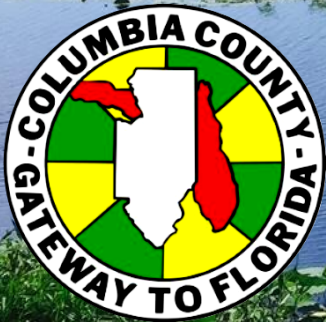


2024 Annual Report



COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Message from the County Manager

David Kraus has worked for Columbia County since 2011 and was appointed Manager by the Board of County Commissioners in 2021. As head of the administrative branch of the county's government, Kraus is responsible to the Board of County Commissioners for the proper administration of all affairs of the County. He provides fiscal, strategic and operational leadership to the organization, as well as, sound analysis and professional implementation of the Board's policies.

This annual report is presented to the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners and its citizens as a State of the County reflecting the work of the previous year (2024), and any recommendations as to actions or programs the Manager deems necessary for the improvement of the County and the welfare of its residents in accordance with the Home Rule Charter for Columbia County, Section 3.3 (2).



› Florida State Flag

David Kraus

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Over the last year, Columbia County has continued making strides to ensure this is a great place to live, work, and play. This annual report highlights the Board's commitment to continue to improve the infrastructure of Columbia County and the services it provides to our residents. These improvements help to make Columbia County one of the greatest places in North Florida.

Columbia County has dedicated employees helping to provide the utmost service to residents and visitors of Columbia County . Our accomplishments included in the pages of this report could not happen without their commitment.



2024 Financial Review

The audit for the period ending September 30, 2024 has commenced and will be presented to the Board once completed.

FY 2024 began with \$2,500,216 in addition ad valorem revenue over the previous year. No new taxes were adopted. The adopted millage levy is 7.8150 mills (which is more than the rolled-back rate of 7.4082 mills by 0.0549). There were increases in fees for the fire assessment rates. All other MSBU rates remained the same as last year.

2024 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Major Issues that Passed

- Rural County Exemption for Emergency Manager Job Requirements
- Continued Broadband Allocation
- Continued Support for Rural Law Enforcement

Major Issues that did not Pass

- Electric Vehicle Surcharge Revenue
- Rural Population Definition Increase Legislation
- 911 Service Fee Clarification Legislation

Legislative Appropriations Secured

- \$3,000,000 – I-75/US 41 Interchange Improvements in Ellisville
- \$1,000,000 – Bell Street Extension
- \$ 850,000 - Suwannee Valley Communications Tower
- \$ 750,000 – 500 Acre Flat Fields – Phase I
- \$ 325,000 – Ellisville Well Redundancy



2024

- Continue to Hold Multiple Budget Workshops Beginning in May
- Continue moving forward with North Florida Mega Industrial Park (NFMIP) Utility Expansion – Complete WWTP
- Constructed Community Center at Bethlehem Park
- Planned Accessibility Features Expansion at Columbia City Park, but did not receive grant funding
- Created in-house Animal Control Services and Added Animal Enforcement Department to FY 2023-2024 Budget
- Connect water line from Ellisville to Fort White – Completed design
- Create MSBU's for Infrastructure in Subdivisions (stormwater, roads, etc.) – Adopted ordinance for new subdivisions
- Created MSTU for North Florida Mega Industrial Park (NFMIP)
- Increase Veteran's Service Office Outreach in Community – on going

2025 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Complete Capital Projects Currently Scheduled
- Continue moving forward with North Florida Mega Industrial Park (NFMIP) Utility Expansion – Complete WWTP
- Completed Construct of Community Center at Bethlehem Park
- Plan for Unanticipated Growth in South Columbia County, including Designated Urban Areas
- Develop Multi-County Utility Agreements
- Identify One Water Recharge Project
- Develop Phase I of 500 Acre Park
- Connect Water Main from Ellisville to Fort White
- Expand Funding for Road Resurfacing
- Hurricane Debbie and Helene Recovery



ISSUES

- Utility and Infrastructure Funding to meet growth in County (Ellisville and NFMIP)
- Completion of existing Capital projects
- Funding for Design and Permitting of Phase I of the 500 Acre Park
- Increasing cost of insurance in State of Florida
- Instability in economy
- Cyber Security
- Continued efforts to secure grant funding for projects
- Improve internal operations of the County
- Continue to expand community outreach efforts through the Library, Extension Office and the Veteran's Affairs Office.
- Monitor Performance of County Contracted EMS Services Provider
- Begin Capital Project related to expansion of Ellisville – Road & Infrastructure
- Transition to North Florida Water Utility Authority
- Development of SR 47/I-75 Interchange
- Creation of New Paramedicine Program – Opioid Abatement Funding
- Recovering from Hurricane Season & Future Mitigation Projects
- Permanent Pet Shelter



About Columbia County

Median Household Income: **\$53,501**

Median Housing Value: **\$165,300**

Veterans Population: **6,358**

Established: February 4, 1832

Number of Districts: 5

18.3% in incorporated areas

81.7% in unincorporated areas

County Seat: Lake City

Congressional Districts: 2nd and 5th

Source: The United States Census Bureau

Estimated Total
Population

73,063

87.4 per sq. mi.



