



Week in Review

Aug. 27 - Sept. 7, 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, 680 E Main St., Bartow, Florida 33830



Code Compliance Fully Staffed and Ready to Make a Difference

The City of Bartow's Code Enforcement Division was recently reimagined and has become the Department of Code Compliance and Neighborhood Services, with a mission to create safe, vibrant, and healthy neighborhoods through resident empowerment, education, collaboration and community

partnerships. Along with its new name comes a whole new staff, headed by recently promoted Director Tray Towles.

Barbara Banks, a lifelong resident of Polk County and resident of Bartow for the past seven year, is the department's Administrative Support Specialist II. Barbara previously worked for the Polk County Board of County Commissioners before starting in her current role and is sure to bring the same professionalism she exhibited with the County to Bartow.

Code Compliance Officer **Porchia Hodge** describes herself as "a compassionate and service-driven individual who values fairness, professionalism, and integrity in all that I do." Porchia has a strong background in community service and public-facing roles, and will bring attention to detail, clear communication, and a commitment to helping others to her role in Bartow.

"Whether working with colleagues, families, or the public, I want to strive to approach every situation with empathy, respect, and resilience. My goal is to always serve others in the way I want to be served-fairly, firmly, and with compassion," she said.

Code Compliance Officer **Delaila Tait** brings her job experience in public safety and community support attained through various roles throughout her life to her new role in Bartow.

Delaila notes that she is known for her honesty and reliability. "I've spent time caring for my neighborhood in a variety of ways - by assisting neighbors with day-to-day tasks to helping maintain our shared spaces," she explains. "I look forward to bringing

this same dedication and hands-on commitment to serving the residents of Bartow."

The Department will soon be located at the Polk Street Community Center. Learn more about the goals of the Code Compliance and Neighborhood Services Department here: www.cityofbartow.net/164/Code-Compliance-Neighborhood-Services

Lineman Lunch Hosted by Tracy Moore

Tracy Moore's life's mission is the result of personal tragedy, inspired by an on-the-job accident that took her husband's life in 2002. Lakeland Lineman Marc Moore, whose official title was special equipment operator, was electrocuted while working in a mobile home park.

In her grief, Moore convinced the City of Lakeland and eventually the state of Florida to create a "Lineman Appreciation Day," which is recognized every year on Aug. 26 in cities managing their own electric utility departments, including Bartow.

Moore also created the **Highline Hero Foundation/In Memory of Marc Moore** to help linemen nationwide who are going through life challenges such as house fires, medical or other issues.

During the last week of August Moore hosted a luncheon at Polk Street Community Center for area electric utilities including Bartow, Wauchula and Fort Meade to thank them for their service. In addition to lunch, the event included a raffle with prizes as well as fellowship among the local linemen.

We thank Tracy for her commitment and generosity to linemen in Bartow and cities throughout the state. Her actions also received much appreciation and comments, with a post about the luncheon on the City's Facebook page garnering nearly 550 likes and loves and 50 comments.



Commissioner Pfeiffer Receives Accolades / FRC Board Position

Commissioner Trish Pfeiffer recently received the Gold Certificate of Excellence from the Certificate Program for Elected Municipal Officials hosted by the Florida League of Cities (FLC).

The certificate achievement program rewards municipal officials for their commitment and dedication to training and continuing education.

"By participating in the FLC's training opportunities, elected leaders are strengthening their knowledge, growing professionally, and ensuring they are prepared to meet the needs of their communities with confidence and integrity," said Michael C. Blake, 2024-2025 FLC President and Mayor for the City of Cocoa.

Commissioner Pfeiffer completed the certificate program between July 2024 and July 2025. Officials earned points for participating in training events offered by FLC, including monthly webinars, online orientation, the Institute for Elected Municipal Officials (IEMO I and II), the State-Mandated Continuing Education in Ethics, and the League's Annual Conference and legislative events.

Commissioner Pfeiffer also has been appointed to serve as an elected official member of the 2025-2026 Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA) Board of Directors. Board members play a very important role in the effectiveness and

growth of the Association.

FRA serves as a statewide non-profit organization that provides training, resources, and advocacy for community redevelopment efforts in Florida. It acts as a forum for professionals to share best practices and successes in urban renewal, while also advocating for effective legal and financial tools to support long-term community growth and combat urban blight.

Pfeiffer's first meeting representing the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors will be early next year.

September Beautification Winners Announced

At the last City Commission meeting, Kyle Lasik, City of Bartow Parks & Recreation manager, recognized two couples whose homes showcase pride, care and community spirit.

