

## HAPPY NEW YEAR



### UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY

BY MAYOR MARK BLEDSOE

It's an honor to be here today as your mayor, and to share a message that lies at the heart of everything we do here in our community: **unity**.

We live in a world that is fast-paced, ever-changing, and sometimes divided.

It's easy to focus on what sets us apart, whether that be our different backgrounds, experiences, or beliefs.

But what makes us strong — what truly defines us — is the undeniable fact that, despite our differences, we are all part of the same community.

Unity is about more than just being in the same place at the same time. It's about recognizing that each of us has a role to play. We all bring something unique to the table — whether it's our ideas, our skills, or simply our kindness and compassion. It's when we combine these strengths that we truly thrive.

But unity doesn't mean we always agree. It doesn't mean that we have to think the same way or act in the same way. What it does mean is that we respect one another, listen to one another, and — above all — stand together. It means finding common ground even when we disagree, and remembering that what unites us is far greater than what divides us.

As your mayor, my commitment is to foster an environment where this unity continues to flourish. Together, we will tackle the challenges that come our way, celebrate our shared successes, and build a future that reflects the best of all of us.

So let us continue to work hand in hand, building a community that not only

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survives but thrives. Let us continue to celebrate what makes us different, while always remembering what binds us together: our common humanity and our shared purpose.

Thank you for being a part of this incredible community. Together, there is nothing we cannot achieve.

River Bend, Together We Rise



**TOWN MANAGER'S  
REPORT**

BY TOWN MANAGER DELANE JACKSON

This edition of my report will address closed sessions. This article was originally published in February, 2020. Closed sessions regulations are a small part of the State's Open Meetings Statute. That language can be found in Article 33C of the North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) beginning at Chapter 143-318.9. However, due to limited space and the complexity of the topic,

I will not be able to cover every aspect of the Open Meetings Law. The reader should consider my report to be a general overview.

All political subdivisions of the State of North Carolina are subject to the Open Meetings Law. Examples of political subdivisions (aka public bodies) are local town councils, county commissions and school boards. There are others, but these three are probably the most commonly recognized public bodies. Chapter 143 begins with these words- "Whereas the public bodies that administer the legislative, policy-making, quasi-judicial, administrative, and advisory functions of North Carolina and its political subdivisions exist solely to conduct the people's business, it is the public policy of North Carolina that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of these bodies be conducted openly." This is why our Council meetings are open to the public and anyone can attend our meetings. Our regular Council meetings are held on the second and third Thursday of each month. When we conduct a meeting that is not a part of our regular schedule, we must properly advertise that meeting in accordance with the North Carolina General Statutes.

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The General Statutes, specifically NCGS 143-318.11, authorizes public bodies to go into closed session. For the purpose of this discussion, a closed session is a meeting of the Council (or any public body) wherein the public is not allowed to attend. Typically, Councils schedule closed sessions as an agenda item for their regular meetings. When they get to that agenda item, they move into another private room to conduct the closed session discussions. However, public bodies can only go into closed session for specific reasons. There are ten categories that permit closed session. Those categories are codified in NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(1-10). Before entering closed session, a motion must be approved in open session by a majority of the public body. That motion must state the purpose(s) of the closed session from at least one of the ten categories. In general, the ten permitted topics which public bodies may discuss in closed session are:

1. Confidential information
2. Honorary degrees, scholarships, prizes and awards
3. Consultation with an attorney
4. Business location or expansion
5. Real property acquisition
6. Personnel matters
7. Criminal Investigations
8. School violence response plans
9. Anti-terrorism plans
10. Viewing of law enforcement recordings

Minutes of what takes place during closed session meetings are still required to be kept. However, based on the purpose of the closed session, the release of those minutes to the public may be delayed or in some cases, those minutes may remain closed from public view forever. The NCGS requires that each public body have an attorney. One important role for the attorney is to ensure that the public body is in compliance with the State's Open Meetings Law.



**WRD/PW  
REPORT**

BY BRANDON MILLS  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Hopefully, everyone enjoyed the Christmas holidays as it's always a wonderful time to spend with family and friends. A BIG thank you to the Public Works department for their hard work in decorating the town for the season. I hope everyone appreciated the new Christmas Tree placed by the Municipal Building. It added a festive touch to our community. I would also like to give a shout out to the Community Appearance Commission (CAC) for making more of the Christmas balls that were hung up at the entrance to town. These lighted balls make the entrance to Town more festive when combined with the lighted tree upfront, and both looked very nice.

