

TO: Mayor and Board of Aldermen
FROM: Lee Galloway, Town Manager
DATE: June 20, 2006
SUBJECT: Status Report

It has been an incredibly busy spring. Much time was spent in the area of personnel, with a new Assistant Fire Chief, a new Recreation Director and a new Code Enforcement Officer having all been hired. And as previously indicated, Finance Director Eddie Caldwell and I feel that we spent more time on developing the 2006-2007 budget than on any other budget on which we have worked during the past 12 years. Mixed in with that has been progressing onward in assessing the site for the new fire station and in working with the architects and fire fighters on the design of the new facility. Somewhere in the midst of all of that, we have been able to spend time in other pursuits. I attribute that to having some wonderful people working with us in all phases of town government.

NEW FIRE STATION

At the Town Board meeting on Tuesday, June 13, Jim Powell and Keith Carlyon of the architectural firm of ADW, INC. were on hand to present the preliminary design for the new fire station to be located in the 1000 block of North Main Street. During the spring, the architects met with Fire Chief Bill Fowler and Assistant Chief Joey Webb and various firefighters in planning the layout of the station. Over a period of two months, Keith Carlyon made changes and shifted walls to allow the greatest amount of storage space possible without expanding the walls of the structure. With the cost of construction still rising rapidly, the architects are making every attempt to keep the expenses down. When we started this project, they estimated a cost of around \$170 per square foot, but last week, they had revised their estimate to \$210 per square foot. Mr. Powell joked at the Board meeting about how anxious Mr. Carlyon was to proceed on this project, and although it was not stated, I think part of that is because Keith realizes that any delay will mean that the cost continues to rise. So he is anxious to get on to construction. The Board gave the architects approval to proceed on with the design of the facility.



Over the next few months, we will begin the preliminary work on the site, with the removal of asbestos and other contaminants during late July and August. In September and October, we expect to see the buildings demolished or sold as the site is being prepared for the contractor on the building. Then, in October and November, it is expected that the poor soil beneath the building site will be removed and replaced with better, more stable soil and rock, all of which will be compacted to have a solid site for the station. The architects are aiming for a construction start in January, 2007, with a one year completion date. We will have our fingers crossed for a ribbon cutting in January, 2008.

We are grateful to the local Extension Office and N. C. State University for selecting the fire station as potential site for a storm water grant proposal. At the Board meeting of June 13, approval was given for this joint project with the State, and it will save the Town approximately \$24,000.

Finance Director Eddie Caldwell and I are completing the loan application package for the Rural Development office of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. We had hoped for a \$3 million loan for 40 years from that agency on the \$4 million project, but we have been tentatively approved for only \$2 million. We have revised the loan request to the \$2 million offered, and Mr. Caldwell has contacted the Local Government Commission to discuss financing on the other \$1 million.

PERSONNEL ACTIVITIES

Assistant Fire Chief

During February, we reviewed the 44 applicants for the position of Assistant Fire Chief to fill the position left with the death of Fire Captain Mike Warren. Interviews of the 8 finalists were conducted during March, and we were able to hire Joey Webb, the long time Chief of the Clyde Volunteer Fire Department. Chief Webb's "real" job was at Borg Warner in Asheville, but his first love was in his volunteer work as the chief of the Clyde Department. Actually, Assistant Chief Webb began his fire service career with the Waynesville Fire Department back in the 1970s and served five years at that time. We were very pleased to be able to hire such a well respected and dedicated professional into our department, and he has been working closely with Fire Chief Bill Fowler in learning the day to day operation of the department.

Recreation Director

Recreation Director Mike Smith had announced his plans to retire effective June 1, but there was an error in calculating this time, and it turns out he may not retire with full benefits until November 1, 2006. We had already replacement and were in the final he would not retire in June but actually works out better for the time to work with Mike and We received 63 applications for narrow the list down to 8 or 10 entice Rhett Langston, of the Buncombe County Parks in Waynesville. Rhett will begin Waynesville and Haywood County a number of times to participate in the County Recreation Assessment and to meet with Recreation Department staff and other town officials.



begun interviewing applicants for Mike's selection process when Mike learned that would have to wait until November. This Town, as it will give the new director more learn about the facilities and personnel. this position, and it was very difficult to for interviews. In the end, we were able to Administrative Officer/Assistant Director and Recreation Department, to join our organization

work with the Town on July 3, but he has already been to

Code Enforcement Officer

During the spring, Codes Administrator Alex Corbin announced his intentions to retire, and we began searching for a replacement. Applicants possessing the required certifications were few and far between, and with so many construction projects about to begin, we needed to have a fully certified inspector on board right away. With his four years of experience with the Town, we decided that Jason Rogers was the most qualified to move up to the Codes Administrator position.

