



I hope everyone had a great holiday period, despite the fact that we may not have been able to travel or have the normal crowd at our homes this year. Here are some things going on in town.

**Keeping up with town priorities in the new year.** 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. The meeting is February 11-12 and will be held online this year. Contact Town Clerk Charles Rocci at [clerk@townofpks.com](mailto:clerk@townofpks.com) for more information.

**East End stormwater project.** The installation of the stormwater line from Myrtle Court west to Yaupon Road is underway. If you drive down Juniper Road from Highway 58, you can see that it crosses a historically wet area. The



Stormwater line being installed, looking east from Juniper Road—Photo by Brian Kramer

entire route does this, and we hope to manage groundwater and create capacity in the water table, which directly impacts flooding. The other half of this project involves the installation of a pump and infiltration chamber on the grounds of the country club. By the time you are reading this, construction should be underway.

**Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative (CCEC) tree trimming.** CCEC's once-every-three-year trimming project is underway. They moved from east to west along Oakleaf Drive and should be complete on Oakleaf by the time you are seeing this. As is normally the case with this work, conversations between the homeowners and the trimming

crew are frequent and mostly friendly. We are doing everything possible to ensure that trees on private property are not removed and trimmed only to CCEC standards. If you have an issue with the work in your area, please call me at 252-723-0013.

**Town staff working remotely.** Due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases in Carteret County and across the state, all town staff capable of working remotely are doing so and will continue until the number of new cases improves significantly.

While there will be no interruption in town business, the methods of contacting staff will be slightly different. The contact list at right provides the best phone number to reach individual staff members. All phone numbers except for the fire and police chiefs are cell phone numbers that will reach the

staff member wherever his/her remote office may be. Voicemails left on office landline extensions will be checked periodically. The chiefs are remaining in their offices; therefore, their usual office numbers are provided.

Because staff is drastically reducing their time in the office, appointments must be made in advance for business that requires face-to-face contact. The drop box behind town hall is available to deposit tax payments, permit payments or tree permit applications, and the vestibule next to the handicap entrance is open to leave larger packets like permit applications, building plans, etc.

**Preparing your home for a deep freeze in Pine Knoll Shores.** There are a few simple steps we can all take to prevent damage from burst water pipes during freeze events. There are two things we'd like to remind everyone of:

- We encourage citizens to shut the water off at their properties when they are not there full time. Some water systems do not want citizens to open their meter boxes, but we invite you to do so. The ACE Hardware store in Atlantic Beach sells a wrench to turn off the water supply to your home. If you shut off the water to your home, you will prevent a burst pipe from becoming a costly event. If you shut the water off and run your faucets until all the residual water is out of the lines, you'll likely prevent the pipes from being damaged in the first place. If you do not know how to turn the water off at the meter box, contact Public Services Director Sonny Cunningham at 252-723-0555 or [SCunningham@townofpks.com](mailto:SCunningham@townofpks.com) the next time you are in town and he will show you how to do it.
- During these freeze events many of us run our faucets in drip mode to keep the lines from freezing. This is an effective practice that we endorse and have mentioned in the past (a reminder: be careful not to create an ice patch where you or anyone else walks). If you plan to do this, it is important to contact Sonny Cunningham as shown here to prevent his being dispatched to a home for an activated leak alarm generated by our smart water meters, when a homeowner is intentionally running water to prevent damage.

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