On the public works operations side, we worked with Sunland in the Channel Run area to ensure stormwater discharge pipes were clear of any debris. They used a vacuum truck to clean out stormwater discharge pipes where it discharges to the river. This important maintenance helps prevent blockages and ensures stormwater can flow effectively.

Water Resources staff repaired a couple of water service lines, addressing the issues promptly and efficiently. Additionally, we replaced several sewer line cleanout caps as part of ongoing maintenance to maintain system reliability. At the Wastewater Treatment Facility, we replaced a couple of air diffusers, which are vital for maintaining oxygen levels that support the microorganisms essential for proper wastewater treatment. These repairs ensure the facility continues to operate smoothly and effectively.

If you have any questions concerning the Water Resources/Public Works Department, please call us at 252-638-3540, Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm. After-hours water and sewer emergencies can be reported by dialing the Town Hall at 252-638-3870. You will be instructed to dial "9" and follow the directions to contact the on-call duty operator. You will then be asked to enter your phone number at the sound of the tone. After entering your phone number, the automated system will inform you that your page has been sent. Please, be patient and our utility

**REPORTING  
AFTER HOURS  
WATER-SEWER  
EMERGENCIES**

- ◆ Dial Town Hall at 638-3870.
- ◆ Dial "9" and follow the directions to contact the on-call duty operator.
- ◆ Enter your phone number at the sound of the tone.
- ◆ The automated system will inform you that your page has been sent.
- ◆ Our utility operator will return your call.
- ◆ If you do not receive a call back within ten minutes, please notify the Police Department at 638-1108 (option 1). They will get in touch with the on-call utility system

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systems operator will return your call. If you do not receive a call back within ten minutes, please notify the Police Department at 252-638-1108 (option 1), and they will get in contact with the on-call utility systems operator.

Please scroll down to next page

# COMING EVENTS

CAC Meeting  
January 15  
4:00 p.m.  
Municipal Building

Regular Council Meeting  
January 16  
7:00 p.m.  
Town Hall

Book/Tech Mobile  
January 17  
2p.m.-4p.m.  
Tech Class 4p.m.-5 p.m.  
115 Wildwood Dr

Town Hall Closed  
January 20  
In observance of  
Martin Luther King Jr  
Day

Red Cross Blood Drive  
Sponsored by Parks & Recreation  
January 25  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Municipal Building

RBCOG Meeting  
February 3  
1:30 p.m.  
Municipal Building

\*Canceled\*  
EWAB Meeting  
February 3  
7:00 p.m.  
Municipal Building

Parks & Recreating  
Advisory Board Meeting  
February 5  
6:30 p.m.  
Municipal Building

Planning Board Meeting  
February 6  
6:00 p.m.  
Municipal Building

Council Work Session  
February 13  
5:00 p.m.  
Town Hall



**RIVER BEND NEWS**

FROM TOWN HALL  
is published monthly by the River Bend Town Council for the residents of the Town of River Bend.

**MAYOR**  
Mark Bledsoe

**TOWN COUNCIL**  
Lisa Benton  
Brian Leonard  
Kathy Noonan  
Buddy Sheffield  
Jeff Weaver

**TOWN MANAGER**  
Delane Jackson

**TOWN CLERK**  
Kristie Nobles

**FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR**  
Mandy Gilbert

**POLICE CHIEF**  
Sean Joll

**DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
Brandon Mills

**ASSISTANT ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**  
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Jennifer Barrow

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**Leaf & Limb Collection Schedule for 2024-2025**

Residents may begin placing their yard debris street side on the dates indicated in parentheses

**Zone 1 Pick Up Begins**

- July 15, 2024  
(July 10, 2024 )
- September 9, 2024  
(September 4, 2024 )
- November 11, 2024  
(November 6, 2024 )
- December 11, 2024  
(December 4, 2024 )
- January 13, 2025  
(includes Christmas trees)  
(January 8, 2025 )
- March 10, 2025  
(March 5, 2025 )
- May 12, 2025  
(May 7, 2025 )