To replace Jason, we made an offer to Gary Sanders, an individual who lives in Waynesville's extraterritorial jurisdiction but who actually works for the Henderson County Inspections Office. He is working out a notice with Henderson County and plans to begin work with us on July 10. Mr. Sanders previously served as a building inspector for a number of years in Georgia, and we feel that he will be an asset to our organization.

Retirements

We are continuing to see a number of retirements take place, but otherwise, there is very little movement among our employees. In the new fiscal year, we hope to work more on the succession plan that Human Resources Director Margaret Langston discussed at the Board's Retreat in March.

OPERATIONAL REORGANIZATION

As discussed in the budget work sessions, we are planning some shifting of personnel and responsibilities as early as possible in the new fiscal year. Most of these changes came out of the recommendations made by MGT Consulting which performed a Staffing Study for the Town in 2004.

The Financial Office at the former Hazelwood Town Hall will close and those two employees will move to Town Hall where all the Finance Department will be under one roof. To make room for them, we will be creating a one stop permitting office at the Hazelwood Branch Office, with the Planning Director, Land Use Manager, Administrative Assistant added to the Codes Administrator and Code Enforcement Officer. This will make it much more convenient for contractors and for those dealing in land development/building permit issues. Of course, the long range plan is for this one stop permitting office to be located in a new structure in front of the existing police/fire departments, but that facility is not scheduled to be completed until early 2009.

In merging the finance department at Town Hall, we will be eliminating one position of Customer Service Representative. As the MGT Staffing Study recommended that the Town provide the Police Chief with an Administrative Assistant, we will replace the Customer Service position with an Administrative Assistant position at the Police Department.

Since we will be losing an Administrative Assistant position at Town Hall when Ms. Rhinehart moves to the Hazelwood Branch Office with the Director of Planning and Land Use Manager, we will be adding a part-time clerical position at Town Hall to work under Town Clerk Phyllis McClure. This position will perform some of the functions that Ms. Rhinehart was assigned, but will mainly assist with answering telephones, greeting the public and handling correspondence.

These changes will not take place on July 1, but will be implemented early in the fiscal year.

PUBLIC WORKS

In my last report, I indicated that the mild winter had allowed the public works crews to work on a number of outdoor projects. Work on sidewalks and tree planting wells was done on Commerce Street in Frog Level, and the Town received many nice compliments about that work.

As traffic in the commercial areas increases, we attempt to get our work crews into residential areas, and in recent months, sidewalks and handicap access ramps have been installed at and near the intersection of Oakdale Road and Country Club Drive.

Work is now underway on a neighborhood area at the intersection of Smathers Street and Fourth Street. Several years ago, the Town purchased a small, narrow tract of land between Fourth Street and Norris Street. This spring, the Town invited residents of the neighborhood to meet at Town Hall and suggest how they would like to see that tract of land developed. It is rather small to be considered as a Town Park or even as a neighborhood park, but it can be a meeting point or small recreational area for the residents of that area. When we met with the residents, sidewalks and a sitting area were suggested as well as picnic tables and perhaps even a picnic shelter. At present, public works crews are installing sidewalks, and in the new fiscal year, we will look at ways that we can place some benches and picnic tables at the site.



WATER TANK COMPLETED

As you are aware, construction has been underway on replacement of the water tank on Reservoir Drive. The Town has been constructing a new, two million gallon above ground storage tank to replace a one million gallon tank which was constructed around 1925. The cost of the new tank will be around \$950,000 when all bills have been paid. I wonder if we can get 80 years of service out of the new tank as the citizens did with the tank constructed in 1925? We shall hope so!

At any rate, after the required water purity testing over the weekend of Memorial Day, the new water tank was placed into service on May 30, 2006. This tank means a much greater storage capacity for the Town and should prevent reduced pressures and flows during strong demands for water from Blue Ridge Paper.

OTHER PROJECTS BEING ENGINEERED

We are presently involved in a number of other projects that are in process or on the horizon:

Asset Management Plan

In 2005, the North Carolina Rural Center awarded Waynesville a grant of \$43,000 for the evaluation of our existing water and sewer system and for recommendations for the most needed future improvements on the two systems. McGill Associates has recently completed the first draft of this document and we are reviewing it now for comments and changes.