Male 51.1%



Female 48.9%

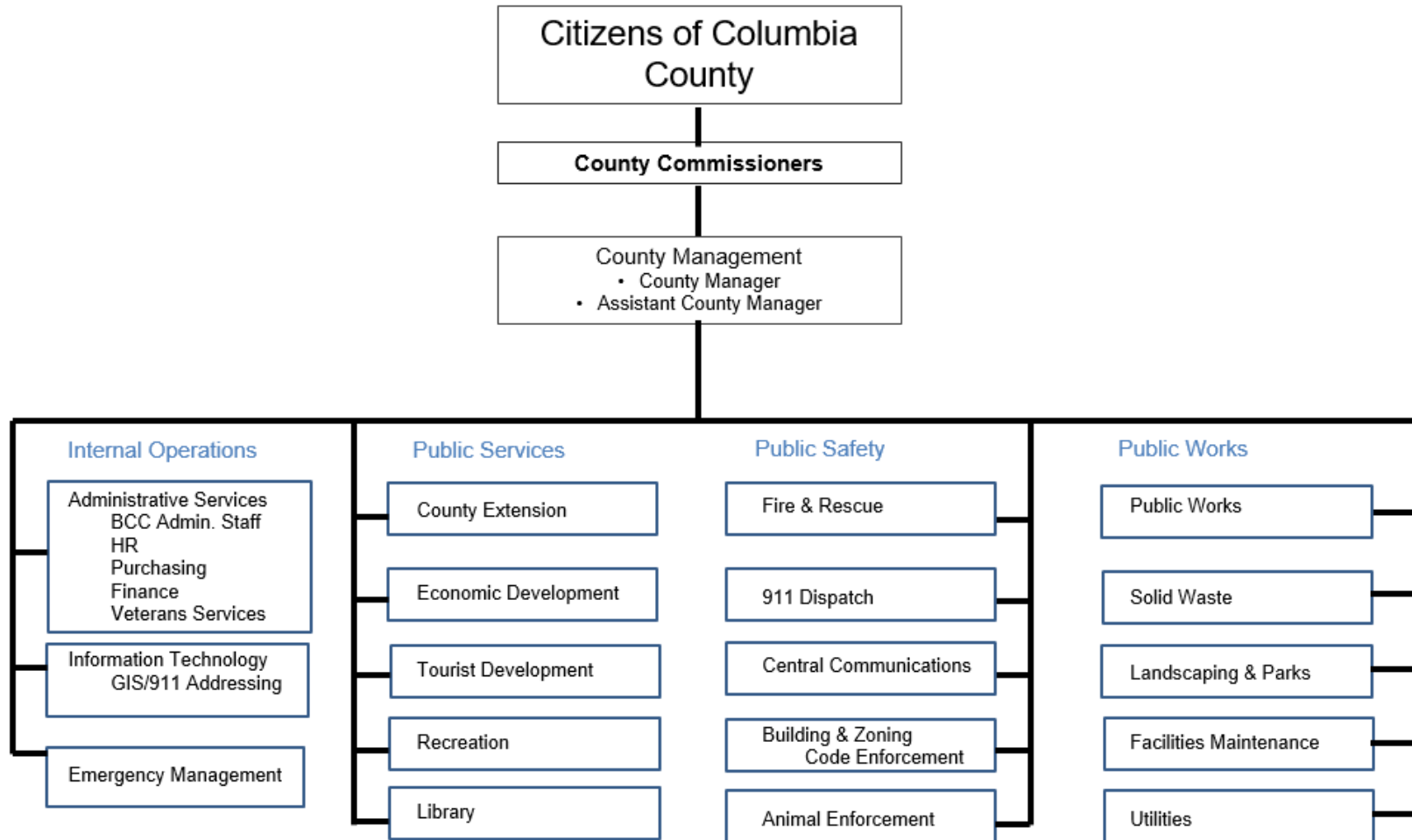
Total Area: 801 square miles

Land: 798 square miles

Water: 3 square miles



County Organizational Chart



Constitutional Officers 2024 Budgets

\$2.4M

Clerk of Court

\$2.3M

Property Appraiser

\$20.8M

Sheriff

\$1.3M

Supervisor of Elections

\$2.3M

Tax Collector



James M. Swisher, Jr.
Clerk of Circuit Court &
County Comptroller



Jeff Hampton
Property Appraiser



Mark Hunter
Sheriff



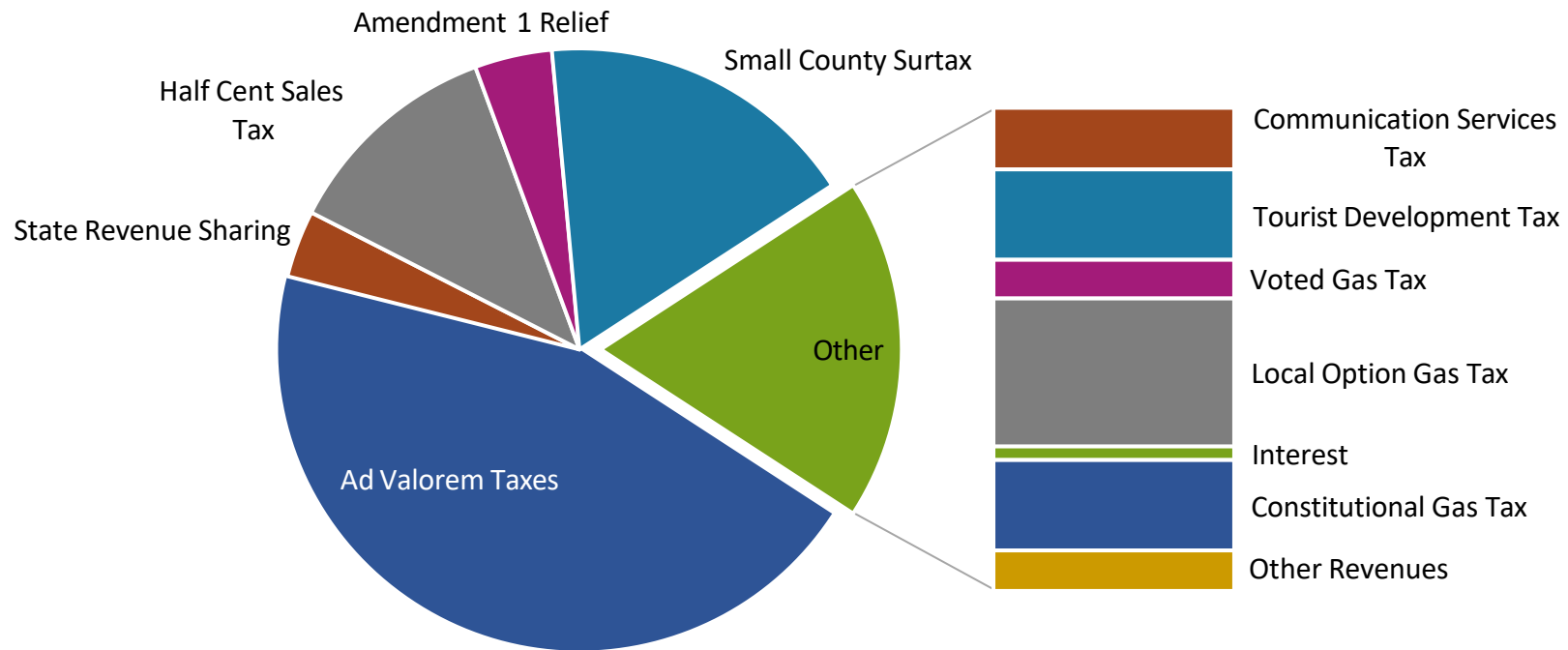
Tomi S. Brown
Supervisor of Elections



Kyle Keen
Tax Collector



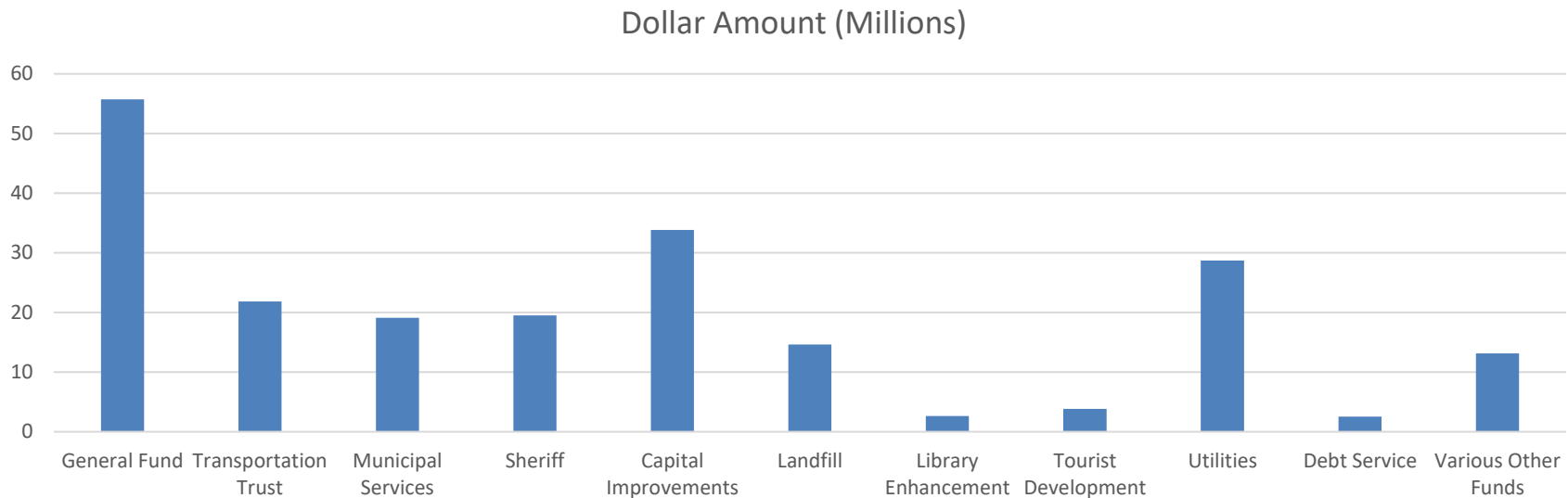
2024 Revenues and Beginning Cash



Columbia County generated \$216.7 million of revenue including beginning cash in the 2024 fiscal year. These revenues can be broken down into five categories:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| • General | \$58.5 million | • Capital Projects | \$58.0 million |
| • Special Revenue | \$58.3 million | • Enterprise | \$39.7 million |
| • Debt Service | \$2.2 million | (Landfill) | |

2024 Expenditures and Reserves



The State of Florida’s “Truth in Millage” (TRIM) requires the County to adopt a “balanced” budget annually by September 30th. Adopting an annual balanced budget is one the Board’s most significant actions taken each year. The annual budget safeguards the County’s financial stability and ensures all service requirements and debt obligations are fulfilled. The budget for FY 2024 totals \$216,860,820 which is broken down into the following:

- \$37.6 million General Fund
- \$21.3 million Transportation Trust
- \$20.3 million Municipal Services
- \$20.9 million Sheriff
- \$45.9 million Capital Improvements
- \$10.8 million Landfill
- \$3.2 million Library Enhancement
- \$4.7 million Tourist Development
- \$28.9 million Utilities
- \$2.2 million Debt Service
- \$21.0 million Various Other Funds

Board of County Commissioners

The Board of County Commissioners is a five-member board elected to represent the citizens of Columbia County. Each member represents a district and is elected by residents of the district. The Commission establishes policies and appoints a County Manager to implement the policies and manage the operation of the County. The Commission adopts the millage rate and annually approves the budget, which determines the expenditures and revenue necessary to operate all County Departments. The powers and duties of the County Commission are established by the County Charter as approved and amended by the citizens of Columbia County.



Ronald Williams
District 1



Rocky Ford
District 2



Robby Hollingsworth
District 3



Everett Phillips
District 4



Tim Murphy
District 5

BCC Regular Board Meetings

The Board of County Commissioners meet the 1st Thursday of each month at 9:30 AM and 3rd Thursday of each month at 5:30 PM at:

Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium

372 West Duval Street

Lake City, Florida 32055



911 Communications

2024 Accomplishments

- Consolidation of 911 Center Dispatch with Lake City Dispatch
- Promotions within department: Jason Rosenfeld, Assistant Director and Bethany Duffany, Training QA Coordinator
- 2024 experienced hurricanes with no laps in 911 or radio coverage
- Contracted with INDIGITAL Corp. for Next-Gen Core Services and ESI Net upgrade of 911 system – Funded through Emergency Communications Board grant
- Conducted CPR Re-certifications for personnel
- Installed INDIGITAL MEVO phones in dispatch that function for taking 911 calls independent of Motorola VESTA CPE system also providing ANI/ALI from callers – Funded through INDIGITAL grant
- Installed Rapid SOS Premium as part of the INDIGITAL Next Gen Core Services grant

Ongoing Projects

- Complete transition to INDIGITAL Next-Gen Core Services digital fiber and ESI net from AT&T analog. Project is grant-funded through the Emergency Communications Board
- Complete move of 911 Admin. lines to County VoIP system

The 911 Communications Center is the only designated public safety answering point (PSAP) for all citizens to access emergency service agencies in Columbia County, FL through 911. It serves 70,000 residence and 801 square miles of Columbia County. The Center provides direct dispatch services for:

- Columbia County Sheriff's Office
- Columbia County Fire Department
- Columbia EMS (Columbia County's EMS Provider)
- Lake City Fire Department
- Lake City Police Department

In addition to emergency calls, the Center does all F/NCIC entries of stolen articles, vehicles, missing persons, protection orders, etc. for the Columbia County Sheriff's Office with the exception of warrants & writs. The Center maintains records on all domestic violence protection orders issues in Columbia County. The Center serves as the after-hours answering point for the Columbia County Sheriff's Office administrative lines.

