



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 ~ May 29, 2020

COPY: Email Distribution

1. On Thursday, City staff submitted a grant application to the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) for new facilities for Enfield Park. The new facilities would include a pavilion, outdoor gym, senior playground, and small multipurpose field, at a total project cost of approximately \$295,000; if funded, PARTF would pay half this cost and the City would fund the remainder. All the new facilities would be built on the same parcel containing the Roger McLean Splash Pad. The Enfield grant proposal has evolved significantly since City staff started working on it in January. Seeking citizen input, we hosted public meetings in February to ask for people's preferred facilities. Though only a few citizens showed up, they offered support for the outdoor gym and senior playground while being clear they wanted a walking trail, new youth playground and dog park. City staff presented a plan including the trail and dog park to the City Council on Tuesday, but the Council directed us to remove the dog park and submit an alternative to PARTF. City staff followed this directive and revised the application to add the pavilion and multipurpose field, while deferring the trail and youth playground to a future phase of development. If funded, the revised application would be a major step towards making Enfield a more engaging park for the entire family. We should have a funding decision in the fall.
2. The Planning Commission will hold its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, June 2nd at 4 p.m. in Council Chambers. During the last Planning Commission Meeting on May 5th, the Commission decided to table their recommendation to the City Council until the next regularly scheduled meeting in June, so all public comments received could be properly addressed. Depending on feedback for the revisions made in the text amendment and comments received, the Planning Commission will make recommendation to the City Council for the Halstead Blvd. Extension Overlay District text amendment during this coming meeting. Due to concerns with COVID-19, the meeting will not be open to public, however,

staff has mailed letters to all property owners within this overlay district to notify them of the meeting date with specific instructions on how to submit written comments, questions, or concerns to the Commission for their consideration. If you are interested in receiving an electronic copy of the proposed text amendment document, please contact our Community Development Department at (252)337-6672 or planneroftheday@cityofec.com.

3. Elizabeth City’s Historic Preservation Commission will hold its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, June 10th at 4:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. Due to the concerns with COVID-19 and with keeping in the standards of the North Carolina Open Meetings Act, the Council Chambers will be limited to 10 people at one time. Staff will provide an overflow room where public attendees and witnesses can view the meeting remotely. Any party with legal standing will have the opportunity to address the commission and the applicant. All board members, staff, applicants, and public attendees will be required to wear face masks and will be placed six feet apart. Comments can be submitted electronically for the public that may not want to attend. These comments can be sent to planneroftheday@cityofec.com or through fax (252)331-1291.

4. During the City Council’s Budget Work Session held Tuesday, the City Council voted to raise the sewer rates by 25% instead of the proposed 50% recommended by the City’s consultant Raftelis. Staff worked with Raftelis to rework our Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to reflect the Council’s actions. In order to generate the necessary revenue to fund the CIP over the 10-year period, a larger annual increase must be imposed. In years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24, and 24/25 the annual increase will need to be 8% instead of the 3% under the first Raftelis plan. The City’s CIP was modified to reflect the decrease in annual revenue. The only difference in the CIP is the amount of sewer line, which can be replaced each fiscal year. Next year the amount budgeted for sewer line replacement will be \$200,000. This amount will increase to \$650,000 \$900,000, and \$1,250,000 in fiscal years 2022 through 2024 respectively. Below is the combined cost for aresidential customer using 5,000 gallons per month:

Fiscal Year	Monthly Combined Bill	\$ Increase
2019 / 20	\$77.80	
2020 / 21	\$86.00	\$8.20
2021 / 22	\$89.89	\$3.89
2022 / 23	\$94.02	\$4.13
2023 / 24	\$98.44	\$4.42

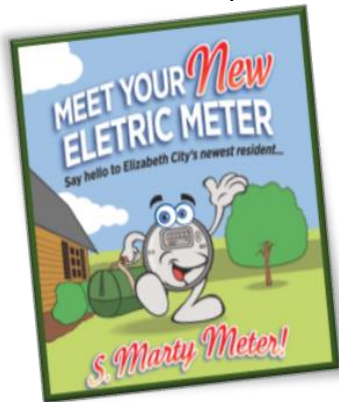
5. Earlier this week, the City Council received a detailed update on the City's electric utility smart meter project. The Council was reminded the first 1,200 meters and much of the communications equipment had shipped. Nexgrid still owes the City several switches and other communication devices. These items are on backorder, but the City does not require the items for initial design setup. In the interim, installation of the DIGIs/backbone and enclosures completed today.

