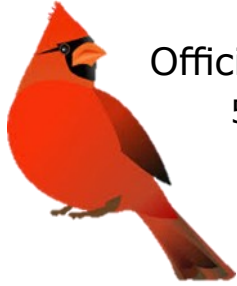


THE CARDINAL



Official Publication of the Town of Melbourne Village

555 Hammock Road, Melbourne Village, FL 32904

Office: 321-723-8300 * Fax: 321-984-7219

E-mail: officeadmin@melbournevillage.org

January 2024

Mayor's Report



Charles Buchanan, USN, WWII Veteran

Reflecting on the sentiments of residents over the past year, there is an overarching feeling of progress and positivity, and I would like to express my appreciation for your ongoing interest and participation in the happenings of our town. A special thank you also to those attending the Mayor's Town Hall meetings. We continue to have a full house and lively, engaging discussions at each one, and I am thankful for this, because when we know better, we can do better.

This past year was not without challenges and difficulties, but we are currently building a dedicated team that is committed to our municipality and its residents. We continue to make progress

clarifying and establishing town policies, enhancing staff training, updating fee schedules, revising the Personnel Manual and the Town Charter, and working towards modernizing our website, record-keeping, and other office processes.

We will be hosting workshops on Town Charter revisions and Brevard County Sheriff's Office patrol options to prepare residents to make informed, knowledgeable decisions regarding the November 2024 election referendums. Keep an eye on the Cardinal Calendar, the bulletin board on Dayton, NextDoor, and hopefully I'll also get our email listserv, Constant Contact, up and running in the very near future.

Finally, I hope your holidays were filled with cherished moments making memories with family and friends. As we embark on the new year, I anticipate a lot of hard work, but with each completed project, we can embrace these positive changes and celebrate our collective achievements.

I am grateful and honored to have the opportunity to serve as your Mayor. Let's keep the conversation going!

Sue Ditty

Mayor

Save the Date! Founders Day 2024

APRIL 27 & APRIL 28

Mark your calendars for the weekend of April 27 & 28 for our annual Founders' Day events! The Ice Cream Social will be held on Saturday evening, followed by a fun-filled day of activities on Sunday. Full details to follow in the April edition of The Cardinal, so be on the lookout for them!

Street Signs and Sidewalks

By Bridget Foster, Vice Mayor

Several months ago, BCSO brought to the Commission's attention the lack of nighttime visibility of our street signs. Our original cast aluminum signs are not reflective and are showing signs of wear. After deliberation, the commission considered two options: replacing them with brand new, generic, flat-blade signs resembling those outside of Melbourne Village, or refurbishing the existing signs by having them cleaned, repainted, and a retroreflective finish applied to the letters. Consensus leaned toward preserving the charm of our current signs, prompting the Commission to send a single sign (Sabal Road) to the original manufacturer for the proposed enhancements before making a final decision. The debut of the newly finished Sabal Road sign took place during November's Regular Commission meeting, where the lights were dimmed to highlight the effectiveness of the new high-visibility coating using a cell phone flashlight. See the before and after photos below! In the coming weeks and months, you will notice periodic removal and eventual replacement of various street signs as they are sent in batches for refinishing until all signs have been refurbished. During their "spa" treatment, Norton Muzzone and our Public Works technician, Jeff Conklin, will be straightening the poles and in a few instances relocating poles to more optimal locations. We appreciate your patience throughout this process as we strive to enhance the safety of Melbourne Village.



More recently, it was brought to my attention that the sidewalks on Dayton Blvd. from Jeannie Dr. to South Dr. are in poor condition. There are several sections that have cracked and heaved causing trip hazards, and some areas have sunken and broken away due to erosion. This matter was discussed by the Commission and the decision was made to draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) to be sent out to contractors in order to have the damaged areas removed and replaced with reinforced concrete. This project is in the early stages of planning, so no further details are available at this time.



