

# NEWSLETTER

Nassau County Board of County Commissioners



## IN THIS ISSUE:

- New BOCC Chairman
- New Property Appraiser and Clerk of Courts
- Holiday Tree Lighting
- Update on Thomas Creek Implementation Plan
- Input Needed: Library Strategic Plan
- Seniors Night Out: Valentine Dance



TABLE OF CONTENTS

BOCC Organizational Meeting .....3

3rd Annual Tree Lighting .....4-5

Outgoing Elected Officials .....6

New Elected Officials Take Office ..... 7

Employee Recognized for Years of Service ..... 8

Batallion Chief Pete Gunnell Retires ..... 8

Directory ..... 8-13

Office of Management & Budget ..... 14

Human Resources ..... 15

Animal Services .....16-17

County Attorney .....18-19

Procurement .....20-21

Library .....22

Fire Rescue .....23

Code Enforcement .....24-25

Stormwater Drainage .....26-27

Public Works/Solid Waste .....28

Public Works/Facilities Maintenance .....29

Public Works/Road Department .....30

Public Works/Parks & Recreation .....31

Planning Department .....32

Building Department .....33

Capital Projects Management .....34

Development Services .....35

County Extension .....36-37

Department of Strategic Advancement .....38-39

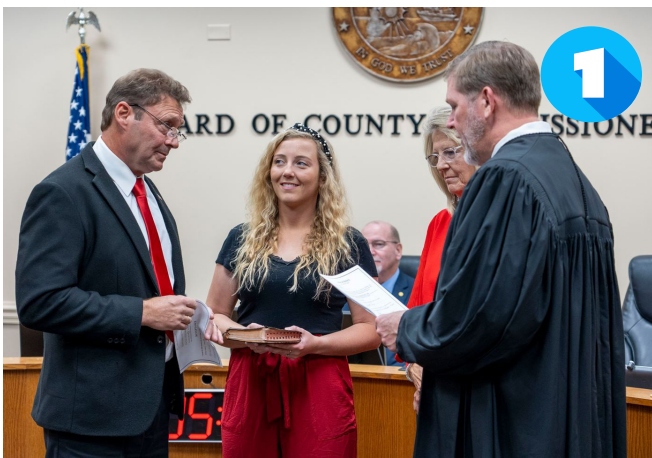
Communications .....40

## ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

On Monday, December 8, 2024, the BOCC held their annual reorganization meeting ahead of the new calendar year. The meeting began with a Swearing-In Ceremony (oath) of Commissioners John Martin, Jeff Gray, and Klynt Farmer, all of which were elected for their second terms during the August 2024 Primary Election.

The BOCC also elected the new Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2025. Beginning in January 2025, John Martin will step down as Chairman of the Board and Vice-Chairman Hupp Huppmann will assume the role. Commissioner Gray will take the role of Vice-Chairman in January.

To watch the reorganizational meeting, please visit [www.nassauclerk.com/watch-meetings](http://www.nassauclerk.com/watch-meetings).



1. Commissioner Jeff Gray takes oath with wife Diana and daughter Brooke by his side. Reading of oath performed by Judge Fahlgren
2. Commissioner John Martin takes oath with wife Donna by his side. Reading of oath performed by Commissioner Huppmann
3. Commissioner Klynt Farmer takes oath with Dad Kenny Farmer by his side. Oath read by Judge Fahlgren.



## 3RD ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING

Approximately 1,500 residents joined us on Friday, December 6, 2024 for the 3rd Annual Tree Lighting. This family-friendly event included holiday vendors, holiday performances by the Nassau Community Band and Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), train rides, Santa's village photo ops, food trucks, a kid's zone, roller skating, photos with Santa, and the lighting of the tree. This year's event also included a 10-minute fireworks display as we wrapped up our year of Bicentennial Celebrations.

A big thank you to all of the vendors and performers for participating. We couldn't have done it without you! And congratulations to Nassau County Parks & Recreation for another successful event. We appreciate all of your hard work and efforts to bring events to the community.

Last but not least, thank you to the hundreds of residents who stopped by our Vision Tent and participated in games and activities while providing input for Nassau County's future. Residents can still provide feedback by participating in the Growth Scenarios Survey. This survey was built upon the community building blocks identified from previous community engagement and surveys. One final preferred growth scenario will be created and included in the 2050 Vision Plan. This preferred scenario will inform updates to the Future Land Use Map and the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.





## TREE DECORATING CONTEST

Prior to the event, community organizations and County staff were invited to participate in a Tree Decorating Contest. Each participating group received a 5-foot artificial tree to decorate. Each was on display at the Vision Tent and visitors were invited to vote on their favorite tree with a chance to take it home. Over 750 votes were cast and there were only 7 votes separating 1st and 2nd place.



Congratulations to the Office of Management & Budget on winning first place in the contest for their candy-themed tree.

Coming in 2nd place was the Nassau County Attorney's Office with their Buffalo Plaid tree.



## Photos from Event



1. Decorated tree from the Office of Management & Budget
2. Decorated tree with County Attorney Office staff
3. Trees from our Tree Decorating Contest
4. Santa and Mrs. Claus
5. Guests enjoy the fireworks show
6. A young resident mailing his wish list to Santa
7. Kids Zone
8. Inside the Vision 2050 tent.

## BOARD RECOGNIZES OUTGOING ELECTED OFFICIALS

At the Wednesday, December 18, 2024 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) recognized Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller John Crawford and Property Appraiser Mike Hickox on their retirements, commending both on their outstanding service and dedication to Nassau County and its residents.

Mike Hickox was elected by the citizens of Nassau County in 2013 and brought with him 35 years of experience as a State Certified Appraiser and Real Estate Broker to the position of Property Appraiser. As a lifelong resident of Nassau County, Mike dedicated his public career to providing fair and equitable assessments to the citizens of Nassau County. In addition to determining the value of all property within the County, Mike is also responsible for maintaining property ownership records, parcel ownership maps, and for administering property tax exemptions. Throughout his career, Mike held a variety of roles such as Past President of the Florida Association of Property Appraiser's, Past Director of the Nassau County Education Foundation, Past Director for the Nassau County Economic Development Board, and Real Estate and Appraisal Instructor for the local Association of Realtors.

John Crawford served Nassau County in different capacities throughout his career, first as a County Commissioner from 1990-1998, and then again when he was elected as Nassau County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller in 2005. While serving in this role, John was responsible for a wide range of record keeping, information management, and financial management for the judicial system and County government including aiding in the judicial process, maintaining the County's official records, and serving as the Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners. As the Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller, he also acted as the accountant and custodian of County funds.

Terms for Property Appraiser Mike Hickox and Clerk John Crawford end in January 2025. Both have delivered their duties in a conscientious and responsible manner, serving with dedication and distinction. The BOCC commends them both and wishes them the best in their well-deserved retirements.



1. Commissioner John Martin; Clerk of Courts John Crawford
2. Commissioner John Martin; Property Appraiser Mike Hickox.



## NEW CLERK AND PROPERTY APPRAISER



1

Nassau County has new Property Appraiser Kevin Lilly and a new Clerk Mitch Keiter. Prior to being elected, Mitch served in the Clerk's Office for 19 years in the positions of Chief Deputy of Information Technology and most recently as Chief Deputy of Compliance and Accountability. Kevin served in the Property Appraiser's Office as the Property Appraiser's Office for 12 years.



2

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNIZED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE



3

At the Wednesday, December 18, 2024 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners recognized Fire Engineer Jason Murphy on 25 years of service. Assistant Fire Chief Greg Roland stated, "It's not often we get a chance to say thank you to a 25 year employee. Jason is a reliable employee and one of the best Engineers we've got. He's been in charge of a rescue unit so he's been multitasking the last 25 years and has done it well. It's an honor to be here in place of Chief Rigdon to recognize Jason Murphy. We hope he still has a few years left because he has institutional knowledge we don't want to lose."

## BATTALION CHIEF PETE GUNNELL RETIRES



4

At the December 18 meeting, the BOCC also recognized Pete Gunnell on his retirement after 31 years of service. Assistant Fire Chief Greg Roland stated, "It's my honor to shake the hand of a Battalion Chief that's one of the best field marshalls we have. If you're on the scene of an accident or a house fire.... I can't think of a better field commander than Pete Gunnell. It's not often that we come across people like Pete. Someone that you know when they show up on scene, you're in good hands. I appreciate his service to Nassau County Fire Rescue. And on behalf of Chief Brady Rigdon, I wish Pete a happy retirement."

1. Kevin Lilly, Nassau County Property Appraiser
2. Mitch Keiter, Nassau County Clerk of Circuit Courts and Comptroller
3. Asst. Fire Chief Greg Roland, Fire Engineer Jason Murphy; and County Manager Taco Pope
4. Commissioner John Martin; Battalion Chief Pete Gunnell; and Asst. Fire Chief Greg Roland.

## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

The following pages contain information about each department reporting to the Board of County Commissioners including their purpose and their contact information.

### Animal Care & Control

Nassau County Animal Services promotes and protects public safety and animal care through sheltering, adoption programs, education and animal law enforcement. They also promote responsible pet ownership, compassion towards animals and safe human-animal interactions.

Tim Maguire, Director  
86078 License Road  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6150  
Email: [tmaguire@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:tmaguire@nassaucountyfl.com)

### Building Department

The Building Department provides professional certified services for the enforcement of the Florida Building Code; Federal, State and local laws; and Ordinances. The department processes permits, performs plans review and inspections on residential and commercial construction projects throughout the unincorporated areas of Nassau County, to protect the life, health and safety of our citizens and property.

Keith Ellis, Building Official  
96161 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6250  
Email: [kellis@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:kellis@nassaucountyfl.com)

### Capital Projects

The Capital Improvement Project Management Department serves the residents of Nassau County by providing efficient planning, design, design management, grant management, construction management, construction engineering inspection management, as well as budget and schedule administration for all transportation, facilities and parks & recreation Capital Improvements Projects.

Raymond Albury, Director  
96161 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6225  
Email: [ralbury@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:ralbury@nassaucountyfl.com)

### Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement's mission is to protect, promote and improve the health, safety and welfare of the community through an effective code enforcement program. Primary functions include educating the public on code compliance and working with residents to ensure a safe environment.

Raymond Lettsome, Manager  
96161 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6200  
Email: [rlettsome@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:rlettsome@nassaucountyfl.com)



## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

### County Attorney

The mission of the County Attorney's Office is to provide high quality, timely, professional, and cost-effective legal representation to the Board of County Commissioners, and to other officials of Nassau County as directed by the Board.

Denise May, Attorney  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 6  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6100  
Email: dmay@nassaucountyfl.com

### County Extension

The County Extension offers classes and information related to 4-H youth development, agriculture and natural resources, lawns and landscapes, and family and consumer services.

Dr. Taylor Clem, Director  
85831 Miner Road  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6350  
Email: tclem@nassaucountyfl.com

### County Manager

The County Manager provides fiscal, strategic and operational leadership to the departments under the Board of County Commissioners, as well as sound analysis and professional implementation of the Board's policies.

Taco Pope, County Manager  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 1  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6010  
Email: tpope@nassaucountyfl.com

### Development Services

The Development Services Department enhances health, safety and welfare within the County by providing economical, responsive, and effective professional engineering services.

Caleb Hurst, Director  
96161 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6225  
Email: churst@nassaucountyfl.com

### Facilities Maintenance

The Facilities Maintenance Division maintains 75 County buildings including repair and maintenance needs, grounds maintenance and janitorial services, to provide a safe and sanitary environment.

Doug Podiak, Director  
45195 Musselwhite Road  
Callahan, FL 32011  
Phone: (904) 530-6120  
Email: dpodiak@nassaucountyfl.com

## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

### Fire Rescue

Nassau County Fire Rescue responds to calls for service in Nassau County and surrounding municipalities through mutual aid agreements. This includes calls for fire service and for emergency medical emergencies.

Brady Rigdon, Fire Chief  
96160 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6600  
Email: brigdon@nassaucountyfl.com

### Human Resources

Human Resources is responsible for recruitment of qualified job applicants, securing competitive rates for employee health benefits, implementing programs that promote healthy lifestyles for the employees, and ensuring that the Board's employee policies and procedures are followed.

Ashley Metz, Director  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 5  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6075  
Email: ametz@nassaucountyfl.com

### Library

The Nassau County Public Library System provides residents and visitors with current materials for recreational reading, viewing and listening; general information to meet their needs related to work, school, personal growth and legal information; and assistance and training in improving the user's skills for finding, evaluating and using information effectively.

Julie Cannavino, Director  
25 N. 4th Street  
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034  
Phone: (904) 530-6500  
Email: jcannavino@nassaucountyfl.com

### Office of Management & Budget

The Office of Management & Budget is comprised of three divisions. The Budget Division provides administrative and financial support to the Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, and Department Heads to ensure the effective and fiscally sound delivery of services to residents. The Grants/SHIP (State Housing Initiative Partnership) Division oversees dozens of grants and administers the SHIP Program for down payment assistance and rehabilitation assistance of homes for individuals in need. Lastly, the Rescue Billing Division handles billing for ambulance/rescue services by filing insurance claims and collecting payments.

Chris Lacambra, Director  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 1  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6010  
Email: clacambra@nassaucountyfl.com



## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

### Parks & Recreation

The Parks & Recreation Division strives to provide high-quality facilities and recreational opportunities for the residents of Nassau County. They oversee County ballparks, beach accesses and boat ramps and also serve as a liaison between the County and youth sports organizations.

Jay Robertson, Director  
45195 Musselwhite Road  
Callahan, FL 32011  
Phone: (904) 530-6120  
Email: jrobertson@nassaucountyfl.com

### Planning Department

The Planning Department provides technical planning support to the Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, and other County departments. They perform the daily operations associated with the implementation of the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan and are the point of entry for site plan review and other applications for development orders.

Elizabeth Backe, Director  
96161 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6320  
Email: ebacke@nassaucountyfl.com

### Procurement

The Procurement Department functions as the central hub for purchasing for the Board of County Commissioners and ensures that the County receives the best price for goods and services. They work with the departments to create Requests for Proposals, Requests for Qualifications, and Invitations to Bid to solicit goods and services, as needed, as well as managing procurements below the formal procurement threshold.

Lanaee Gilmore, Director  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 2  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6040  
Email: lgilmore@nassaucountyfl.com

### Public Information

The Public Information Office strives to provide accurate and timely information to the residents, specifically as it relates to activities for departments under the Board of County Commissioners. This includes distribution of monthly newsletters, creation of news stories, management of the Board's news blog and social media pages, and attending special meetings and events.

Sabrina Robertson, Communications Officer  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 1  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6010  
Email: srobertson@nassaucountyfl.com

## DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

### Road Department

The Road Department performs maintenance of County roads including paving, grading and the application of surface treatments. They also maintain drainage systems, mow rights-of-ways and ensure that roads are free of objects and debris for the safety of motorists.

Darren Marsh, Director  
37356 Pea Farm Road  
Hilliard, FL 32046  
Phone: (904) 530-6175  
Email: dmarsh@nassaucountyfl.com

### Solid Waste

The Solid Waste Division provides collection and disposal of solid waste and recyclables, in addition to reporting and post closure procedures for five closed landfills.

Lynn Diden, Division Manager  
45195 Musselwhite Road  
Callahan, FL 32011  
Phone: (904) 530-6700  
Email: ediden@nassaucountyfl.com

### Strategic Advancement & Economic Resources

The Department of Strategic Advancement & Economic Resources is tasked with managing the County's Strategic Plan, correlating strategic planning efforts, performance monitoring and reporting and ensuring the execution of strategic initiatives and special projects. The department also works to increase collaboration and sharing of resources for Library Services, Animal Care & Control, Public Information, and the UF/IFAS Extension Office.

Brandy Carvalho, Director  
96135 Nassau Place, Suite 1  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6010  
Email: bcarvalho@nassaucountyfl.com

### Stormwater Drainage Division

The Stormwater Drainage Division provides oversight to the water quality and water quantity in Nassau County. Staff is working diligently to create a comprehensive map of the County's entire stormwater system. This will help better serve citizens with stormwater flood protection and water quality projects. Staff work closely with Development Services and the Building Department to review development for applicable regulatory compliance.

Katie Peay, Director  
96161 Nassau Place  
Yulee, FL 32097  
Phone: (904) 530-6390  
Email: kpeay@nassaucountyfl.com



## MEET YOUR COMMISSIONERS



District One  
John Martin  
County Cell: (904) 570-2594  
Email: [jmartin@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:jmartin@nassaucountyfl.com)



District Two  
A.M. "Hupp" Huppmann  
County Cell: (904) 319-0686  
Email: [ahuppmann@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:ahuppmann@nassaucountyfl.com)



District Three  
Jeff Gray  
County Cell: (904) 570-1946  
Email: [jgray@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:jgray@nassaucountyfl.com)



District Four  
Alyson McCullough  
County Cell: (904) 319-0689  
Email: [amccullough@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:amccullough@nassaucountyfl.com)



District Five  
Klynt Farmer  
County Cell: (904) 570-1357  
Email: [kfarmer@nassaucountyfl.com](mailto:kfarmer@nassaucountyfl.com)

# OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

## OMB Division

- FY 24/25 Budget Book completed and submitted to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for review
- Contracted with the firm, MGT of America Consulting, to complete a Comprehensive User Fee Study/Analysis of the County's fees. The fee study will include a review and update of fees for all county operations including, but not limited to, the Building Department, Planning, Development Services, Stormwater, Public Works, Fire & Rescue, Animal Services and Code Enforcement.
  - Continued data collection/compilation to MGT throughout December to assist with departmental user fee study models. Initial meetings held by MGT with departments throughout July, August, and beginning of September. MGT held follow up meetings throughout November to assist departments with volumes and time costs estimates to input in the fee study models. OMB/County Manager held meetings with the departments to assist them with their fee study models and address any concerns or questions. Assisted MGT with final information gathering from several user departments and MGT is currently in the final stages of preparing the cost analysis results for management review.
- Continued assistance to the departments with FY23/24 Carry Forward PO encumbrance concerns and resolution as well as updating our internal tracking spreadsheets.

