



Wishing everyone a 2021 that is a bit brighter than 2020. Here are some things happening in town.

Keeping up with town priorities going into 2021. Each year the Board of Commissioners has a two-day planning session in February that charts our priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. We formulate the budget-planning schedule, identify important capital improvement projects, and discuss other initiatives coming from the

mayor and commissioners. Additionally, several boards and commissions provide updates to the commissioners. I believe this is one of the best ways to track the priorities of the town going into the next year. Keep an eye out for the dates for this meeting, which will, of course, have to be done over the internet this year. You may contact Town Clerk Charles Rocci at 252-247-4353, ext. 13, for more information.

East End Phase 2 stormwater project. As of this writing, construction of the storm water line running from Yaupon Road to Myrtle Court has begun. We had a few delays in early December due to heavy rainfall in the construction area, but we are back on track now. Also, the town and the country club have reached agreement on the portion of the project located on the grounds of the club, which will be done during January and February.

Use of excess FEMA funds from the Hurricane Florence beach project. The federal government rolled out a new program following Hurricane Florence that allows the town to use any excess funding from the project for specific uses. These uses focus on resiliency related activity for future natural events. At the December Board of Commissioners meeting, the commissioners approved submission of the following list to FEMA to spend approximately \$2.6 million related to future storms and public safety:

- A ladder truck for the fire department
- New dual-band radios (VHF and 800 MHz) in the police and fire departments
- Auxiliary power systems for all water system production wells
- A sloped metal roof for the public safety building
- Roof replacement at town hall
- Debris-removal equipment for the Public Services Department

Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative (CCEC) tree trimming project. By the time you are reading this the electric cooperative contractors will likely be in town trimming trees. We sent letters to approximately 90 homeowners who have trees that we are recommending for removal, per the plan I have briefed here previously. If you have received such a letter and want to speak to me about it, please call me on my cell at 252-723-0013.

Replacement of steps at town hall and the public beach access raised walkway at the east end of town. We are in the process of soliciting design proposals to replace the aged wood at the front door and back handicap ramp of town hall. We are doing the same at the public beach access across from the Hampton Inn. We aim to have this work completed prior to June.

Painting of center lines on Oakleaf and Mimosa drives. We will paint center lines on both of these roads this winter.

Stormwater projects on Pine Knoll Boulevard and Acorn Court. If you live on Live Oak Court or Acorn Court and you are not familiar with the projects the town plans for this spring, please contact Town Clerk Rocci at 252-247-435, ext. 13, for details.

Town requirement that bags of household garbage be placed in containers. In December 2018 the Board of Commissioners took action to require that household garbage be placed in containers and not left on the side of the road in plastic bags. Coyotes are feeding on these bags, and as we deal with the concerns of coyotes in town, one of the most important recommendations from biologists with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission is that we remove food sources for these animals. In support of this, we have a convenience site at town hall for second-home owners to drop off household garbage prior to leaving town.

Audit report. At the November commissioners meeting, our state approved auditor reported on our overall financial condition to the board. We received an "unmodified opinion" by our auditing firm, which means they were impressed with what they saw and had no findings of concern. All of our major funds have reserve levels that are at or near the goals established by the board, and these numbers (in particular in the General Fund) will improve when we receive further reimbursements from FEMA. Audit reports are great, but it is the behind-the-scenes work of Julie Anderson (Finance), Sonny Cunningham (Water and Public Works), Jason Baker (Fire/EMS and Emergency Management) and Ryan Thompson (Police) that makes these results possible. These department heads are excellent stewards of the town's funds.

An alternate method to reach a Pine Knoll Shores Police Officer for non-emergency situations. If you need to ask a question or simply pass some information on to a police officer, please call 252-726-1911, and your call will be answered at the County Communications Center. You may then ask the attendant to have a Pine Knoll Shores police officer call you. Please note that for any situation that actually involves suspected criminal activity or that requires a police officer to come to your location you should call 911. It is critically important that when a law enforcement officer actually deploys to a scene that he or she does so only after being centrally dispatched via the 911 system.

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This Month's Puzzle Solutions

C	A	C	H	E	N	O	V	A	U	K	E	S
A	G	A	I	N	E	P	I	C	S	A	V	E
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