The Center is Phase II compliant with various wireless companies providing a tower location or the GPS location coordinates for calls received.

Budget: \$3,687,935

Number of Employees: 43

Thomas Brazil

Phone: (386) 758-1388

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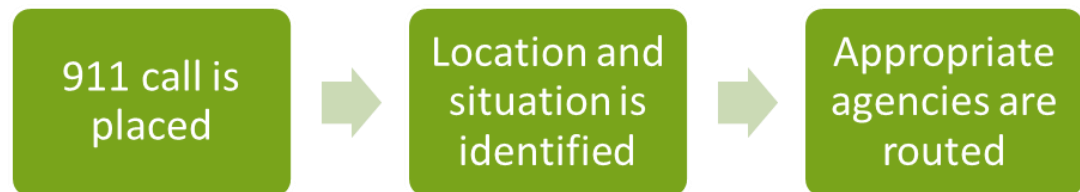
2025 Plans and Goals

- Purchase and install new EVENTIDE logging recorders funded through an Emergency Communications Board Grant
- Quoting for equipment refresh on Motorola VESTA 911 CEP system and project kickoff in the June State Emergency Communications Board grant cycle
- Replace the internal batteries in the EATON UPS system at the 911 system
- Re-certify the 911 PST Academy through the FL Dept. of Health in February
- Re-certify and renew all licenses of PST DOH licenses and EMD/EFD
- Install a clean agent fire suppression system in the server room and electrical room at 911 center – Capital project
- Assisting both Lake City PD and CCSO in their accreditation on-site inspections

E-911 Public Education

The current focus of E-911 public education and public outreach is to educate the citizens of Columbia County on helping 911 help you. This campaign encompasses the following concepts:

- Call 911 only if you need emergency response from police, fire or medics. If non-emergency assistance is needed use non-emergency numbers listed in the telephone book for the appropriate agency for your need. Numbers such as the power company for power outages, 5-1-1 for travel information, the Crisis Hot Line for human services information, local police and fire agencies all be found in local telephone directory.
- Lock your wireless phone so that you don't accidentally call 911. Pocket and purse/bag dialing wastes time and resources. If you accidentally call 911, don't hang up until you have explained to the 911 operator that it was an accident.
- Know your location when calling 911. One of the first things you will be asked is, "911 what is the address of your emergency?" Awareness of your surroundings, such as street names, landmarks and mile markers, can be helpful in identifying your location.
- Promote the Center's ability to receive text to 911 with the "Call if you can, TEXT if you can't" campaign.



Animal Enforcement

2024 Accomplishments

- Established Animal Enforcement Department October 1, 2023
- Transported 871 animals to facility – 77 animals surrendered to owner
- Issued 59 Citations
- Certified all officers in animal control, euthanasia, and chemical immobilization
- Operated and managed pet friendly shelter for hurricane events
- Participated in I-75 Toyota's Trunk or Treat held October 26th.

Ongoing Projects

- Landscaping in open field adjacent to office in the current fiscal year
- Pet Owner Education
- Continued officer training, education and certification

2025 Plans and Goals

- Train and certify officers in additional areas such as bite stick, O.C. Spray and dangerous dog investigations
- Public Relations - attend more events to educate the community
- Microchipping Ordinance

The Department of Animal Enforcement is responsible for the implementation, management, and operation of animal enforcement services activities of Columbia County. Ensuring compliance with the County's animal control ordinances and Florida Law, including 828.30, Florida Statutes.

Within the Department of Animal Enforcement the following functions are performed:

- Management and daily operation of animal enforcement services as required by the County's animal control ordinance and Florida law, including 828.30, Florida Statutes
- Coordinating the shelter of animals with the Lake City Human Society/Lake City Animal Shelter

The mission of Columbia County Animal Enforcement is to serve as diligent stewards of animal welfare and public safety. We are dedicated to upholding the highest standards of professionalism, compassion, and integrity in enforcing animal control regulations.

DID YOU KNOW?

Columbia County Animal Enforcement Managed
1,367 Total Cases

Budget: \$512,482

Number of Employees: 5

Thomas Wormuth

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Building & Zoning

2024 Accomplishments

- Created new inspector position
- Completed Northern expansion of the Designated Urban Development Area (DUDA)
- Recruited and filled three positions becoming fully staffed

Ongoing Projects

- Southern expansion of the Designated Urban Development Area (DUDA) to include Ellisville and Fort White
- Continual assessment and improvement of the on-line permitting process and associated procedures
- Creation of Development Permit for Flood Zone areas to incorporate as part of the permitting process

2025 Plans and Goals

- Complete the Southern Designated Urban Development Area (DUDA) expansion and Land Development Regulations Revision
- Complete the Development Permit process and roll out to public
- Strengthen Floodplain Management position both technical and practically

Building Department Mission

To establish a secure built environment by enforcing compliance with pertinent construction codes. This mission is accomplished through meticulous permit issuance, comprehensive plans review, through inspections, adept utilization of automation technologies, and continuous training initiatives.

Zoning Department Mission

To steer future growth and development through strategic planning, judicious zoning practices, and data analysis. Adopting forward-thinking approaches, striving to facilitate sustainable community development that ensures a prosperous and harmonious future.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement is responsible for investigating citizen complaints and verifying if an ordinance or LDR violation has occurred.

Non-Ad Valorem Assessments

The Special Assessment Inspector position performs inspections on parcels within Columbia County to ensure the assessment fees for fire protection and solid waste are verified for collection.

Building/Zoning and Code Enforcement Highlights

• Permit Applications	2,644
• Field Inspections	7,399
• Planning & Zoning Applications	247
• Code Enforcement Open Cases	130

Budget: \$1,115,118

Number of Employees: 12

Troy Crews

Phone: (386) 758-1008

troy_crews@columbiacountyfla.com



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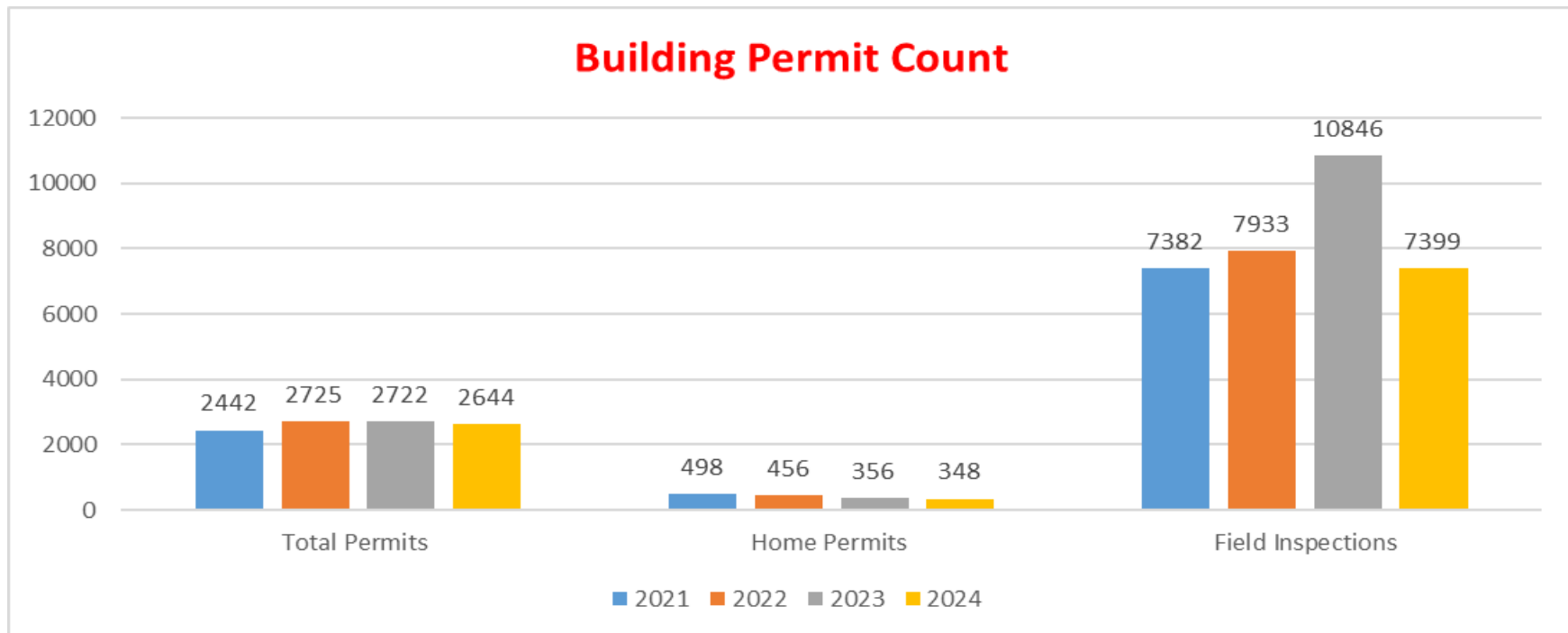
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2025 Projects

- Tractor Supply
- WAWA
- Toyota Dealership
- Land Development Regulations Revision
- Departmental staff analysis and restructuring of department
- Implement impact fee study

The building trend has considerably declined in home building, while permit issuance has remained consistent. This correlation aligns with current economic conditions and increased interest rates, contributing to a slowdown in home construction.