If you notice something in need of maintenance, repair, or potential replacement in Melbourne Village, visit the Town Office and fill out a work order request. These requests are regularly reviewed and prioritized based on urgency, serving as the most effective way to proactively communicate infrastructure observations. As we all continue to take pride in the areas we see and frequent, promptly notifying the office of any concerns, we can stay a step ahead of upcoming project needs, allowing for effective planning and budgeting. You can help!

Rejuvenation, Repair, Replacement, Renovation, and Renewal

By Heather Roberts, Town Clerk

Town improvements are in the works! In a groundbreaking move in March 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) emerged as a beacon of hope, providing relief and support for local governments, small businesses, and hard-hit industries and households following the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. government infused funds into these various sectors to alleviate the economic aftermath. Melbourne Village received \$347,500, a substantial sum for a town of this size.

The town's allocation strategy is to invest in much-needed critical repairs and infrastructure, channeling these ARPA funds to the areas of greatest need. \$51,390 was used to repair and replace the roofs of the Town Hall, Public Works garage, and Hester Wagner Community House. An additional \$5,800 has been set aside as we eagerly await the arrival of replacement parts for the playground equipment. The remaining funds are earmarked for rejuvenation of the town's right-of-way culverts, the repair of the Dayton Blvd. sidewalks, replacement of the Town Hall and Public Works septic systems, and Hester Wagner Community House exterior renovations.

Residents of the Town of Melbourne Village, prepare for revival, where each dollar spent is an investment in creating a more resilient future!

New Town Website

By Dave Jones, Commissioner

Yes, the rumors you may have heard are true – the Town is going to launch a new, contemporary website in 2024. For the past 15+ years, our current site has served its purpose, catering to the needs of our citizens, businesses, local government, and anyone interested in our wonderful little town. However, this new era of digital communications and engagement creates an expectation that local government provide a professional 21st century solution, taking advantage of the latest technology to connect people with tip-of-the-fingers information.

Our new, user-friendly site will provide access to a variety of resources, including town calendars, public records, staff information, emergency management, building ordinances and codes, self-service permitting, community house rental information, job opportunities, Public Works service requests, town meeting agendas and minutes, local history, and more. Key objectives for this online platform include quick, intuitive access to essential and pertinent information, transparency, notice of upcoming activities, and adherence to government-mandated ADA accessibility standards.

Want to see what has been done with some of the newer, small municipality web sites in Brevard? Visit www.melbournebeachfl.org, www.townofpalmshores.org, and www.townofmalabar.org, then compare with our current site at www.melbournevillage.org.

The Town Commission and Clerk are eager to begin the search for the appropriate product and implementation partner and make a final selection. We are in the process of identifying residents who possess the necessary skills to aid in the launch of our new site. Feel free to contact the Deputy Clerk if you are interested in participating.

Will You Serve?

By Gary Ingram, Commissioner

Can one person truly make a difference? Without question, we all live in a wonderful community. We cherish the lush canopy of trees that are protected by ordinance and we are comfortable with the level of safety and security of law enforcement services negotiated by the Town Commission. Our Mayor, Commissioners, volunteers, and employees have all done a remarkable job in ensuring that we continue to enjoy the benefits that the Town of Melbourne Village has to offer.

However, change is the only constant, and the Town of Melbourne Village continues to face new challenges. Earlier this year, the Florida Commission on Ethics presented a recommendation that was approved by the Legislature requiring full and public disclosure of financial interests including assets, liabilities, and net worth for all elected officers – an initiative now commonly known as Form 6. Regrettably, no provision was made to excuse those who serve in unpaid elected positions in very small municipalities where information of this nature is simply too personally invasive for many of us to feel comfortable sharing. We held out hope for some change to the new Form 6, but as none is forthcoming, Commissioner Dave Jones and I felt that it was in our best interests to resign.