## Grants Division

- Nassau County's application for FEMA Public Assistance (PA) for the Hurricane Milton incident was approved
- Nassau County submitted the abatement plan to its Disaster Readiness Assessment (DRA) for the Florida Recovery Obligation Calculation (F-ROC). This effort will reduce the County's risk and increase its preparedness for disasters and hurricanes in 2025.

## SHIP Division

- The BOCC approved the Affordable Housing Committee's (AHAC) recommendation of the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Incentive Strategies. The report was submitted to the Florida Housing Coalition as required by December 31, 2024.

## Award Winning Budget Book



During the last Fiscal Year, the BOCC earned a Distinguished Budget Award from the Government Finance Officers Association. This is awarded to state and local governments who prepare budget documents of the very highest quality that reflect both the guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA's best practices on budgeting. OMB is putting together the FY 24/25 Budget Book and are hopeful that it will also be recognized by the GFOA and contribute to another Distinguished Budget Presentation Award.

# HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Services		Employee Benefits	
New Hires:	2	Benefit Enrollments:	8
Terminations/Retirements:	6	Benefit Terminations:	9
Positions Posted:	11	Benefit Changes:	2

## FINANCIAL WELLNESS

In December, employees were encouraged to take control of their financial situation by creating a budget to improve financial health.

Maintaining a balanced budget with a positive cash flow empowers you to be in control of your money. Creating a budget and tracking monthly income and expenses allows you to plan for financial goals so you can achieve what is most important to you. Work with a Money Coach to get tips on creating financial stability through a budget that aligns with your goals.

Partner with a Money Coach to learn how to:

- Develop a budget that works for you
- Prioritize savings for goals
- Learn ways to track your expenses and income
- Identify ways to overcome a shortage
- Plan for irregular and emergency expenses
- Take steps to achieve a positive monthly cash flow.



\*Wellness info provided by CorpCare, EAP\*

## Job Opportunities

The County provides a Comprehensive Benefits Program which includes, among other things, paid time off, paid holidays, health, dental, and vision insurance, and tuition reimbursement. In addition, the County also participates in the Florida Retirement System (FRS), which requires a 3% employee contribution and an employee funded voluntary 457(b) deferred compensation plan. For additional information, visit [www.https://nas-safl.com/jobopportunities](https://nas-safl.com/jobopportunities).





# ANIMAL SERVICES

	Dogs	Cats
Shelter Intakes	58	68
Shelter Outtakes*	86	102

\*Outakes include adoptions, fosters, return to owners and transfers to other rescues



## 149 pets were adopted in December!

This includes Sandy Cheeks (left) whose new family drove all the way from Texas to adopt her! This special lady was a favorite of shelter employees and volunteers who cited her love to snuggle and her adorable tippy tappy dancing.

Thank you for this amazing couple for giving Sandy Cheeks a happy new home for the holidays.

## Doggy Spotlight



Meet Caramel, a mixed breed who is approximately 6 years old and is looking for her forever home.

Caramel was lucky to go on a doggy date recently and this is what her date had to say.

“Caramel loved walking and running along the trails. Once she was out of her initial excitement, she walked very good on the leash, greeting every animal and person she saw along the way. Caramel was also great in the car and loved looking out the window!”

If you’re interested in meeting Caramel, please contact the shelter to schedule a time or stop by during visiting hours.

## Thank You Nassau County



Thank you to the wonderful shelter volunteers who spent the day preparing a special holiday dinner for all the pets at NCAS.

Thank you as well to all the individuals/families who fostered pets during our "Home for the Holidays Event" and providing them with an opportunity to spend the holidays in a warm, loving home.



## Special Needs Vet Fund

Nassau County Animal Services' small budget doesn't allow for extraordinary vet care. However with the generous support from our community, many pets have been given the special treatment they need to get better.

Pictured here is Cooper, a stray who was picked up and found to have at least 4 pellets under his skin where he had been shot. We're not sure how anyone could do this to an innocent animal, but we are extremely grateful for those who support our Special Needs Vet Fund so we can provide him with the care he needs to get better.

If you're interested in making a donation for Cooper or any other special needs animal, you can do so at: [nassaufl.co/NCASVetFund](https://nassaufl.co/NCASVetFund). Donations to NCAS are tax deductible and as such, a receipt will be provided to you.



## Upcoming Adoption Events

- Saturday, February 1, 2025 from 10am-2pm, 25 W. Castillo Drive, St. Augustine, FL
- Saturday, February 8 and Sunday, February 9, 2025 from 10am-4pm, Petsmart River City, Jacksonville, FL
- Saturday, February 22, 2025 from 10am-4pm, Macama, Fernandina Beach, FL
- Sunday, February 23, 2025 from 10am-4pm, Pet Supplies Plus, Yulee, FL

1. Sandy Cheeks meets her new family
2. Caramel is looking for her forever family
3. Volunteers make special holiday lunch for pets at NCAS
4. Adoptable dog dressed as a reindeer for our "Home for the Holidays" ad
5. Seeking donations to help Cooper get the surgery he needs.

# COUNTY ATTORNEY

Requests for Legal Services Received	Requests for Legal Services Completed	Public Notices Issued	Public Records Requests Fulfilled
51	53	17	332

## BICENTENNIAL EDITORIAL: A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMERICAN BEACH

During the 1900s, African Americans sought out communities to escape the stress of segregation. In 1935, Abraham Lincoln Lewis (A.L. Lewis), President of the Afro-American Life Insurance Company, purchased 33 acres of oceanfront property on Amelia Island to create a resort where his employees could enjoy “recreation and relaxation without humiliation.” The resort later became known as American Beach.

As time passed, American Beach grew in notoriety and became a heavily sought after destination for celebrities, local residents and visitors.

In 1964, Hurricane Dora destroyed a vast majority of the homes and businesses in American Beach leaving the community devastated. That same year, the passage of the Civil Rights Act granted African Americans access to other public beaches. While some American Beach residents stayed and rebuilt their homes, many residents decided to leave their properties and move elsewhere. As a result, much of the land within American Beach was ultimately lost to developers or decay.

In 1975, MaVynee Oschun Betsch, a great granddaughter of A.L. Lewis and an international opera singer, relocated from Europe to American Beach. Her full-time mission was to protect American Beach and her great grandfather’s legacy from further development and destruction. She worked tirelessly to preserve the environment, including the dunes and beaches, and actively supported the cultivation of native trees and flowers.

In the late 1970’s, proposed development of the southern portion of Amelia Island threatened one particular dune system known as “NaNa.” The NaNa dune system is a 60-foot dune system and is named after the Twi word which means “grandmother” in the West African language. Due to MaVynee’s efforts, the NaNa dune system is now protected as part of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve.

In the Spring of 2002, MaVynee began working toward establishing a museum to outline the history of American Beach and to highlight the culture of her great grandfather’s generation. She gathered documents, books and artifacts which are currently displayed in the A. L. Lewis at American Beach Museum located at 1600 Julia Street American Beach, FL 32034.

More information can be found at <https://allewismuseum.org>.





Photo Credits: Amelia Island Museum of History

## Official Webpage

For more information about the Nassau County Attorney's Office, visit:  
<https://nassaufl.co/CountyAttorney> or by scanning this QR Code.



## Public Records Requests

Filing a records request has never been easier. Our electronic records system, Just FOIA, allows you to create an account and receive updates on the status of your request throughout the process. You can file a request on our website at <https://nassaufl.co/PublicRecords> or by scanning this QR Code.



1. Postcard showing a bustling American Beach community
2. MaVynne Betsch in May of 1982
3. Beach crowd in the 1940s
4. Sunbathers on American Beach.

# PROCUREMENT

## Procurement Methods: ITQ, ITB, RFP, and RFQ

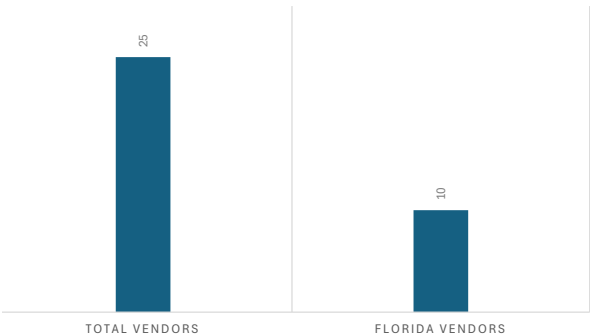
Understanding procurement methods is essential for effective purchasing. Four key processes—Invitation to Quote (ITQ), Invitation to Bid (ITB), Request for Proposal (RFP), and Request for Qualifications (RFQ)—serve distinct purposes.

- 1. An Invitation to Quote (ITQ) is an informal process County Departments use for obtaining competitive pricing, typically for small, low-value recurring purchases.
- 2. An Invitation to Bid (ITB) is a formal process used when purchasing goods or services over \$100,000 with clearly defined specifications. Conducted by the Procurement Department, bids are submitted electronically via a sealed platform (PlanetBids).
- 3. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is a formal method used for procuring services exceeding \$100,000. It invites vendors to propose detailed solutions for complex needs, evaluating factors like approach, qualifications, and cost to determine the best value for the County.
- 4. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) focuses solely on prequalifying vendors based on expertise, experience, and capacity. Pricing is considered only after determining the most qualified vendors. This process is typically used to meet the requirements of Florida Statute 287.055, the Competitive Consultant Negotiation Act (CCNA).

