



CITY OF
ELIZABETH CITY
HARBOR OF HOSPITALITY *North Carolina*

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager
REF: City Manager's Weekly FYI ~ April 24, 2020
COPY: Email Distribution

1. Monday, April 27, 2020, will be the first City Council meeting held since Executive Order #121 took effect. Under Executive Order #121, all North Carolinians are restricted to gatherings of less than 10 people. Due to the City Council consisting of nine individuals, plus support staff of 12 or more, we had to develop a modified meeting format to accommodate for these restrictions. The City Council and myself will be attending the meeting in Council Chambers, while City staff will be participating remotely. One of the significant differences from a normal meeting is that the public will not be able to attend the meeting in person. The meeting will be live streamed via the City's website and on Channel 11. Although citizens will not be able to participate in person, we greatly value their input; therefore, if a citizen would like to participate and have a comment relayed to the Council, they can do so by emailing City Clerk April Onley at aonley@cityofec.com. Written comments will be subjected to the same rules as those during a regular Council meeting, and as such, will be limited to three minutes. Please make sure to include your name and address on the written statement as it will be read into the record by the City Clerk. You will have from today until Monday, April 27th at 6:45 p.m. to send in any comments you would like to have read into the record.
2. Fifty-nine (59) applications were received by the deadline for the COVID-19 Small Business Micro Grant Program. As expected, a significant number of applications were received on the deadline date. ECDI Executive Director Debbie Malenfant is working to organize and verify the information submitted for the grant review subcommittee. We are anticipating that final decisions will be made regarding disbursements next week.
3. Today, Assistant City Manager Cole and Senior Center Superintendent Stacy Williams teleconferenced with Sentara Albemarle Medical Center (SAMC) representatives, discussing future collaboration projects for the

Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Senior center. Specifically, the group will explore wellness awareness programming through a monthly lunch and learn series, step down cardiac rehabilitation using the SAMC Fitness Room at the Senior Center, and diabetes prevention and care. The next planning meeting is scheduled for early May. The new wellness platforms are to be offered when the center reopens.

4. The Business Improvement Grant for CBC Elizabeth City, LLC for the renovation project at 118 S. Hughes Boulevard was closed out this week. The property owner received a \$20,000 BIG in the 2019-20 fiscal year for the project. Over \$300,000.00 was privately invested in



the renovation project that turned an abandoned gas station into a Currituck BBQ Elizabeth City restaurant. The business opened for pick-up orders only on Wednesday of this week, mid-COVID-19 pandemic, and received a great response from the community. This project is a great example of the success of the City's Business Improvement Grant program. To date, \$478,364.00 in Business Improvement Grants have been awarded and have resulted (or will result) in \$3,153,734.15 in private investment in our City. We thank the property owner, CBC Elizabeth City, LLC, the general contractor Fenton Construction, LLC, Currituck BBQ Elizabeth City the restaurant, and all others involved for their investment and work on this project and in Elizabeth City.

