



POA Bulletin



POA4US.org

APRIL 2025

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Upcoming POA General Membership Meetings

Attend In-Person or Watch Online via Facebook Live (no donuts for you!)



Note: The April Membership Meeting Topic will be covered in two parts – be sure to attend or watch both meetings.

April 3, 2025 • 7 pm

Everglades Recreation Center

SPEAKER: Lisa Honka

PART ONE: Key to Senior Living Options

April 15, 2025 • 7 pm

Laurel Manor Recreation Center

SPEAKER: Lisa Honka

PART TWO: Key to Senior Living Options

May 20, 2025 • 7 pm

Laurel Manor Recreation Center

SPEAKER: Dr. Craig Curtis, K2 Medical

TOPIC: Alzheimer's Research

Donuts & Coffee will be available at the POA General Membership Meetings

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UF/Spanish Plaines Hospital Update

Cheryl Chestnutt | March 18, 2025



For the third year in a row, the UF Health/Spanish Plaines Hospital Chief Clinical Officer, Cheryl Chestnutt, presented an update at the POA General Membership Meeting in March on the hospital's journey toward achieving higher quality care and improved patient satisfaction. She joked again that she looks forward to the day when the hospital will be dropped from POA watch list.



Honest & Fortright

Ms. Chestnutt said the journey is not done, but they are moving forward.

One UF Health

Stephen J. Motew, M.D., M.H.A., FACS, has been named president and CEO of the UF Health clinical enterprise, effective April 1, over the entire enterprise that includes the academic and clinical side. UF Health has hospitals in Jacksonville, Flagler, Leesburg, Spanish Plaines, and Shands in Gainesville. The goal is to move the academic and community models into one.

After Covid and changes in leadership, that movement slowed down but is now picking up.

They are working on the vision and culture pieces. What is the north star? It is now called the clinical enterprise which encompasses everything and everyone that provides care at the patient level.

The focus is on how to improve the outcomes. Patients should expect the same quality outcomes every time.

By sharing what each hospital does well, Ms. Chestnutt believes they can become One UF.

Quality Journey

Ms. Chestnutt said the slide (used in the presentation) has not changed, although they are making progress toward the 5-Star Rating by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

In 2020 when UF acquired Spanish Plaines, by agreement there was one year of no change. Then leadership changed.

From 2018 to June 2021 the CMS star rating was a one. From July 22-23 and with COVID slowing, they started to show improvement. Ms. Chestnutt is confident that the '24-25/26 CMS star

Hospital continued on page 2

Mission Statement

The Property Owners’ Association, Inc. (POA) is the original property owners’ group in The Villages. Established in 1975, the POA operates with complete independence from the Developer of The Villages. Membership is open to all property owners and residents of The Villages. The POA is committed to acting as a watchdog to ensure that the Developer and local government are responsive to the needs, interests, and rights of residents.

Vision The Property Owners’ Association, Inc. (POA) is a champion for the rights of residents of The Villages. Guided by member input, investigation and determination, the POA brings attention to and acts on issues that may impact property values and quality of life.

Goals The POA provides 1) a forum for discussion of issues; 2) research and analysis; 3) programs of interest; and, 4) is a conduit for objective and accurate information. Specific attention is given to resolving housing, community and local government issues.

Values

- Independence Honesty Fairness
- Objectivity Respect

The POA Declaration of Independence

The POA is free of any outside influence. This is the only way we can assure our members of absolute autonomy to act on their behalf. From the very beginning in 1975, we recognized this need for independence, and we’ve cherished and nurtured it ever since.

The *POA Bulletin* is published monthly by the Property Owners’ Association of The Villages, Inc. Articles represent the opinion of the POA or the writer, and Letters to the POA postings represent the opinions of the writers. Care is taken to ensure that facts reported herein are true and accurate to the best knowledge of the POA and are taken from reliable sources. The POA assumes no liability for any information published, opinions expressed, or delivery to any person or location. The POA does not endorse or recommend the products or services of any advertiser or discount partner. All publication rights are reserved. Publication or reprinting of any material contained herein is by written permission only. The POA reserves the right to remove and/or discontinue any advertisement or advertiser from its *POA Bulletin* at any time at its sole discretion.

