



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 ~ June 19, 2020
COPY: Email Distribution

1. This week, I informed the City Council that I will be leaving Elizabeth City for a similar position in Argyle, Texas. For the last 17 years, it has been my pleasure to call Elizabeth City home, and to manage this community, which I deeply love. If you consider my tenure successful, you can thank the 315 employees who work for the City of Elizabeth City. As a manager, you are only as good as the people you work with, and the citizens of Elizabeth City should know that our employees are dedicated to work for them. In my 17 years, I have worked for six mayors, 22 different Councilors, and nine Council terms, which have been interesting and challenging at times. I do believe we have accomplished many important tasks, including the sale of our electric generating assets, which allowed us to lower our electrical rates by 16%; this put over \$29,593,987 back in our citizens' pockets. I am also very proud of the development of the River Road soccer complex and the South Park ball complex. I am especially proud of working with the County and the Airport Authority on the development of the Aviation Park. I only wish we could have done more. I would like to thank the citizens of Elizabeth City for their support and challenges. It has been my pleasure to serve you.
2. On Monday, the City of Elizabeth City made our official request to the Attorney General for a waiver from Executive Order #124 and Executive Order #142. You may review this document by clicking [HERE](#). As indicated in the waiver, beginning in July, the City will dip below our \$3,000,000 minimum cash balance in the Electric Fund. The City will remain below the \$3,000,000 cash balance in August and into the future. As indicated in the waiver, the City will not have funds on hand to pay our electrical bill to the North Carolina Eastern Power Agency and will be in default of our power sales agreement. To keep the City's electrical utility solvent, an emergency rate increase may be required anywhere between 10% and 40% to offset the loss of revenue from Executive Order #124 and #142. City staff has had numerous conversations with the Attorney

General's office and they have requested supplemental information. I have placed this item on the agenda for Monday night's City Council meeting in hopes that the Attorney General will grant a qualified waiver, which may require the City Council to take action.

3. The City of Elizabeth City Police Department has been declared a hot spot for the COVID-19 virus. Presently, we have nine employees who have tested positive, and we have still have 13 tests we are waiting on results. At this time, it has not affected our ability to respond to calls for service. Currently, we are following our continuity of operation plan for the Police Department. To my knowledge, no non-police department personnel have tested positive. The City of Elizabeth City as a whole is taking protective measures to control the spread of the virus. As an organization, we have implemented several protective procedures to ensure the safety of our employees. If an employee is experiencing symptoms such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, they should contact the Human Resources Department to coordinate testing.
4. Diligent work continues on installing new sections of the City's Raw Water Transmission Main along Wellfield Road. As has been previously announced, the City won two Community Development Block Grants, one in 2018 and one in 2019, to replace approximately 8,000 linear feet of deteriorated transmission main, mostly on Wellfield Road, but extending some along West Main Street Extension. These grants total \$1.07 million and allowed us to hire Enviro-Tech Unlimited Construction Services for the project in December. On Wednesday, Enviro-Tech and our project engineer, McGill Associates, reported that a rainy May slowed work some, but more than 20% of the total pipe should be installed by July 1st. This will put us around the Wellfield-Cody Street intersection. Weather permitting, Enviro-Tech predicts faster progress in the coming months. Enviro-Tech is doing good work for the City, but City staff are also emphasizing they need to complete the project as soon as possible. With hurricane season starting, we want to minimize the risk of tropical storms delaying or damaging this vital infrastructure project.
5. Earlier this week, City Electric Utility contractors began installing our new Nexgrid smart meters. Monday was the first day of installation, and although the day's effort was cut short due to the inclement weather, our two-person crew set just over 200 meters. At the time of print, exactly 207 meters within the Billing Cycle 1 section were completed. The 200 plus customers within Billing Cycle 1 will be the first to receive utility bills generated by the new electric meters; these bills will be mailed on July 10th. Installation sequencing is coupled to the billing cycle. Setting meters within Billing Cycle 1 will suspend next week, with crews shifting their

efforts to Billing Cycle 2. 207 meters done, now only 12,993 more to go! FMI about the Nexgrid electric meter project, please call the Electric Division at (252) 337-6870.

