



TO: Mayor and City Councilors
FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager
REF: FYI ~ Week Ending February 11, 2011
COPY: Email Distribution

1. This week, the Electric Department received approximately 135 calls regarding City streetlights not working. The crews have been working diligently all week repairing these streetlights and have repaired at least 19 streetlights where bulbs only were required and 79 streetlights in which the whole fixture had to be replaced. The fixtures that had to be replaced were installed between 1994 and 1998. We have found no other reason why they are going out in such a large quantity at one time other than due to age. When these fixtures were purchased, they had a manufacturer's guarantee of five years. Because of this unusually high demand, the warehouse is now out of stock of fixtures and an order has been placed with a ship date of at least five to six weeks for delivery. We will continue to repair the streetlights that require just bulbs until the new shipment of fixtures arrives.
2. Since being notified on Tuesday that DCA has approved our CDBG-ER project, staff has been trying to meld NCDOT rules and regulations with CDBG rules and regulations. NCDOT has already completed an environmental assessment for their project, which encompasses Pearl and North Road Streets, and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been issued. However, CDBG/HUD regulations require that an environmental assessment be completed and a FONSI be issued prior to executing any contracts with contractors. All agencies that would sign off on the CDBG environmental assessment have already signed off on the NCDOT environmental assessment. Staff has requested that DCA expedite the grant agreement and release of funds so that we can keep Contract 1 of the Elizabeth Street project on track. At this time, there are no local funds included in this \$1.8 million project. Staff will be working with both NCDOT and DCA on the allocation of per unit costs.

3. On Thursday, the City held a pre-bid meeting for contractors that were interested in utility relocation work in preparation for NCDOT's TIP Project U-4438, the reconstruction of Elizabeth Street. Three projects were discussed; the relocation of the overhead power, relocation of water and sewer utilities north of Elizabeth Street (Contract 1), and the relocation of water and sewer utilities south of Elizabeth Street (Contract 2). The pre-bid meeting was informational for the contractors interested in the electric power relocation work and mandatory for the contractors interested in the water and sewer relocation work. At the pre-bid meeting, there were six contractors interested in the electric work and seven that are now qualified to submit a bid for the water and sewer work. Tony Medlin, with NCDOT, provided the contractors with detailed information regarding compliance with the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements for the project and especially their responsibility to avoid the disqualification of a bid based on non-compliance with these requirements. Sean Robey, of Hyman and Robey, reviewed the details and complexities of the water and sewer work. He also reviewed special requirements on the project, especially the requirements to maintain reasonable access to businesses and residents in the project area. Contractors were also advised that the City had just received news of a CDBG-ER grant that would allow the City to extend the project area of Contract 1 to include a section of Road Street from Glade Street to Ward Street. It will take about one week to get the additional design details to the prospective contractors; hence, the City will move the bid opening date for Contract 1 to early in the week of March 7th.
4. The Parks and Recreation Department maintenance crews have been working the last two weeks to clean up Old Oak Grove and Old Hollywood Cemeteries. Our crews removed old flowers from the grave sites and pruned back some trees at both cemeteries. This week, prison inmates began working at Old Oak Grove clearing the tree line along the back swamp, raking leaves, removing tree branches, and clearing household trash that has been thrown into the woods. A kitchen refrigerator was actually found at the edge of the woods! The inmates worked all day Monday but only a half day on Tuesday due to the inmate in Winfall escaping from a work crew. Due to the escape, then the snow and the fact that inmates do not work on Fridays, they have not yet returned. The inmates are scheduled to resume work at Old Oak Grove on Monday and should complete the clean up by next Thursday.
5. On Monday and Tuesday of this week, the NCLM Wellness Initiative staff conducted wellness assessments for City employees. On Monday, 30 employees were tested and on Tuesday, 33 employees were tested. These confidential assessments included the measurement of each

employee's Body Mass Index (BMI), waist, blood pressure, blood glucose, pulse rate, total cholesterol and triglycerides. Strength and flexibility exercises were included in the assessment, which also included walking a mile. Each employee tested was given their results that afternoon. All employees were excited and motivated about their results and the test enabled them to take a serious look at their health. The NCLM Wellness Initiative team will return on Monday through Thursday, February 14 - 17 to continue the testing. The final results will give our Wellness Committee a tool to use in determining where we need to focus in improving the health of our employees, which will translate into health insurance cost savings.

6. On February 7, 2011, we held an in-service training for the customer service department employees to provide an in-depth review of heating degree days and how this affects a customer's billing. In addition, Dennis Gordon provided a first hand account of his experiences and the conditions of homes he has observed while doing energy audits. Ricky Albertson explained the difference between demand charges and energy charges and how they affect a customer's bill. It is hoped that this training will assist our customer service employees in helping our customers understand their bills as a result of the unseasonably cold temperatures we have experienced.
7. City staff has been working with representatives from Habitat for Humanity, who have recently been given three almost-finished residential structures at Ward and 5th Streets. The City has inspected the homes and estimates that there is approximately \$8,000 in work needed to finish two of the structures and \$10,000 in work to finish the third. The City will be utilizing some of our weatherization funds to purchase hot water heaters, add additional insulation and do air sealing. These homes will eventually end up in the hands of individuals who meet our weatherization guidelines. Habitat for Humanity is working with a local engineering firm to provide water and sewer to each building. The City will not be able to issue a certificate of occupancy for these homes until water and sewer has been installed. Habitat for Humanity is working with several other state and non-profit agencies to install the heating and cooling systems.
8. The sign designating the Fish Courts/Dawson Street area as an ecological project was installed by the Parks and Recreation Department maintenance staff on Wednesday. This sign notifies the community that this is a project designed to return the area back to its original wetland ecological state. This sign was requested by the City Council in the fall when Heather Smith and Tracy Morris of the Ecosystem Enhancement

Program spoke to Council concerning the benefits to water quality and control due to returning the area to its original wetland state.

9. ElectriCities has launched a new weather calendar tool, TempTracker365™, which can be accessed online at <http://www.temptracker365.com/>. By using this tool, customers can better understand how extreme cold or hot weather affects their electrical usage. TempTracker365™ gathers, tracks and stores each municipality's daily high and low temperatures. With a click of a button, you can produce a monthly calendar showing temperatures for the last three years. We hope to make this link available on the City's website and have asked if we would be permitted to do so.

10. Upcoming Event Reminders:

- City Council meeting, Monday, February 14 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers, 306 E. Colonial Avenue
- The 100th Annual Meeting Centennial Celebration of the Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce will be held on Friday, February 18, 2011.

RCO/vdw