

Michael Smith, Executive Director of the Greater Valdosta United Way, stated that they cover 10 counties and partner with 20 local non-profits of which 19 are located here in Lowndes County/Valdosta. Speaking on behalf of The Haven and the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) and CASA that will see cuts across the State, all of the agencies that have stepped up and fed, clothed, and sheltered people throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic and they need your support if there are funds available. It has been two years of fundraisers being cut and the United Way tries to support the best they can, but there is no way that local donors/businesses can clear some of the gaps that these agencies have dealt with. The agencies are dealing with staffing issues, mental strain, and compassion fatigue of working 24/7 throughout the Pandemic. If there are funds available, it would be a great way to help people out. There are a lot of good people who are working hard and we are very fortunate to have them in our human service sector.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that Council has been given a copy of the Citizens to be Heard Action Items from the last Council Meeting for their review.

The Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce is holding their Annual Awards Banquet today beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Rainwater Conference.

The Boy Scouts of America Building Leaders Campaign Dinner will be held on Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Rainwater Conference Center. The guest speaker will be Malcolm Mitchell. The City of Valdosta is sponsoring a table for this event.

The 6th Annual South Georgia Film Festival will be held at Valdosta State University on Friday, March 4, 2022 through Sunday, March 6, 2022. Tickets can be purchased on-line.

The Valdosta Police Department will have Open Testing beginning on Saturday, March 5, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the City Hall Annex Building in the Multi-Purpose Room.

The Strategic Initiatives Summit will be held on Friday, March 18, 2022 through Saturday, March 19, 2022 at The Woman's Building.

The 13th Annual City Government 101 Class begins on Monday, April 11, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers with Government Overview and HR Presentations. City Government 101 will run through May 16, 2022 with graduation on that day. Applications will be accepted until Friday, March 18, 2022.

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that Ellen Hill, Main Street Director, has accepted a new position with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs which is a good progressive next move. He asked that she come forward so that we can congratulate her.

Ellen Hill, Main Street Director, stated that she would like to read a little note that she sent to the Downtown businesses. "For the past 15 years, she has had the privilege of serving the citizens of Valdosta and the Downtown community through her work as Main Street Director. She is and will always be grateful for her journey--the growth completed, the lessons learned, the