Due to these resignations, there are vacancies on the Town Commission that will need to be filled. We are seeking individuals who are willing to volunteer to become interim members of the Town Commission until the November 2024 election. In order for our Town to meet future challenges and continue to progress, we need individuals to step forward. Stop in to the town office and ask for a Commission application packet, then start attending town meetings to witness the transformative decisions being made every month by the Commission.

Decoy Cars Prove Effective

By Fred Anderson, Commissioner

Every morning, Dave Jones, Gary Ingram, and I take turns strategically placing a decoy car in various locations in order to impede traffic, a tactic that has been quite effective in reducing speeding. Additionally, I have urged the deputies to make their patrol cars more visible by parking in more conspicuous locations while doing their required paperwork, rather than in hidden locations such as behind Target or on Hall Road. Plans are currently underway to sell the TMVPD Ford Taurus once the radios and other equipment are removed under the supervision of the Brevard County Sheriff's Department. By releasing this vehicle, the Commission can remove its maintenance, repair, and insurance from the budget. We will be keeping the Ford Explorer in order to continue the Decoy Program, creating a safer environment for all residents while preserving resources for the greater well-being of the community.

Public Works' Endless Summer

By Norton Muzzone, Commissioner

In my younger years, the expression “Endless Summer” had a completely different meaning than the one I experienced this year. Unfortunately, due to an unexpected hiccup in our Public Works staffing, our Village was without any personnel tending to grounds maintenance nor any type of repairs required to maintain our daily standard town procedures. The timing could not have been worse, as the typical growing season was at its peak. When the request for assistance came, due to my ongoing experience working on the AHF Parks and Paths Committee, it was an easy decision for me and so I responded without hesitation. I shared with Mayor Ditty my intentions and desire to handle this situation. What I would like to express is the overwhelming response I received regarding town volunteers willing to assist. We were able to not only accomplish the typical tasks of keeping grounds cleared and mowed, but with considerable labor and difficulty the clearing and cleaning of swales and culverts, which were a top priority. We have cleared so much overgrowth that has restricted water flow for such a long period of time because while our foliage is enjoyed by all and is such a part of our town’s identity, it does in fact require constant maintenance and upkeep. The temporary Public Works crew did have some equipment repair issues to deal with at first, and needless to say there were some learning curves that were experienced along the way, yet now with our combined experience and using working equipment, it has all come together. I would like to take a moment to appreciate all of the grateful responses received from town residents for the overall condition of our town and its appearance. I have noticed that our residents have also assisted either by having their landscape personnel take it up a notch, or by taking it upon themselves to assist in keeping our town beautiful. For a minute there, it seemed summer really would never end as we worked in the hot sun day after day. Finally we have cooler temperatures, the ability to catch our breath, and time to make plans to keep Melbourne Village as unique and special as it ever was.

Jeff Conklin Public Works Technician

By Suzy Headon, Deputy Clerk

Seeing a familiar face around town? That’s because Jeff Conklin has returned as our TMV Public Works Technician! Jeff has several years’ experience in highway maintenance, is a certified herbicide technician, and is familiar with our roads as well as our equipment. Commissioner Norton Muzzone has been orienting Jeff to our new, more organized system and schedule so we look forward to his contributions to the appearance and maintenance of our town. Jeff is married with two sons, and they enjoy spending time together as a family. Jeff’s favorite places to eat are Salt & Sweet and Frankie’s Deli. In his spare time he enjoys fishing and beer tasting. When you see Jeff around town, give him a quick wave to welcome him back to our team!



