



# Week in Review

June 3 - 16, 2025

The *Week in Review* is prepared and published by Laurie Hayes, Director of Communications, for the staff and residents of the City of Bartow, 450 N. Wilson Avenue, Bartow, Florida 33830

## Juneteenth Holiday to be Observed this Thursday

This Thursday, June 19, marks the 160th anniversary of Juneteenth, which commemorates the day freedom for all slaves was proclaimed by Union General Gordon Granger in Galveston, Texas.

This decree came more than two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Because it was the first time that many slaves in Texas learned of their freedom, June 19 - or Juneteenth - became a day of celebration.



The day was first recognized as a federal holiday in 2021, when the 117th U.S. Congress enacted and President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law. Juneteenth became the first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day was adopted in 1983.

## Jason Hargrove Honored

While accepting the proclamation from the City Commission that declares the celebration of Juneteenth in Bartow, Juneteenth Empowerment Committee Co-Chairpersons Zelma Harris and Jamie Gaskins did some recognizing of their own, honoring Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Director Jason Hargrove for his "invaluable assistance in providing services to our community and to the success of the Juneteenth celebrations." Jason will be honored at the Juneteenth luncheon this Thursday at the Bartow Civic Center.

*Note - City offices will be closed on Thursday. Residents who normally have sanitation services on that day will have their refuse picked up on Wednesday.*

## June is Pride Month

The City of Bartow is part of the global community in which people of diverse



cultures, races, creeds, genders and sexual identities must work together toward peace and understanding. While members of the LGBTQ+ communities still face ongoing discrimination, resulting in immeasurable human tragedy, loss of life, community isolation and abuse, PFLAG of Polk County envisions a world where diversity is celebrated, and all people are respected, valued and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

PFLAG, along with the Lakeland Youth Alliance (LYA), which provides a safe space for LGBTQ+ youth and their straight allies of Polk County, conduct various cultural, educational and entertainment activities to focus attention on the importance of acceptance and respect for diversity.

Recognizing that the LGBTQ+ residents, students, city employees and business owners within Bartow contribute to our vibrant, innovative, culturally inclusive, world-class community, the City Commission at its first meeting in June issued a proclamation recognizing June as LGBTQ+ Pride Month in the

City. The proclamation was accepted by Polk Pride FL Representative Michelle Valdes.

## Community Meeting Planned for Wind Meadows / Wind Meadows South



A Community Engagement meeting planned for Wednesday, June 25 from 5 – 8 pm at Spessard Holland Elementary School, 2342 EF Griffin Rd., hosted by the City of Bartow for the residents of Wind Meadows and Wind Meadows South.

From 5 – 6 p.m., the City leadership team will showcase services, programs and amenities provided to residents by the City and answer any questions you might have. This will include representatives from Police and Fire, as well as Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts, Utilities, Customer Service, Solid Waste and more. There will be hand-outs with contacts and other useful information for future reference.

Beginning at 6 pm, City Manager Mike Herr and Mayor Tanya Tucker will offer greetings and opening remarks followed by presentations from select department heads. The meeting will then be open for public comments and questions. The gathering is part of an ongoing effort to better engage with our citizens and ensure that their needs are being met by City government.

## Achievers on Display Juneteenth Celebration

The Banner Pole Committee will present an "Achievers on Display" Juneteenth Celebration on Friday, June 20 from 6:30 - 7:30pm at Polk Street Community Center, 12550 Polk St.

Hosted by Commissioner Leo Longworth, the event will be an evening of interaction, engagement and celebration as some of Bartow's Legends share their stories.



*Pardon our Progress*  
**Golf Course Paving Ahead of Schedule**



The parking lots at Mulligans Bar and Grill and the **Bartow Golf Course** are (finally!) getting an upgrade! The paving project was divided into two phases, focusing first on the north lot near the restaurant.

In exciting news, the work is moving more quickly than expected. As a result, paving on the South side has already begun.

