

We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way.



# CONNECTIONS

DESTIN WATER USERS INC.



## WINTER 2021



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Annually, we create a budget to guide our work for the coming year. The budget includes operating and maintenance expenses to cover our day-to-day work, debt service to cover loan payments, and capital expenditures to cover repair and replacement (R&R) costs and capital improvements (CIP). It takes significant capital to ensure that our systems are properly maintained and that we have adequate facilities to deal with future expansion.

The R&R Budget includes two big projects including the Headworks Replacement and the Indian Bayou Reclaimed tank. The Headworks is the

point where everything comes into the plant for treatment and we attempt to remove as much of the non-biological trash that enters the waste stream. This is critical to the treatment process as this trash can cause problems downstream. The Indian Bayou Reclaimed Tank is a project to improve operational efficiency of our reclaimed water distribution system and to provide additional wet weather storage.

In Lift Stations, money has been budgeted for maintenance and upkeep of pumps, piping, and panels. Most of the work will be completed by DWU staff, but we do have two piping replacement

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## Message from the GM continued

projects that we plan to contract out. We also have money budgeted for a permanent generator for Lift Station P-41 which is required under our permit. To date, we have had a mobile generator on site. We will rotate the mobile generator back into our fleet and install a permanent generator this coming year.

The Wastewater R&R Budget includes money to move on to Phase II of SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) Upgrades. The project is separating the plant production network from the administrative network for security purposes. The Replace Belt Filter Press project is a multiyear project. The first phase includes modifying the building entrance to accommodate a larger hauling trailer and purchase of a piece of equipment to move the new trailer. This will help reduce the number of times per week that we need to dump our biosolids reducing our sludge hauling expense. The next phase will be replacement of the Belt Filter Press. The Disinfection Conversion project will replace the chlorine gas we currently use with sodium hypochlorite (high strength bleach) which is a safer product and reduces the potential threat gas chlorine poses to our neighbors. The Launder Covers is a project to control the growth of algae in our clarifiers.

The Water R&R items address maintenance and operational needs.

The Distribution Budget includes money to replace company vehicles, relocate 2" service lines, pigging and pressure pipe testing, and sanitary sewer system repairs. These are regular repair and maintenance expenses that we program for company assets. The Redundant Force Main is a carryover project from 2020 to build a redundant line feeding into the Plant from the south. This line conveys wastewater from all development along Gulf Shore Drive and all development along Highway 98 from The Donut Hole to Big Kahunas. FlexNet AMI (Advanced Metering Infrastructure) is a carryover project to allow members on-line access to see their usage. The Insertion Valve

Program is looking at the installation of new valves in strategic locations to improve system maintenance and operation when identified. The Reuse Meter Changeout is a new program to replace our aging brass meters with new I-Pearl meters. The brass meters have aged out and we no longer can get replacements, and repair parts.

The Plant Ops/Engineering budget includes a new dump trailer and a new 6" Thompson Silent Night Pump which is neighborhood friendly. The Wetlands Project is a carryover project from 2020 to restore wetlands along our southern property line.

The CIP budget is geared to add new facilities to serve future expansion.

In Lift Stations, we have money to replace aging control panels at specified lift stations. There is also funding to address capacity issues at Lift Station A-00 which is located on Highway 98 across from Chick-fil-A. We are exploring the option to install a new force main in a new development to increase the flow to the plant which will be a cost savings over our other option which is construction of a new larger lift station.

On the Plant, we have money to begin engineering for building an anoxic zone for Ox Ditches 1 and 2, and to install a fourth screw pump in our reuse treatment train. This screw pump is needed because the volume we are treating has created the need to expand capacity and add redundancy.

In water, we have money budgeted to complete the new well at Well 5 which will be funded by SRF (State Revolving Fund) dollars. We had to increase the budget for this item based upon recent bids in our area.

In our distribution and collection systems, we have money for septic tank abatement to install a new sewer line to serve Sea Hills Drive and connect it to the new townhome development proposed for Azalea and Melvin Street. We have some miscellaneous water main upgrades planned for 2021 including one on John Avenue. The Destination Lift Station is the project to replace the private lift station with one DWU will own and operate in the Destination commercial subdivision; this will be funded by a special assessment of the impacted members. The funding in Reuse Piping will be used to extend reuse to the Destin Elementary School athletic fields and other areas if possible.