Hospital *continued from page 1*

rating will be a two, with data based on what was done in ‘22-23.

At UF/Spanish Plaines the 2024 Leapfrog safety grade was a C. They needed a 2.94 score for a B and missed it by .05 at 2.99. Last year she said they would be a B in about a year. The Spring score will be out in May, and she is confident the grade will be what they anticipate.

Ms. Chestnutt said they have improved and will continue to improve. UF/Leesburg has a B Leapfrog rating and last year it had a 2-star CMS rating; this year they think they will be a 3-star.

Overview of things that are important:

- Lives saved: UF/SS is now ranking in top range with a 40% reduction in mortality.
- Readmissions: 11.1%. This really impacts the patient and reimbursement. They don’t want patients to come back.
- Safety – top quartile – infections they cause, dropping the risk of bladder, surgical, etc. infection or blood clot
- Door-to-Discharge: Since Ms. Chestnutt arrived, she couldn’t go anywhere without people talking about the ER and the wait times. They have dropped patient wait times in the ER by 48 minutes.

She said it has been a tough winter with COVID and flu. The hospital is very, very full.

Expanding the Footprint

The Brownwood ED continues to grow, grow, grow. They have and are continuing to open separate Urgent Care facilities in Eustis, Mt. Dora and Clermont. They just opened one in Summerfield and may open an ED there. They also have land in Oxford and may open an Urgent Care in that location.

They now have 5 ED care sites and have 48 new beds at the UF/ Leesburg Hospital. They are landlocked at UF/Spanish Plaines. They have 20 more beds than last year by putting two beds in some rooms. There are 13 clinics across Sumter and Lake, and they are growing service lines.

One challenge is they do not have enough employed doctors. Primary care is how they connect patients with their doctors. This year they have hired three new primary care doctors in Summerfield and Leesburg. Last year had zero.

They also have new physicians in:

- Cardiovascular in Leesburg
- Neuro stroke, interventional radiology to address a clot
- Breast surgeon with a goal of having a comprehensive breast program
- Pelvic floor
- Minimally invasive joint and spine

What’s coming up?

Ms. Chestnutt described a Hospital-at-Home program, where a patient is not sick enough to be in the hospital but needs to be watched. This is accomplished through Telehealth, monitors, and cameras. Nurses may make home visits and administer medications. Shands is doing it now and others may start. There is no date for Spanish Plaines and there is a lot of work to do, so they are letting Shands go first.

As Ms. Chestnutt stated previously:

- They hope to have the Mobile Stroke Unit by this Summer.
- Stroke specialists will be starting in April, with skills to perform thrombectomy procedures.
- Continue to grow ER and Urgent Care.
- Grow to meet needs of those they serve.

The use of a Navigator is continuing to grow, providing a one shop place to call for specialized care, questions, follow up care, referrals, etc.

Ms. Chestnutt concluded with a picture of an organ donor “Hero Walk” with this caption:

“The best work happens not when you know that it’s not just work, but something you know will improve other people’s lives.”

Hospital *continued on page 4*



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(Note: if no preference circled then **Driveway** is default, once account established, make changes at poa4us.org)

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Hospital *continued from page 2*

Questions:

Is pricing the same at all the Emergency Departments (ED) as at the hospital ED? What other options are available for Urgent Care late at night?

Pricing is the same at all EDs. She is not sure there is an Urgent Care open 24 hours, but they are looking at doing one in Summerfield or Oxford.

If you leave and did not see a doctor, do you still have to pay for the ED doctor?

You would pay the hospital but not the doctor if you did not see one. They are paid separately. Also, insurance does pay based on the terms of your policy, even if you leave.

What is the Nurse-to-Patient Ratio?

During winter, it is extremely tight. They have been offering extra pay on top of overtime to get staff to pick up extra shifts.