Hazelwood Avenue Traffic Signal

About two years ago, we began to experience serious problems with the traffic signal at Hazelwood and Brown Avenues. It would malfunction frequently and spent a great deal of time on flash rather than on a regular light change rotation. We were able to secure some parts for this very old signal from the Department of Transportation and our electric department was able to get another year or two life from the light. In the present budget, funds were allocated for a new signal. The project has been engineered by Mattern and Craig, and the new lights and controller box are in place and should go into operation very soon. The sensor wires must be cut into the pavement so that the light will change on demand from approaching traffic.

Hendrix Street Bridge

The engineering firm of Vaughn and Melton will be finalizing construction plans for the replacement of this bridge during the 2006-2007 fiscal year. You will recall that every other year, the Board approves an agreement with the State for the inspection of our bridges. The Hendrix Street Bridge placed fairly low during the ratings a few years ago, and with that ammunition, we were able to convince the State to add this bridge to the replacement list. Under this program, the federal government pays 80% of the cost and the local government must bear the remaining 20% share.

Lab at Water Plant

For over a year, McGill Associates has been working on the plans for an addition to the lab at the water plant. This is a need that was identified to the Board during a tour of that facility approximately 4 years ago, but it has taken some time to reach the point of funding. I look forward to reviewing the proposed plans early in the new fiscal year and seeing if our wants exceed our ability to pay.



COMPLAINT SYSTEM



One of the concerns we have had in recent years is the manner in which we handle complaints from citizens. In some situations, we receive the complaint, fill out a complaint form and then lose track of that complaint. The citizens might wonder what has happened with their complaint and why it has not been satisfactorily resolved. In some cases, we have to order parts or new signs or we simply need to schedule the work and put it in line with other work already promised; however, the citizen may not know that and we do not get back with them to explain the situation. So for some time, we have been in search of a complaint system that will resolve a number of issues.

The new system is set up so that any citizen may access the Town's web site and file a complaint from their home. Or any town employee with computer access (or any elected official, for that matter) may go to the Town's web site and fill out the complaint. So if a citizen without computer access calls Town Hall or complains at the Recreation Center or the Police Department or anywhere else, the employee receiving the call may fill out the complaint form. Each complaint is assigned a complaint number, so if a citizen was curious about the status of their complaint, they could go to the web site and check the status on line. Or if the citizen called to check on the status, the employee could go on line and check to see how we are addressing the complaint.

The system is also designed to notify us if the complaint has been received but not resolved. In other words, if a complaint is pending, the program will kick it back to the "complaint center", telling them that the complaint is unresolved. This will help to prevent complaints from getting lost.

The system also allows us to track the location of complaints. If we are receiving an unusually high number of complaints from a given neighborhood or garbage route, it may signify that we need to do a better job in training our employees on improving techniques of garbage collections.

We are purchasing this system from "e-gov", and it has been used in many other communities across the country. We are excited about the possibilities of this system and the improved level of service that it can offer citizens. I would commend Management Intern Alison Melnikova, Purchasing Supervisor Julie Grasty, Town Clerk Phyllis McClure and Administrative Assistant Amy Hardin for their work in researching the most desirable system for Waynesville.

SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

Earlier this month, we held an auction of surplus equipment, and we were a little disappointed with the results. In the past, we have held joint auctions with Haywood County, but this year, the County decided to hold their own auction. This cut down on the volume of equipment being sold and probably cut into the number of people attending the auction. Recent auctions have seen retired police cars selling for between \$4,000 and \$5,000, but the recent auction saw two police cars selling for a combined \$4,400. In total, the auction this month only brought in \$7,000.

We also learned that Haywood County decided to use a new method of selling surplus equipment, using a process known as "Gov-Deals". Under Gov-Deals, entities sell surplus equipment on the internet, similar to the way individuals and companies sell items on e-Bay. Our Purchasing Supervisor, Julie Grasty, has already been researching the Town's participation in Gov-Deals, and Town Attorney Woody Griffin has reviewed a proposed contract between the Town and the company to assure that it was satisfactory. That contract has now been approved and signed, and we are planning to use this method of selling surplus vehicles and equipment in the future. At present, we have a used street sweeper and perhaps a used 2004 Dodge Intrepid to sell. During the next few months, we are anticipating the arrival of several trucks on order, meaning that other units will be coming off line and available for sale. We would like to try this method and see what success we have.

