



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 ~ March 6, 2020  
**COPY:** Email Distribution

1. Earlier today, the City held a ribbon-cutting event for the new Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Senior Center. The First Friday Art Walk keynote event included an address from former Parks & Recreation Director Jim Overman and the



signing of the National Anthem by our ECPC Senior Choir. Attendees received the first viewing of the facility since the City acquired the premier downtown building from The Daily Advance last June. Situated at the intersection of South Water and East Church Streets, the two story building features four gaming rooms, two shuffleboard courts, three billiard tables, an arts and crafts and cinema room, banquet hall, a multipurpose class room, and high-tech conference space. Also exclusive to the new senior facility are a library with multiple computer workstations, a catering kitchen with café seating, and the Sentara Albemarle Medical Center (SAMC) Wellness & Fitness Center. As a major sponsor to the project, SAMC will feature wellness courses, remote access to doctors and wellness coaches, healthy living classes, and step-down referrals to the fitness center. I am excited of our rebirth for Elizabeth City's adult and aging community. Because the ECPC Senior Center is a joint project with Pasquotank County, all citizens of the county will be free to enjoy the programming, trips, and education opportunities facilitated by the department. Prior to the City purchasing the building, the City entered into an Interlocal Agreement with Pasquotank County. The agreement

required the City to issue the \$1,500,000.00 for the purchase and remodeling of the facility. The County will annually pay one-half of the debt payment of \$87,075.60 each; additionally, they will pay one-half of the operating cost. I extend my warmest gratitude to the Senior Center Coordinator Stacy Williams and other City staff, JKF Architecture, A.R. Chesson and the host of vendors who worked tirelessly to make the project possible.

2. This week, I requested all City departments provide a Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP) for their respective departments in response to the Coronavirus fears. The City is working closely with Pasquotank County Emergency Manager Christy Saunders on this matter. Several years ago, the City, along with the County and the Health Department, participated in a pandemic table top exercise. The information we learned through this exercise will be incorporated into the COOP. A number of City departments including the Police and Fire Departments have a very well-defined COOP in their standard operation plans. All the separate departmental COOPs will be incorporated into a comprehensive plan for the entire City's operations. Under state statute, the City has very broad powers to address the Coronavirus should the Governor or President issue an Emergency Declaration. Chief Buffaloe has been invited to attend a State Coronavirus Task Force meeting, which will be held in Raleigh on March 12, 2020. He will be sharing what he learned with the rest of the management team following the meeting.
3. On Wednesday, the Mayor and I attended the Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce first annual Albemarle Economic Forecast Breakfast at YMCA @ The Pines. Dr. James Kleckley, an economic forecaster and professor at East Carolina University came to present economic data on the national, state, and regional level. The event was sponsored by Will Thompson and Atlantic Union Bank. Following Dr. Kleckley's presentation, Director of Economic Development, Christian Lockamy, gave brief remarks on the recent activity in the region and our path forward for success. The event was widely attended by many in the community and region, and will likely set a precedent to become an annual event.
4. Monday, which was also Dr. Seuss' birthday, kicked off National Read Across America Week. Officers from the Elizabeth City Police Department visited Pasquotank Elementary School and the Boys and Girls Club to read some of



the author's classic books to the children. This initiative is intended to motivate students to read and have fun while doing so. Officer Colon read an all-Spanish version of Cat in The Hat for the kids to enjoy.

5. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, several employees tested for water certifications. I'm pleased to report the following employees obtained their B-Distribution certification: Raymond Staten, Bob Rice, and Richard Perkins. The Distribution System is an A-Distribution system. We encourage all distribution system operators to continue their education and certifications to advance and have a successful career in water distribution. Congratulations and great job!
6. A special meeting has been called for Planning Commission on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. During this special meeting, the Planning Commission will be reviewing a proposed text amendment to the Halstead Boulevard Extension Overlay District. This proposal is to update and clarify the ordinance that was adopted in 2006. This proposal also includes several changes to the current design standards for the overlay district. Planning staff has been working for some time now on this proposal. In the spring of 2019, staff organized a landscape committee to discuss reasons why the current landscape ordinance in the Halstead Overlay District was ineffective. The committee then reviewed case studies of recently approved commercial development in the Halstead Overlay district and compared it to other communities' requirements. Based on these efforts, staff has proposed a complete update of the Halstead Boulevard Extension Overlay District Regulations in its entirety.
7. Our Criminal Intel Division has just launched a new initiative with The Neighbors app by Ring, which is a free app designed to help community members connect and stay informed about what's going on around them – whether they own a Ring device or not. The Elizabeth City Police Department can use Neighbors to share important crime and safety information with residents and work with their communities to make neighborhoods safer. Ring is proud to work with local police across the country, through the Neighbors app, to help open the lines of communication between local police and the communities they serve. Ring believes when communities and law enforcement work together, safer neighborhoods can become a reality.
8. **First Friday ArtWalk – Tonight – 4:00-7:00 p.m., Downtown Elizabeth City.** As we "leap" out of February and lose an hour this weekend when we "spring forward" into Daylight Savings Time, the



luck of the Irish will be with us for the March First Friday ArtWalk. You'll have the opportunity to visit 19 locations throughout downtown for events with tours, ribbon cuttings, grand opening celebrations, a block party, live music, kids' activities, art experiences, and a field of guest artists. Festivities start at 2:00 p.m. with open tours of Weatherly Lofts, followed by the ribbon cutting for the new Senior Center at 4:00 p.m., grand re-opening and expansion of Glass Music at 4:30 p.m., and the Block Party Celebration / Ribbon Cutting event for new downtown business Whitney Young Law from 5:00-6:00 p.m. Make a point to visit all the participating ArtWalk businesses for memorable experiences and showcase artists. Come on down for the ArtWalk experience. Downtown Elizabeth City, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., with dining, sipping and live music performances afterward in various establishments. Come on downtown early and stay late for the many festivities. Click [HERE](#) for the listing of participating businesses.

9. For the month of March, our Code Enforcement Division has had a total of 13 new cases. From 03/01/2020 to 03/05/2020, 16 cases have been closed, with 54 cases still active.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City will meet in Regular Session on Monday, March 9, 2020, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, located on the second floor of the municipal building at 306 East Colonial Avenue.