Selecting the right procurement method is critical because it ensures transparency, efficiency, and value while aligning with the specific goals and requirements of a project.

### Vendor Registrations

There were 25 new vendors that registered to bid on new projects with Nassau County. Of those, 10 were Florida-based vendors.



### Compliance Review

Procurement Compliance Review (PCR) Process.

Total # of contracts reviewed by PCR	27
Total value of contracts reviewed by PCR	\$8,026,700.25

To register as a vendor for Nassau County, visit: <https://nassaufl.co/vendorregistration>.

## Contracts, Contract Amendments and Change Orders approved by the County Manager in December

Petticoat-Schmitt	Contract amendment	N/A
RL Lighting Prediction Services	Contract extension	\$4,690
Fernandina Dojo	AICVB Sponsorship for the Seaside Karate Classic	\$7,500
Amelia Island Dance Festival	AICVB Sponsorship for Amelia Island Dance Festival	\$15,000
Kudzue 3 Trucking	Pavement overlay services for Spring Lake Estates Subdivision	\$67,252
Sandhill Recycling	Increase Not-to-Exceed amount of contract	\$25,000
Zambelli Fireworks	Fireworks for Tree Lighting Event	\$10,000
Hubbard Construction Co.	Price correction to Work Authorization	\$56,270
Surveying & Mapping, Inc.	Topographic survey of Manucy Road from Manucy Pointe Dr. to Castro Ct.	\$16,165
Consolidated Water Group	Monthly testing of water injection pumps	\$18,780
City of Fernandina Beach	Mutual Aid Agreement for Fire Rescue Services	N/A
Advanced Roofing, Inc.	Roof repairs at Hilliard Road Dept.	\$34,135
Syn-Tech Systems	Fuel Master System	\$5,560
Governmentaljobs.com	Performance Management Software	\$27,070
Colliers International	Appraisal of Yulee Methodist Church Parcel on Christian Way Extension	\$1,050
Surveying & Mapping, Inc.	Topographic survey of 50 Bobby Moore Cir.	\$22,250
Surveying & Mapping, Inc.	Survey of Yulee Methodist Church Parcel	\$18,025
Arc Surveying & Mapping	Topographic survey of Scott Road Beach Access	\$2,866
IBM	Autorenewal of Software Subscription	\$14,400
Civic Plus	Website redesign	\$20,092
Silver Ships, Inc.	Purchase of fast response boat for Nassau County Fire Rescue	\$30,236



# LIBRARY

Items Circulated*	22,162
Library Cards Issued	263
Gate Count	11,739
Computer Use (hours)	570
Computer Use (people)	901
Reference Questions	70,402

\*Includes books, audio books, cds/dvds, and other items that can be checked out at the 5 library branches

## Community Input Needed: Library Strategic Plan



Nassau County Public Library (NCPL) is committed to providing exceptional service to its patrons and strives to continuously improve its offerings. To achieve this goal, the library is launching a new Strategic Planning process and is seeking valuable input from community members and businesses.

NCPL is always looking for ways to better serve our community. Usage statistics and patron feedback are crucial, but we also want to hear directly from residents and businesses about their needs and aspirations for the library.

NCPL invites everyone to participate in the "Take 15, Spark Change" survey, an online questionnaire designed to gather in-depth insights and ideas. The survey covers a range of topics related to library services, facilities, resources, and programs. By obtaining input from not only library users but businesses and non-library users, it

positions NCPL to ensure representation from all stakeholders in our community.

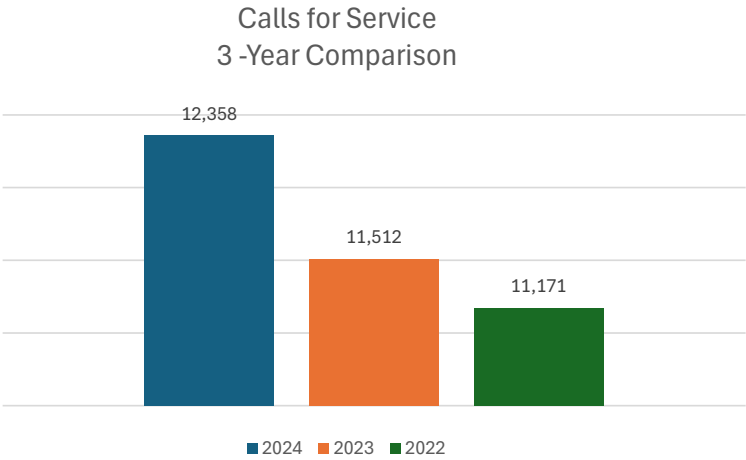
The feedback we receive through this survey will be instrumental in shaping our new five-year Strategic Plan. This plan will guide the library's direction and priorities for the next half-decade, ensuring we continue to meet the evolving needs of our community.

The "Take 15, Spark Change" survey is available online at [www.nassaureads.com](http://www.nassaureads.com). NCPL urges all community members and businesses to take advantage of this opportunity to shape the future of their library. By participating in the "Take 15, Spark Change" survey, residents can make their voices heard and help NCPL continue to provide exceptional service for years to come. All completed surveys will be entered into a prize drawing. The survey closes on April 15, 2025.

# FIRE RESCUE

Call Type	# of Calls
Medical Calls	846
Fire Calls	163
*Other Calls	1

\*Examples of “other calls” include lift assistance, downed wires, stranded motorists, etc.



1. Lt. Brett Louis promoted to Captain on Dec. 14, 2024
2. Captain Ben Salter was promoted to Battalion Chief on Dec. 14, 2024
3. Engineer George Faucher showing the fire engine to Leadership Nassau for their Government & Policy Day
4. Progress picture of Station 90 in Hilliard.

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

Complaints received	20
Initial inspections	20
Cases reaching compliance	8
Cases presented to Code Special Magistrate	7
Lien search requests	186
Stop work orders issued	2

### Inspection/Investigation and Notification

Information collected during investigations into code violations is public record subject to Florida Sunshine laws.

- Complaints are inspected in a timely manner, with a priority placed on those complaints most seriously related to health, safety, and welfare
- Detailed information regarding the complaint is validated and documented with photos, and an inspection is conducted to determine the next steps
- Inspections are always made from a public right-of-way unless permission is granted by the property owner to enter the property
- Inspections are conducted discreetly
- The Code Enforcement Officer will determine if the complaint should be assisted by another department or agency, and make the referral; if this is the case.

The Code Enforcement Officer has **three methods of notifying someone of a code violation**:

1. Personal Contact
2. Courtesy Letter
3. Door Hanger.

**Personal contact** - Upon validating a complaint, the Officer will contact the property owner to inform them of the violation and actions needed for code compliance. This could be in person, by phone, or by email, whichever is available.

**Courtesy Letter** - If the Officer cannot reach the owner or resident, a courtesy letter will be left explaining the violation, actions needed for compliance, a time frame to comply, and date for reinspection by the officer.

**Door Hanger** - Upon validating a complaint and attempting personal contact, or non-compliance of the violation, the Officer will send the property owner an Affidavit of Non-Compliance. The next step is Notice of Violation. Upon validating the violation and Notice of Non-Compliance, the officer will send a Notice of Violation, via certified mail, explaining the



violation, actions needed for compliance, and a time frame to comply the violation. If the violation is not corrected within the time frame, the Officer will send and post the property with the Notice of Hearing for the upcoming Special Magistrate agenda. Please see Florida Statute 162 for more information on notice requirements.

## Compliance

To come into compliance, a citizen, business owner, tenant, or property owner may contact the Code Enforcement Officer in person, by email, or by phone to get more information regarding the code violation and the process or to seek more time to comply.

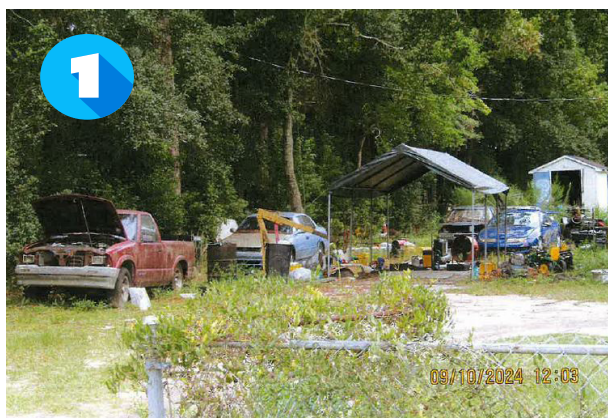
Compliance time frames are used as a guideline and may be subject to change if someone requires more time to bring the property into compliance.

- If the Officer inspects a property, and the site is in compliance, the case is closed
- If compliance occurs after personal contact or a door hanger, the case is closed
- If compliance occurs before the Code Enforcement Special Magistrate meets, the case may or may not be heard. It is the decision of the Special Magistrate whether to determine guilt and/or to assess any fines, or Findings of Fact
- If a complaint reaches the Code Enforcement Special Magistrate agenda, the Special Magistrate will hear the case evidence, from both sides, determine if there is a violation, and whether or not to assess fines and fees. If fines and fees are not paid timely, a lien can be recorded on the property. Appeals of the Special Magistrate's decision go to the Circuit Court.