5. NC DOT published a press release on April 21st addressing the additional shortfalls of their revenue for this fiscal year due to COVID 19. As you may have read in past FYI's, since August 2019, two preliminary projects in Elizabeth City for the Hughes, US 17 South, and Oak Stump corridors have been delayed in the engineering phase due to last year's disaster recovery expenses, as well as the current related Map Act lawsuit cases. In this week's press release, NC DOT announced that there will be an additional \$300 million budget shortfall for their organization this fiscal year due to the loss of revenue through the Motor Fuels Tax, Highways Use Tax, and DMV fees related to effects to reduce to spread of COVID 19. As you may already be aware, NC DOT is fully funded by these taxes and fees. Due to these extraordinary circumstances, we are expecting an even further delay for the continuation of the preliminary engineering for both projects along Hughes, US 17 South, and Oak Stump corridors. NC DOT provided a list in the press release for projects that are still scheduled to be awarded in the next year at the following website [NCDOT website](#). We do not know how this may affect the Oxford Heights Bridge. From the list provided, project number U-5942, to improve the signal system at 44 intersections throughout the City was included. The list of projects that have schedule changes can be found [here](#). We currently have no projects on this delayed list, since our projects are still in the preliminary engineering phases.
6. Over the past month, Community Development staff have been working to address all comments from the Planning Commission for the proposed text amendment to the development standards for the Halstead Extension Overlay Zoning District. In an effort to decrease further delay, the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting scheduled for May 5th will proceed. Staff has mailed letters to all property owners within this zoning district to notify them of the meeting date. Due to concerns with COVID-19, the meeting will not be open to public, however, we have asked all property owners within the zoning district to please send us any comments, questions, or concerns they might have for the Commission to consider. If you are interested in receiving an electronic copy the proposed text amendment document, please contact our Community Development Department at planneroftheday@cityofec.com or (252)337-6672. All written comments, questions, or concerns regarding the proposed text amendment must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 4th to be considered. All written comments can be sent to planneroftheday@cityofec.com or by fax (252)331-1291.
7. On Wednesday April 22nd, 2020, Agent Lamont Butts assisted Jeff Epps from Stemerold City in Cumberland County NC to collectively teach an interactive class on Un-Manned Aerial Systems for the NEAAT School. The topic for the day was: Have you considered or are you already using drones and/or Un-Manned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) in your business or

organization? The high school class worked in groups remotely on photomapping and remote piloting. Through instructions and basic programming, the students were able to remotely pilot a drone roughly 209 miles away. The Elizabeth City Police Department was honored to partner with Stemerland City and the NEAAT School with this interactive class presented on Zoom.

8. As I shared last month, the City's contractor, Roof Engineering Corporation (REC) of Norfolk, Virginia, mobilized and initiated the Elizabeth City Public Safety Administration Building (PSAB) roofing project. The project is now 95% complete. The seven-person crew worked diligently during five weeks of inclement weather. During active construction, several structural concerns were uncovered. The emergency change order repairs are complete. In addition to the roof, REC installed an interior ladder, coping, downspouts, and other appurtenances. The City's heating and air conditioning contractor, Piedmont Service Group worked in tandem with the roof replacement. Two of the 11 five-ton air units requiring replacement have changed out. New racks for the rooftop equipment were installed also. The City experienced extensive damage to the PSAB last September during Hurricane Dorian. The project contract was awarded with a completion date sometime before the end of April 2020; and we are on schedule. However, the \$259,000 bid award has increased to include the \$7,875.00 repairs to parapet wall due to termite damage.



9. On Wednesday and Thursday, the Assistant City Manager facilitated kickoff conference calls for the City's smart meter project. In January, the City Council authorized staff to move forward with the migration from our existing one-way communicating electric meters to the more advanced meters enhanced with Nexgrid smart technology. The conferences included representatives from our meter suppliers, installation contractor, utility billing vendor, as well as Electricities. Alongside Project Manager Angela Cole, additional staff assigned to the project include Director of Information Technology Matthew Simpson, Electric Division team members Bob Vannoy and Ricky Albertson, and Data Processing

Manager Alicia Steward. Deployment is planned to begin about the first week of June, with a December 1, 2020 completion date. Project updates will occur weekly. Updates to the City Council will be posted to the project page on the City's website

10. In this new climate of social distancing the City of Elizabeth City Information Technology Department (IT) would like to offer our best intentions to set-forth a few organizational video conferencing ground rules that will give everyone a chance to participate in virtual meetings effectively. City staff will all work as a team to establish an expectation that everyone will keep their comments brief and relevant, so we can all hold each other accountable when participating in video conference meetings. The IT Department has established a document to provide our City with a basic framework to manage each of our virtual meetings effectively. If anyone is interested in this document, please contact City Administration or the IT Department to request the full memorandum as it relates to video conferencing etiquette and best practices. The document was designed to establish a number of very important video conferencing ground rules to help manage virtual meetings in an effective manner. Creating a video conference requires a lot of work and energy, but would definitely pay off when done right. We have adopted these ground rules as our shared commitment to doing great work during virtual meetings conducted by the City of Elizabeth City.

UPCOMING EVENTS: