

Kramer's Korner

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for a new metal roof for town hall. Before we send this out, we are going to speak to another community that went through this experience. As our building inspector has told us, a properly installed metal roof is tremendous. An improperly installed metal roof is less effective than shingles.

Grant to address street drainage. As previously reported in this column, we have received a grant from the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management for the design of street drainage projects in town. We signed a state agreement for this project and will soon start working with an engineer. Envisioned are very mild swales installed in the town right of way, with crowned asphalt to move water into the swales. This grant is for design only, not construction, which we hope to address in a future budget year when funds are available.

Water system grant. We were not selected for a grant to replace water lines throughout most of the older east end of town. This NC Department of Environmental Quality grant program will have a second round this fall, but I am not hopeful. Quite frankly, it is entirely due to Sonny Cunningham that our system is in such solid working condition that we did not compete with financially distressed systems or systems that had more serious maintenance issues. We will continue to work on this.

Sidewalk segments for safely crossing Highway 58. As a follow-up to the discussion of this topic at the July meeting of the Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Edwards and I visited public beach accesses at Ocean Glen, Beacon's Reach and Dayton Place. Related to these beach accesses and crossing safety, there are ongoing discussions of a sidewalk segment from Dayton Place on the south side of Highway 58, east to the traffic light at Pine Knoll Boulevard; a sidewalk segment from the crosswalk at Juniper Road east to Laurel Court (which was discussed in the spring and had a cost estimate of \$100,000 for construction and \$13,000 for design); and a small segment from the eastern Bermuda Greens driveway to the Hotel Alice driveway (cost estimate of \$30,000 for construction and \$9,000 for design). I anticipate these specified locations will be discussed in February when we start next year's budget planning.

Flood maps. We continue to wait for FEMA to advise us that the new flood maps will enter a 90-day period during which homeowners can appeal the new maps to the federal government. In the meantime, you may see what zone your property is currently in by visiting fris.nc.gov/fris. If you need assistance, reach out to Town Clerk/Planning Administrator Charlie Rocci at 252-247-4353, ext. 11, and he can walk you through it.

Lightning strike. Sometime overnight on August 7-8, there was a lightning strike that impacted both town hall and the aquarium. At town hall we had the most damage from a weather event we have seen in 15 years, including hurricanes. We regret the inconvenience this caused with our phone service, but that was just the beginning of the damage:

- The transformer serving the building was destroyed. CCEC replaced it.
- Our phone system was wiped out. We forwarded the main number to the public safety building so citizens would get a human voice—and had to get most of the phone equipment at town hall replaced.
- The conference phone in the board room is dead.
- The fire alarm system at town hall was damaged, and as of this writing the technicians are still assessing this.
- Two desktop computers and a monitor were destroyed, and several network cards were damaged.

- The exterior parking lot lights at town hall were damaged, but are now back in service.
 - Both board room TVs are out and will be replaced.
 - The electronic access controls to town hall are not fully operational; the contractor was in, and equipment is on order.
 - From a server and connectivity standpoint, our modem, router and switch were all damaged. Spectrum replaced the modem, and our IT contractor got us running with temporary replacements of the other two. New equipment is on order.
 - At least three security cameras are not operating, nor is the DVR associated with them. Replacements are on order.
 - An HVAC unit in town hall may be compromised.
 - Smaller items like the shredder and postage machine are also dead.
- We had commercial back-up power supplies and surge protectors on these major pieces of equipment, but it wasn't enough protection. We have filed an insurance claim, and it looks as if this damage will be covered with a very modest deductible (\$500). We are going to take a look at industrial/commercial level lightning protection.

P.E.O. Pecans

By Karen Askew

It's that pecan time of year again. P.E.O.'s (Philanthropic Educational Organization) annual pecan drive has begun. Proceeds from the sale of fresh pecans (never frozen or cold stored) go toward providing grants, loans and scholarships to support the education of women at all levels, from high school to the doctoral level and everything in between. To find out more about P.E.O. visit peonc.org peointernational.org.

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