



Community Calendar

Town meetings in September will be hybrid - held both in person and virtually.

- Sept. 10 at 9 a.m.
Virtual Coffee with the Town Manager
RSVP to:
epappacoda@oaklandfl.gov
- Sept. 9 at Oakland Meeting Hall/Virtual
 - Budget Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.
 - Town Commission at 7 p.m.
- Sept. 22 at Oakland Meeting Hall/Virtual
 - Final Budget Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.
 - Town Commission at 7 p.m.

Details: www.oaklandfl.gov

Town of OAKLAND Florida

OAKLAND NATURE PRESERVE SEEKS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR MATCHING GRANT INITIATIVE

Oakland Nature Preserve received a Challenge Match Grant for its environmental education programs - but the Preserve needs your help!

This grant will provide matching funds of \$5,000 if the Preserve can raise \$5,000.

"This is extremely valuable to our environmental education programs, which serve people of all ages in both Orange and Lake counties," said Director Jennifer Hunt.

Your donation will be matched, dollar for dollar, so your contribution will have double the impact and will directly help fund educational programs throughout 2020-2021 school year.

Oakland Nature Preserve is an active 501c3 organization, and your donations may be tax deductible. You can donate online or by making checks payable to Oakland Nature Preserve and mailing them to P.O. Box 841, Oakland, FL 34760. Please note on the memo line that your donation is for the Challenge Match Grant.

For more information, visit <https://oaklandnaturepreserve.org>.

TOWN AWARDED GRANT TO PRESERVE HISTORIC AFRICAN AMERICAN CEMETERY

Oakland's Historic African American Cemetery has been recommended for Florida's Historic Preservation Grant in the amount of \$25,000. The Town's is the top-ranking project of the 58 recommended proposals statewide.

The cemetery is the resting place of freed slaves and families who migrated to West Orange County following Emancipation. It contains historic African American seashell and folk grave markers.

"The Town's goal is to manage and protect this historically significant site for future generations," said Town Manager Steve Koontz. "It is an important part of the heritage of the Town and can be a place of contemplation and remembrance that will coincide with educational and cultural programming provided through the new Healthy West Orange Arts and Heritage Center at the Town of Oakland."

The cemetery was established in 1882 with burials continuing through the 1940s. Oakland founder James Gamble Speer gave the original deed to three Black trustees in 1917. It was later deeded to the Town of Oakland in 2014.

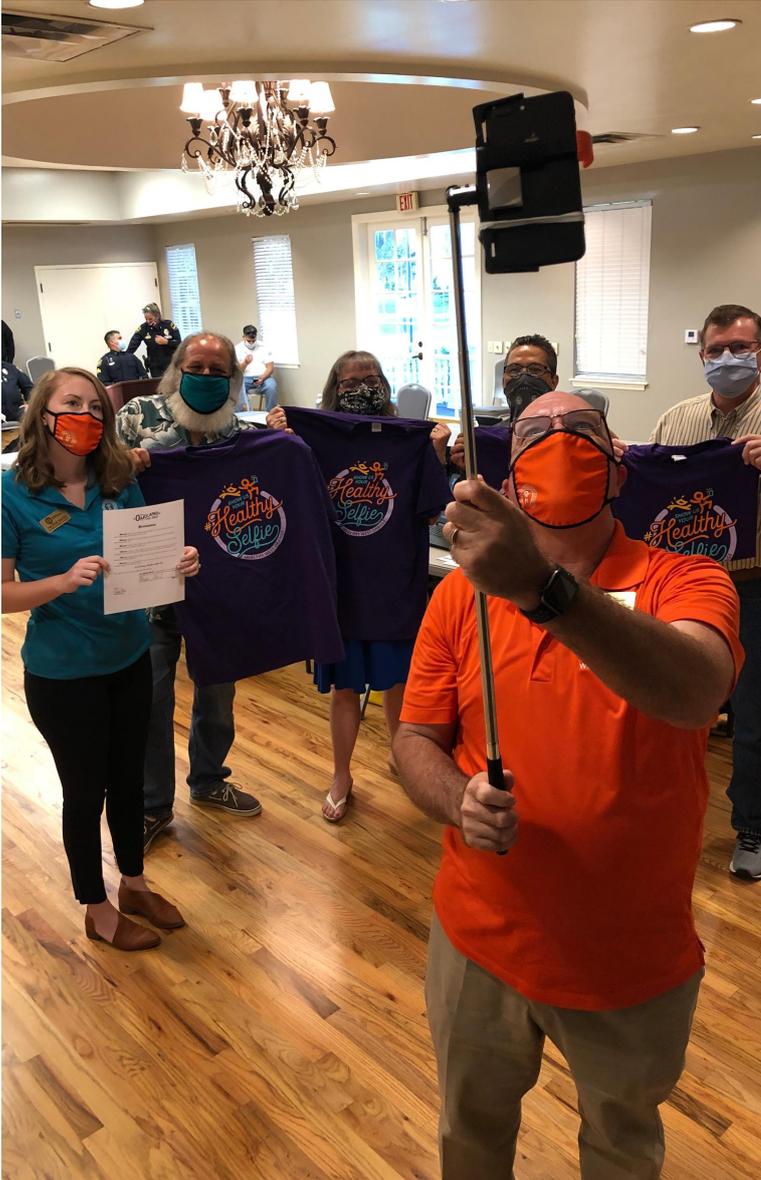
The site was saved from development in the area thanks to combined efforts by the Town and a group of descendants who rallied to raise awareness, clear underbrush, and conduct archaeological work.

