

# Kathleen Beckman

## YOUR Clearwater Vice-Mayor

### Monthly Newsletter

August 2022



#### Back to School and a Focus on Education

In Florida, I'll never equate August with the end of summer. How can it be when we've had a string of sweltering 90 degree+ days? While I absolutely love living in our "endless summer" climate, as a former teacher, with the start of a new school year, I always feel like it's a great opportunity for a re-set and a focus on learning. And I'm always excited to learn! My first three articles highlight a variety of learning opportunities. We're lucky our community has so many offerings for enrichment and

advancement. Check out our libraries and recreation centers, too, for a broad range of learning opportunities. You can discover more here: [My Clearwater](#), and don't forget to take a few moments to enjoy these endless summer days.

## Representing Clearwater at State Conferences



Clearwater is part of the **Suncoast League of Cities**, and I am proud to serve as Second Vice-President on the Executive Board. This year marks the **100th anniversary** of the **Florida League of Cities**. In 1922, Florida's city officials formed a group of municipal governments to help shape legislation, coordinate their efforts for stronger advocacy, and share ideas and experiences. That group became the Florida League of Cities. Throughout our state, there are a number of "leagues" of cities that make up the Florida League.

I traveled to Hollywood, Fla., on Aug. 10 for the annual Florida League of Cities State Conference. I attended a variety of seminars including Home Rule and strategic advocacy; HB 7 and the restrictions on employee training; the science of the story: how voters make

decisions, to name a few. I also met with other local elected officials to share ideas and plan for the 2023 legislative session.

In addition, It was an honor to recognize **Sen. Ed Hooper**, from greater Clearwater, who was presented with the 2022 FLC Defender of Home Rule Award, the League's most distinguished legislative award for his work to protect local governance.

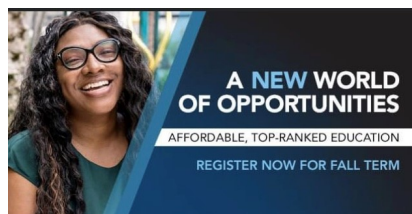
Next, I'm headed to the **Florida Housing Coalition's Annual Statewide Housing Conference** in Orlando, Aug. 29-31. This conference attracts more than 900 affordable housing professionals, advocates, lenders, developers, administrators and policy makers. I'm excited to attend and learn best practices and how Clearwater can "move the needle" for our residents and their housing needs.

## FREE All-Day Hispanic Business Conference



Pinellas County Economic Development's Office of Small Business and Supplier Diversity is hosting an all-day Hispanic Business Conference on **Wed., Sept 21 at 8am-5pm** at the **Epi-Center at St. Petersburg College in Clearwater**. There will be guest speakers on entrepreneurship to amplify regional efforts with the goal of building a strong, local, culturally diverse economy for all. Registration is free but seating is limited. You can learn more here: [Hispanic Business Conference](#)

## SPC Has Many Opportunities for New and Returning Students



Did you know St. Petersburg College (SPC) has a campus in Clearwater? It's located at 2465 Drew Street.

**Associate and bachelor's degrees** are offered, as well as short-term **industry certifications**. Students benefit from flexible schedules, assistance programs, free tutoring and career counseling. Tuition costs are low and there are scholarship opportunities. SPC is partnering with the Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition to promote "**Reach New Heights at SPC**," an SPC Clearwater Neighborhood Information Session on **Thursday, Aug. 25, 6-8 p.m.** at the **North Greenwood Recreation Center**, 900 N. MLK Jr. Ave., Clearwater. Learn more at [spcollege.edu](http://spcollege.edu).



# People You Should Know



## Peg and Andy Walton

This month's "**People You Should Know**" highlights **Peg and Andy Walton**. Andy is the pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church, and Peg is retired from a career in economic development and workforce training.

