



Utility Authority Executive Director

Nassau County, Florida



Eastern Gateway to the Sunshine State



MISSION STATEMENT

Nassau County will foster the highest quality of life possible for its citizens through a responsive and open government. It will provide services that are effective, in an economical and efficient manner, that not only meet but exceed the expectations of the people of Nassau County.

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Tucked into Florida's northeast corner and hugging the Atlantic Ocean along Interstate 95 north of Jacksonville, Nassau County's 726 square miles proudly serve as the eastern gateway to the Sunshine State.

From pristine beaches and natural preserves to historic landmarks and first-class amenities, the community of over 101,500 residents and a regional population of 1.7 million, is among the fastest-growing counties in the country — and it's no surprise. Through land use planning, zoning regulations, and conservation efforts, the county balances growth with environmental stewardship, creating livable communities and enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

Nassau County is a nature lover's paradise, with 13 miles of pristine beaches, numerous nature trails, and multi-use paths; hundreds of miles of rivers, including St. Marys, Amelia, Nassau, and their related tributaries; historic downtown Fernandina Beach; and award-winning golf courses. Residents have easy access to several state parks — Fort Clinch, Amelia Island, Four Creeks, Ralph E. Simmons, Big Talbot Island, and Little Talbot Island — and landmarks like American Beach, Huguenot Memorial Park, and Cary State Forest. The community has also prioritized creating and preserving green spaces; in 2023 alone, acquisition and development agreements for over 550 acres of public parks were approved.

As one of the oldest counties in Florida, Nassau's rich history stretches back to 1824. Numerous archaeological sites in the county record evidence of prehistoric communities — and Nassau was the site of early European contact, dating to 1562 with the arrival of the French on present-day Amelia Island.

COMMUNITY, CONTINUED

The County has seen occupation by the French, English, Spanish, and Americans, as well as action during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and local history buffs will enjoy visits to the Amelia Island Museum of History, Amelia Island Lighthouse, and Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve.

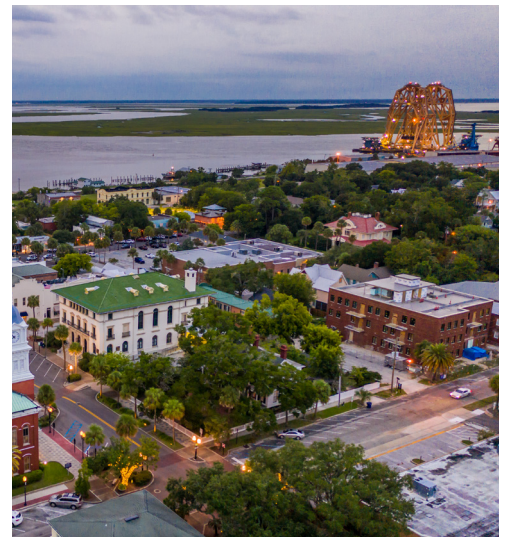
There are plenty of modern-day pleasures, too. Downtown Fernandina, St. Johns Town Center, San Marco Historic District, and the Shoppes of Avondale offer a mix of big-name brands and local boutiques and standout dining destinations like The Salty Pelican, Espana, The Patio at 5th and Ash, Beech Street Grill, Coast, David's Restaurant, and Salt serve up delicious food and great ambiance. The community also loves getting together to celebrate; popular events include the Annual Shrimp Festival, Amelia Concours d'Elegance, Railroad Days, the Dickens on Center Victorian-inspired holiday festival, and the Northeast Florida Fair.

Proximity to Jacksonville, St. Augustine, and Orlando to the south and Savannah and Charleston to the north provides fantastic cultural opportunities, from zoos, museums, and arboretums to historic churches, professional sports venues, performing arts centers, and airports. But home to just three incorporated municipalities — Fernandina Beach, Hilliard, and Callahan — the needs of most of the community's unincorporated areas are the focus for Nassau County.

Area families are well served by the A-rated Nassau County School District, providing K-12 instruction to over 12,600 students across 16 campuses, and private educational options include Amelia Island Montessori School, Faith Christian Academy, Fernandina Beach Christian Academy, St. Michael Academy, The Ogburn School, and Lighthouse Christian School. Nearby higher educational facilities include Florida State College at Jacksonville, University of North Florida, Jacksonville University, Southeastern University, Edward Waters College, Columbia College, Barry University, Keiser University, Chamberlain University, and Webster University.