The grant will assist the Town in planning for perpetual protection of this integral part of Oakland's heritage with proper surveying and a long-term maintenance plan. The funding will also aid in addressing vegetative overgrowth, wayfinding signs, walking paths, identification of graves and protection of early monuments.



Research surrounding the residents buried in the cemetery, including family genealogy, migration to Florida, participation in the citrus industry, and economic, spiritual and social life, are of great interest to Oakland's residents as well as the West Orange and regional Central Florida communities.

"Being able to document the history of the cemetery is significant to understanding the story of how our community was founded and the importance of our heritage," wrote Oakland Cemetery Committee Past Board President Betty Wade and Past Board Member Ramona Phipps. "Seeing the cemetery restored would add a sense of pride while honoring those who are buried there."



RESERVE OFFICER CASTRO SWORN IN

Officer Rene Castro has joined the Oakland Police Department as a reserve officer. He is a retired Lieutenant with 28 years of experience at the Clermont Police Department. There, he served as a command officer and has extensive experience in community relations, having started their Explorer Program in 2002.



ESTID LIMA PROMOTED TO SERGEANT

Estid Lima has been promoted to Sergeant with the Oakland Police Department, where he has served for over 3 years. Prior, Sgt. Lima worked for Haynes City PD.

He is a retired veteran with the Army and Navy, serving multiple tours overseas. He was recently awarded the CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) Oakland Officer of the Year from Aspire Health for his work de-escalating situations with citizens suffering from mental health issues.



HEALTHY SELFIE DAY

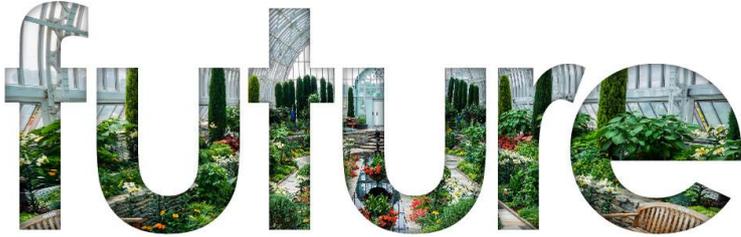
Mayor Kathy Stark declared Friday, September 18, 2020 as Annual West Orange Healthy Selfie Day.

The Town of Oakland and Healthy West Orange inspire healthy behaviors and provides resources to help residents make better lifestyle choices.

Healthy West Orange champions healthy programs that deliver health and wellness activities, unites health-minded organizations, provides meaningful benefits, advocates for healthy community decisions, and encourages local leaders to keep their communities' health and wellness a top priority.

Mayor Stark urged all citizens to join in supporting this initiative.

Shape the



of your community.



LET'S GET OAKLAND COUNTED

Data from the 2020 Census will aid in the distribution of billions of dollars in federal funds that support education, health care, emergency services, housing and food assistance and more.

The deadline to respond to the Census is Sept. 30, 2020.

The Census Bureau is working to complete data collection as quickly and safely as possible, while ensuring a complete and accurate count as it strives to comply with the law and statutory deadlines.

At 60.8%, the Town of Oakland's Census response is still below the statewide average.

The process is safe, quick and easy - and important for receiving federal funding for essential services in our area. To eliminate the need for workers to visit your home in person, simply visit www.2020census.gov or call 844-330-2020.

When you respond to the census, your answers are kept anonymous. They are used only to produce statistics. By law, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, your home, or your business.

TOWN ANNOUNCES BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING DATES IN SEPTEMBER

The Town of Oakland is announcing Public Hearing dates for the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Budget.

The hearings to set the millage and adopt the budget are scheduled for the following dates at the Oakland Meeting Hall, 221 N. Arrington St., and will be available live via Zoom.:

- First public hearing
Wednesday, September 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
- Final public hearing - Adoption of budget
Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

During a July 28 Town Commission workshop, the Commission recommended a status quo general fund budget based on a millage rate of 6.50, the same rate as in FY 2019/2020.

The Town Commission reduced the millage over the last two years, but have proposed maintaining the current millage due to uncertainty caused by COVID and an anticipated reduction in sales tax revenues.

A millage rate is one tenth of a percent, which equates to \$1 in taxes for every \$1,000 in home value. The millage funds integral operations for the Town's growing numbers of residents, including public safety services such as Orange County Fire Rescue, the Oakland Police Department, infrastructure projects, and maintaining reserves for emergencies.