I met them when I was knocking on doors, and we've been friends ever since. The Trinity Presbyterian congregation is leading by example. Learn more here: [\*\*Peg and Andy Walton.\*\*](#)



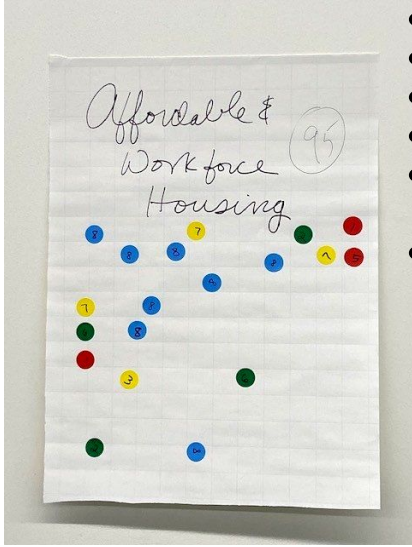
## Kathleen Agnew

**Kathleen Agnew** also shares her story in "**People You Should Know.**" She is a retired nurse and near full-time community advocate. She is involved in everything from the Clearwater Neighborhoods Coalition to the Charter Review Committee to the NAACP and her church. Kathleen will be named "**Mrs. Countryside**" on Sept. 21. You can learn more about why she is so deserving of this honor here: [\*\*Kathleen Agnew.\*\*](#)

## Clearwater Allocates \$22.4 Million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds

On Aug. 4, the City Council approved the city staff recommendations for allocation of \$22.4 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. This **once-in-a-lifetime federal funding** will be moved into General Funds and has been designated to be put into specific "categories" for distribution. Specific dollar amounts are designated for a variety of categories including:

- affordable housing;
- broadband infrastructure;



- street and sidewalk improvements;
- State Street Park improvements;
- Main Library upgrades;
- solar panels for city facilities;
- start-up funding for North Greenwood CRA; and
- grant opportunities (\$3 million) for arts, education and nonprofits.

You can see the approved list here:

[\*\*Clearwater ARPA Funds Distribution.\*\*](#)

I'm proud that our city held four community engagement meetings to share information about ARPA funds and solicit feedback from residents. The city also solicited online comments. Final staff recommendations reflected this feedback, and I'm confident these ARPA funds will have a dramatically **positive impact in our community**. Finally, I'm asking city leadership to create a **webpage** so residents can track where, when and how these funds get distributed.

## Utility Rate Changes

Proposed rate changes for domestic water, sewer, lawn water, reclaimed water and stormwater will be considered by the Clearwater City Council at two public meetings. The first is scheduled for **6 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 18**. The second hearing is scheduled for **6 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 1**, both at the Clearwater Council Chambers at the **Clearwater Main Library**, 100 N. Osceola Ave. in Clearwater. You can learn more here: [\*\*Proposed rate changes.\*\*](#) Click here for [\*\*Upcoming City Meetings.\*\*](#)



## Clearwater One Step Closer to Adding a New Sister City

On July 28, the Clearwater Sister Cities Advisory Board recommended to City Council that the city of **Ixmiquilpan, Mexico** be given Sister City status in Clearwater. There are approximately 30,000 residents in the greater Tampa region from the central Mexican State of Hidalgo, where this city is located. We have many Hidalgonese in Clearwater. What an exciting opportunity to **learn about and share cultures.**

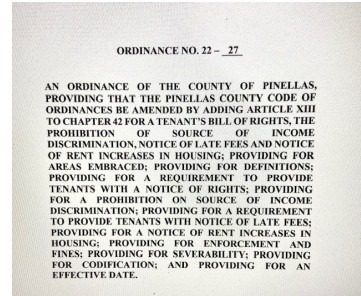


## Tenants Bill of Rights

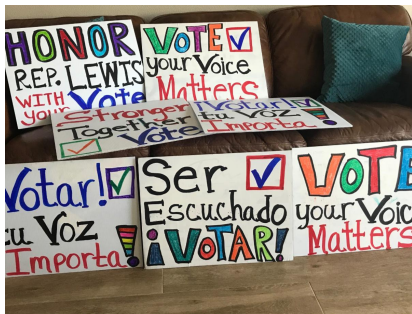


On Aug. 2, Pinellas County Commissioners passed (5-2) a “Tenants Bill of Rights” for all of Pinellas County. This ordinance means residential landlords will soon be mandated to give **60 day’s notice** when raising rent more than 5% in an annual lease renewal. There will be a **30-day required notice** for leases that are 3-12 months in length. Tenants in month-to-month living situations have the right to **15 day’s notice**.