Medical care is provided by Baptist Medical Center Nassau, which offers a full spectrum of in- and out-patient services and 24-hour emergency care to coastal communities in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia, as well as UF Health at Wildlight, with additional facilities on the way.

Nassau's median household income is \$90,838, and housing options run from an average-priced mobile home for \$151,358 to a single-family home at \$458,691 or a condo at \$677,508.



MAJOR RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

- ➡ **WILDLIGHT** - 24,000 acres, 24,000 Residential Dwelling Units, 11 Million of nonresidential uses.
- ➡ **WILDLIGHT COMMERCE PARK** (included in above) - 120 Acres, 1.5 Million of light industrial.
- ➡ **CRAWFORD DIAMOND INDUSTRIAL PARK** - 500 Acres of Industrial Land, Frontage on two Class I rail lines.
- ➡ **BAPTIST HEALTH** - 24.25 acres, 75,000 square foot medical office building and emergency department.
- ➡ **HCA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL** - 55 acres, 11,000 square foot free-standing Emergency Room with future plans for a full-scale hospital and medical office buildings.

GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATION:

A non-charter county with a commission-manager form of government, Nassau County's governing authority is the five-member Nassau County Board of Commissioners. The County is divided into five districts, and elections are held every two years, with commissioners elected at large and serving four-year staggered terms. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board are elected by the Board annually.

The Board employs a staff of 485 and appoints a County Attorney and County Manager. Other elected officials include the Property Appraiser, Supervisor of Elections, Sheriff, Tax Collector, and Clerk of Courts.

The Board of Commissioners appoint a County Manager who oversees the following Departments: Planning & Economic Opportunity (including Code Enforcement), Engineering, Animal Care & Control, Public Works (including Facilities Maintenance, Road Department, and Solid Waste), Building, Fire Rescue, Nassau Amelia Utilities, County Extension, Human Resources, Library and Office of Management & Budget (including Information Technology).

The County's annual budget of approximately \$479 million is supported by an ad valorem millage tax rate of 9.2927, excluding special taxing districts. The organization's employees provide an array of municipal services, with approximately two-thirds of the workforce covered by collective bargaining agreements in the Fire-Rescue and various labor positions.

County Manager Taco Pope was appointed in 2020, having previously served Nassau County for almost 15 years in various posts, including Assistant County Manager, Planning & Economic Opportunity Director, Planning Director, and Community Planner. He recruited Marshall Eyerman in the spring of 2021 as Assistant County Manager and Robert Companion, P.E., in the spring of 2022 as Deputy County Manager. The County Manager oversees the following Departments/operations: Building, Code Enforcement, Planning, Capital Projects, Stormwater, Development Services, Library, Animal Care & Control, Strategic Advancement &



TOP EMPLOYERS

- Nassau County School District
- The Omni Amelia Island
- Nassau County Government
- The Ritz Carlton Amelia Island
- West Rock
- Baptist Medical Center Nassau
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Rayonier Advanced Materials
- City of Fernandina Beach
- White Oak Plantation

Economic Resources, Office of Management & Budget (including Nassau Amelia Utility), Procurement, Fire Rescue, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Public Works (including Parks, Facilities Maintenance, Road Department, and Solid Waste).

ABOUT THE POSITION:

Reporting to the County Manager’s Office, the Utility Authority Executive Director is a highly responsible professional and managerial position providing direct support to the County Manager on various utility related programs, services, delivery models, and planning. The position will be primarily outward facing to include coordination with County staff, the Board of County Commissioners, citizens, current/potential utility providers, and industry groups related to various public utilities affairs issues and capital planning, construction, financing, and maintenance.

This newly created position will not physically oversee the operation of any water or wastewater treatment plants, but rather serve as a liaison with current utility providers to proactively plan for adequate services in a fast growing region and to lay the foundation to establish a future comprehensive utility authority in Nassau County. The Director is expected to actively participate, coordinate, lead, and advocate for high quality and sustainable long-range planning of utility infrastructure operations throughout Nassau County for the best long-term interest of the County and its businesses and residents. The Director should be able to possess an advanced “feel for the whole” and be capable of effectively articulating the impact utility implementation and operation has on economic development, fiscal sustainability, conservation, urban form, local government, and the day-to-day quality of life for both current and future community members and stakeholders. The position will work directly with County leadership and department staff in the coordination of land-use planning, capital programming, utility planning, contract and agreement execution, and governmental relationships with the utility providers, developers, and other community members.