**CODE CASES THAT HAVE OUTSTANDING FEES AND/OR FINES WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL PAID IN FULL**

## Success Story

A property on Wilson Neck Road was in violation of County Codes for accumulation of trash and unservicable vehicles. They received a courtesy letter from Code Enforcement in September 2024 notifying them of the violations. The Code Enforcement Officer worked with the resident to help them understand codes and reach compliance. We appreciate the property owner's cooperation in eliminating this eye sore and safety hazard from the community.



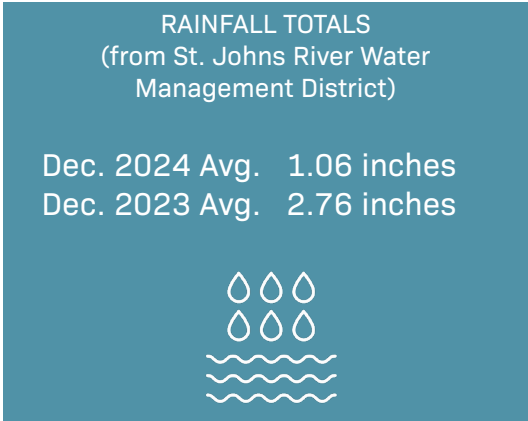
1. Wilson Neck property before with violations
2. Wilson Neck property after reaching compliance.

# STORMWATER DRAINAGE

## Current Updates

- The Vulnerability Study is complete. See the website for final interactive data at: <https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/1259/Vulnerability-Assessment>
- Spring Lake Estates Construction Project Phase 1 is nearing completion
- Staff working with Emergency Management on the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS)
- Staff working with the Transportation Planning Organization/Florida Department of Transportation to install stormwater gauges along roads
- Closed on 2nd property for the Resilient Florida Grant and Thomas Creek Implementation Plan.

Lot Grading Applications Approved	119
Formboards Approved	50
Drainage Concerns Reviewed	5
Building Heights Reviewed	100



## A Drop of News

Did you know that Nassau County has an illicit discharge ordinance?

“No person shall drain, deposit, place or otherwise discharge into any natural outlet or stormwater system within the County, or to cause or permit to be drained, deposited, placed or otherwise discharged into such waters, any organic or inorganic matter which causes or tends to cause pollution.”

Polluting matter includes, but is not limited to:

- Roof runoff
- Lawn runoff
- Fertilizer
- Pet waste
- Motor oil
- Street runoff.

To view Nassau County Code 10.9 - Illicit Discharge and Connection, visit: <https://nassaufl.co/stormwaterdischarge>.



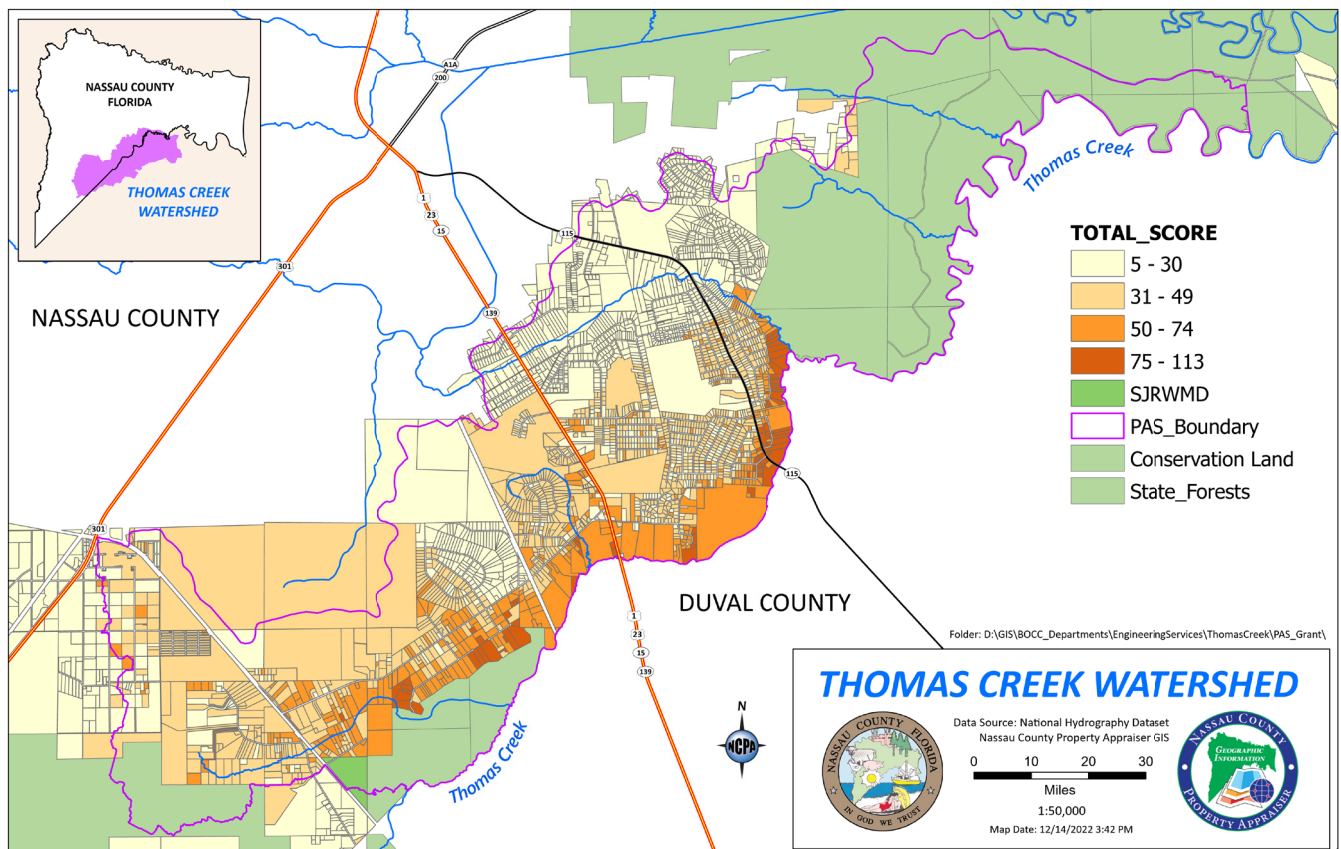
## Thomas Creek Implementation Plan

The Thomas Creek watershed management has been a priority to Nassau County dating back to the desnagging efforts of 2007. Since then, a Planning Assistance to States Grant (PAS) study was performed with the Army Corps of Engineers that concluded the best course of action is a voluntary buyout program. Staff presented the Thomas Creek Implementation Plan in March of 2023 to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. Subsequently, the Stormwater and Drainage Management, as part of the Thomas Creek Implementation Plan initiative, applied for the Implementation Grant to purchase homes in the Thomas Creek watershed. This \$2.8 million dollar grant requires a 50% which \$1 million was approved for by the Board. The other \$400,000 will be in work in-kind funds.

On June 20, 2024, the County held an Open House regarding the Thomas Creek Implementation Plan. Dozens of residents were in attendance to learn more about on-going efforts to mitigate flooding in the area. Booths with County staff were set up in the Callahan Community Center to allow for specific questions that summary presentations have not answered to date. Citizens that volunteered for the program were informed about the purchasing process utilizing funds from the Resilient Florida Implementation Grant Program which awarded Nassau County a 50% match to purchase properties in accordance with the Thomas Creek Implementation Plan.

We are excited to report that the County has closed on two of the four properties that were identified in the Thomas Creek Implementation Plan. The \$2.8 million grant award includes demolition of all structures and the land being restored to a vegetated floodplain. This will reduce the flood risks in the Thomas Creek area.

The two other remaining properties are slated to be purchased in February or March 2025.



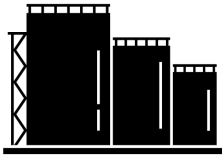


# PUBLIC WORKS - SOLID WASTE

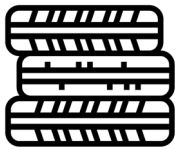
Scrap Metal Collected	12.66 tons
Electronics Collected	5.58 tons
Single-Stream Recycling Collected	26.67 tons
Cardboard Collected	17.56 tons
<b>Total Collected for Recycling</b>	<b>62.47 tons</b>



180.9  
tons of residential  
waste collected



257,600  
gallons of leachate\*  
collected



72  
tires collected for  
recycling

\*Leachate is liquid that forms when rain water filters through landfill waste



- 1. Chris and Lynn cleaning out the leachate system at the West Nassau Landfill
- 2. Isom removing cardboard from baler to be recycled
- 3. John was gifted with some candy for the holidays
- 4. Chris making repairs to the leachate system at the West Nassau Landfill.