This ordinance is scheduled to go into effect on Monday, Oct. 3, 2022. The ordinance also prohibits discrimination against applicants using government housing vouchers, and there are late fee notification requirements. You can read the full ordinance here: [Pinellas County Tenants Bill of Rights](#). Clearwater will fall under this ordinance unless the city chooses to opt out before Oct. 3.



## Florida's Primary Voting is Happening Now



Florida is a closed primary state, but, there are significant non-partisan races you can still cast your ballot in. County judge and school board races can be decided in a primary election. If you vote by mail, you should have already received your ballot. If you vote in person, **early voting** is **Aug. 13-21**, and

**Election Day is Tuesday, Aug. 23**. Polls are open from 7-7. You can check your registration and learn more here: [votepinellas.com](http://votepinellas.com).

## Moccasin Lake - A Clearwater Treasure - Celebrates 40th Year



**Moccasin Lake, Cliff Stephens Park and Alligator Kapok Park**, are three amazing natural treasures in



**This 51-acre nature preserve** with trails and boardwalks, under a canopy of mature oaks and across

Clearwater. These parks are within easy walking distance of each other and offer trails, shade, walking paths and abundant open space.

On July 30, Moccasin Lake celebrated its 40th year with a community celebration. There was face-painting, live music, crafts, tasty food, and animal presentations by some of the many clubs and societies that meet at the park. Moccasin Lake has a variety of unique amenities, including a Garden Lodge for rental, a picnic pavilion, a wooded amphitheater, the Moccasin Lake stage and the nature center patio.

ponds and creeks, has an array of wildlife including gopher turtles, raccoons, and many birds. It is also home to several injured birds of prey. The park offers classes, programs, camps and meeting/reception rentals with both indoor and outdoor meeting space. If you'd like to learn more or join the "[Friends of Moccasin Lake](#)," check them out: [Friends of Moccasin Lake](#).

## Saving Money and Reducing Emissions

Clearwater was recently awarded a grant to install roughly **\$1 Million of Solar** on city buildings. An additional **\$2 Million** was allocated for solar on city buildings as part of ARPA funding. The solar, combined with other priorities like energy efficiencies across city buildings, will save big \$ in energy costs, while also reducing carbon emissions, helping us work towards our **Greenprint 2.0** goals. Learn more about **Greenprint 2.0** goals and progress at [Greenprint 2.0](#).



## Come Celebrate an Historic Event

**Trinity Presbyterian Church** will make history on **Sept. 1 at 10 a.m.** as it hosts its **solar panel ribbon cutting and dedication**. Under the leadership of Co-Pastor Andy Walton, (who is profiled in this month's "People You Should Know") and Co-Pastor Dawn Conti, along with Associate Pastor, Kathi Trautwein, the congregation recently installed over 300 solar panels on their church located at **2001 Rainbow Drive**. Pastor Walton said, "The whole idea is to be good stewards, that's our primary mission, but it also makes economic sense." The congregation is both proud and excited and extends an **enthusiastic invitation** for all to attend their ribbon cutting celebration. You can learn more here: [Trinity Presbyterian Church](#).





# The Value of a Second Set of Eyes

The writer Annie Lamont said, "Almost all good writing begins with terrible first efforts. You need to start somewhere." Luckily, after my first draft, I'm fortunate to have my friend, **Harry Roberts**, provide edits and feedback to help polish my monthly newsletter. Harry is retired from a 40-year career in public relations for an education agency in Pennsylvania and a national professional association in Maryland. He enjoys watching sports and old movies, rooting for Penn State and the Rays, reading, going to the gym, and taking long walks. **He's a great guy. Thank you Harry!**



## Thank You for Your Interest and Support

One of the reasons I send out a newsletter is to receive feedback from you. However, please be aware that any communication with me related to the newsletter is public record.

### Important Links

[My Clearwater Magazine](#)

[Upcoming City Meetings](#)

[City of Clearwater Volunteer Opportunities](#)

### Contact Information:

Kathleen Beckman: 727-580-0948

[kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com](mailto:kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com)

City Council Office

600 Cleveland St., Suite 600

Clearwater, FL 33755

[Visit my Website](#)



Share This Email



Share This Email



Share This Email

Clearwater City Council | 600 Cleveland St, Suite 600, clearwater, FL 33755

[Unsubscribe](#) [kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com](mailto:kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com](mailto:kathleen.beckman@myclearwater.com) in collaboration with



Try email marketing for free today!