**Zone 2 Pick Up Begins**

- July 22, 2024  
(July 17, 2024 )
- September 16, 2024  
(September 11, 2024 )
- November 18, 2024  
(November 13, 2024 )
- December 16, 2024  
(December 11, 2024 )
- January 20, 2025  
(includes Christmas trees)  
(January 15, 2025)
- March 17, 2025  
(March 12, 2025)
- May 19, 2025  
(May 14, 2025 )

Pinecones, pine straw and leaves must NOT be bagged. For additional important information about River Bend’s Leaf & Limb collection program, please see our updated Ordinance online at [www.riverbendnc.org](http://www.riverbendnc.org).

**Town Council 2025 Meeting Dates**

- Work Session ..... January 9
- Regular Meeting ..... January 16
- Work Session ..... February 13
- Regular Meeting ..... February 20
- Work Session ..... March 13
- Regular Meeting ..... March 20
- Work Session ..... April 10
- Regular Meeting ..... April 17
- Work Session ..... May 8
- Regular Meeting ..... May 15
- Work Session ..... June 12
- Regular Meeting ..... June 19
- Work Session ..... July 10
- Regular Meeting ..... July 17
- Work Session ..... August 14
- Regular Meeting ..... August 21
- Work Session ..... September 11
- Regular Meeting ..... September 18
- Work Session ..... October 9
- Regular Meeting ..... October 16
- Work Session ..... November 13
- Regular Meeting ..... November 20
- Work Session ..... December 4\*\*\*
- Regular Meeting ..... December 11\*\*\*

\*\*\*Changed due to holiday

All Council Work Sessions will be held in the River Bend Town Hall beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Regular Council Meetings will be held in the River Bend Town Hall beginning at 7:00 p.m.



**Golf Cart Registration**

Town ordinances allow for residents to drive their properly equipped golf carts on River Bend streets provided that they are inspected by and registered with our Police Department. If you plan to drive your golf cart on the roadways, you must display the current year registration decal. Decals for 2025 are available now.

Inspection and registration are required annually. The registration fee for each golf cart is \$10.

For additional information and to make your inspection reservation, please call the River Bend Police Department at 638-1108. Click [HERE](#) for more information



**Registration is Required for all Dogs and Cats**

River Bend Animal Registrations for 2025 are due by March 31, 2025. All River Bend dogs and cats must be registered annually.

Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8 AM-4 PM.

Owners must present proof of rabies vaccination at the time of registration. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Registration is \$10.00 per pet.



**Pet I. D. Photos Now Available**

The Town of River Bend is now offering residents the opportunity to link a digital photo of their registered pets to our Animal Registration database. When you register your pet this year, you may submit a photo by e-mail, or staff can scan a photo for you if you prefer. This photo database will help reunite lost pets with their owners more quickly in the event a pet becomes lost.

The service is voluntary and free of charge.

**DOG PARK AT RIVER BEND**



River Bend dogs have their own exercise area where they can play with other canines. Situated between the Town Park and Ritter Field, the dog park gives dogs a chance to run while their owners socialize.

The park is open from sunrise to sunset for dogs with proof of current vaccinations. Separate exercise areas accommodate large and small dogs.

For complete list of rules applicable to dog park use, please visit our web site at [www.riverbendnc.org](http://www.riverbendnc.org). Dog park rules are also posted at the entrance





Sign up for our  
**Emergency Notification System**  
and receive timely notifications by phone, e-mail, text messages and more.

**SIGN UP NOW**  
at [www.riverbendnc.org](http://www.riverbendnc.org)

*this service provided by the Town of River Bend through*  
**Blackboard  
connect**



If you have a medical condition for which you require any type of special medical care during a disaster or if your medical condition requires assistance to evacuate during a disaster, you may wish to apply to Craven County for their Special Needs Registry. The River Bend Police Department can provide you with the appropriate form and provide some basic information about the County's program.



River Bend has a very active Community Watch program supported by our Police Department. If you are interested in volunteering, call the River Bend Police Department at 638-1108.



River Bend has a skateboard park to meet the needs of some of our more athletic residents.

A signed parental approval [form](#) is required and helmet use is strictly enforced. For more information about the skateboard park, visit our web site or call the River Bend Police Department at 638-1108.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.