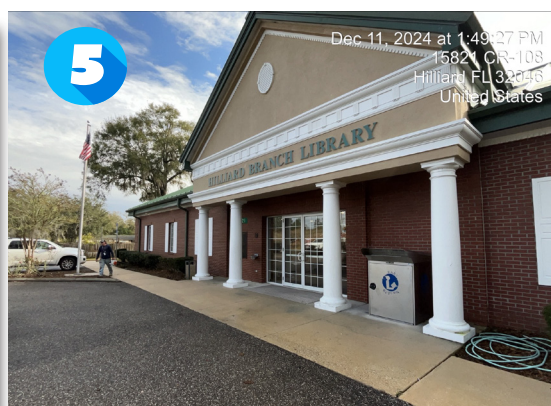
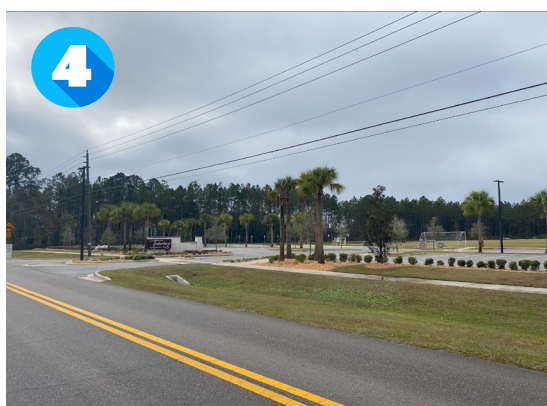
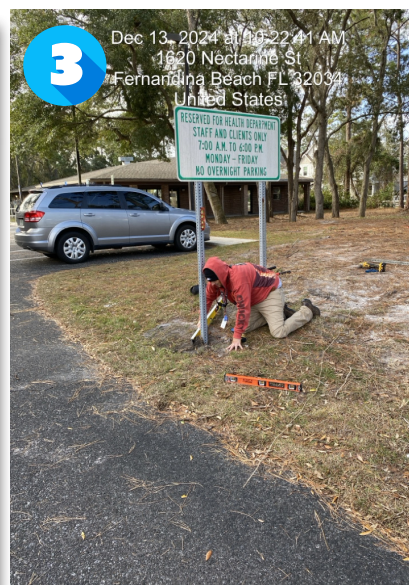
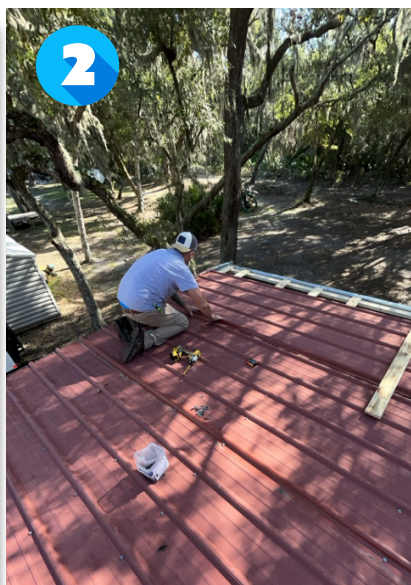
# PUBLIC WORKS - FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

Facilities Maintenance maintains 74 County facilities, providing repair and maintenance needs, grounds maintenance, and janitorial services to provide a safe and clean environment for both employees and the public.

In addition to routine maintenance and repairs, Maintenance Technicians are assigned work orders each day. Each work order is different and varies in location and skill sets. Work orders range from painting, carpentry, plumbing, welding, air conditioner, and electrical work.... just to name a few! Pictured below are photos of some work orders being completed in December 2024.


Facilities Maintenance completed **1,194 work orders in December**. The top work orders consisted of:

Janitorial/Custodial	837
Inspection	140
Grounds Maintenance	23
Plumbing	17
Electrical	10
Doors/Gates/Hardware	8
Repairs/Maintenance	2



1. Anton and Craig laying mulch at Tributary Regional Park
2. Stephen repairing the roof at Nassau Amelia Utilities
3. Steven installing signage at the Fernandina Beach Health Department
4. Facilities Maintenance laid 640 bags of mulch at Tributary Regional Park
5. Facilities Maintenance cleaned the roof and gutters at the Hilliard Library.

# PUBLIC WORKS - ROAD DEPARTMENT

	Work Orders Created	152
	Ditches Cleaned	17,740 LSF*
	Storm Drains Cleaned	3,360 LSF*

\* Linear Square Feet

### Culvert Repairs

- Completed 4 work orders for various drive-way repairs

### Storm Drain Cleaning

- Completed 10 work orders using the jet vac truck

### Dirt Road Maintenance

- Completed 14 work orders adding additional materials to dirt roads

### Fleet Maintenance

- Performed 14 preventative maintenance work orders
- Performed 48 non-scheduled work orders
- Dispensed 1,042.7 gallons of diesel fuel

### Roadside Ditch Cleaning

- Completed work orders digging ditches in various locations around the County

### Paved Road Maintenance

- Completed 2 work orders for various miscellaneous maintenance
- Completed 16 work orders for pot hole repairs
- Completed 8 work orders for roadway shoulder repairs
- Completed 13 work orders for tree/debris removal

### Traffic Division

- Completed 37 work orders related to signs, pavement markings, traffic detours, etc.



## Submitting Work Orders

Did you know that you can submit requests for work orders to County roads and facilities online? Once you created an account and submit your work requests you will be given a tracking number that can be used to check the status of your request as it progresses through the system. Visit <https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/299/Maintenance-Request>.

1. Congrats to Cody Pruitt, Darrell Blake and Kenneth Thornton for winning individual challenges in December's equipment rodeo. Congrats to Kenneth on being the overall winner for all four challenges.
2. Routine side cutting on Poole Road
3. Replacing a crossdrain on Chippewa Trail.



# PUBLIC WORKS - PARKS & RECREATION

## 3rd Annual Tree Lighting

Great job to Nassau County Parks & Recreation for another successful Tree Lighting Event. On Friday, December 6, 2024, thousands came out to enjoy a night of holiday performances, vendors, activities, fireworks and of course, the lighting of the tree. We are already looking forward to next year's event!



## 4th Annual Breakfast With Santa

On Saturday, December 14, 2024, Nassau County Parks & Recreation hosted its 4th Annual Breakfast With Santa event at the Callahan Fairgrounds. This event featured a free pancake breakfast, photos with Santa and a gift exchange. Thank you to everyone who came out to the event. We hope your littles had a great time with Santa!



## Seniors Night Out

Join us on Saturday, February 15, 2025 for Seniors Night Out: Valentine Party.

Enjoy live music, dancing and dinner. There is no cost to attend, however the event is limited to seniors ages 55 and up.

The event will be from from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at the Callahan Multi-Use Facility located at 543350 US Highway 1, Callahan.



1. Photo of tree in front of the Robert M. Foster Justice Center prior to the Tree Lighting Event
2. Parks & Recreation staff stop to warm their hands after spending the day setting up in very cold weather
3. Family with Santa & Mrs. Claus at the 4th Annual Breakfast With Santa Event
4. Event flyer for Seniors Night Out: Valentines Party.

# PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## New Administrative Specialist

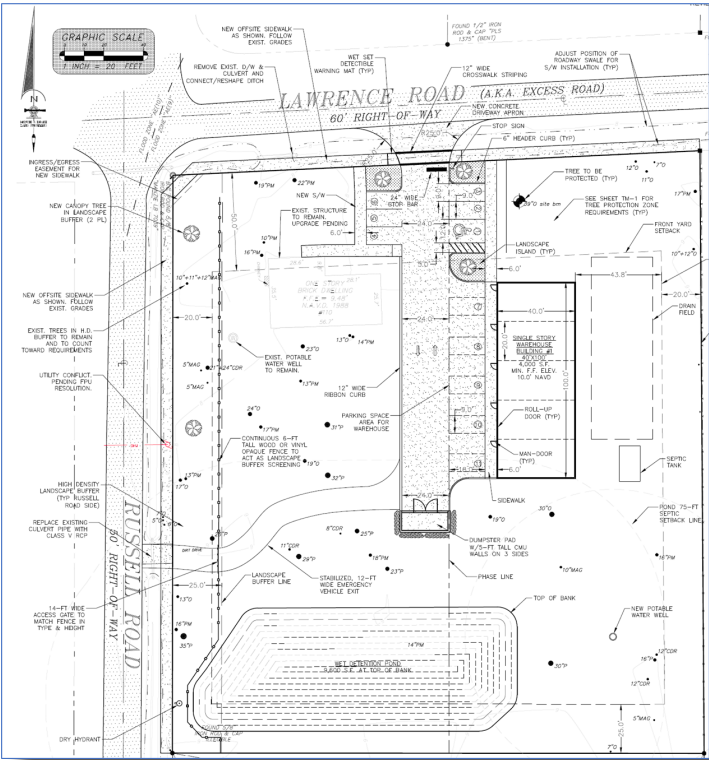


Please join us in welcoming Myraida as our new Administrative Specialist. Originally from Puerto Rico, Myraida has had the fortunate experience of traveling through and living in various states nationwide as a proud military spouse. Myraida received her bachelor's in Elementary Education in Oklahoma and had the chance to teach there as well as in Alaska and North Carolina. She held the Registrar position for the Dept of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) at the elementary school in Fort Knox, KY, at their last duty station. She also received her associate's degree in paralegal studies in Watertown, NY.