They are not using outside sources anymore. The only place there are contracted employees is in the cath lab. They went from 240 to 280 patients just over a weekend which makes it difficult to staff.

Is the 3rd floor Cath Lab going to be used as a patient wing or something different?

In July 2025 there will be a 9-bed HD suite for chronic renal failure Hemodialysis.

On the opposite side of those beds, there will be nine additional patient beds.

What management approach are you using? Red, yellow, and green?

Yes, they are still using that method. Ms. Chestnutt must present performance for financial, quality outcome and team quarterly. The score card is Red, Yellow, and Green. They must stay at Green and must hardwire that performance.

Why is there difficulty in getting physicians?

Across the nation, residencies are not being filled to capacity. Hospitalists are not currently being employed but Ms. Chestnutt hopes they will have them in the future. Internal Medicine is a nationwide issue, along with Gastrointestinal, Surgeons, and many other fields. ●

CORRECTION: In the March issue of *The Bulletin* on page 15, outgoing AAC member Sandy Mott, recommended Mr. William “Bill” Williamson. We apologize for the error.



John DiTrani
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Sumter County Commissioners Consider Redrawing Districts

By Marv Balousek | Reprinted with Permission by Villages-News.com

Redrawing district boundaries could help clarify residency issues for two Sumter County commissioners.

Commissioners Donald Wiley, District 5, and Andrew Bilardello, District 2, both own properties in District 4, represented by Commissioner Jeffrey Bogue, according to a county interactive map.

Wiley, who serves as county chairman, said he rents an apartment in his district and often visits his wife, who lives in a home they purchased last year in the Middleton area. He put his District 5 house up for sale late last year.

Bilardello owns a home near Adamsville, but his landline phone is linked to another property in Wildwood, which is in his district. He used to live in the Village of Fenney.

His address has protected status due to his past career, but he said he lives in his district and uses the Adamsville home as a place for visiting relatives. Bilardello said his home address has been verified by the Supervisor of Elections Office.

State law requires county commissioners to live in the districts they represent. If they move out, they must vacate the office.

With The Villages poised to add 3,000 homes a year, commissioners agreed at a workshop meeting in March that County Administrator Bradley Arnold should develop several options for redrawing the lines based on population changes.

Arnold said he had not started to develop those options due to a trip to Tallahassee. He said official addresses of commissioners are determined by the Supervisor of Elections Office.

Wiley said the main driver for redistricting now is the county's rapid growth, not residency issues.

He said Sumter County is expected to add 45,000 residents by 2030, the next scheduled time for redistricting, which is mandated every decade

after the U.S. Census.

Wiley said he will maintain the apartment for the rest of his term, if necessary, to comply with the law.

Bilardello said redistricting is needed because the population differences among districts are exceeding the 5 percent optimum. Due to home construction in the Villages of Southern Oaks, District 4 is growing rapidly, and he said District 2 needs more people for balance.

Both Wiley and Bilardello supported redistricting now, commissioners Todd Coon and Bogue were non-committal and Commissioner Deb Butterfield spoke against it.

Four of the five county district boundaries match

Boundaries continued on page 7

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Boundaries *continued from page 5*

school board boundaries. Arnold said he will contact the school district to see if officials also are interested in redistricting.

Commissioners are required to live in their districts and Arnold said redistricting prohibits drawing boundaries that remove any commissioner from their district.

District boundaries mean less in Sumter County than elsewhere because of One Sumter, adopted 21 years ago, that changed elections so that all county residents vote for the five commissioners instead of electing them by district.

A 2008 referendum to overturn One Sumter failed.

Commissioners voted in 2021 to put another referendum to undo One Sumter on the ballot but rescinded that action a year later. ●

AARP now offers a Free 60–90-minute Smart Driver Technology workshop for those thinking of either leasing, purchasing or just upgrading to a newer vehicle.



Local presenters would be available to attend organized social / club meetings to share this information. Please contact (352) 430-1833 to arrange a presentation for your Club.

AARP Driver Safety now offers a 6 hour “Smart Driver” course for seniors; it is designed for those 50 and older. All available courses are listed at AARP.org/findacourse or call (877) 846-3299.

