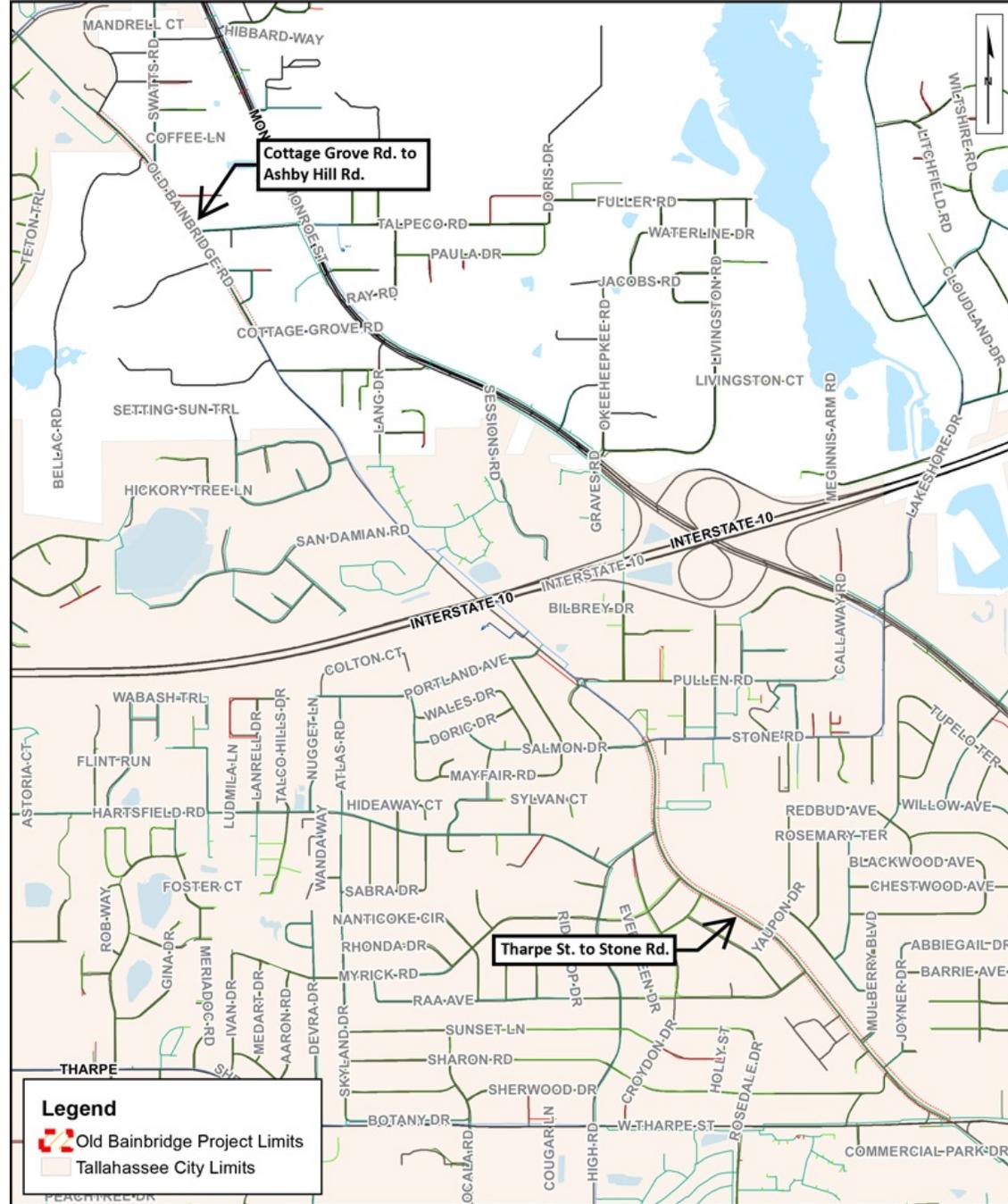
Residents will have the option to have a tree delivered to their residence for planting at their convenience. This project provides an enjoyable and educational experience for the entire family, and comprehensive instructions for tree planting and care will be provided upon tree delivery. For those who prefer assistance with tree planting, County staff is available to assist upon request; just choose the "delivery and plant" option.

If you agree to water the tree three times a week for one year, Leon County will plant the tree anywhere between your house and any publicly maintained road or any privately maintained road with public access.

[Click here to sign up.](#)

Residents residing within the Tallahassee city limits are encouraged to explore the City of Tallahassee's Adopt-A-Tree program by visiting Talgov.com/AdoptATree.

Old Bainbridge Water Main Replacement



In line with its commitment to providing best-in-class utility services, the City of Tallahassee is gathering information related to the replacement of potable water infrastructure within portions of the Old Bainbridge Road corridor between Tharpe Road and Fred George Road. The purpose of this project is to replace approximately 9,000 linear feet of water mains as well as valves, fire hydrants, water services and meter settings. This investment will improve the City's ability to continue to provide safe, reliable drinking water and fire protection.