Jennifer and Matt Culverhouse and Jessica and Jason Merritt were awarded the September Beautification awards for their work in making their properties shine.

Thank you to both families for helping keep Bartow beautiful and inspiring others to take pride in their homes and our community!



Bartow Honors Race Equality

Bartow is proud to honor events that promote appreciation and understanding of various cultures, recognizing that the City's character is formed by the traditions, experiences, heritages and languages of its citizens.

These celebrations encourage us all to move beyond simple tolerance to respect, embrace and celebrate the diversity of our residents comprising race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and other ideologies.

At their regular meeting on Sept. 3, Mayor Tucker and Commissioners proclaimed September as Race Equality Month in Bartow and presented the proclamation to Community Relations Committee Co-Chairperson Gloria Washington.

That Committee will host the City's annual Diversity Luncheon on Sept. 17 at the Bartow Civic Center. For more information or to purchase tickets, go to bartowchamber.com/bartow-diversity-luncheon/

CRA to Host Clean Up

Mark your calendars and make plans to participate in the International Coastal and CRA CleanUp in Bartow on Saturday, Sept. 20 from 8 to 11:30am.

The effort is sponsored by the Bartow Community Redevelopment Agency and **Keep Polk County Beautiful, Inc.**

Volunteers will receive T-shirts, tickets to Bok Tower and lunch at Carver Recreation Center after the Cleanup. (Supplies will be provided.) Join friends and neighbors to help keep our local waterways and neighborhoods clean!

Register by calling 863.534.0100, ext. 2771 or online at keeppolkcountybeautiful.org.



September is Hunger Action Month

Hunger continues to be a serious challenge affecting individuals and families in our community, with nearly one in six US households facing food insecurity.

Since 2008, Hunger Action Month has been nationally recognized in partnership with **Feeding America**, bringing awareness to the critical issue of hunger in our nation and encouraging communities to take action to address food insecurity.

The **Bartow Community Service Center** has been a pillar of support for our City, faithfully serving families and individuals for nearly 60 years by providing much-needed food assistance and other essential services.

The Center distributes more than 200,000 pounds of food annually to those in need, supporting nearly 21,000 families each year, and serving over 26,000 hot meals to individuals who may otherwise go without.



At their meeting last Wednesday, the City of Bartow Mayor and Commission acknowledged September as Hunger Action Month. The proclamation was accepted by Rusty Music, Executive Director of the Center.

Suicide Prevention and Awareness in September

The month of September is nationally recognized as Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, created to raise visibility around mental health and proactive suicide prevention resources in communities throughout the US. This observance seeks to open conversations, reduce stigma, and connect individuals with the support services they need.

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals ages 10 to 34, with more than 48,000 lives lost to suicide each year.

Each of these losses deeply impacts an estimated 100 others including family members, friends, coworkers, service members, and neighbors, demonstrating that suicide affects us all.

The City of Bartow stands in full support of those working in the fields of mental health, education, law enforcement, and other vital services who dedicate themselves to prevention and healing, and encourages residents of Bartow to learn about mental health, take steps to safeguard their own well-being, and extend compassion and care to one another.

At their Sept. 3 meeting, Mayor Tucker and the Commission presented a proclamation to Ava Crossman, representative of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.



Star Spangled Banner to be Celebrated Sept. 14

“The Star-Spangled Banner” was written during the War of 1812, when, by the dawn’s early light on September 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key saw the American flag flying over Fort McHenry, signifying an American victory.

“The Star-Spangled Banner” became our National Anthem on March 3, 1931 when President Herbert Hoover signed Public Law 823.

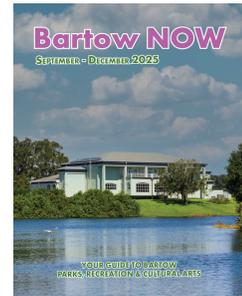
The Bartow Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) called for a day to observe the historical significance of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” In response, Mayor Pfeiffer and the City Commission have proclaimed September 14 as Star Spangled Banner Day in Bartow.



The proclamation was accepted by Kellie Sage, Regent, Bartow Chapter DAR Representative.

New issue of Bartow Now Available in Hard Copy as well as an Online Flipbook

The latest issue of Bartow Now is hot off the presses and is available at all City facilities as well as in flipbook form here: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/423e11d400.html> . More changes coming to the digital version soon!



Planning and Zoning Meeting

The Planning & Zoning Commission will hold its next meeting at 5:30pm on Monday, Sept. 22 at the Bartow Civic Center, 2250 S Floral Ave. Among the topics to be discussed and voted upon will be the annexation and rezoning requests in regards to projects known as Emilie East and West.

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