

Foley Newsletter

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Ralph G. Hellmich

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Hello, everyone. I certainly hope you are well and enjoying this nice fall weather. There is a lot happening in Foley, so let me dive in right away.

The city council passed the 2022–23 budget, which went into effect Oct 1. I am proud to work with the council, and our combined efforts produced our city's most progressive budget in many years. We all recognize the extraordinary growth happening in South Baldwin County.

The new budget includes \$50 million in capital projects to address growth. This amount is five times more than is normally spent on these projects, yet it still is a financially responsible budget that maintains adequate reserves in case of natural disasters.

I am pleased to report that Foley has entered into an agreement with the Baldwin County Board of Education for additional funding for the six Foley schools. The fund will be administered by the newly formed Enhanced Education Advisory Committee. The funding provided through this partnership will be used to take care of specific needs identified by Foley's principals.

Another partnership between the board, the cities and the sheriff's department is the upgraded School Resource Officer Program that is in every public school in Baldwin County. Not only does this provide a very high level of security for our schools, these officers interact with students on many levels, basically as mentors. I applaud the BCBE for the many security upgrades that have been enacted this year.

A number of city projects have begun around town. Construction is well under way on the Pine Street Park, which will have a musical



Mayor's Notes

theme. Main Street is moving forward on several projects in the historic downtown area. The alley behind Hotel Magnolia has been named Cat Alley. Improvements there will include murals, door painting and attractive fencing.

Road projects under way include the Juniper Street extension, connecting Juniper Street with Hwy. 59 at Co. Rd. 20.; N. Pecan Street and soon, S. Pecan Street.

Our park upgrades continue. We just completed the new restrooms at Mel Roberts Park.

Other current projects include the new library and the public works campus, as well as our Kids Park renovation that was voted for online by over 2500 people. These are all happening during this year.

Foley has joined with Hennef, Germany in our first Sister Cities Program. Its goal is to promote educational and cultural activities for students and residents. The first joint project is a gallery exhibit of images from the other city; this will open simultaneously in each city on Nov. 3. Free to the public through Dec. 2, the exhibit will be open Tuesday through Friday, noon to 4 p.m., at the Truist Bank Building at 200 W. Laurel.

There's much more to talk about, but I must bring this to a close. I look forward to seeing you at our Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations. Enjoy the holiday season!

Mayor Ralph G. Hellmich

Foley provides support for local schools

Foley High School and all of the schools in the Foley feeder pattern will soon benefit from additional resources provided by a partnership between the city and the Baldwin County Board of Education.

The city council voted to create a fund with \$200,000 that will be matched by the Baldwin County Board of Education. The fund, controlled by an appointed board, will address specific needs identified by the principals of each of the six schools. This includes Foley High, Foley Elementary, Florence Mathis Elementary, Foley Middle, Magnolia School and Swift School.

Examples of needs that may be eligible for this fund include: additional teaching units to help with English guided reading and math intervention to bring down the teacher/student ratio; attendance coaches; and instructional aids for English as Second Language teachers.

The project was created as a way of enhancing capabilities within the Foley feeder pattern schools without taxing citizens, according to Foley Mayor Ralph Hellmich. The funding provides the opportunity for extras that will make a difference in the classroom.

Foley has also increased its support for school resource officers from \$2 million to \$2.6 million. Foley was one of the first cities to begin placing a police officer at each school. This was done several years ago in response to the increase in school shootings. The program aims to not only deter shootings, but also help create positive interactions between students and law enforcement officers. The program has evolved to the point where the county school system is reimbursing the cities for some of the cost of providing officers in each school. ■



Construction to begin on new kid's park

More than 2,500 votes were cast by some of our most discerning residents. The city's youth have spoken and the new inclusive Foley Kids Park will feature a nature theme and give children of all abilities a safe space to play. The project is slated to begin demolition and construction after the Christmas holidays. ■

Foley deputy chief and lieutenants complete National Command and Staff College

Congratulations to Deputy Chief Kevin Carnley, Lt. Glenn Hartenstein and Lt. Larry Dearing on their graduation from the National Command and Staff College. They completed 240 online hours of graduate course work on leadership and attended a two-week residency program.

Lt. Hartenstein trained in Orange Beach, Alabama, and Deputy Carnley and Lt. Dearing were in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana.