The Nassau Amelia Utilities (NAU) system provides water and wastewater services to the southern end of Amelia Island consisting of approximately 3,432 service connections and a population of 9,750.

The NAU system is comprised of one water treatment plant (WTP) and one wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to service both residential and commercial customers. The water treatment system consists of the WTP with a treatment capacity of 983.6 million gallons per day (MGD), a water booster pump station, and the distribution piping network. The WTP draws water from three existing on-site supply wells and provides potable drinking water to customers throughout its service territory.



ABOUT THE POSITION, CONTINUED

The wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) has a permitted capacity of 0.95 MGD annual average daily flow (AADF). Treatment consists of a 2-stage advanced activated sludge process with biological nutrient removal using chlorine disinfection for final treatment prior to effluent discharge to either an unlined 2.9 MG effluent storage pond for public access reuse or a lined 1.0 MG reject water storage pond based on effluent quality.

A summary of the responsibilities of the Utility Authority Executive Director includes the following:

- Under limited supervision, will be engaged in governmental relations and perform and/or plan, schedule, coordinate, monitor, and review the interlocal and franchise agreements, and legislative requirements of the public and private utility providers (including Nassau Amelia Utility, Jacksonville Electric Authority, Okefenokee Rural Electric, Florida Public Utility, Florida Power & Light, etc.) as they may impact Nassau County.
- Under limited supervision, provide leadership, management, and supervision of contract utility services throughout the County.
- Maintain working knowledge of current regulatory standards and proactively stay abreast of emerging trends and legislation that may impact Nassau County and ratepayers.
- Stay abreast of trends and best practices related to long range utility planning, system and right of way maintenance, utility administration and customer service goals.
- Serve as the utility interface with citizen groups, development community, industry groups, regional and local utility providers, State/Federal Agencies, and others.
- Assist in developing, directing, coordinating, and advising on utility administration, policy, operations, capital, and service delivery activities.
- Direct and perform the investigation and resolution of complaints and concerns related to utility operations and activities as assigned and upon request; identify and initiate solutions to major issues involving policy, service delivery and organizational changes and direction.
- Evaluate and analyze policies and procedures and recommend development of new policies and/or revisions to current policies, ensuring compliance with County, State and Federal policies, guidelines, rules, regulations, and laws.
- Identify, research, and develop courses of action and coordinate wide-range work programs and activities with County departments, outside agencies and organizations.
- Perform a variety of highly analytic and strategic organizational reviews to support decision making by the County Manager and elected officials.
- Interact and effectively communicate with various groups and individuals such as County Manager, Board of County Commissioners, Constitutional Officers, other County employees, various other Local, State and Federal agencies, personnel in other jurisdictions, vendors, consultants, contractors, business/property owners, citizens, and other utility providers.
- Ensure effective construction, maintenance, repair and operation of the County's water distribution and wastewater collection systems and facilities, including mains, service lines, fire hydrants, valves, pump stations, sewage lift stations, and related facilities.



ABOUT THE POSITION, CONTINUED

- Provide long-range utility planning in coordination with the County's planning department and utility providers operating in Nassau County.
- Manage, monitor, and enforce contracts, agreements, and inter-local agreements with government partners.
- Engage actively in State/Federal rule making that may impact the provision of public utilities in Nassau County.
- Work with the County lobbyist, State legislatures, and agency heads on behalf of Nassau County.
- Review plans on new utilities construction and modifications to existing infrastructure.
- Prepare recommendations and reports regarding the construction and maintenance of major projects.
- Develop, implement, and monitor short- and long-range objectives and monitor performance.
- Inspect and evaluate work being performed by staff, contractors, and other utility agencies; identify problem areas and propose corrective action.
- Respond to inquiries and complaints from the public and other departments; attend meetings with other departments, County staff, public groups, and other utility providers.
- Assist with the preparation of the annual budget and Capital Improvement Program for NAU.

Interact and communicate with various groups and individuals such as the immediate supervisor, co-workers, County personnel, contractors, developers, consultants, industry/business representatives, property owners, various other Governmental agencies, vendors, and the general public.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES:

New Utility Infrastructure Planning Position and Focus in a High-Growth Region: Nassau County is the 65th fastest-growing county in the country, and the Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) predicts it will be the seventh fastest-growing county in the State of Florida by 2035, with a projected population of over 148,000.. Given the projected growth rate and associated impacts to critical infrastructure, natural environments, and the local economy, the Utility Authority Executive Director position was established to proactively and comprehensively plan for the effective provision of utility service and infrastructure to meet the projected growth in utility service needs over the next century.