Communication device

installation for Cycles 1 and 2 will lead the effort because these will be the first meters to be swapped. Handheld devices (to be used during meter installation) are being configured by Information Technology staff for City technicians / installers. For our utility customers, please look for the S.

Marty Meter bill insert with your June statements. The flyer will include a few details about the project and how to contact the City with additional questions and information. In late summer, Customer Service Division will begin the customer portal development. The portal will deploy for public go-live December 1, 2020. For now, representatives are completing data push protocols and screen presentation. Our project is tracking without extreme issue or delay. We remain on target

for the City Manager's December 1, 2020 deadline.



Photographed are City Information Technology Director Matthew Simpson and System Analyst Pedro Holley installing communication boxes.

6. On Tuesday evening, the City Council approved the proposal -- **Reinventing Downtown and Outdoor Space Concepts in Elizabeth City for COVID-19 Reopening** -- that was submitted by Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc. (ECDI), on behalf of businesses City-wide. The proposal was developed in cooperation with City departmental staff and administration, business owners, business organizations, lengthy discussions with the Alcohol Law Enforcement agency, and review of actions and plans of other communities across the state, region, and nation.

The purpose of the request is to allow businesses to expand outside of their normal footprints to serve customers in a safe and healthy atmosphere while maintaining appropriate social distance. It is not designed to promote large groups or gatherings, and events such as live music are not allowed. The lifting of restrictions **does not** override or usurp any order from Governor Cooper or the NC Department of Health and Human Services. In summary, the action:

- Lifts restrictions to allow businesses to expand outside of their building footprint and use specific public outdoor spaces and/or sidewalks in front of or adjacent to their businesses to serve customers. This applies to restaurants, cafes, retailers, and service businesses.
- Lifts restrictions to allow restaurants with parking lots to utilize up to 30% of their existing parking area for outdoor seating and allows for use of outdoor tents to accommodate seating. (Tents must meet Fire code and be approved/inspected by the EC Fire Department.)
- Lifts restrictions on retailers and service businesses City-wide allowing for displays, tables, and sales opportunities on public areas and private areas immediately outside of and adjacent to their businesses. (Use of private property requires permission from property owner.)
- Lifts signage permitting restrictions and promotional signage restrictions on retailers, service providers, and restaurants City-wide.
- Allows for alcohol consumption on specifically identified public outdoor spaces during normal business service times (beer and wine only).
- Allows for closure of the 600 block of E. Colonial Avenue to vehicular traffic from the corner of Poindexter & Colonial Avenue to Water Street on Wednesdays from 5:00 – 10:00 pm; Fridays from 5:00 pm - 10:00 pm; and Saturdays from 11:00 am – 10:00 pm. Property owners with private parking garages will be allowed ingress/egress.

All businesses must comply with ADA, Health Department, NC DHHS, and ABC rules, regulations, and guidance, as well as all Governor's Executive Orders, recommendations, and guidance currently in effect or forthcoming.

A business wishing to expand onto public property must notify and make a specific request to Deborah Malenfant, ECDI, at 252-338-4104 or Carter Thompson, City of EC Community Development Office at 252-337-6672.

Link to proposal in its entirety [HERE](#).

Link to NC Dept. of Health & Human Services "Interim Guidance for Restaurants" [HERE](#)

Link to NC Dept. of Health & Human Services "Interim Guidance for Retail Businesses" [HERE](#)

Link to NC Dept. of Health & Human Services "Interim Guidance for Salons, Massage, and Personal Care Business Settings" [HERE](#)

Link to Frequently Asked Questions for EO 138 (Phase 1 Reopening) [HERE](#)

Link to Frequently Asked Questions for EO 141 (Phase 2 Reopening) [HERE](#)

Link to Alcohol Beverage Control Temporary Extension of Premises Guidelines – Phase 2 [HERE](#)