Don Willis Park

by Celia Byrnes, Beautification Committee Chair



Hi folks! Since becoming chair of the town’s Beautification Committee, I have been so pleased to have many folks step up to help beautify our town. A huge thank you to you all. This includes planting and maintenance of Flamingo Triangle, Margaret Hames Triangle, Live Oak Triangle, and Acacia Island. Next up is Printshop Crossing and Turpentine Island. We are still looking for someone to adopt Don Willis Park, which doesn’t require more planning or planting, just light maintenance such as edging/trimming after public works does the mowing, and picking up palm fronds or branches as they fall. Could this be you? Please contact me for more info: Celia 832-466-5577

Camille's Corner

By Camille Moore, Code Enforcement Officer

While driving through the village, I've noticed a few instances of code violations, and I thought it would be helpful to share some tips on how to steer clear of them. Here are a few examples of what I'm seeing and some easy ways to stay on the right side of things:

- Accumulation/Improper Disposal of Trash/Debris - Properly store items outside beneath the eaves of the house, a carport, or under the roof of porches/patios. Storage outside not under cover is a violation. Assure trash/debris for pickup was generated by the property or consolidated with neighbors (no commercial trash/debris).
- Work Without a Permit – Before starting any improvements and/or tree removals, check with the office for a permit application.
- Unsafe Structures/ Pools – Any structures that can be readily accessed must be maintained for safety or made inaccessible. This includes sheds, play structures for children, and homes. Pools are required by law to have certain safety enclosures and/or covers to avoid unauthorized access. These enclosures include fences that must be maintained to prevent unauthorized access.
- Overgrowth – This is more prevalent during the warmer months. Regularly mow the property to avoid grass/weeds that are too tall.
- Inoperable Vehicle – Assure vehicle(s) stored on the property have inflated tires, a valid license plate/registration, are free from excessive accumulation of tree leaves/needles, and can be started/moved if necessary to prove 'operability.' Storage of inoperable vehicle(s) must be under cover (structural and/or maintained cloth cover).

Please feel free to reach out to me at code_enforcement@melbournevillage.org with any code-related questions or to file a complaint. Also, you may contact the staff in the office to file a complaint or get a question to me, either in person or over the phone at (321-723-8300). Finally, on the Town's website (<https://melbournevillage.org/>) there are links to all the codes and ordinances being enforced. Above all, I'm here for all of you, and to help ensure you're living in a place you can feel safe in and proud of.

Election Dates & Deadlines

By Bridget Foster, Vice Mayor

Florida is gearing up for multiple elections in 2024, with the presidential race taking center stage alongside some potentially controversial amendments which may be on the ballot. Mark your calendars for the Presidential Preference Primary and the Primary election on Aug. 20. Primary elections play a crucial role in selecting candidates for federal, state, and county offices in the subsequent General election. Melbourne Village also has some important elections coming up in November 2024. The Mayor's seat and three Commission seats are up for re-election, as well as at least one referendum.

Here is the 2024 Election Schedule. Reminder: Voter registration ends 29 days before an election in Florida.

Presidential Preference Primary: Tuesday, Mar 19 (register by Feb 20)

Primary election: Tuesday, Aug 20 (register by July 22)

General election: Tuesday, Nov 5 (register by Oct 7)

PLEASE NOTE:

Even if you voted by mail in 2022, you now must proactively request a vote-by-mail ballot from the Brevard County elections office. Even if you're already a registered voter and not opting for mail-in voting, it's essential to verify your voter registration status for the upcoming year. Confirm your status by visiting:

<https://registration.elections.myflorida.com>.

Trunk or Treat Was Sweet!



Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

By Betty Jo Yorio, Commissioner

The Town Commission will be hosting an invitation-only Volunteer Appreciation Dinner scheduled for January 20th. This gathering serves as a heartfelt gesture to express our gratitude and recognize the local residents generously dedicating their time and services. Since their contributions go beyond official volunteer roles, we want to thank all of the people on all committee positions, and also those who come forward on an as-needed basis to pitch in without compensation, stepping in to support our town's modest yet formidable staff. When you receive your invitation, kindly RSVP so we can plan effectively as we celebrate the spirit of community and the invaluable efforts of our dedicated volunteers.