Myraida moved to Nassau County at the end of 2021 with her husband, who retired from the Army after deciding to plant their roots to make Yulee their forever home. More recently she worked as a Deputy Clerk for the Criminal Department at the Nassau County Clerk's Office. In her free time, she enjoys visiting family, learning to make crochet stuffed dolls/animals from YouTube videos, and enjoying walks on the beach with her husband and Great Dane, Bonnie.

## Project Spotlight: Johnny's AC

Staff is currently reviewing a commercial site plan for the Johnny's AC. The proposed project is located on the south side of Lawrence Lane, north of SR200. The plans propose a single story 4,000 square foot building and associated stormwater/drainage facilities on approximately 1.85 acres.





# BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Permit Type

New Builds, additions, rehabs, roofs, siding, signs	289
Mobile homes and modular homes	9
Electrical	170
Mechanical	125
Plumbing	225
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>818</b>

**Other Activities:**

- Issued 26 Contractor Licenses
- Issued 91 Certificates of Occupancy
- Performed 2,237 field inspections
- Performed 152 plan reviews

## New CRS Coordinator



The Nassau County Building Department is pleased to announce that Sara Mitchell Clifton has been promoted to the position of Community Rating System (CRS) Coordinator. Mrs. Clifton is a Nassau County native and graduated from Fernandina Beach High School. She went on to complete her associates degree and has volunteered for a variety of community organizations and sports clubs. After graduation Sara traveled the world with her husband and two children; living in Cuba, Orlando, Virginia, and Guam before returning to her roots in Nassau County.

Sara joined Nassau County in April of 2022 as a Building Department Permit Specialist bringing a background in the property appraisal process and customer service. In just over a year, she was promoted to Senior Permit Specialist for her attention to detail, excellent customer service, and ability to train new staff. The floodplain management workgroup is excited to have her on board to serve as a point of contact for FEMA and other departments/agencies regarding the Nassau County CRS Program. She will help maintain, implement, and collaborate on CRS activities in the areas of floodplain management, emergency management, and stormwater management to ensure the best possible discount on National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policy premiums for our community.

## Success Story: Unsafe Structures



Nassau County Ordinance No. 2019-15 established minimum standards governing health and general welfare as to the maintenance of buildings and structures and allows for structures in violations to be declared as a nuisance.

In August 2024, a Building Inspector conducted an inspection for an Unsafe Structure on SR 200 that was considered unsafe. A demolition permit was issued on October 3, 2024 and the structure was demolished, bring the property into compliance.



- 1. New CRS Coordinator Sara Clifton
- 2. Unsafe Structure - before
- 3. Unsafe Structure - after.

# CAPITAL PROJECTS

## Road Projects

**CR 121 from Duval County to CR 119 (Phase One)**  
State funding grants have been executed and design is underway for Phase 1.

**CR 121 from CR119 to US 1 (Phase Two)**  
State funding grants have been executed and selection of design firm is in procurement stage.

**Henry Smith Road**  
Construction began in October 2024.

**William Burgess Extension**  
Final permitting and design specifications are complete. Construction began in January 2025.

**Pratt Siding Road**  
Plans are complete. ROW identification and acquisition is underway. Construction anticipated to be complete in 2025.

**Hendricks Road Extension to CR 107**  
Plans currently underway to provide connectivity from Hendricks Road to CR 107. The design has been completed and right-of-way acquisition is underway.

**Hendricks Road to Amelia Concourse**  
Provide connectivity from Hendricks Road to the Amelia Concourse. Design completed. Planning is currently underway.

**Sundberg Road**  
Design for paving the existing dirt road to provide connection from CR 121 to Andrews Road. Design is currently underway.

**CR 108 Extension**  
State funding grants have been executed and design firm is being procured.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

**Amelia Island Parkway Trail Phases 2-4**  
South Fletcher Avenue to State Road 200.  
Construction for Phases 2-4 is being procured and is anticipated in early 2025.

**Amelia Island Trail Phase 5**  
A request for proposals (RFP) for a Feasibility Study to provide pedestrian and cycling facilities to the Bonnieview/Clinch Drive Community is under development.

**Amelia Island Trail from Simmons to Hickory and Citrona to Fernandina Waterfront**  
Project will be conducted in two phases. Both are currently in the design phase with a Request for Proposal to be advertised in late 2024.

## Intersection Improvements

**Pages Dairy and Chester Intersection Improvements**  
Construction began in August 2024.

**William Burgess Boulevard and Harts Road Roundabout**  
Design is complete. Construction will be completed under a developer agreement with costs shared by the developer and the County. Construction began in October 2024.

**US 301 and Crawford Road Intersection Improvements**  
Project is currently in the design phase.

**Amelia Island Parkway & Buccaneer Trail Roundabout**  
Planning is currently underway.



1. Storm drain improvements near the Chester Road/David Hallman Parkway intersection.

## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Driveway/Sidewalk Permits Issued	64
Driveway/Sidewalk Inspections Performed	150
Utility Permits Issued	19
Building Permits Reviewed	135
Borrow Pit Permits	0
DRC Pre-Applications Reviewed	4
Site Engineering Plans Reviewed	22
Variance Requests Reviewed	0
Zoning Certifications	1

### DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Residential Developments that were reviewed included sixteen expansions to existing residential developments in the Yulee area.

Commercial properties that were reviewed in the Yulee area included an EMX track, two churches, a commercial site expansion, CVS, FPU Substation expansion and an air conditioning store.

### DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)

The Development Review Committee meets every Tuesday at 9am to discuss applications that have been filed for development. These are preliminary meetings to ensure that the applicant and proposed project have met all requirements from the County. Anyone interested in learning about proposed projects should follow DRC agendas closely and reach out to Development Services with questions at (904) 530-6225.

## UF/IFAS COUNTY EXTENSION

The County Extension offers classes and information related to 4-H youth development, agriculture and natural resources, lawns and landscapes, and family and consumer services.

Total Programs/Activities	10	\$1,470.80
Site Visits	2	\$147.08
Phone Calls, Emails and Office Visits	124	\$2,279.74
Volunteer Hours	193	\$5,676.13
Newspaper Articles	2	\$281.36
Soil Analysis	10	\$200.00

### HORTICULTURE

The mission of the Horticulture Extension Agent is to provide science-based horticulture recommendations for residents, green-industry professionals, planners, designers, and communities through educational resources, trainings and outreach programs.

#### Residential Horticulture

Dr. Taylor Clem leads the horticulture extension and Master Gardener Volunteer programs for Nassau County. The horticulture extension programs target Nassau County residents, green-industry professionals, homeowners associations, property managers, decision-makers, and landscape designers. The programs focus itself on the statewide Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program – a nine-principal program relating to landscape conservation practices.

Master Gardener Volunteers promote and educate the community through various outreach opportunities. Annual Master Gardener Volunteer training attracts a strong group of community-centric volunteers that provide research-based solutions to Nassau County residents.

#### Horticulture Program Services Available

The University of Florida and Nassau County's extension office offers different types of soil testing: pH Testing and Nutrient Analysis.

- Soil pH Testing is free and provided at the county extension office. A soil pH test is a great way to understand the current conditions of our landscape; allowing us to select the right plant for the right place and help with management decisions.
- Nutrient Analysis provide more in-depth information for landscape management. For a fee, you can send samples to UF's soil testing lab for a nutrient analysis or purchase a turfgrass soil test kit from: <https://turf.ifas.ufl.edu/soilkit/>



## Landscape Troubleshooting

Are you having issues with your landscape and need help from the horticulture extension agent or Master Gardener Volunteers? Reach out to our Master Gardener Volunteer Help Desk. Our volunteers help troubleshoot residential horticulture problems. You can stop by or call the office, but an email with images and a clear description is preferred – [NassauMGV@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:NassauMGV@ifas.ufl.edu).

## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The 4-H Agent(s) mission is to provide educational programs for positive youth development and overseeing fundraising, record-keeping, marketing, working with the Nassau County 4-H Association, and ensuring compliance with state and national policies.

### End-of-Year Activities

- Nassau County 4-H hosted a holiday party with over 130 4H members featuring food, fun games and fellowship
- Several 4-H members worked together to present a float in the Callahan Christmas Parade
- The Teen Leadership Council submitted for a community service grant with the FL 4-H Community Pride Project
- The 4-H Archery Team preparing to send 6 kids to a State 3D match in January.

### Thank You Farm Bureau

Thank you to Nassau County Farm Bureau for donating \$1,500 to Nassau Extension 4-H which will be used to purchase a Tower Garden system for use in school enrichment programs. This donation will allow 4-H to extend its outreach, expanding to multiple schools and grade with the educational journey of gardening.

## AGRICULTURE

The Agriculture/Natural Resources Agent works to help ranchers and farmers enhance their production and distribution capacities, while maintaining sound environmental principles.

### Composting

In December, Agriculture Agent David Hebert worked with a local producer to increase their compostable piles and winter covercrop of winter pea for biomass and soil health.



1. David Hebert creating compost piles for local producer.

# STRATEGIC ADVANCEMENT

## Nassau Prosperity Alliance Quarterly Report



The Nassau Prosperity Alliance (NPA) has released the fourth quarter report for FY 23/24. This document includes updates on a variety of initiatives including the Transit Study Update, Timber to Tides Design Overlay, economic development highlights and more.