Lt. Hartenstein won the Distinguished Writer Award for session 14 (Jan 17–28, 2022), and Lt. Dearing won the Distinguished Writer Award and Top Capstone Research Award for session 15 (July 11–22, 2022).

Foley is proud to have a professional police department that is committed to continuous improvement to better serve its citizens. ■

Foley Public Library Wi-Fi Hotspot Project

By offering the ability for patrons to check out Wi-Fi hotspots, the Foley Public Library has met a tremendous need in our community.

The Foley Public Library's mission has always been to provide members of the community with the resources necessary to fulfill their evolving informational, educational, recreational and cultural needs.

The need for the internet connection increased dramatically during COVID as local students were forced to learn from home and hundreds of local workers began working from a home office. At that time only 63.7% of Foley households had a broadband internet subscription.

A solution for residents who did not have internet service in their home was the installation of a Wi-Fi hotspot. Fortunately, the library was able to apply for and receive a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS Cares Act Grant) that paid for 15 hotspots that could be checked out to library patrons. Those hotspots were an immediate success with school children, homebound workers, and those seeking jobs on the internet. Since that time, the library has added 30 more devices, which are very popular. The library has checked out the hotspots more than 2,000 times and there is a continuous waiting list for the devices.

Thanks to the IMLS Cares Act Grant,



the library has been able to meet a need in this community and will continue to do so with local and additional grant funding. The Wi-Fi outreach program has been a major success and is popular among patrons of all ages. ■



Moving Forward

Construction has begun on several downtown improvements. In Heritage Park, the fountain and surrounding plaza are being upgraded. The project includes a new pool for the fountain, new pavers and moving some of the existing walls.

Another improvement that will begin soon is the Rose Trail Extension. This will create a green pathway connecting Hwy. 98 with the southern section of the Rose Trail near the dog park. This will replace a section of pavement and concrete west of the Foley Post Office.

Also, a new, larger restroom facility will soon replace the current Comfort Station in Heritage Park. ■



Foley Fire Department Acquires Boats for Flood Water Rescues

The Foley City Council recently approved the purchase of additional boats for the Foley Fire Department to use for flood water rescues in storm events. During Hurricane Sally and other flood events, numerous rescue calls from residents in flooded neighborhoods were received by FFD. Foley's existing rescue boat was not the best resource for navigating in flood water and through residential areas. The new boats are designed to float in shallow water and will allow rescuers to move victims to a safe location as quickly as possible. ■

Fall/Winter Fire Safety

As we are in the fall season and approaching the holidays, the Foley Fire Department reminds you to practice fire safety in all of your fall and winter activities. This includes proper use and display of decorations, heating equipment / fireplace safety, and cooking safety. We also remind you to install and keep working smoke alarms in your homes, and replace those batteries when needed. Smoke alarms have a rated life of 10 years, so replace older alarms for the best protection. This year's NFPA fire prevention campaign has focused on planning and practicing home fire escape. We encourage you to visit the NFPA website at <https://www.nfpa.org/Events/Events/Fire-Prevention-Week/About> to learn more about these fire safety tips.

Open Burning

As of November 1, the annual ADEM ban on open burning has expired. HOWEVER, a burn permit from the Foley Fire Department is required by city ordinance for any open burning of debris within the Foley city limits. Several conditions must be met in order to obtain a permit. The debris must be vegetative or untreated wood, and the location of the fire must be at least 500 feet from any structure or public road. The use of portable or fixed outdoor fireplaces is allowed without a permit, provided that they are at least 15 feet away from a structure. Please contact the Foley Fire Department at 251-943-1266 for questions or assistance.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

FY 2021/22 Annual Report (Oct. 2021–Sept. 2022)

- 598 Single-family Permits
\$136,299,930 Valuation
- 20 Duplex/Multi-family Permits (92 Units)
\$17,018,543 Valuation
- 27 New Commercial Permits
\$27,597,454 Valuation
- 54 Commercial Addition/Remodel Permits
\$42,312,307 Valuation
- 3,982 Total Permits
\$269,148,290 Valuation
- 3rd in the nation in FORTIFIED construction

Visit cityoffoley.org/Community-Development or call 251-952-4011 for more information. ■

Check us out online:

www.CityofFoley.org www.VisitFoley.org
www.CoastalAlabamaMarket.com
www.FoleyLibrary.org www.FoleyRecreation.com
www.GrahamCreekPreserve.org



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Upcoming Events

Foley Events Updated Daily VisitFoley.com
Foley Public Library FoleyLibrary.org
Foley Senior Center CityofFoley.org
Foley Sports Tourism FoleySportsTourism.com
Graham Creek Preserve GrahamCreekPreserve.org

Foley Public Library

New hours: 9 a.m.–7 p.m. Mon.–Thurs.; 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Fri.–Sat. Monthly programs, Makersaurus Time, adult arts and crafts, family bingo night, lunch and learns and other clubs.