First Annual Veterans Day Celebration

by Teri Eno



Melbourne Village celebrated Veterans Day on Nov 11th at the AHF Hall honoring our residents who have served in the military. During this very special event, Mayor Ditty shared some history of the different service branches before personally recognizing each veteran individually and emphasizing the importance of the sacrifices they made for our freedom. All Villagers in attendance paid tribute to our veterans and collectively thanked them for their service. Following the ceremony, we all enjoyed a Hot Dog Social and some delicious desserts. This was the first Veterans Day celebration in the Village, and we will be hosting this event every year!



Florida Wildlife Hospital A Valuable Resource

By Kevin Foster

Living in Melbourne Village means we enjoy more green space than most municipalities, and it also means we are more likely to run across injured wildlife. There is much to know about both caring for an injured animal and assessing if the animal even needs human intervention. For example, what do you do if you happen across a warren holding a fluffle of rabbit kits and no mother in sight? How do you know if they have been abandoned? Since young rabbits are independent when they are about the size of a baseball, and mothers only visit a warren one or two times a day for younger kits, it would be exceedingly difficult to know.

That is when you would turn to the experts at the Florida Wildlife Hospital (FWH). They have resources on their website <https://floridawildlifehospital.org/> to help you assess a wildlife situation. Under the “Found Animal” page, there is a helpful decision chart for you to follow to help you figure out what next steps, if any, need to be taken. In the example of our fluffle, they recommend loosely placing yarn or string around the warren. If by the next day the string hasn’t been disturbed then you should take the kits to a wildlife rehabilitator like FWH.

The main mission of FWH is to rehabilitate wildlife. Since 1973, they have rescued, rehabilitated, and released thousands of sick, injured, and orphaned native Florida animals in Brevard County, averaging 5,000 patients per year. Located in Palm Shores, FWH is available 365 days a year, 9 AM to 4:30 PM, to admit wildlife patients. There is never a charge for animal care, but they receive no state or federal funding, so donations are welcome. FWH is the only facility of its kind in the area and provides immeasurable and critical value to the community and to the lives of the wildlife cared for at their facility. Leave it to the experts at the Florida Wildlife Hospital and give our Melbourne Village wildlife the best chance for recovery.



Holman’s for the Holidays

By Scott Perrine

For 30 years, residents of Melbourne Village have been treated to a sprawling wonderland of twinkling lights and festive cheer each Halloween and Christmas, courtesy of Bobby and Debbie Holman and inspired by Debbie’s grandmother. Debbie fondly recalls the nights she and her grandmother spent bonding while replacing burnt-out bulbs. The tradition and display have grown since then.

Now requiring a coordinated family effort, Debbie’s son, Alan Moye, begins pre-planning the haunted maze layout and logistics as early as September and takes a week off work to oversee the setup itself. Despite the new thrills being added to their displays each year, the price will always be free. “You don’t have to donate,” Debbie explained. “I want families to be able to take their kids and come and it not cost them anything.” However, after politely declining donation offers over the years, this year Debbie realized she could turn the generosity of neighbors into positive community outreach. She set out a small bowl to collect (strictly voluntary!) donations for the Palm Bay Spay and Neuter Clinic. In all, over \$1,000 was raised for the Spay and Neuter Clinic during last October alone!

The Holmans don’t want you to let the decorative gates fool you. Their whimsical winter wonderland is meant for up-close admiration. So, step off the sidewalk and immerse yourself in the magic! Watch the Polar Express race around its track, dance with St. Nick, or snap a selfie with Surfing Santa. So as the holiday season begins to wrap our village in its warm embrace, let’s tip our hats to Bobby and Debbie Holman for 30 years of tireless dedication to keeping the holiday magic alive in Melbourne Village.



Space Coast League of Cities

By Bridget Foster, Vice Mayor

Melbourne Village made quite a showing at the December Space Coast League of Cities' (SCLOC) annual holiday dinner with thirteen of us there to represent the town! Fondly referred to as the "Justice League of Cities" by my friends and me, the SCLOC comes together on a monthly basis to work together to promote self-government and to strengthen our collective voice to defend Home Rule: our right and responsibility to have autonomous authority, allowing us to effectively and efficiently provide for the needs and preferences of our citizens.