Historical permit records are consistently reviewed, a process that is becoming more efficient with the transition to digital submissions. Improved office procedures and the implementation of electronic permitting have resulted in reduced overall permitting times, better customer notifications, increased staff efficiency, and a decrease in operating expenditures. Commitment to optimization is reinforced by ongoing enhancements to in-house software programs utilized by the Department.



On the technical front, Building Inspectors and building plan reviewers are tasked with conducting onsite inspections at every phase of construction projects. Their role involves ensuring strict adherence to the Florida Building Code, National Electric Code, and Accessibility Code. This multifaceted approach underscores our commitment to maintaining the highest standards in construction practices, regulatory compliance, and public safety within our community.

2024 Annual Permit Totals

	Commercial	Residential	Storage Tank	Other	Total Permits
	Permits	Permits	Permits	Permits	
Total Apps and Permits					
Additions	4	29		0	33
Air Conditioner Replacement or Repair	5	70		0	75
Communications Tower	13				13
Culvert		29		43	72
Culvert Waiver	1	2		26	29
Demolition	1	6	1	0	8
Electrical Service	41	469		0	510
Generator	0	10			10
Mobile Home		212			212
Modular Building - Residential or Commercial	7				7
New Commercial Construction	21				21
New Residential Construction		129			129
Remodel	13	141		2	156
Right-of-Way Access/Driveway	8	157		4	169
Roof Replacement or Repair	31	856		16	903
RV - Recreational Vehicle		13			13
Screen Enclosure		15		0	15
Signs - New or Existing	4				4
Solar Power System	1	52		0	53
Storage Building	6	161		3	170
Swimming Pool and Spa	1	41		0	42
Total	157	2392	1	94	2644

The Zoning Department serves as the central hub for all matters pertaining to land use, overseeing a spectrum of responsibilities that encompass land planning, comprehensive planning, and the implementation of Land Development Regulations (LDR). In addition to its core functions, the department is tasked with the judicious management of floodplains and the meticulous processing of development applications.

A pivotal role of the Zoning Department involves the administration of materials and presentations for both the Planning & Zoning Board and the Board of Adjustment. This includes coordinating and facilitating discussions, ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks, and presenting essential information to these governing bodies.

In essence, the department plays a vital role in shaping and regulating the physical development of land within our jurisdiction. Through its multifaceted responsibilities, the Zoning Department contributes to the harmonious and sustainable growth of the community by navigating the intricate intersections of planning, regulation, and decision-making processes.

Planning and Zoning Applications	Application Count	From 10/1/2024-9/30/2024
		Fee Amount
Alcohol License	7	\$525.00
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	9	\$15,150.00
Division of Land	1	\$500.00
Miscellaneous Zoning Application	6	\$125.00
Site Development Plan	27	\$9,400.00
Site Specific Amendment to the Official Zoning Atlas	12	\$20,350.00
Special Exceptions	14	\$12,600.00
Special Family Lot Permit	42	\$2,100.00
Special Permit	2	\$1,150.00
Special Temporary Use	75	\$23,000.00
Statement of Land Use and Zoning	8	\$100.00
Subdivision	11	\$7,000.00
Subdivision Variance	8	\$7,600.00
Variances	25	\$23,750.00
Total	247	\$123,350.00

Code Enforcement

The Columbia County Code Enforcement Department is entrusted with the responsibility of addressing citizen grievances and ascertaining the occurrence of any violations of ordinances or Land Development Regulations (LDR). The procedural sequence commences with the issuance of a Warning Letter and Timeframe. Should compliance prove unattainable within the stipulated timeframe, a Notice of Violation (NOV) is issued, specifying a distinct timeframe for rectification. Subsequently, the property undergoes continuous monitoring for adherence to compliance standards. A final inspection is conducted on the compliance due date; in the absence of compliance, the case is scheduled for a Magistrate Hearing, facilitated by a Notice of Hearing (NOH).

Ensuring equitable treatment for every citizen, our office extends opportunities for compliance, providing additional timeframes when violators demonstrate concerted efforts to address and communicate their resolution strategies. The paramount objective of the Code Enforcement Department is to foster voluntary compliance and educate citizens, thereby safeguarding public health, safety, and the overall quality of life in Columbia County.

Open Case Summary 2024

Type	Dist 1		Dist 2		Dist 3		Dist 4		Dist 5		Total
Accumulation of Junk and Debris		3		3		5		2		3	16
Building Permit Issues		0		1		1		0		1	3
Care of Premises		10		4		5		3		8	30
Dangerous or Open-to-Entry Buildings		10		2		2		4		3	21
Hazardous Conditions		2		0		1		2		0	5
Health and Safety		6		1		0		2		1	10
Livestock Infraction		0		1		0		0		0	1
No Temp RV Permit		3		4		0		2		1	11
Operation of Illegal Business		0		1		0		1		0	2
Other		0		1		0		2		0	3
Overgrown Property		4		2		3		2		2	13
Residing in Shed/Unpermitted Structure		1		2		0		0		0	3
Substandard Housing		1		0		0		0		0	1
Unknown		0		0		0		0		0	1
Untagged/Expired License Plate		2		0		1		0		0	3
Zoning Code Infraction		2		2		1		0		1	7
Total Open Cases		44		24		19		20		20	130

In fiscal year 2022-23, the Board of County Commissioners approved the full-time position of Special Assessment Inspector. This position is responsible for performing inspections on parcels within Columbia County to ensure the non-ad valorem fire protection services and solid waste services assessment fees are verified. Each parcel within the County, either by owner request or field audit, is inspected to capture the total number of building/structures used as dwellings for the non-ad valorem assessment and added to the tax records for collection.

(#1) ADD ON'S TO TAX ROLL = ADDITIONAL DWELLINGS									
Or # of Dwellings	Org Waste Assessment	Org Fire Assessment	Correted # of Dwellings	New Waste Assessment	New Fire Assessment	Original - Vs - Corrected	\$ Waste \$ Added	\$ Fire \$ Added	
43	\$ 7,130.16	\$ 11,761.32	110	\$ 19,063.29	\$ 31,002..25	67	\$11,933.13	\$19,240.93	
(#2) REDUCTIONS = Verified Solid Waste Removed / Reduce # of Dwellings									
Org # of Dwellings	Org Waste Assessment	Org Fire Assessment	Correted # of Dwellings	New Waste Assessment	New Fire Assessment	Difference	\$Waste\$ REDUCED	\$Fire\$ REDUCED	
110	\$ 21,744.77	\$ 30,986.15	74	\$ 5,743.74	\$ 21,947.	-36	\$17,981.63	\$ 9,038.57	
(#3) REDUCTIONS = Verified "VACANT Land Fee ONLY" (No Dwelling Structure)									
Org # of Dwellings	Org Waste Assessment	Org Fire Assessment	Correted # of Dwellings	New Waste Assessment	New Fire Assessment	Difference	\$Waste\$ REDUCED	\$Fire\$ REDUCED	
16	\$ 2,970.90	\$ 4,517.70	1	\$ -	\$ 49.78	-15	\$ (2,970.90)	\$ (4,467.92)	
(#4) CAMPGROUNDS / MOBILE HOME PARKS = AUDITS									
Org Fire Fee	Org Waste Fee	New Fire Assessment	New Waste Collection	Org-vs-New "FIRE"Assessment	Org-vs-New "WASTE" Assessment				
\$ 38,160.60	\$ 792.24	\$ 50,284.56	\$ 594.18	\$ 12,123.96	\$ (198.06)				



County Extension

2024 Accomplishments

- Reached 12,611 county residents with educational programs
- Trained and worked with 226 volunteers to provide 5,197 in-service hours
- Engaged and reached 322,781 people through social media posts and videos
- 3 State Awards, 2 Regional Awards
- Received in financial contributions and grants \$347,000 to support programming

2025 Plans and Goals

- Expand educational outreach across all programs
- Strengthen public communication and visibility
- Innovate programming to meet the community's growing need

UF/IFAS Extension Columbia County partners with the community to provide research-based solutions and educational programs that improve the lives of Columbia County residents. Educational program areas include agriculture, horticulture, livestock, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth development. These programs serve all citizens of Columbia County - youth, farmers, families, and businesses alike.



Family & Consumer Sciences

The focus of the family and consumer science program has been on financial education, health, and nutrition in 2024. Through the financial management, we have offered VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) and partnered with local agencies and businesses to offer financial education, saving residents over \$32,000 with education and services. This interjected an additional \$140,000 of tax returns back into the Columbia County economy. The community has also received support in their health and nutrition through classes that offer healthy quick cooking options at home as well as support a change of their lifestyles to be able to sustain a healthier, more fulfilling life.