Established in November 2022, the NPA consists of representatives from the Amelia Island Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Nassau County Chamber of Commerce, Nassau County Economic Development Board, Small Business Development Center at UNF and Prosper Nassau, and serves as

a unified coalition to facilitate strategic initiatives that promote economic development and support the local economic ecosystem.

The NPA's mission is to "nurture a more resilient, sustainable, equitable and prosperous ecosystem cultivated with a generational perspective and crafted to increase competitiveness on a regional and global scale, promote prosperity and high-paying jobs, and create vibrant and resilient communities that offer the highest quality of life". This mission is supported by priority initiatives established in the County's Interim Strategic Plan.

The Quarterly Report and other information about the NPA can be found at <https://www.nassaucountyfl.com/1331/Nassau-Prosperity-Alliance>.

## Atlantic to Okefenokee Corridor



In December 2024, Director of Strategic Advancement Brandy Carvalho visited Tallahassee for a meeting with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC) to discuss Florida Forever, Florida's premier conservation and recreation and lands acquisition program. One of the topics of discussion included the Atlantic to Okefenokee (A20) Conservation Corridor, an area with more than 55,000 acres that stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the east coast of the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge to the west. The corridor incorporates the John M. Bethea State Forest, Oselola Wildlife Management Area, and the Osceola State Forest Complex. The St. Marys River also unifies it as its northern boundary.

Nearly 12,000 acres in the A20 are listed as priorities in Nassau County's Conservation Land Acquisition and Management (CLAM) Program. Nassau County and the North Florida Land Trust worked together to prepare a proposal to ARC for them to consider adding the critical corridor to Florida Forever's priority list. The request was granted in June 2024. The A20 completes a more than 90,000-acre

conservation corridor in the southern watershed along 80 miles of the St. Marys River and will more than double the acres of the existing conservation lands near its boundaries.

In addition to its environmental significance, the A20 corridor also holds historical importance. The land once served as settlements for American Indian nations like the Timucuan, Uchee, and Muskogean, as well as the Gullah Geechee nation. The A20 and St. Marys were important residential, foraging, and fishing areas for the populations, and the northern boundary of the river was part of the St. Marys River Paddling Trail. The A20 also has sites used in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the American Civil War.

Nassau County and the NFLT will continue to work together to implement the project.

## Door Judging



Commissioner Hupp Huppmann and Director of Strategic Advancement were honored to be judges in the Department of Health's holiday door decorating contest.

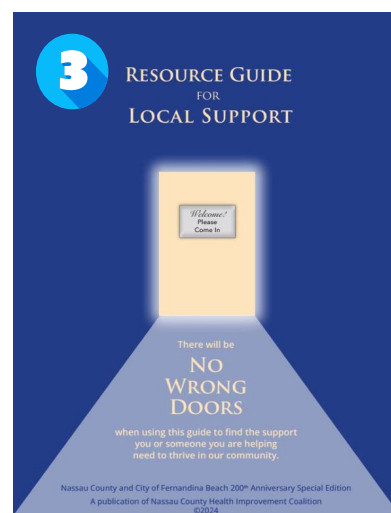
## Community Resource Guide

In case you missed it! The Nassau County Health Improvement Coalition released "No Wrong Doors", a community resource guide to help individuals find the support they need. Individuals trying to access new services and support find themselves challenged by misinformation or inability to tap into agencies and meet requirements at a time when they may be vulnerable or in crisis. Imagine having to go to or call several places to get information on needed services to be told "Not here" ... and nothing else.

The "No Wrong Doors" Resource Guide For Local Support exists to help Nassau County residents find resources they need. Through this guide, anyone seeking help will have a better understanding of their options and how to access the services. The expected result is a better-served community, improved quality of life and better health outcomes.

The guide can be found at <https://nassaufl.co/NoWrongDoors>.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Nassau County Health Department at (904) 875-6100.



1. Director of Strategic Advancement Brandy Carvalho meets in Tallahassee regarding the Florida Forever Program and the Atlantic to Okefenokee Corridor for future conservation
2. Commissioner Huppmann and Director of Strategic Advancement Brandy Carvalho with representatives of the Health Department during their holiday door judging contest
3. No Wrong Doors Resource Guide.

# COMMUNICATIONS

Communcitions Officer activities in December 2024 included:

- Monthly BOCC Newsletter for November 2024 released
- Completed two cybersecurity training courses
- Tree Lighting Promotions
- Attended Tree Lighting and took photos
- Attended Breakfast With Santa and took photos
- Issued 3 Special Event Permit
- Coordinated Touch-a-Truck for the Chamber's Leadreship Nassau Program - Government & Policy Day
- Finalizing Annual Report
- The County Insider: 40 stories
- FaceBook: 50 posts
- Tweets: 15
- Linkedin posts: 7
- Instagram posts: 4

Media Manager activities included:

- Released video ad for Tree Lighting
- Captured video footage for Tree Lighting
- Released video following Tree Lighting and Vision 2050 activities
- Attended Equipment Rodeo and captured footage for future project
- Working on end-of-year video highlighting activities and events from 2024



## Sign up for News



Are you interested in having Nassau County news delivered straight to your inbox? Sign up for our weekley newsletter. Emails are sent weekly and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Scan the QR Code or sign up online at: <https://nassaufl.co/News>

## Follow Us on Social Media!



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<https://twitter.com/FlNassau>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/nassau-county-board-of-county-commissioners>



[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPcL9uy37-oy\\_iX1ka\\_fw8Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPcL9uy37-oy_iX1ka_fw8Q)

1. Mutlimedia & Communications Manager Omari Matlock filming at Tree Lighting event.



## AROUND THE COUNTY



1. Group photo of the current County Commission following their organizational meeting on December 9, 2024
2. Holiday Pajama Party with Santa, Pete the Cat and Frosty the Snowman at the Fernandina Beach Library
3. County Attorney's Office sponsored a family for the holidays
4. Grace in the Building Department won first place in the holiday cubicle design contest
5. Congratulations to Susan McKenney retired from the Library after 25 years of service
6. Isom organizing batteries for recycling at the Convenience Recycle Center in Callahan
7. Library staff at their quarterly meeting at the Yulee Library.

## ACCOLADES

“  
We greatly appreciate the effort it took to get a stormwater ditch cleared. The situation for property owners mid-island is now far better than it was and that is because of your commitment.”

-M. Kirkland

“  
Thank you for your responsiveness. The water was suddenly gone after our visit yesterday. I am very appreciative to Katie and the Stormwater Department.”

- K. Bryan

“  
Dear Mr. Robertson,

Our daughter Kris told us how helpful you were and what a pleasure it was to work with you on this project (memorial bench). My husband and I add our sincere thanks for all you did to make it possible.”

“  
A heartfelt thanks to Russell Marh who worked is inspection schedule last week to allow me to pour our slab.”

-J. Stokes

“ I am reaching out to advise you of two employees who truly went above and beyond their everyday responsibilities to make me feel confident in my decision to foster/adopt from your organization. Jame displayed such charisma, respect and overall that she is a genuine person for her dedication to the animals and her job. Damian showed his knowledge by answering all my medical questions. His kindness and ability to communicate clear and concise information makes him an asset to your organization. ”

-A. Celone

“ I am always pleased with everyone at the Building Department. Always very helpful and prompt. ”

-L. Bonner

“ We had a wonderful experience at the permit office. Sherry, Patty, April, Heidi, and Tom worked to get everything in order to get my permit approved. Sherry went the extra mile to get the recorded deed. Tom took time to review plans with us to avoid issues in the future. Very personal attention. ”

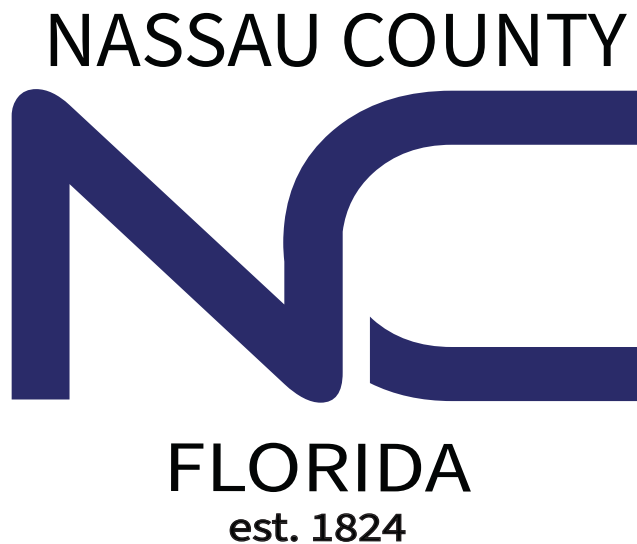
W. Pata

“ I have been submitting for permits with this County for 2 years now. I can truly say that you are always consistent and always helpful. ”

-M. Roberts



# Board of County Commissioners



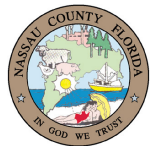
Visit our news blog, **The County Insider**, for up-to-date information related to the County including, but not limited to, road closures, special events and programs, project updates, County awards, meeting information, and more!

[www.thecountyinsider.com](http://www.thecountyinsider.com)

Nassau County Newsletter

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