This longstanding legal principle gives us the power to determine for ourselves the nature and form of our town government, determine policies, provide services, and devise solutions to our local challenges. This is important to us because home rule provides some guarantees of noninterference in local affairs. We attend these meetings to enforce our position that voter-approved referendums should prevail, rather than being overridden or preempted by legislation approved by larger, more distant county or state governmental authorities.

At these gatherings, we contribute by providing input and feedback on the issues presented for consideration by our fellow municipalities. More importantly, we make valuable connections and gather resources for future needs, whether within our town or in other municipalities. Reflecting on the past year, we take pride in the positive impression we've made on the people we've met at SCLOC: Melbourne Village is here to stay, committed to maintaining local governance and preserving the welfare of our community.



Did you know that the Town has many active Boards and Committees that rely on resident volunteers, many of which are in the need of new members? Some meet regularly and others only as needed. Please contact the Town Office to learn more or if you are interested in volunteering.

Beautification Committee

Reports on methods, concepts and specific plans to improve the general appearance of the planting and landscaping of public property in Melbourne Village. Meets as needed.

Board of Adjustment

Established to hear appeals of decisions rendered by zoning administrators. Interpret unclear provisions in the zoning ordinance. Decide on variance applications by landowners to permit buildings or land uses which vary from the zoning regulations.

Code Enforcement Board

Enforces Town codes and ordinances, including, but not limited to, occupational license, fire, building, zoning, litter, environmental,

animal control, abandoned property, land use, sign codes and ordinances. Meets as needed.

Finance Committee

Provides financial analysis, advice, and oversight of the Town budget. Their sole responsibility is to ensure the organization is operating with the financial resources it needs to provide programs and services to the community. Meets monthly.

Town Review Board

Designed to maintain those features of residential neighborhoods specifically identified by Town residents and the Town Commission as core community value. (Ord. 2012-01) They merged with Planning and Zoning and fulfill those duties as well, including conducting and preparing the comprehensive planning program or portions thereof for the Town. Meets as needed.

If interested in volunteering, please contact the Town Office.

Town of Melbourne Village
555 Hammock Road
Melbourne Village, FL 32904



Solid Waste Collection Information WastePro 321-837-0055

wasteprousa.com/town-of-melbourne-village/

Monday Recycling and yard trash. Place yard waste in containers or cut to 4-foot lengths. "Can what you can." No recycling in plastic bags!

Wednesday and Saturday Regular garbage, regular household rubbish.

Large Items If large appliances (stoves and refrigerators, with doors removed) and furniture are not picked up within a few days, contact Waste Pro.

Reminder: Do NOT place large piles of yard waste directly beneath power lines or next to mail boxes. The clam truck cannot be operated under power lines. If you must place yard waste in plastic bags, do not seal them (leave them so they can be easily opened). The best option is to containerize small items whenever possible.



SHERIFF WAYNE IVEY
BREVARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Non-Emergency
(321) 952-6371

Non-Emergency 772 Area
(772) 663-6269

Community Services
(321) 264-7755

www.Brevardsheriff.com



Contacting Town Officials

Letters should be addressed to the Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, or Commissioners:

Town of Melbourne Village
555 Hammock Rd
Melbourne Village, FL 32904
M-F 9:30am-3:30pm
phone: 321-723-8300

Website: www.melbournevillage.org

Contact the Office and Commissioners at
officeadmin@melbournevillage.org

Written communication (including email) with Town Officials pertaining to Town business is considered public record.

Regular Town Commission Meetings are held at 6:30 pm on the 4th Tuesday of every month at the AHF Hall unless noted.

The Town Commission

MAYOR	Sue Ditty mayor@melbournevillage.org
VICE MAYOR	Bridget Foster
COMMISSIONERS	Fred Anderson Norton Muzzone Betty Jo Yorio Vacant Vacant