UF | **IFAS Extension**
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Budget: \$536,662

Number of Employees: 9

Heather Janney

Phone: (386) 752-5384

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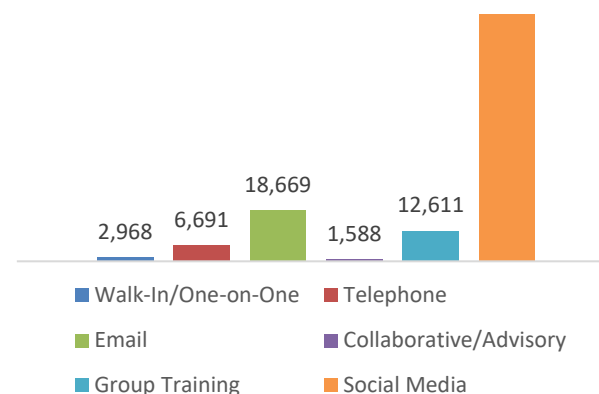
Horticulture

The horticulture program area strived to improve lives of Columbia County residents through programming focused on water conservation, gardening, and pesticide safety Landscaping™, entomology, and pesticide safety and education. To achieve this, the program relies on the Master Gardener Volunteer program. In 2024, there were 19 active volunteers donating over 1,700 hours of horticulture-related education. Over 55 classes were provided for residents and landscape professionals including fall vegetable gardening, beekeeping, weed identification and control, and fruits in the landscape. Saved County budget over \$3,000 by providing pesticide license training and recertification.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Programs deliver timely, relevant educational programs so farmers and residents can use research based scientific knowledge to increase economic returns and sustainably manage our land and water resources. Some of the services provided to over 3,500 Columbia County residents included crop scouting, plant disease diagnostics, soil sampling and forage testing, educational on-farm trials, and enhancement of marketing for products. Educational programs provided include consulting over the phone, site visits, educational meetings, festival booths, and social media. These programs provide best management practices to our agriculture producers and community residents to help them to further protect our County's most important resources.

Programming Reach



Youth Development and 4-H

Youth development and 4-H is achieved with help from all of our program areas. In 2023-2024, over 5,200 County youth were reached with life skills through 4-H Clubs, in-school enrichment, speaking competitions, agricultural tours, classes, training events. Agricultural literacy and awareness were increased among students and faculty at several local schools through classes and consultations helping them grow commodities in fields and classrooms. 100% of participants in mental health programming increased their wellness and over 1,000 youth increased their public speaking skills. Without the help of volunteers, the reach and service to clients would be limited. Over 290 4-H Volunteers donated upwards of 5,200 hours of labor to youth development in Columbia County. Thirty-five volunteers were trained in suicide prevention to help with the growing needs of mental health in Columbia County. Over 600 youth and adults were educated in the necessity to “turn of the tap” and help with water and conservation . Through participation in the 2024 Farm to Table Event, \$21,800 was raised for scholarships and agriculturally based youth serving agencies in the County.



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Economic Development

2023 Accomplishments

- Hosted and attended Rural Counties Day
- Hosted quarterly North FL. Economic Development Partnership Board of Director and business meeting held at FGC Library
- Attended Florida Rural Economic Development Association conference and FP&L Illumination conference

Ongoing Projects

- Clear Sky Health – Specialized rehabilitative care hospital, creation of approximately 100 new jobs
- Equipment Share Rental - Under Construction on 6-acres – Hwy 90 E. across from Lake City Gateway Airport
- Agroliquid – Liquid fertilizer company, manufactures plant nutrition products and services crop operations across the U.S. and world - First company to break ground at NFMIP located on HWY 90E
- Price Creek Solar – Construction of first of five solar energy centers East of SR 100 and South of NFMIP
- Southeast Milk, Inc. Renovating building on SW Main Blvd. – Full service dairy cooperative operating across 6 states in the southeastern U.S.
- FPL Disaster Staging Complex

2024 Plans and Goals

- Promote economic development and capital investment in Columbia County
- Promote projects in brownfield areas
- Promote Qualified Target Industry Projects
- Promote commercial, manufacturing, and industrial projects

The mission of the Columbia County Economic Development is “To foster a strong local economy and vibrant community by promoting a favorable business environment to attract private capital investment and employment opportunities.” Will continue collaboration with local business, educational, and civic partners .

Grants

\$9.5M appropriated by the Florida Legislature for various projects, including \$5.7M to construct WTP at NFMIP

\$65M awarded through Florida Commerce via the Community Planning and Technical Assistance Grant to develop Pre-Master Plan for Bell Road Distribution Center

\$5M awarded through Florida Commerce via Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) grant to construct a service road in Ellisville. The road will alleviate truck congestion on Hwy 41 South



› Gateway Solar Array

Budget: \$1,230,996

Number of Employees: 3

Jennifer Daniels

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Emergency Management

2024 Accomplishments

- Operated First Pet Friendly shelter during Hurricane Helene
- Activated County EOC, CIC and shelters for Hurricanes Debby (August), Helene (September), and Milton (October)
- Attended the State Emergency Response Commission meetings and first Florida Training in Emergency Management symposium
- Elected Vice-President of FEPA
- Taught classes at Gilchrist County EOC, FEPA Annual meeting, Governor's Hurricane Conference
- Graduated the McChrystal Group's Leadership Training Class
- Participated in planning of the FDLE Terrorism Exercise
- Renewed Storm Ready Certification through National Weather Service Jacksonville
- Spoke at Governor DeSantis' press conference presenting a check to Columbia County for Rural Infrastructure
- Chaired the Local Emergency Planning Committee quarterly meetings

The Emergency Management (EM) Department collaborates year-round with local, state, and federal partners to provide training, exercises, and response to any event that threatens the safety of the county. Emergency Management provides plan review for local businesses for continuity of operations and emergency response. Serves as the chairman of the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) committee and maintain the LMS project list.

During disasters, Emergency Management coordinates the response efforts for governmental and the community agencies that provide emergency support functions, operates shelters and the Citizen Information Center, supports State Emergency Management Division efforts, and participates in Long Term Recovery efforts.

Trainings

Virtual CIC and Shelter training provided to County employees. Conducted operation "Crazy Train Tabletop Exercise", FEMA "Just in Time Training"

Presentations:

- House Select Committee on Hurricane Resiliency & Recovery
- National Hurricane Conference Panel – Hurricane Idalia's Impacts

Budget: \$188,664

Number of Employees: 1 FTE, 1 PTE

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Ongoing Projects

- Public Safety Complex Design Grant
- Implementing the Incident Command System in the EOC during Activations
- Hurricane Idalia HMGP Projects
- Training County staff on EOC roles, duties and responsibilities
- Develop electronic sign in sheet for blue sky meetings and activations
- Develop EOC media annex and feeding annex

2025 Plans and Goals

- Continue to move the HMGP projects toward completion
- Complete update of Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) plan
- Develop a system of adding projects to the LMS project list
- Identify permanent location for pet friendly shelter
- Identify County staff positions to fill ICS roles in EOC activations
- Train County staff in key EOC positions so that staff augmentation can be brought in to support the County
- Continue to participate in outreach events to inform the public about emergency management
- Continue to modify and develop forms to assist with EM and EOC documentation

Committee/Board	Position
Columbia County Traffic Safety Team	Chair
Florida Emergency Preparedness Association	Vice President
Emergency Food and Shelter Board	Chair
FEPA Certification Commission	Commissioner/ Advisor
Local Emergency Planning Committee	Chair
Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Working Group	Chair
North Central Florida Hazardous Materials Policy Board	Vice-Chair
Long Term Recovery Committee	Member
Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Regional 2 meetings	Member – Region 3
State Emergency Response Commission (SERC)	FEPA Appointee
United Way Board Executive Committee	Liaison
United Way Board of Directors	Liaison



Fire Rescue

2024 Accomplishments

- Implemented the Community Paramedic Program
- Performed community risk reduction through educational programs to schools and adult groups
- Installed smoke detectors
- Provide fire extinguisher training
- Participated in community fundraisers and events

Ongoing Projects

- Construction of new station – FL. Legislative Fund Award \$950,000
- Fill position vacancies

2025 Plans and Goals

- Design and permitting for Station 51 replacement building.
- Purchase equipment according to equipment replacement plan

Columbia County Fire Rescue provides a multitude of services to the citizens of Columbia County. These services include fire responses, motor vehicle accidents, advanced life support response to the north and south end of the county and basic life support response to all of Columbia County. CCFR also provides educational programs for community risk reduction to school and adult groups, truck demonstrations, smoke detector installations, fire extinguisher training, building plan reviews, building inspections and pre-fire plans.

Projects

Construction of new fire station located off Lake Jeffery Road

Community Services

Fire responses, motor vehicle accidents, advanced life support response to the North and South end of County, basic life support to entire county. Responds to Hazmat incidents, Columbia EMS assist calls, provide paramedics to CCSO SWAT Team, and water rescues. Provided fire extinguisher training, fire building plan reviews, fire building inspections, and pre-fire plans. Participates in community fundraisers and events.