The City has contracted with a design consultant to design these improvements, and the land surveyor that is a part of the consultant's team, SS&A, has been in the area since July 31, 2023, collecting data such as right-of-way and utility easement boundaries; location, size, and depth of existing utilities; location of physical improvements within the right-of-way/easements; and topographic information. The initial survey is nearly complete; however additional survey work, including obtaining the location and size of trees that may be impacted by the project, is anticipated.

NOTE: Rick has spoken with City staff, who have said that the water main piping will be installed under the road itself to ensure the protection of the canopy road. To improve fire safety for the neighborhoods along Old Bainbridge, the City will be adding some fire hydrants in the rights of way but the impact on the canopy will be minimized.

Once this water project is complete, the County will be scheduling an Old Bainbridge resurfacing project for 2025.

AWS Learning Days in Tallahassee



Rick recently participated in a panel during Amazon Web Services (AWS) Learning Days.

This two-day conference, held in Tallahassee, provided training sessions, one-on-one support with experts, collaboration with peers, and workshops.

Veterans Day Activities





On Veterans Day, Rick and his oldest daughter joined Leon County and the American Legion to will honor our hometown heroes for the annual Operation Thank You Veterans Day breakfast.

During that breakfast, the County presented two proclamations honoring Dennis O. Baker, U.S. Navy retired, and Henry Lowery Jr., U.S. Marine Corps retired, for their service to the country as well as for their continued efforts to remember and support our nation's veterans.

After the breakfast, Rick was joined by Jessica and their daughters for the annual family tradition of riding on the Leon County float in the Veterans Day Parade.

Volunteer Opportunity with the Big Bend Community of Care



Every year, during the last full week of January, communities across the country come together for a critical and compassionate undertaking known as the Point in Time (PIT) Count. This nationwide event is not just a procedure; it is a moment of reflection, understanding, and action against homelessness.

As we approach the 2024 PIT Count, the Big Bend Continuum of Care (BBCOC) invites you to be a part of this nationwide effort. Whether you are a service provider, a local official, a concerned citizen, or a person with lived experience of homelessness, your involvement is crucial. Rick has participated in the PIT Count for the last 4 years and always finds it a worthwhile and eye-opening experience.

If you are interested in joining the legion of volunteers who take to the streets to count, survey, and support our homeless population, [click here](#).

Introducing the Bruce J. Host Northeast Branch Library



Recently, Leon County Government dedicated the Northeast Branch Library in honor of former Leon County Commissioner Bruce J. Host and his decades of public and military service.

Commissioner Host represented the residents of District 4 from 1992 to 2000. During his time in office, he championed the creation of the Northeast Branch Library as a place for the community to access resources and come together. The County and the community were excited to celebrate Commissioner Host's many achievements and unveil the sign featuring the library's new name.

UPCOMING *VISION 2055* ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

COMMUNITY VALUES VIRTUAL PRESENTATION - DECEMBER 11, 2023 at 5:30

Throughout the initial phases of the planning process, we have been identifying key themes and underlying values of the community. These values will build the foundation of *VISION 2055*.

Join us for a live webinar on December 11 at 5:30 PM to learn about the community values and how they will be applied to the plan! Follow the link here (https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_ixSHE5-QRpewzqaydptGEA) or use the QR Code below to register for the virtual presentation.

S.T.E.P. GROWTH FRAMEWORK - JANUARY 29-30, 2024

The multi-day in-person STEP framework will offer four opportunities for the community to provide insight into how the community should grow. This workshop will kick-off with a presentation and then provide mapping exercises to identify where, and how, the community should grow.

There are four meetings you can attend. The format and materials at each meeting is the same, so you only need to attend one. We will start the meeting with a brief presentation before dispersing to a handful of mapping stations. Please join us at one of the following meetings:

January 29 from 12:30 PM - 2 PM at Smith Williams Services Center, 2295 Pasco St.
January 29 from 5:30 PM - 7 PM at LeRoy Collins Main Public Library, 200 W. Park Ave
January 30 from 12:30 PM - 2 PM at Jack McLean Community Center, 700 Paul Russell Rd.
January 30 from 5:30 PM - 7 PM at Frenchtown Renaissance Center, 435 N. Macomb St.



TALLAHASSEE
LEON COUNTY

VISION 2055
A FOCUSED FUTURE

To find out more, please view the project webpage at www.compplantlc.com

or use a QR code to the right.

Project Website

Virtual Presentation Registration



Leon County is Hiring

Do you or anyone you know want to grow your career, join an award-winning team, and make a difference in our community?

Apply now at www.LeonCountyFl.gov/Jobs to start your Leon County career today.



Meridian Road Resurfacing

If you drive on Meridian Road, you likely noticed that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is in the process of resurfacing the part of the road from Thomasville Road to Lakeshore Drive. We've been told

that this is a year-long project, possibly completing towards the end of 2024.

Thank you to FDOT for this upgrade!



Congratulations to Getaway Grill and Bar!

Congratulations to Steve and Shannon Flynn and everyone at The Getaway Grille and Bar for winning the "Best of Florida 2023" award! We are so fortunate to have this establishment along the North Monroe corridor in District 3.



Learn more in this [article from the Tallahassee Democrat](#).

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

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