

THE CITY OF
ELIZABETH CITY
NORTH CAROLINA



TO: Mayor and City Councilors
FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager
REF: FYI ~ Week Ending January 14, 2011
COPY: Email Distribution

1. City staff has now confirmed with NCDOT our community outreach meeting on the Elizabeth Street project. The meeting will be held on February 1, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. at the Arts of the Albemarle facility on Main Street. We are preparing letters that will include a copy of the official meeting notice to mail to all property and business owners within the targeted area of the project, as well as selected others in the community. These letters will be mailed next Wednesday, January 19. City staff continues to work with NCDOT staff from Raleigh on the agenda for the meeting. At the present time, we plan to have NCDOT provide an overview of their project, followed by a presentation by City staff on the utility relocation portion of the project. We estimate this portion of the meeting will take approximately 45 minutes. After the formal presentation, we will have four to five breakout sessions, which will be broken down by project geographical areas. During the break out sessions, we will go into great detail explaining to individual merchants and citizens how and when we will affect their business. The bid package for the utility relocation aspect of the project will be advertised on January 24, 2011 with openings scheduled on February 25, 2011 and March 1, 2011. If, during our discussions with the business and property owners, we need to make adjustments to our plans, we will still have time to send out an addendum. Staff has no problems meeting with individuals prior to the February 1 meeting to educate them on the project. In addition, staff and NCDOT will remain at the February 1 meeting until all questions are answered. The state consultant on this project is preparing a number of visual aids, which will be provided to the City for display. I would like to thank Arts of the Albemarle for all their help and for allowing us to use their facility.
2. Within the next 45 days, the Public Works Department will be advertising and opening bids on five major projects. These projects include Elizabeth

Street utilities, reconstruction of the raw water tank at the water treatment plant, construction of a new raw water transmission line and flood management improvements at Water and Shepard Streets. The estimated cost of these projects is \$10,300,000 and funds are available to do all the work.

3. I received the City's power bill on Monday from the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency. The bill was for power purchased from December 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010 and was in the amount of \$3,439,806. This is the largest power bill the City has ever received. The previous high bill was for power used in January 2010. That bill was \$3,352,747. The City purchased 38,222,358 kW, which cost the City \$1,861,428. In addition, the City's peak was hit for the month on December 15, 2010 at 9 a.m. The peak was 67,361 kW, which cost the City \$1,464,799. City staff was expecting a large bill based on the degree heating days for the month of December.
4. The Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Recreation Advisory Committee met yesterday afternoon at the Knobbs Creek Recreation Center. Mr. Steve Moler with Recreation Resources Service addressed the committee concerning the purpose of a Recreation Advisory Committee, the proper structure of the committee, and the relationships between the committee and the City and County, as well as the need for by-laws. Bobbi White gave handouts to each committee member detailing the department's programs, activities and facilities as well as future facility/park needs and information on the South Park facility. The committee agreed that there is a need to extend the irrigation system in the park and to sod the ball fields (rather than sprig) in order to have the fields playable by August 2011. If the fields are sprigged, they will not be playable until the spring of 2012. With the fields being sodded in June, the park will be ready to host softball and baseball tournaments in August, thus providing the City and County an opportunity to increase occupancy tax collections as a direct outcome of earlier usage. This results in added revenue for our area hotels, motels, bed and breakfast establishments and restaurants. The committee will be making a recommendation to the City Manager who will then forward it to both governing bodies for consideration.
5. Today, we were notified by the League of Municipalities that our health insurance provider will change effective July 1, 2011 from CIGNA to MedCost. MedCost is headquartered in Winston-Salem, NC and is the "leading independent health management organization in the Carolinas (NC and SC)". We are currently researching the effects that this change will have on Virginia health care providers. As soon as additional information is available, you will be notified. We will be requiring that the

League meet with all City employees to discuss the change in provider network and changes in the plan design. This change is being made to save administration costs associated with our health insurance coverage. The City annually budgets in excess of \$2 million for health insurance coverage for our employees.

6. As part of our ongoing effort to improve customer service to our citizens and customer base, the Department of Planning and Community Development has updated its webpage in order to make it more detailed and user friendly. Staff has revised various applications and included additional information to assist applicants through the planning process. This page can be accessed through the City's website at www.cityofec.com.
7. The Daily Advance is reconfiguring the Sunday paper in order to save newsprint. As a consequence, and in fairness to the broader business community, the space on the classified pages that has been given to Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc. and the Downtown Business & Professionals Association for "The Downtowner" will be used for editorial content beginning January 23, 2011. The Daily Advance has offered ECDI and the DBPA the opportunity to submit a column for publication on the Sunday business page. The focus of this column will be on business-to-business activities affecting downtown merchants and organizations. As members of DBPA, The Daily Advance will continue to support downtown Elizabeth City, publishing the cultural events that take place downtown in its daily and weekly calendars and through the local entertainment coverage.
8. Beginning in February, 2011 the Historic Preservation Commission will meet at 4:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in City Council Chambers. Previously, their monthly meetings began at 5:30 p.m. The change was adopted during yesterday's HPC meeting.
9. Most City offices will be closed on Monday, January 17 in observance of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Monday's garbage and recycling route will be collected on Tuesday, January 18.
10. The City has issued the appropriate permit to the Office of Student Life at ECSU for the annual MLK March, which is being held on Monday, January 17. Participants will assemble at the G. R. Little Library on campus at 9 a.m. and walk with police escort to the A. P. Midgette Building on Colonial Avenue where a ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. In case of inclement weather, the event will be held in the Sheep-Harney Elementary School Auditorium.

11. Upcoming Event Reminders:

- For ticket holders, the annual MLK Community Breakfast will be held Monday, January 17 at 8:00 a.m. at the K. E. White Graduate Center.
- For ticket holders, the 2011 Northeast Legislative Summit "State of the State and the Region" event will be held on Friday, January 21 at noon at the Pines.

RCO/vdw