Budget: \$8,818,510

Number of Employees: 80

Chief Jeff Crawford

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Community Event

Incident	Events
Fire Alarm Activation	151
Grass/Brush Fire	130
HAZMAT	963
Medical Calls	2,567
MVC's	742
Other Responses	1,197
Structure Fire	88
Vehicle Fire	53



Community Paramedicine Vehicle



Brush Fire



Description	1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total for 23-24
Est. Original Prop Values	\$1,549,270	\$864,600	\$2,649,650	\$2,212,593	\$7,276,113.00
Est. Prop Value Losses	\$793,500	\$638,600	\$2,218,750	\$1,093,954	\$4,744,804.00
Injuries/Fatalities	2	2	1	0	5
Fire Alarm Activations.	34	32	37	48	151
Grass/Brush Fire	38	32	36	24	130
HAZMAT	768	27	71	97	963
Medical Calls	134	759	827	847	2567
MVC's	334	127	126	155	742
Incident-Other	13	323	388	473	1197
Incident-Structure Fire	23	19	23	23	88
Incident-Vehicle Fire	0	15	25	13	53
Life Safety-CPR	0	2	0	0	2
Life Safety-Development Reviews	0	0	0	0	0
Life Safety-Inspections	5	23	24	13	65
Life Safety- Plan Review	7	4	22	9	42
Life Safety-Pre-Fire Plans	3	1	0	0	4
Life Safety-Smoke Detector Installations	2	2	3	6	13
Life Safety-Special Events	30	6	27	16	79
Staff Development- Volunteer Training	79	148	187	88	502
Staff Development- In-house Training	3,120	3,420	3,240	3,240	13,020
Staff Development-Other Training	160	225	98	180	663
Target Solutions Training	2,496	4,104	3,888	3,888	14,376
Staff Development-Total Hours	5,855	7,897	7,413	7,396	28,561



Human Resources

2024 Accomplishments

- Established stand-alone department April 2024
- Hosted F.A.C.T. Roundtable July 2024
- Implemented Employee Portal enhancing staff convenience in accessing basic employment information
- Hired seventy (70) new hires
- Coordinated NACo Leadership training for four (4) county employees
- Enhanced employee benefits by offering employer paid dental and vision and increased life insurance coverage

Ongoing Projects

- Update departmental forms, processes, procedures, and position descriptions to new format
- Reorganize space utilization for building two offices and create direct entrance into department

2025 Plans and Goals

- Implement Long-range Succession Planning for departments
- Update onboarding/orientation process
- Recommend Training and Development Program for employees

The Department of Human Resources is responsible for the coordination and development of human resources for the most efficient utilization and delivery of human resources services for the county government.

Within the Department of Human Resources the following functions are performed:

- Personnel and labor relations functions, including the administration of the policies and procedures related to personnel management in accordance with the Columbia County Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Administration of employee benefits, the Classification and Pay Plan and policies on Drug-Free Workplace.

DID YOU KNOW?

Columbia County received \$35,000 from Florida Blue to enable a wellness program for employees

Budget: \$299,999

Number of Employees: 3

Kari Guy

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Information Technology

2024 Accomplishments

- County wide area redundant network migration to ClearWave Fiber Optics
- County wide migration from Comcast internet services to ClearWave Fiber Optics
- Completed layer 3 Ethernet equipment upgrades for all remote departments
- Completed VoIP Call Manager upgrades to include Unity Voicemail and Prescence
- Implemented advanced Cisco VoIP Emergency Response for enhanced 911 PSAP capabilities
- Implemented digital to analog conversion to replace 911 PSAP copper phone lines
- Implemented additional redundant VoIP SIP trunks to accommodate 911 consolidation
- Completed Arctic Wolf advanced network monitoring, implemented advanced threat protection using AI analytics to provide real time monitoring and notification
- Implemented Advanced Multifactor Authentication protocols for Microsoft SharePoint to protect County data
- Upgraded email security applications

2025 Plans and Goals

- Complete Lake City Reporter Building IT technology
- Complete capitol project by migrating the on premise servers and data to the Microsoft Cloud, in an effort to decrease the county's hardware footprint and limit data security liabilities
- Conduct one year assessment of multi-factor authentication services, new email security applications and Arctic Wolf network monitoring.
- Continue staff on-going education and training

The IT Department is responsible for the management, operation and control of the information technology services and resources of Columbia County. IT plans and coordinates maintenance activities for the County's computer, network systems and other information technology resources.

IT researches, analyzes and identifies needs and options for upgrades and improvements to computer, networks and other information technology resources for the County. IT coordinates and assists with the installation of new computer systems and software for the County, monitor and manage the County's intranet

911 Addressing

911 Addressing was merged with IT and is responsible for all mapping, enhanced 911 addressing, mapping support for BCC Departments and other constitutional offices.

Redesigned the procedures for obtaining 911 addresses by incorporating an online application portal, included Building and Zoning and the Property Appraiser to reduce turnaround time in acquiring an address and eliminating addressing errors.

IT Dept. received 1,553 help tickets with 1,552 resolved with an average in progress time of 43 minutes. Completion percentage is 98.0%

Number of Employees: 4

Todd Manning

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Landscape & Parks

2024 Accomplishments

- Completed laser grading ball fields at the girls and adult complex
- Installed court lights at Richardson Community Center
- Completed new restroom at Richardson Community Center
- Completed shade cover over bleachers at tennis courts
- 39 tournaments at Southside Sports Complex and South Columbia Sports Complex
- Constructed boardwalk at Falling Creek Falls Park
- Constructed cricket field at Old Boys Club
- 99 rentals at Ponderosa Pavilion at Alligator Lake Park
- FWC fishing event held at Ponderosa Pond
- Smokey Bear's 80th Birthday Bash held at Alligator Lake Park
- Special Olympics Florida Competition held at Southside Sports Complex

2025 Plans and Goals

- Renovate bridges on the trails at Alligator Lake Park – Capital Project \$68,000
- Commence improvements at River Rise Boat Ramp – Capital Project \$101,835
- Commence repair of existing ShoreSox system and boardwalk at Rum Island
- Launch Phase I of the 500 acre regional park
- Initiate relocation of RC Track facilities – Capital Project \$257,686
- Fort White Complex Fencing – Capital Project \$70,000

The Landscape and Parks Department is dedicated to providing quality recreation opportunities for our residents and visitors. The services provided include, but not limited to, maintenance of county parks, community centers and various county facilities. The 146 acre Southside Sports Complex is also maintained by the department. The department was responsible for prepping the complex for the 39 tournaments this past fiscal year.

Assisted in providing venues for youth cross country events, weddings, birthday parties, local recreational league events, and tournaments and other various events at Alligator Lake Park.

Parks

Southside Sports Complex
South Columbia Sports Complex
Alligator Lake
Falling Creek
Rum Island
Five Points Park
Columbia City Park
Bethlehem Park
Lake Jeffery Road Practice Fields
CR 18 Trail (O'Leno to Ichetucknee)

Community Centers

Deep Creek
Lulu
Mason City
South Columbia/Fort White
Springville
Westside
Winfield
Richardson

6	County Parks
7	Boat Ramps
8	Community Centers
17	Playgrounds
25	Miscellaneous Facilities
48	Ball Fields
78	Ponderosa Pavilion Rentals
146	Acre Southside Sports Complex

Budget: \$1,941,903

Number of Employees: 21

Clint Pittman

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Library

2024 Accomplishments

- Submitted State Aid to Libraries Grant Application resulting in state funding for FY 2026, State funding FY 2025 estimated at \$468,930
- Filled four vacancies in the library staff
- Filed for e-rate discounts, resulting in 90% discount rate on library Internet access
- 8 students earned high school diplomas and career certifications (111 total graduates) through the Library's Career Online High School program
- Purchased 217 financial literacy materials for children and adults following award of \$5,000 FINRA Investor Education Foundation grant
- Library staff members received training on a variety of topics
- Partnered with various organizations to provide programs, services and events
- Collected over 750 food items for local charities during the Library's annual Food for Fines event
- Provided outreach programs and rotating deposit collections to 19 local childcare centers
- Coordinated 20 field trips and outreach visits to local schools resulting in over 3,000 student contacts
- Hosted STEAM Break children's programs during Spring Break week with 243 in attendance
- Hosted Youth Art Contest (45 entries)

Columbia County Public Libraries serves the public 63 hours per week across all three locations. There are a wide variety of different resources and programs available to the public including eleven weekly children's programs, outreach services, summer reading, computer classes, adult literacy, public meeting facilities, e-government assistance, genealogy resources, tax forms, volunteer and community service opportunities, and many more.



› Library Director Katrina Evans reads to kindergarteners at Summers Elementary School during Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! In January 2024

DID YOU KNOW?

The Library had 115,446 annual visitors and circulated 266,569 items last year.