In The Villages, there are at least 4 classes each month. The classes are either two days, 9 AM to Noon or **one day*** 9 AM - 4 PM. Fee is \$20 for AARP members, \$25 for non-members. Select your class and call the instructor to register. Instructor will give instructions and time to arrive to complete registration. **Volunteers Needed! Contact Chet at 352-430-1833 or 352-348-4946.** ●

April 2025 Schedule						
Instructor	Phone #	Day	Date	Day	Date	Location
Jack Haughn	352-603-1420	Tuesday	4/8/25	Friday	4/11/25	Laurel Manor
Art Donnelly	631-792-2203	Friday	4/18/25			Buffalo Cross
TBD - CALL FIRST	352-430-1833	Monday	4/21/25	Thursday	4/24/25	Savannah
Art Donnelly	631-792-2203	Tuesday	4/29/25	Wednesday	4/30/25	Rohan

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Residents Have Responsibilities Too

Golf course etiquette – Good Golf School

Now that literally millions have been spent on the executive golf courses to bring them back to exceptional levels, golfers have a responsibility to help keep them that way. Did you know The Villages has a “Good Golf School” that can teach you golf etiquette, how to manage your tee times, how to repair divots, what is an acceptable speed of play, etc.?

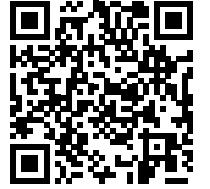
“Good Golf means being considerate of other golfers and those living on the course, and practicing safety in our golf cart community.” (from the Good Golf School website.)

The Good Golf School is offered at these locations on the following dates.

- April 10, April 24, June 5 | Colony Cottage Regional Recreation Center 510 Colony Blvd.
- May 15 | Rohan Recreation Center 850 Kristine Way
- July 17, September 4 | Rohan Recreation Center 850 Kristine Way
- August 14, October 9 | Colony Cottage Regional Recreation Center 510 Colony Blvd.
- November 6 | Rohan Recreation Center 850 Kristine Way
- November 14 | Colony Cottage Regional Recreation Center 510 Colony Blvd.
- December 4 | Colony Cottage Regional Recreation Center 510 Colony Blvd.
- December 5 | Colony Cottage Regional Recreation Center 510 Colony Blvd.

Share the Paths

The Villages has recently produced an excellent video about Sharing the many paths and multi-modal paths. Please scan the QR code and take the time to watch it.



Responsibilities *continued on page 10*

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Nicholas Hieber is an authorized, independent agent for Florida Blue and Florida Blue Medicare.

Responsibilities *continued from page 9*

Learn How to Park Your Car and Your Golf Cart!

Parking is especially difficult at this time of the year. Residents and visitors could make things much easier if they would park properly! **Villages-News.com** has a “bad parking patrol” that finds miscues every day! Like this!



Clean Up after Pets/Pets on Leashes

The Villages is a very pet-friendly community. But, believe it or not, not all people are pet lovers. Some are even afraid of them. Even those of us who love them don’t like it when you do not pick up after your pet. Here are some friendly guidelines to help you be courteous to others.

Pet Friendly Informational Guidelines

- All dogs are required to be on a leash at all times. Dogs are not allowed off leash on any athletic field, common area landscaping, or other public areas.
- All pets are always required to be on leash at all common areas. No pets are allowed off leash at any facilities unless at a designated Dog Park.
- Owner is responsible for picking up after pet; bag stations and trash cans are provided.
- Dogs must wear current license tags and have up-to-date vaccinations.
- Please follow all county ordinances regarding pets.
- Dog owners are responsible for any injuries caused by their dog(s).

Please be Nice and Courteous

We are all neighbors here, coming from a variety of states and communities. We have more than 3,000 resident lifestyle groups for every interest.

The headlines are frightening these days, even here in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown. Road rage incidents, neighborhood feuds, people getting physical over minor disputes. Don’t become a person of rage!