6. Last week, City staff and I met with a developer interested in constructing an apartment complex on the 21-acre site at the corner of Halstead Boulevard and Body Road. Formerly known as the Mark Gregory Halstead Apartments project, in 2016 this site was annexed into the city and rezoned to Apartment District from low density residential. To assist with the visualization of potential development, a sketch was presented to City Council that showed a possible layout of the property with 216 apartments. The concept for the development is to construct 216 market rate apartments with the majority being two-bedroom units. During the meeting concerns with the Knobbs Creek drainage and the availability of utilities to service the project were discussed. There was further discussion regarding the possible funding options available for sanitary sewer improvements.
7. This past Tuesday, Elizabeth City's Planning Commission held a special called meeting to make up for the cancelled regularly scheduled meeting on June 2nd. During their special called meeting, Planning Commission recommended approval of the Text Amendment to update and modify the development regulations in the Halstead Boulevard Extension Overlay District to City Council. This recommendation comes after three consecutive months of feedback from the property owners in the Halsted Blvd Extension Overlay District, Administration, and Planning Commission. Since the adoption of the Halstead Boulevard Extension Overlay District, and as commercial development has steadily increased, staff has become aware of sections of this ordinance that needed to be updated and clarified, while other sections of the ordinance had been proven to be a hardship for developers to achieve. The document recommended for approval this past Tuesday will provide relief to developers, while still keeping in the enhanced standards of an overlay district. This document will move forward for a public hearing in the next month.
8. The Planning Commission convened this past Tuesday, December 5th, to review the preliminary plat for Tanglewood Pavilions Phase 2 submitted by TGW# 1 North LLC, and Liberty Warehouse II, LLC. The second phase of the Tanglewood Pavilions development is 45 acres in size. The property will be subdivided into four lots, three out-lots and a 13-acre shopping center lot, and a 25-acre residual parcel. The proposed improvements for this phase include adding additional lanes to Mount Everest Drive North, realigning Conlon Way and finishing it with curb and gutter, constructing a detention pond, and extended the Halstead Bike path to Mount Everest Drive North. A modified curb line has been proposed to NCDOT to alleviate a concern with the location of the existing traffic light pole. After

considering the request, the Planning Commission voted anonymously to approve the preliminary plat.

- 9. The Pasquotank County Small Business Grant Program is open for applications. Deadline: Friday, July 10, 5:00 p.m.** Pasquotank County officials have announced the COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program. The program provides \$250,000 in grant funds for qualifying small businesses that have been adversely impacted by COVID-19. Small businesses within the County can apply for grants of up to \$2,500. The County has designated the Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Economic Development Commission (EC/PCEDC) as the agency to administer the program, and is partnering with Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc. (ECDI) as a communications facilitator. Detailed program guidelines and grant applications are available at: www.pasquotankcountync.org/covid19grants. For more info: call the EC/PCEDC at 252-338-0169 or ECDI at 252-338-4104

- 10.** It's finally here! The Downtown Waterfront Market will open this Saturday, June 20th at Mariners' Wharf Park. While the market season has kicked off a little later than in past years, you will see it was definitely worth the wait. Not only will the vendors that you have loved to see every Saturday be there, but many new vendors have joined for this kickoff market. Come shop for produce, microgreens, black garlic, homemade sauces, whirligigs, birdhouses, healing skin balm, and so much more! You can do your last minute Father's Day shopping for dad and grab a few things for yourself too. While at the Market, stop by the Parks and Recreation tent and register for upcoming programs. The market will run from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For a complete listing of this week's vendors, click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City will meet in Regular Session on Monday, June 22, 2020, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Due to the Governor's Executive Order, this meeting will not be open to the public; however, it will be live streamed on the City's website at <http://www.cityofec.com> as well as on Channel 11. Any member of the public who wishes to have their comments heard by the Council may submit them to the City Clerk at aonley@cityofec.com to have them read into the record. The Clerk will accept comments until 6:45 p.m. on Monday, June 22nd. Please remember to include your name and address.