Budget: \$2,003,142

Number of Employees: 26

Katrina Evans

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2024 Accomplishments

- Hosted Lubee Bat Conservancy program (150 attendees)
- Hosted *Stars in the Story Dome*, special children's event (54 attendees)
- Hosted Book Character Pumpkin Contest (31 family entries)
- Visited the Lake City VA Hospital and local assisted living facility to provide library services to patients and residents
- Hosted interactive Family Movies for Halloween and Christmas, including visit from Santa Claus
- Hosted 17th Annual Art Show in partnership with the Friends of the Library and the Art League of North Florida.
- Distributed over 1800 pairs of free eclipse glasses to community for the Annular Eclipse and Solar Eclipse
- Hosted Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon (40 attendees)
- Partnered with AARP to provide free tax filing assistance
- Painted exterior of the West Branch Library Building
- Worked in emergency shelters 824.75 hours and Citizens Information Center 275.25 hours in response to Hurricanes Debby and Helene (26 library staff)
- Hosted a Summer Youth Employment Program worker, June 10-July 18



Main Library



Fort White Branch



West Branch

Free Loan Material

- | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| • Books | • Newspapers | • VHS tapes | • Puppets | • e-books |
| • Magazines | • Audio CDs | • DVDs | • Seeds | • Audiobooks |

Additional Online Resources

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Wireless internet | • Driving-tests.org |
| • OverDrive | • Florida Electronic Library |
| • LearningExpress Library | • eLibrary |
| • Ancestry Library Edition | • FastCase |
| • Heritage Quest | • Pronunciator |
| • cloudLibrary | |



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2025 Plans and Goals

- Update five-year strategic plan to meet State Aid requirements
- Consider change in integrated library system software and library webpage software to improve user experience and reduce costs
- Hire and train new Assistant Library Director following retirement of current Assistant Library Director on December 31, 2024
- Install new fire alarm and detection devices at Main Library to replace outdated system
- Continue to expand ebook and downloadable audiobook collections
- Continue to work on growing and strengthening partnerships with local schools to increase usage by students and teachers
- Continued facilities maintenance/improvement projects at all three Library locations
- Implement computer classes for the public on various computer and technology topics at NorthStar Family Resources Center
- Host graduation ceremony for Career Online High School graduates
- Seek grant funding to continue Career Online High School program
- Implement sensory story time for children on the autism spectrum following appropriate training for library staff
- Incorporate statewide FLIN SHAREit platform to existing interlibrary loan workflow
- Consider adding regular library visits to additional local assisted living facilities to provide library services to residents as staffing allows



Above: Pictured are Youth Services Librarian Kate Duong helps to get the word out about free eclipse glasses available at the Library (top left), The Fort White Branch Library displays some of the new financial literacy materials purchased with grant funds from FINRA Investor Education Foundation (top right), The Library participated in Kiwanis Kids Day on May 4, 2024, Star Wars Day! May the 4th be with you! (bottom).



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Management Services

2024 Accomplishments

- Responded to 437 Public Records requests
- Compiled and verified Financial Disclosure Information to State
- Administered Individual and Business Assistance programs and oversaw Emergency Home Repair program .
- Facilitated utility billing software training.
- Administered County indigent burial/cremation program
- Advertised and conducted Non-ad valorem assessment committee meeting
- Finance and Purchasing Officers completed HUD OIG CDBG-DR Fraud Training
- Administered County non ad-valorem assessment program
- Coordinated financial disclosure filing through FL. Commission on Ethics
- Participated in Comprehensive Safety Action Plan project task force team
- Administered the first year funding of Opioid Abatement Funds
- Participated in Green Light for Veterans Campaign
- Secured increased disability ratings for veterans totaling \$274,056.60 annually

The Department of Management Services is responsible for supporting the Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, and Assistant County Manager including procurement, insurance and risk management, fiscal and grant oversight, utility billing and collections, non-ad valorem assessments, and veterans affairs.

Within the Department of Management Services the following functions are performed:

- County Insurance/Risk Management Programs
- Compliance with County Purchasing Policies and related Florida Statutes
- Oversight of fiscal and grant management
- Veterans Affairs
- Utility Billing and Collections
- Non-Ad Valorem Assessments

Budget: \$3,424,315

Number of Employees: 10

Lisa K.B. Roberts

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2024 Accomplishments

- Outreach program transitional support for incarcerated veterans – connecting veterans to pre-release planning, educational and employment resources
- Streamlined claims processing in VA office
- Purchasing Training – Construction Procurement and Better RFPs Better Projects

Ongoing Projects

- Non Ad Valorem Assessments
- Continue to assist all County departments with procurement needs
- Administering Opioid Abatement eight-year program

2025 Plans and Goals

- Ensure efficient and effective operations of the department so access to information, programs, and services are provided to employees and the public
- Continue expanding outreach services of veterans affairs
- Implementation and training of Purchasing document submittal and invoice payment tracking system
- Implement MSTU and MSBU's
- Implement Bank of America reconciliation automated invoice system through web portal
- Update Public Records Policy to reflect custodian of record responsibility in departments

The Procurement function of the Management Services Department is to assist county departments with procurement needs

Requisitions Processed	
Purchase Orders	481
Field Purchase Orders	6,852
Bids/RFPs/RFQs	
Bids/RFPs/RFQs	26
Piggyback Bids/Contracts	28
Leases	4

Veterans Affairs assists veterans and their families with services, benefits, and support. The office hours for the Veterans Service office is:

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8 AM-2PM

Tuesday and Thursday 10 AM – 4 PM

Telephone Inquiries: 700

Office Visits: 215

Claims Filed: 123

Claims in Process: 104

Finance assists in the budget process, monitoring of County expenditures, grant administration, community center funding contracts, and county insurance administration.

Insurance claims filed: 26

Purchasing Accounts Reconciled: 4 – Total Expended: \$169,984.60

Grant Projects Total Expended: \$28.6 M

Management Services also provides services for utility billing and collections, non-ad valorem assessments, and BOCC Agenda preparations



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Maintenance & Facilities

2024 Accomplishments

- Installed cat-5 cable for Court Administration, 911/EOC, health department, and west branch library
- Replaced roll up door at Public Works
- Set up Euthenization building
- Paint, trim out and install electrical system at Traffic Ops building
- Installed ceiling fans at Mason City and Lulu Community Centers
- Installed lock box at Mason City Community Center
- Completed approximately 200 scheduled facilities repair and maintenance

Ongoing Projects

- Old Lake City Reporter interior renovations
- Bethlehem Park Community Center construction
- Fire Department Administration Office Building construction
- Old Richardson School Historic Renovation
- Traffic Ops Building construction
- Animal Enforcement Euthenization building

2025 Plans and Goals

- Courthouse chiller and boiler control upgrades
- Jail cooler and freezer replacements
- Fire suppression system (911) upgrade
- Fire Station 48 HVAC system upgrade

The Maintenance and Facilities Department is responsible for the sanitation services of seven facilities and maintenance of over 50 facilities throughout the County.

Our goal is to provide safe and comfortable facilities for County staff as well as the public who use these facilities for business, sports, or recreational activities.

In 2024 the Maintenance and Facilities Department completed capital projects consisting of installation of elevator door lock monitoring compliance, installed and constructed animal enforcement offices and kennels, installed, Richardson Community Center outdoor lighting and replaced roof at old Lake City Reporter building.

Grant Funded special projects to be completed:

- 1) Bethlehem Park Community Center
- 2) Fire Department Administrative Offices
- 3) Old Richardson School Historic Renovation

Did You Know?

Facilities & Maintenance responded to over 833 maintenance requests.

Budget: \$2,475,725

Number of Employees: 17

Donny DuPree

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Maintenance Requests

County Extension -	13
Economic Development -	0
Fire Department -	58
Information Technology -	16
Public Libraries -	72
Public Works -	12
Solid Waste Facility -	25
Sheriff's Office -	18
Tourist Development -	04

Courthouse Annex -	05
Emergency Management/911 -	22
Health Department -	10
Detention Center -	453
Parks and Landscape -	59
Community Centers/Recreation	45
Supervisor of Elections -	06
IT Department -	16



Public Works

2024 Accomplishments

- Ellisville WWTF (2)
- Birley Road Paving
- Westwood Acres Paving
- Tina/Pine Knoll Paving
- Spradley/Colvin/Menlo Paving
- Quail Ridge Paving
- Gabe Paving

Ongoing Projects

- Eastside WWTF
- Lake City Animal Shelter
- Petroleum Cleanup of Public Works
- County Road 6
- Queen/Winfield/Chambria
- Parnell Hills
- High Dry Acres
- Traffic Study
- 238 Improvements
- Bascom Norris (SR47 to Faith Road)
- NFMIP – Tyre Road
- Bell Road Extension
- Dirt to Pave Conversion: Cypress Lake/Charles
- Annual Resurfacing :
 - Mayo
 - English/LM Aaron
 - Dairy
 - Ring Court

Public Works maintains the infrastructure of Columbia County as well as makes improvements wherever needed and whenever possible. This vast department is divided into two divisions:

- Maintenance Division oversees more than 600 miles of paved roads and 450 miles of dirt roads
- Transportation Division is responsible for the planning and construction of infrastructure and providing water and sewer services



Services Provided

Culverts Replaced	9
Culverts Cleaned	34
Miles Graded	8,598
Work Orders Completed	3,285

Budget: \$12,112,426

Number of Employees: 86

Kevin Kirby

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Future Plans and Goals

- Obtain dedicated funding source for road maintenance
- Improve drainage in known problematic areas
- Replace aging equipment

Maintenance Division

- Operates 10 motor graders to maintain 450 miles of dirt roads on a rotating schedule
- Performs asphalt patching, drainage ditch maintenance, and culvert installation
- Maintains all county rights-of-way, retention ponds, urban mowing, guard rails, and sidewalks
- Repairs and maintains all heavy equipment

- Maintains all county road shoulders
- Installation and maintenance of all street signs, traffic signs, traffic signals, street lights and school zones
- Improve storm water run-off issues by improving water quality and flood reduction

Transportation Division

- Road Construction/Resurfacing
- Water and Sewer services

Raw Materials Utilized:

424,447 tons of lime rock
257,700 tons of dirt
49,500 tons of millings



Solid Waste & Mosquito Control

2024 Accomplishments

- New Landfill Engineer Contracted – Locklear and Associates, Inc.
- Title V Air Permit Renewal
- FDEP Small County Consolidated Solid Waste Management Grant-\$93,750 – Utilized to Assist in the Cost of Litter Removal from County Roads
- Trees timbered for future Class III Expansion and Soil Storage Stockpiles
- Landfill Spotter Certifications: Charles Moore
- Landfill Operator Recertification: Evan Cox and Terrill Acosta
- New Hire of Landfill Secretary I – Sabrina Platt
- Assistant Landfill Director, Evan Cox supervised contracted hurricane debris removal crews and –Ceres with storm debris pickup from Hurricane Debby and Helene; 60+/days

Provided Services

Solid Waste

- Commercial and residential Solid waste disposal
- Household hazardous waste disposal
- Recycling

- Annual community-wide toxic round-up

Mosquito Control

- Surveillance
- Adulticiding
- Larviciding

Solid Waste ensures Columbia County has adequate disposal capacity in place to serve the citizens and businesses of Columbia County, manage and dispose of waste in a manner that ensures health and welfare, protect and preserve natural resources, and meeting all state and local regulations while maintaining sound fiscal management.