In these divided times, we could all use a little more kindness, a little less shouting, and a little less judgement. ●



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Feb. 12, 2026



Sept. 8, 2025



Dec. 3, 2025



Nov. 6, 2025

Manufactured Homes and Why They are Today's Best & Most Affordable Housing Option

Manufactured housing offers an affordable, high-quality solution for homeownership. Built in controlled environments with strict federal standards, these homes provide numerous benefits over traditional site-built homes. When located in land-leased manufactured housing communities, residents enjoy additional advantages and amenities that enhance their lifestyle.

Affordability and Financial Flexibility

Manufactured homes typically cost up to 50% less per square foot than traditional homes, excluding land costs. This affordability enables homeownership without the financial burden of conventional real estate. In land-leased communities, residents own their homes but lease the land, reducing upfront investment and monthly expenses, as property taxes on the land are not required.

Amenities and Community Engagement

Land-lease communities provide amenities often unavailable to individual homeowners,



such as clubhouses, pools, fitness centers, and organized social activities. These features foster an active and engaged lifestyle, enhancing residents' overall well-being.

Simplified Maintenance and Management

Community management oversees landscaping, infrastructure, and common areas, ensuring a well-maintained

environment without the hassle of individual upkeep. This arrangement provides a stress-free living experience.

Spotlight on Water Oak Country Club Estates

A premier land-lease community, Water Oak Country Club Estates in Lady Lake, Florida, offers an active 55+ lifestyle within 300 acres of scenic beauty. Residents enjoy amenities like two clubhouses, outdoor pools, tennis and pickleball courts, a fitness center, an 18-hole championship golf course, and an on-site restaurant.

Sun Communities: A Leader in Manufactured Housing

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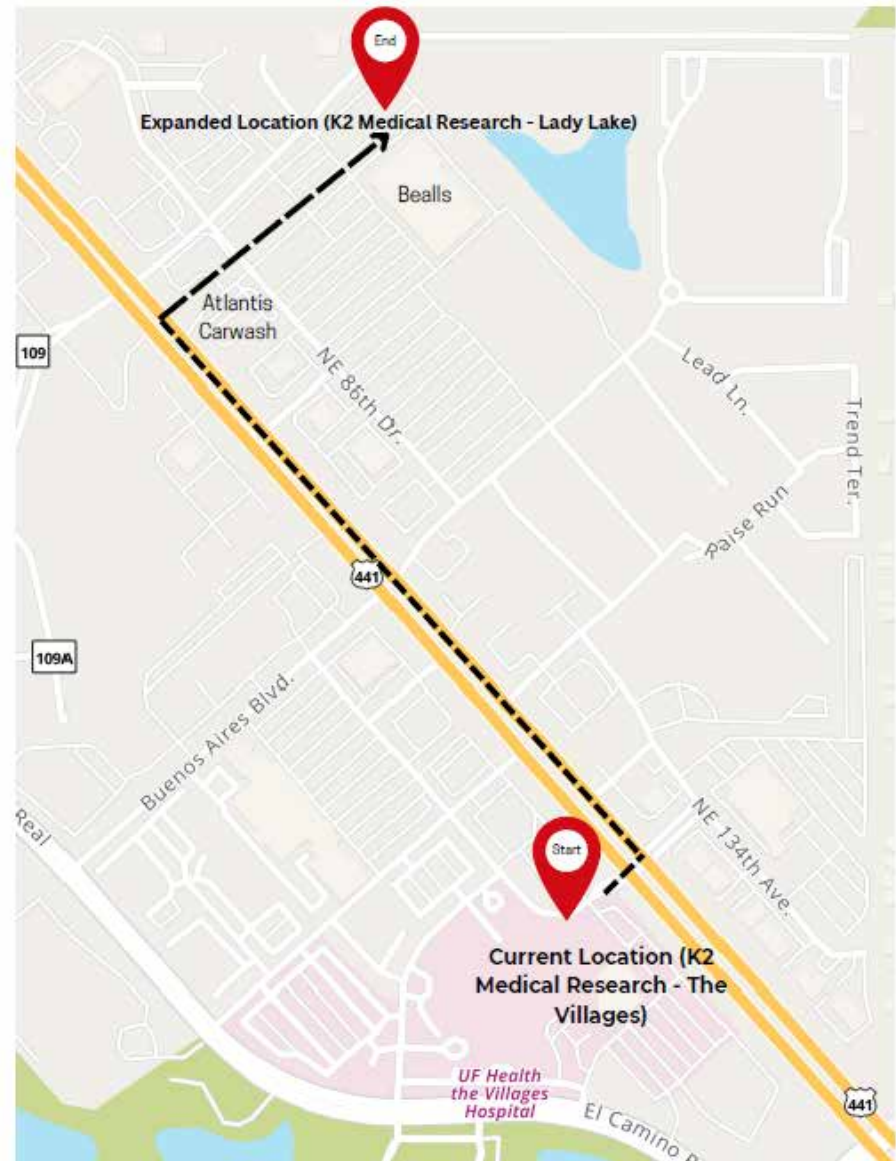
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Current Location: 1400 N. US HWY 441, The Villages, FL 32159