The other major expenditure is for hardening and upgrading our operation facilities at the Plant. This project was driven by the destruction we witnessed after Hurricane Michael and the realization that most of DWU's operational building may not survive a hurricane like that. We hope to begin construction on phase 1 in 2021.

We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way. We do this by investing capital to pay for the big-ticket repair and replacement items and planning and building for our future.

**LOCKWOOD WERNET**  
General Manager

### Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Destin Waters Users, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, March 2nd, 2021, starting at 5 P.M. in the Training Building at the DWU George French Water Reclamation Facility located at 14 Industrial Park Lane. Reports concerning the status of the Corporation will be presented by the President, Treasurer and General Manager. Results from the recent election will be announced and the DWU Employee of the Year will be recognized.

**All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.**



# EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



**SEPTEMBER 2020**  
Laura Bramblett



**OCTOBER 2020**  
Kasia Krzak



**NOVEMBER 2020**  
Rick Martin



**TOM WEIDENHAMER, PRESIDENT**

## Message from the **PRESIDENT**

### DO YOU KNOW THE HISTORY BEHIND THE DWU LOGO?

One day I was talking to former DWU employee Terry Watkins about another matter when the subject of the DWU logo came up. Terry reminded me that he had been tasked by previous DWU General Manager Erik Smith to come up with a new logo for the company back in 1985. Erik had planned on repainting the water towers and he wanted to create a new logo for DWU and have it painted on the water tanks. With those instructions from Erik, Terry began work on the design.

The logo is comprised of three legs, a base, and a water droplet. The shortest leg stands for where we have been. The medium sized leg stands for where we are. The longest leg stands for where we want to be. The base represents the fact that we are built on a firm foundation and the water droplet reminds us that our business is water.

Our business is all about water. We were formed in 1963 to provide the members of DWU with safe reliable drinking water.

We also are charged with treating the wastewater from our members and disposing of it in a safe manner which we do by treating it and sending it out as public access irrigation water. We will always be single focused on water which simplifies our business mission to serve the members of DWU.

We do have a firm foundation as a company. The members of the Board of Directors who have served DWU through the years have always been community minded and they made wise decisions to ensure we have a reliable water supply and adequate infrastructure to serve our members. As you read through the names of past directors, you will recognize them as leaders of our community. We have had business savvy general managers who set up business systems, and policies and procedures to ensure efficient and effective operations and we have had dedicated employees who executed the plans and built the foundation we operate on today.

As we move forward and look to the future, we need to remember where we have been. This is the shortest leg because we cannot dwell in the past relishing in our past glories or wallowing in our failures. However, we need to understand where we have been so we can build on our past successes and learn not to make the same mistakes again.

We also need to focus on where we are because that is the measuring stick that helps us gauge what we have accomplished and what we need to focus on in the future. This is the medium sized leg because we need to focus on our business at hand.

The longest sized leg is the leg that represents where we want to be. This must be the major focus of our operations because we are always preparing for the future. We work in a dynamic industry that is constantly changing with new regulations, evolving technologies and shifting demands; therefore, we need to focus on how we are going to respond to this ever-changing environment.

We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way. We do this by exercising our core values of vision, quality, and stewardship.

In 2021, we plan to remember where we have been; move forward from where we are and focus on where we want to be; knowing that we are operating on a firm foundation built by those who have gone before us and supported by you, our members.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

*Tom Weidenhamer*



**DESTIN WATER USERS, INC.**

P.O. Box 308  
Destin, FL 32540-0308

**OFFICE HOURS**

The DWU office is open Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

**PHONE NUMBERS**

Administrative Office – Bill Payment Questions and Concerns  
(850) 837-6146

Emergencies, Nights, Sundays and Holidays  
(850) 837-6551

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***Destin Water Users has won 2020 Tank of the Year Award***

*Sponsored by Tnemec Company, Inc. roughly 300 tanks were nominated for this year’s contest, and more than 20,000 votes were cast online for 12 finalists from throughout the U.S. and Canada. The 750,000-gallon water tank, Tower 5, depicting sea life from the area was completed last spring and towers 169 feet over Calhoun Avenue in Destin. This is the second win for DWU who won the 2017 Tank of the Year for Tower 3 located behind Target. Both tanks were painted by water tank mural artist Eric Henn.*

**DESTIN WATER USERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



Tom WEIDENHAMER  
President



Jim FOREMAN



Ames HUDSON



Jimmy NEILSON  
Vice-President



Jack SCELSI



Sandy TRAMMELL



Jim WOOD  
Secretary/Treasurer