Downtown OWA

Live shows: Brandon Styles, magician/comedian and other special events.
For info and times: VisitOWA.com.

Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market

Local produce, fresh seafood, homemade goods and more. Open Sat. 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
20733 Mifflin Rd.
CoastalAlabamaMarket.com

Nov. 11 Veterans Day Parade

10 a.m. Come join us in Heritage Park as we celebrate veterans of all branches.
Map of parade route at VisitFoley.com.

Nov. 11–Dec. 23 55th Annual Trim-a-Tree Marketplace

Unique Christmas ornaments, decorations and gifts created by local artists and members. Presented by the Foley Art Center. Suite 410, Tanger Outlet Center.
Mon.–Sat. 10 a.m.–7 p.m., Sundays 11 a.m.–6 p.m. 251-943-4381.

Nov. 12th 29th Annual Foley Rotary Club Oyster Run

7 a.m.–12 p.m. 5k run/walk begins at 8 a.m. and one-mile fun run begins at 9 a.m.
Registration at 7 a.m. Heritage Park.

Nov. 12 Chocolate and Cheese Festival

10 a.m.–7 p.m.
Heritage Park

Nov. 19 Creek Crawl

A four-mile course of mud, water and other obstacles testing strength, agility and endurance. Sign up at <https://crawlcreek.itsyourrace.com>.
23460 Wolf Bay Dr., Foley
grahamcreekpreserve.org

Nov. 19 Annual Harvest Festival

9 a.m.–2 p.m. Featuring produce, seafood, artwork, baked goods, and more. Harvest Queen pageant at 10 a.m.
20733 Mifflin Rd.
CoastalAlabamaMarket.com

Nov. 19 Tree Lighting Ceremony

Enjoy a snowy tree lighting ceremony with Christmas music. VisitOWA.com

Nov. 23 & Dec. 28 Cocoa, Coffee & Donuts with an Author

10 a.m. Upstairs meeting room at the Foley Public Library. Space is limited. RSVP at FoleyLibrary.org

Dec. 2 Christmas in the Park

6–8 p.m. Stroll through the park and enjoy the lights, Christmas Tree Lane, Christmas village and Santa!
Heritage Park. VisitFoley.com.

Dec. 2 Mobile Symphony Youth Orchestra Presentation

7 p.m. Accomplished young musicians from across the Gulf Coast perform a beautiful holiday concert. \$5 suggested donation.
Foley Civic Center.

Dec. 3 Foley Christmas Parade

10 a.m. Enjoyed by young and old, the parade includes music, floats, tractors and even a glimpse of Old St. Nick. Organized by the Foley Kiwanis Club. Map of parade route at VisitFoley.com.

Dec. 3 Let It Snow

11 a.m.–3 p.m. Fun activities, music and photo ops in Heritage Park. More details to come. VisitFoley.com

Dec. 3 Downtown Foley Open House

11 a.m. VisitFoley.com

Dec. 3-22 Christmas at OWA

Saturdays and Sundays only.
VisitOWA.com

Dec. 5 The Baldwin Pops Christmas Concert

7 p.m. Join us for a magical evening full of holiday spirit at the Foley Civic Center! Presented free of charge by the City of Foley.

Dec. 1 & 2 Christmas Murder Mystery Dinner Show

6:30 p.m. Enjoy a delectable plated dinner situated around an up-close interactive show that will take everything you have to solve the case. Tickets required. VisitOWA.com

Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Celebration

8:00 p.m. Celebrate the new year at OWA with a spectacular fireworks show.

Jan. 10 Snowbird Welcome

9 a.m.–12 noon. Foley info, coupons. Free coffee and pastries.
VisitFoley.com