Expanded Location: 8577 NE 138th LN, Lady Lake, FL 32159



In Case You Missed It...Highlights from March Meetings

Spanish Springs Town Square to Get a Makeover

The Village Center Community Development District (VCCDD) has approved a \$1.2 million makeover for the first phase of improvements to the Spanish Springs Town Square. Included in the project are demolition, minor site work, curbing replacement at select intersections and utility modifications. The improvements consist of pedestrian concrete paving, pedestrian decorative paving, new raised seating areas and planters, tile work, precast concrete work, handrails, landscape/irrigation improvements, as well as electrical and lighting improvements. The work will take place near the Van Patten House and The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.



CDD 7 Moving Ahead with Own Lighting Plan

Request for Proposals for solar lighting in CDD 7 went out in February and proposals were opened in March. Five proposals were received. The next step will be the selection committee process with CDD 7 legal counsel, and staff anticipates coming back in May or June with a recommendation. District Counsel recommended not moving too quickly in awarding a contract to allow negotiations with SECO. There needs to be coordination in timing to ensure that there is no gap in lighting. The Board instructed its legal counsel to initiate a meeting with SECO to help identify what SECO's requirements will include.

CDD 7 has led the way in exploring the solar lighting option in response to the dramatic increases from SECO Energy for street light pole rentals. CDD 2 is also looking at other options. Other districts are monitoring what CDD 7 is doing.

The next SECO Board meeting is March 31 and is open to any members of the co-op. They will discuss the second planned increase of the pole rentals based on their cost-of-service study. They will then send a letter to each of the district boards. A meeting will be held on April 14 for District staff and any district board members that wish to meet with SECO.

Meetings *continued on page 14*

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Meetings continued from page 14

CDD 4 Implements Towing Rule

The Community Development District (CDD) 4 Board of Supervisors passed a Rule at its March meeting that will be used for towing and removal of improperly parked vehicles and vessels from District-owned property. Temporary parking for the Phillips and Soulliere Villa Units is not for the Owners’ use but for the use of the Owners’ Invitees and Guests within the Villa for temporary vehicular parking. The Rule also includes all District-owned roadways.

The purpose of this Rule is to incorporate the authorization and requirements for towing and removal of vehicles and vessels from private property in Section 715.07, Florida Statutes, and as authorized by Chapter 190, Florida Statutes, with regard to towing and removal of improperly parked vehicles and vessels from the District-owned property.

The specific Rule is:

Towing and Removal of Improperly Parked Vehicles and Vessels

Except where expressly authorized in the plat book, no person has permission to park a vehicle or vessel on or at any District-owned property or roadway. The authorization and requirements for towing and removal of vehicles and vessels from private property in Section 715.07, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time, are hereby incorporated with regard to towing and removal of improperly parked vehicles and vessels from District-owned property and roadways, identified in Section 4 below. If the District Manager or his or her designee determines that a vehicle or vessel is parked in such a manner that it violates the plat book or intended use of the property, then in lieu of signage described by §715.07(2)(a)(5), notice may be provided by attaching a notice to the vehicle or vessel for a period of not less than 48 hours in the form promulgated by the District Manager.