Foundation for Future County-Wide Utilities Authority: Nassau County is currently working with the Florida Governmental Utility Authority (FGUA) on operational responsibilities of the Nassau County treatment plants. Nassau County envisions taking over operations of the County plants from FGUA in roughly 10+ years (in addition to other possible utilities within the County) and developing a county-wide utility authority which will own and operate such systems going forward as the County continues to grow. It is important to note that the Utility Authority Executive Director will not physically oversee the operation of any water or wastewater treatment plants but will interface closely with FGUA and the other public and private utility providers within the County to plan for the effective long-term provision of utility services, maintenance, and infrastructure and plan for the establishment of a proposed future County-wide utilities authority.





IDEAL CANDIDATE:

This newly created position of Utility Authority Executive Director is expected to proactively develop effective intergovernmental relationships with area utility providers and perform and/or plan, schedule, coordinate, monitor, and review interlocal and franchise agreements, and legislative requirements impacting current and future utility affairs. The successful candidate should have a background in municipal utility management, with a strong understanding of utility infrastructure planning, operations, permitting, and long-term capital planning in high-growth environments to ensure reliable public utility services for both current and future residents and customers within Nassau County.

Nassau County seeks an individual with a high level of emotional intelligence and a proactive, transparent, and collaborative management style as its Utility Authority Executive Director. The ideal candidate will promote relationships with area utility providers modeling the highest level of integrity and ethics. The individual should be approachable, even tempered and maintain a calm demeanor, even while simultaneously juggling multiple tasks and numerous high-profile initiatives.

The ideal candidate will be a skilled negotiator, strategic thinker and possess strong financial acumen and experience in long-term capital planning and budgeting skills and have extensive experience with project management. The Director be an adept problem solver with a demonstrated track record of creative and entrepreneurial solutions. They will be open-minded and willing to consider “outside the box” strategies to address current and future utility issues and challenges. The selected individual will be an effective public speaker and be comfortable when communicating with individuals at all socio-economic and educational levels.

As noted earlier, the Utility Authority Executive Director will not be managing utility facilities and operations, but rather coordinating with other public and private utilities, planning for proposed infrastructure development to meet the County’s growing needs, franchise management, coordination with FGUA, and establishing the foundation for a future Nassau County-wide Utility Authority. As such, individuals with a high-level understanding of utilities, growth management, and insight to set a vision for developing effective systems, operating structures, franchise negotiations, and contractor oversight and intergovernmental/interlocal agreements are highly desired in the position. Candidates who have high-level experience as a utility director, infrastructure planning positions, City/County Managers/Administrators, and/or other related backgrounds in utilities are encouraged to apply for the position to assist the County in its planning and exploration in how to best meet current and future utility demands and related infrastructure needs.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Public or Business Administration, Civil or Environmental Engineering, or a related field and ten (10) years of related experience or a master's degree with eight (8) years of related experience is required. A minimum of six (6) years of supervisory/management experience is also desired, although candidates possessing an equivalent combination of education and training may also be considered. Advanced professional certification and previous work as a high-level manager is preferred. Preference will be given to candidates with local government experience in the State of Florida.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS:

Nassau County offers a competitive salary based upon qualifications and experience with a desired starting salary range of \$110,800 - \$168,600, depending on qualifications. Utility Authority Executive Director is part of the Senior Management Class with the Florida Retirement System with a 3% Employee required contribution. Voluntary supplemental 457 deferred compensation retirement available. The County provides 100% of employee premiums for health insurance for one of two base plan offerings. The employee will have the option to buy up to two additional plan offerings at a 60% subsidy for health care to cover family or dependents. Full-time employees enjoy 13 paid holidays and 180 hours of paid time off annually.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position, contact:

Doug Thomas, Executive Vice President

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863-860-9314



Nassau County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check. The selected candidate must secure a valid Florida State Driver's License within a reasonable period of time following appointment.

Pursuant to the Florida Public Records Act, all applications are subject to public disclosure upon receipt of a public records request; however, public record requests regarding candidates are not expected for this position during the recruitment process.

RESOURCES:

County Website:

www.nassaucountyfl.com

County Blog:

www.thecountyinsider.com

Economic Development:

www.nassauflorida.com

Chamber of Commerce:

www.islandchamber.com