PIGEON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

On Friday, June 16, I had a meeting with the newly organized Board of Directors of the Pigeon Community Development Club. Effective May 10, 2006, new officers include the following:

Co Chairpersons:	Lynn Forney and Wendy Barnes
Treasurer:	Thomas Bryant
Secretary:	Robyn Powell
Public Relations:	Fred Riley
Contact Liaison:	Juanita Tate
Youth Mentor:	Stanley Gibbs

The Club is attempting to overcome some bad publicity and difficult times that they have experienced the past few years, and they seem quite determined to move forward in service to the entire community. Once again, they will be sponsoring the Summer Enrichment Program at the Center on Pigeon Street, and it will run through August 18. They are looking for volunteers to help in a variety of ways, so if anyone is interested, please let us know.

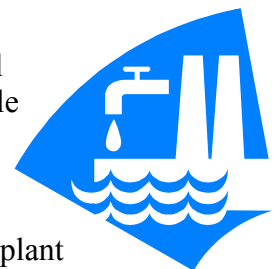
GOOD PUBLICITY FOR WAYNESVILLE

In recent weeks, there has been some good publicity for Waynesville in various areas of the State, both coming during the month of May. Each month, the ElectriCities publication, NC Power, carries a profile of one of the member cities. During May, Waynesville was the featured town, and an attractive two page story was included in the publication. ElectriCities was kind enough to send a bundle of the article, so if you would like an extra copy for family members or friends, please let us know. These are on hand at Town Hall.

Also in May, the League of Municipalities carried an article on what municipalities in North Carolina are doing to contend with the increasing cost of energy. When the author contacted me to ask about the Toyota Prius which the Town owns, I told him about the experiments of Wastewater Superintendent David Smith with using biodeisel in the VW Golf he drives. When the article was published, David's comments about his experience were the lead off, but there was also a picture of the Prius which the Town purchased in the interest of fuel economy and better air emissions.

WATER REPORT

Within the past few weeks, you should have received a copy of the annual report that is prepared for individuals and businesses connected to the Waynesville Water System. This year, Water Plant Superintendent Kyle Cook and his staff did another excellent job in preparing the interesting and informative brochure. We have many compliments from the public about the good quality of water provided by the Town of Waynesville, so we tip our hats to all those at the water plant who work around the clock to distribute a quality product to the public.



ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

The Electric Department has continued with their replacement of power poles. During the past several months, they have replaced poles along East Street and in the Assembly/Howell/Oak Street neighborhoods. At the present time, they are working on Killian Street replacing poles and doing some tree trimming. We will no doubt receive complaints about the trimming, but that is expected when we have to take tree limbs back to get them away from our wires and reduce the blinks and outages.

ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS

League Committees

During the past year, Alderman Libba Feichter was selected to serve on the League's Finance and Administrative Legislative Action Committee. I have been asked to serve on the Finance and Administrative Technical Advisory Committee, which really serves as a resource for the decision making body on which Ms. Feichter serves. In addition to the Legislative Action Committee, Ms. Feichter is also serving on the Strategic Planning Committee for the League. She spends a good deal of time in Raleigh and has become even more familiar with I-40 between here and the capital.

Town Hall Day

On Wednesday, June 7, Alderman Feichter and I were in Raleigh to attend Town Hall Day. According to League officials, this was one of the most heavily attended Town Hall Days in recent years, and they feel that it has had an impact upon the actions by the General Assembly. Each year, representatives of the various municipalities in the state converge on Raleigh on Town Hall Day to let representatives and senators know what bills will help local government and what bills will hurt. This was a good year to express opposition to some bills that could be very negative for local government.

County Manager Process

In an effort to generate community involvement in the selection process for the new County Manager, a Search Committee was formed by the County Commissioners to assist in narrowing the field of candidates. Committee members were asked to review all of the applications and narrow their choices to a list to recommend for further consideration. On the morning of June 19, Committee members met to offer their recommendations, and these were presented to the County Commissioners at their meeting on the same evening.

Manager's Summer Conference

The Summer Conference of the North Carolina City and County Managers' Association will be held this week at Sunset Beach, North Carolina. The conference begins with training sessions on the afternoon of Thursday, June 22, and continues through Friday before concluding around noon on Saturday, June 24. In addition to the educational sessions, I hear there may be a little beach music and dancing, and we will enjoy that. I have continued to serve on the Program Committee of the Association and we are responsible for planning the program and social events at both the winter and summer conferences. I look forward to the sessions as they will give me at least 10 hours toward the 40 hours necessary to maintain my credentialed manager status. I will leave Waynesville Wednesday afternoon and will return on Sunday. As usual, I will leave a means of contacting me while I am away. I appreciate the Board allowing me to attend these events.