Circumstances that violate the plat book or intended use of the property include, but are not limited to, a permanently parked vehicle or vessel that is in a Temporary Parking location or a vehicle or vessel that is not temporarily parked in the Temporary Parking location identified in Section 4 below, a parked vehicle on a District-owned roadway, a parked vehicle which appears to be inoperable, a parked vehicle subject to registration requirements that does not have a visibly displayed current registration, a parked vehicle that causes a violation of a federal, state, or local law or regulation, or a parked vehicle which constitutes a nuisance due to noise, odor, or obstruction.

CDD 7 Amends Legal Counsel Agreement

At the recommendation of the CDD 7 Legal Counsel, Michael Eckert, the contract was amended for legal services to allow a new associate Michelle Rigoni to be the primary counsel for the Board. She has a wealth of experience with deed restrictions and special district units of government. He believes this will save the Board a significant amount of money. He will only get involved in issues, such as the negotiating with SECO.

Mr. Eckert also said that they have originally provided ARC review at no additional charge. He does not believe that “free” review is sustainable for them, nor does he think reviewing every application is necessary. They will only review as an issue works its way up through the appeal process.

CDD 5 In Favor of RPMs on Multi-Modal Paths

The Community Development District (CDD) 5 Board of Supervisors voted in support of installing Reflective Pavement Markers on the multi-modal paths in its district. It intends to ask the Project Wide Advisory Committee to fund the installation. CDD 5 is the first board to go on record asking for the RPMs but several other districts are seriously considering it as well.

Multi-Modal Path Group to Meet April 22



The Multi-Modal Path Discussion Group (MMPDG) will meet April 22 at 2 pm at Savannah Center to continue dialogue about improving safety on the multi-modal paths. Chairman Cliff Wiener reports these dramatic accident statistics on golf cart accidents last year were obtained from The Villages Public Safety Department. Not all were on the multi-modal paths.

- 64 accidents with no injury
- 66 with injury
- 3 pedestrians hit by golf carts, with injury

Residents are encouraged to attend the meeting on April 22 . ●

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Executive Golf Courses See Dramatic Improvement from New Agronomy Plan

In 2024, all the resident talk was about the poor conditions of the executive golf courses. Residents were outraged. This year is a different story. After bringing in the United States Golf Association (USGA) to consult last year, significant changes were made to how the courses are being maintained. And the improvement has been dramatic.

Assistant District Manager Bruce Brown reviewed the progress with members of the Amenity Authority Committee (AAC) at its March meeting.

The Challenges:

- **Putting Greens** – Suffered due to challenging weather patterns and aging infrastructure at the course. The USGA recommendation is to continue to renovate courses and transition to TifGrand and TifEagle turf varieties. These turf varieties are being utilized with full course renovations.
- **Traffic Management** – With 3.5 million rounds per year (including championship courses), Executive Golf has developed a comprehensive traffic management plan which addresses foot and golf cart traffic. They are also evaluating other control solutions.
- **Agronomic Program** – the USGA assessment determined that a lack of consistency existed with agronomy programs across multiple contractors. Consistency could be achieved through District-developed agronomy plans with mandated use through contract.

In May 2024, AAC approved the direct purchase of fertilizer, pesticide, herbicide, grass seed and other related items. Plans for each course were developed in consultation with USGA and PGA Tour.

In August, the AAC approved removing contractor-provided agronomy plans and inputs from the contracts.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 24-25 approved budgets included \$100,000 per course for fertilizer, pesticides and other inputs. For all Recreation Amenity Division (RAD) funds, the agronomy program increased the budget by \$1 million annually.

Increased maintenance staffing standards have benefited courses in the Sumter Landing Amenity Division (SLAD). The contracts cost money, but the benefits have been very significant in terms of overall course maintenance, appearance and playability. These increased staffing standards will be implemented at all RAD courses starting in October 2025.