The new and improved North parking lot will be open for lunch customers at Mulligans. Golfers can park next door, in the Idlewood Venue's parking lot. A shuttle will be available to transport golfers to the Pro Shop and back. We apologize for any inconvenience as we work to

improve access to this popular City amenity.

## Good, Clean Fun on Tap at the Bartow Public Library!

Summer is off to a fantastic start at the Bartow Public Library! The Library kicked off their Summer Reading program with a fabulous Foam Party attended by more than 325 sudsy library fans. If you missed out on the fun, rest assured there is more to be had. [Check out their special Summer schedule](#), which includes a special story time and craft presented by Jennilyn Crump of the Lakeland Aerospace Center for Excellence this Wednesday at 10am. After the story, head outside to see, touch, and sit in a real Sonex airplane! See ya at the Library this summer!



## Local Kids are Having a Bash this Summer

Bartow Summer Camp is in full swing and the past few weeks have been packed with fun, creativity, and new adventures! Our campers stay active and engaged all week long with a variety of hands-on activities that spark imagination and built teamwork.



During Week 2, the Book Bus rolled in and filled the day with excitement, giving everyone the chance to explore new stories and discover the magic of reading. Out on the field, campers learned the basics of flag football and had a blast running plays and building team spirit. They also kept the momentum going with some friendly games of kickball, where the energy and enthusiasm were off the charts!

We can't wait for what's coming next!

## Share the Love - and your Votes with the Golf Course

It's that time again... Last year, residents and fans of the Bartow Golf

Course rallied behind this City icon, helping us cinch the #1 spot for "Best Golf Course" in The Ledger's Community Choice Awards. Help us retain the title by once again voting for your hometown course. [Vote here!](#)



## City Water Now Free of Fluoride

Florida recently became the second state in the nation to officially ban fluoride in public water.

Gov. Ron DeSantis signed SB 700, also known as the Florida Farm Bill, into law last month. The bill doesn't specifically mention the word "fluoride," but it bans the mineral by preventing "the use of certain additives in a water system."

The statewide law will go into effect July 1, over-riding Bartow City Commission's 3 - 2 vote in March that was in favor of keeping fluoride in the City's water.

In anticipation of the statewide ban, the City's water plant has used up their current supply of fluoride and is in early compliance with the state mandate.

## City to Host Independence Day Celebration

Hosted by the City of Bartow for the first year, the Independence Day Celebration will take place in Mosaic Park on Friday, July 4, from 2:30 - 10pm.



Attendees are invited to bring blankets and lawn chairs and settle in for an afternoon and evening celebrating our nation's independence.

Pack a picnic of snacks and non-alcoholic beverages or take advantage of a variety of food options available for sale. The event will stay true to the traditional celebration and feature live music, food trucks, children's activities, family games and, of course, FIREWORKS!

The Opening Ceremony will start at 2:30pm with local dignitaries including Mayor Tanya Tucker. Bartow Idol winner Natalie Suarez will then set the patriotic mood with her rendition of the Star Spangled Banner. An afternoon of family fun will include a moon bounce and inflatable games, a rock wall, a balloon artist, face painting and a roving magician.

There will be live music all day ending with headliner Eli Mosley presented by @ThunderCDJR who will lead in to the Fireworks Extravaganza at 9:10pm.

Get all the details on the City website at [cityofbartow.net/529/July-4-Celebration](http://cityofbartow.net/529/July-4-Celebration) Vendor and sponsorship opportunities still are available. For more information, email [nvelaquez@cityofbartow.net](mailto:nvelaquez@cityofbartow.net) or call 863.534.0120.



## Inspections of Utility Poles Underway

Over the next three months, Osmose Utilities Services will be inspecting approximately 3000 utility poles in the City. These inspections will help ensure reliable power for our community and safety for our workers.

As part of the inspection process, crews may use hammers or drill and dig around the bases of the poles. Crews may need to walk through private property to access some poles. The work will not interfere with electric service. Questions? Call 863-

534-0100.

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