› Waste Contractor dumping at Landfill

Mosquito Control provides integrated pest management for mosquito reduction around homes and neighborhoods to reduce the risk of contracting mosquito-borne diseases. The department provides services utilizing the most effective techniques available and is accomplished by eliminating mosquito-breeding sites during the season that runs from May through October. The department is regulated through the Florida Department of Agriculture (FDACS) F.S. Chapter 388 and F.A.C. Chapter 5E-13.

Budget: \$4,365,742

Number of Employees: 22

Pam Davis

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Ongoing Projects

- Excavating future Cell 5 utilizing clay for daily cover of Class I and Class III
- Clearing and grubbing phase for future Class III expansion
- Storm debris – received 835 tons of Hurricane debris from residents generated from SWE 2024, Hurricane Debby and Hurricane Helene), staging, burning and ash disposal

2025 Plans and Goals

- Design plan for Future Class II expansion
- Fort White High School – Landfill/Recycling Tour – Proposed December 2024
- National Night Out – Promoting Landfill/Recycling Education
- New Hire Landfill Spotter Certification
- Re-certifications for Landfill Operator and Landfill Spotters

SOLID WASTE TONNAGE	23/24	% Change from 22/23
Class I – Commercial Garbage	28,330	- -3.6%
Class I – Residential Garbage	31,384	+ 1%
Class I – Average Tons Per Day	220	-.45%
Class III – Commercial C&D	25,639	+ 21%
Class III – Residential C&D	5,234	- 15 %
Class III – Average Tons Per Day	114	+15%
Tires	534	-10%

MOSQUITO CONTROL

2024 Accomplishments

- Attended Dodd Short Course – Sentinel Chicken and Directors Caucus Course: Evan Cox, Asst. Director
- Attended Director Caucus at Dodd Short Course: Pam Davis
- Attended Various Webinars Required for CEU's to Maintain PHPC License: Pam Davis and Evan Cox
- Hired new Mosquito Control Operator-Michael Oxendine
- Ariel spraying by FDACS due to Hurricane Debby
- Obtained FDACS State Funding in the Amount of \$38,892 – Utilized in conducting arthropod/mosquito control services on a match basis by the County

2025 Plans and Goals

- Continuing Education – Dodd Short Courses
- National Night Out-Promoting Mosquito Prevention/Awareness Education

MOSQUITO CONTROL SERVICES

SURVEILLANCE:

Conducts adult mosquito surveillance in five (5) zones monthly by placing CDC Light Traps in those areas to gain information on the relative population density and species of mosquitoes to determine the most appropriate means of control; also drivers are required to perform Landing Rate Counts and record the data to meet the threshold to spray mosquitoes.

Visual Inspections of larval mosquito habitats are conducted to identify the presence of larval mosquitoes to determine what larvicide is required to treat the type of water source.

County partners with UF/Florida Dept. of Agriculture to identify mosquitoes that could pose a risk of transmission of mosquito-borne diseases.





MOSQUITO CONTROL SERVICES

ADULTICIDING:

Provides spraying of the County using various chemicals to kill adult mosquitoes, and are generally applied using truck mounted ULV spray unit that are based on the trapping counts and/or landing rate counts recorded as per the rules and regulations.

LARVICIDING:

Provides for the chemical treatment of larval mosquitoes (either I-IV Instar) by applying chemicals to roadside ditches, swales, retention ponds, treatment ponds and small bodies of water, and man-made ponds.

Mosquito Application		23/24	% Change from 22/23
Truck Spray Request		12,252	+ 17%
Standing Water Treatment		138	+ 103%



Tourist Development

2024 Accomplishments

- Earned Bronze Adrian Award
- Visit Florida full page ad with Miles Partnership
- Brand identity redesign
- New enhanced website
- Paid media strategy: utilized search, social, mobile, and native ads to boost awareness and interest
- Secured media coverage in local, regional, and national outlets
- Full page ad in April and September issues of Orlando Family Magazine. Digital editions had an active link to Lake City's Website. Digital banners were placed on Orlando Family Magazine's website and an added value eblast
- Hosted Babe Ruth and USSSA Tournaments
- 2023 Tourism Week Proclamation
- 1st County of 27 TDC's to Participate in Visit Florida Rural DMO Photo/Video Shoot with Cycle Here Media
- Participated in Various Media Campaigns Targeting General Awareness and Education about Destination, Driving Traffic to Website, Geographic and Demographics Targeting, Competitive Sets, Audience, and Paid Social (Facebook/Instagram)

Columbia County Tourist Development serves as the county's marketing arm, promoting local attractions and activities to boost tourism. This effort increases the tax base through visitor spending, which strengthens the economy by creating jobs in hotels, restaurants, service stations, and tourist attractions. Additionally, Columbia County Tourist Development Tax revenue is invested into events and youth sports venues to develop high-quality youth sports facilities. The enhanced facilities improve the quality of life for local residents, providing children of Columbia County the opportunity to play team sports at a first-class venue thanks in part to tourism.

Taxes Collected

Total Collections	% Change
\$2,202,539	+3.97

Hotel Occupancy

	Data	% Change
Occupancy	65.7%	+3.3
Rooms Sold	320,102	+3.4

Budget: \$5,056,011

Number of Employees: 4

Clint Pittman, Interim Director

Phone: (386) 758-1312

Clint_pittman@columbiacountyfla.com

www.facebook.com/visitolakecityfl

www.instagram.com/visitolakecityfl

<https://southsidesportscomplex.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/southsiderccomplex>



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2023 Accomplishments

Event Sponsorship

- Chamber of Commerce –Gateway City Beer and Wine Festival
- Stephen Foster Festival of Lights – Polar Express
- Columbia County Resources Fair and Rodeo
- Stephen Foster Folk Festival
- Olustee Festival
- Lake City – Columbia County Museum
- Babe Ruth State Softball Tournament

2024 Plans and Goals

- Break Ground on Phase 1 of Regional Sports Park
- Recruit New Executive Director and Sports Marketing Director
- Drive Awareness and Affinity as a Year-Round Active Lifestyle Destination
- Keep Brand Top of Mind for Target Visitor Groups, while Keeping Sustainability in Mind
- Maximize the Visitor Economy and Experience
- Increase in-market Spend and Economic Impact
- Promoting Tourism Amenities that Support the Community
- Identify Long-term Vision and Strategic Roadmap Focused on Driving Growth and Improving Partner Relations
- Build Relationships to Expand Sports Tourism for Short-term events and the Long-term Product Development Initiatives



› Historical Downtown Lake City

SPONSORED CONTENT

4 Great Fall Vacation Destinations

Experience Authentic, Unspoiled Florida

Lake City, Florida's Springlands is the perfect vacation destination for anyone who wants to experience authentic, unspoiled Florida. With endless crystal-clear springs and winding rivers to paddle on, dive into or fish in – along with miles of natural trails and outdoor recreation areas perfect for hiking, biking and camping – this is a place that your whole family will love to explore. So plan your visit to Lake City, Florida's Springlands soon. Because Happy Happens Here. Learn more at lakecityfl.com.

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Utilities

2023 Accomplishments

- Ellisville Wastewater – Expand the Treatment Plant to double the capacity
- Ellisville and Fort White Water systems – replaced meters throughout system upgrading to radio read meters
- Fort White Water Treatment Plant – Replaced 5000 gallon hydro-pneumatic tank that pressurizes the distribution system\
- Preformed maintenance and improvements to Fort White system
- Revised Rate Schedule to unify rates between systems

Ongoing Projects

- North Florida Mega Industrial Park Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) construction
- North Florida Mega Industrial Park Water Treatment Plant (WTP) – Design and Wellfield location
- Finalize Water and Wastewater Master Plans

2024 Plans and Goals

- Ellisville/Fort White – complete 12-inch water main installation
- FDOT Rest Area WWTP – acquisition of system to add wastewater treatment capacity
- Ellisville Water Distribution – Seek funding to loop system near Interstate exchange (SRF/AWS)
- Ellisville WTP Improvements – Install flow-meter, and acquire an additional wellfield to improve water quality and redundancy.
- Work toward multi-county operations and maintenance agreement to control costs.

The County operates the water and wastewater systems in Ellisville, the water system in Fort White and is building a water and wastewater system at the North Florida Mega Industrial Park. In 2013, the County moved the Utilities into a separate Department for transparency.



Budget: \$ 28,700,309

Number of Employees: 4

Robert Domingue,
Utility Director

Phone: (386) 466-9431

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