Agronomy continued on page 17

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Agronomy *continued from page 16*

In the process of developing these new maintenance plans and standards, Executive Golf Maintenance Director, Mitch Leininger, left the District to join USGA. A new Director started in March. Donald Jones is described as a seasoned golf course superintendent with extensive experience managing diverse climates and turf condition across Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

He holds an associate's degree in Agronomy from Texas State Technical College and is a Class A Superintendent with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. With a strong background in agronomy and golf course management, Donald is dedicated to maintaining top-quality playing conditions and enhancing the overall golfer experience.

Several executive courses are undergoing compete renovations this year. Currently closed for full renovation are Amberwood (re-opening Spring 2025), Bacall (reopening end of 2025), Pelican and Pimlico. Saddlebrook has been closed since February 14 for rest and rehabilitation.

Golfers can check current course conditions and closures at **DistrictGov.org** by selecting 'Golf' under the 'Recreation, Parks and Golf' tab. ●



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Counselors will be at the following locations to assist area residents for one-on-one counseling on the indicated days.

Eisenhower Recreation Center
9 am - 11:30 am | 1st & 3rd Wednesdays

Lady Lake Library
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm | 2nd & 4th Wednesdays

Chula Vista Recreation Center
3 pm - 5:30 pm | 1st & 3rd Fridays

Leesburg Public Library
9:30 am - 11:30 am | 1st & 3rd Tuesdays

Lake Miona Recreation Center
9 am - 11:30 am | 2nd & 4th Tuesdays

“Understanding Medicare,” a group presentation geared toward those turning 65, will be made at 1:00 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Aviary Recreation Center.

For more information, go to FloridaShine.org or call (800) 963-5337. ●

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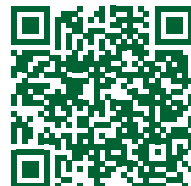
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Lawn maintenance companies provide services that eliminate time-consuming activities like mowing, edging, raking and general yard cleanup. Some companies require long-term contracts and others don’t so you should take the time to investigate and find a reliable company with a good reputation.

These are some common-sense things you should do before contracting for lawn care:

Consult your neighbors: Check with folks in your neighborhood and/or use the Nextdoor app to inquire about reliable lawn care services. Find out which companies have done a good job and get an idea how much they charge.

Check with Seniors vs. Crime: Call any Seniors vs. Crime office during business hours and ask how many complaints a company has. It’s helpful if you can find out how long the company has been in business since many businesses will get complaints over time – you can’t please everyone – but if a company has been in business for 6 months and has a dozen complaints, we call that a CLUE.

Don’t be fooled by “Licensed and Insured”: It’s important to remember that lawn maintenance, sometimes called “mow, blow, and go,” DOES NOT require a professional competency license – in fact there is no such thing. And, when you see that a company is “licensed and insured,” you tend to feel safer when you hire them. Keep in mind that “licensed and insured” often refers to their pickup truck – it has a license (plate) on the back, and it’s insured.

However, if your company offers special services such as applying pest control, weed killer or fertilizer THEY MUST BE LICENSED IN FLORIDA by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. If you decide to contract for these services, you should ask to see their license and if those services carry a guarantee.

Read any written contract carefully: Once you sign a contract, you are party to that contract so make sure you are satisfied that it covers everything you want provided including the cost of those services, the term of the contract and the costs, if any, of contract renewal.

Paying in advance: Be cautious of companies that require you to pay in advance as some companies develop a history of taking your money in advance and then not providing the services you thought you paid for.

Snowbirds – beware: Some unscrupulous lawn service vendors will require you to pay for the entire summer season and then not show up as agreed. If you are a snowbird, have one or more of your neighbors keep an eye on your property while you are away for the summer and let you know if your lawn guy is not showing up.

If you have any questions or need to file a complaint on a company that is not performing according to the provisions of your contract, you can file a complaint with Seniors vs. Crime on our website at seniorsvscrime.com. Additionally, the website has our office locations and hours of operation. ●





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