



THE NEW NORMAL IN 2021
BY MAYOR JOHN KIRKLAND

The COVID-19 virus has changed what will be the “norm” from 2021 forward. It seems that human nature is dedicated to resisting change but some wise person once stated that “the only thing constant is change.”

The change that we are confronting has been some time in development and has a number of contributing factors. A number of those contributing factors follow:

A. Reliable Communication; Today communication from the remote corners of the world is instantaneous and reliable. A hundred years ago the Titanic was lost and nearby ships could not be alerted to rescue survivors.

B. Travel in the Victorian era could easily have taken 80 days to go around the world. Today, with a little planning, a trip around the world can take less than 80 hours. With this rapid interface of world travel comes the transport of the COVID-19 virus and its future successors around the world.

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As we consider how the world can adapt to the new norm we need to recognize that adjustments need to be made to the conduct of operations at every level of society. The following events demonstrate how vulnerable we are as we ignore change and cling to a past norm:

1. The world is a single marketplace and depends on manufacturing of products produced half a world away. The recent grounding of the giant container shipping vessel Evergiven in the Suez Cannel demonstrated that change to the week-long event denied markets the cargo on that vessel and all of the other vessels while

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the Evergiven blocked transit through the canal.

2. Continuing with ships, we should consider how the pandemic, communications and the U S Navy come together to illustrate the need for new planning considerations. In the age of sail, naval vessels of every nation were sent on voyages of discovery and they might be at sea for more than a year with no new or updated communication from superior command. In our time the Commanding Officer aboard the attack carrier Theodore Roosevelt had a pandemic problem and proposed a need to bring the infected crew members to port for treatment. He relied on the instant communication with the “chain” and sent a message. He sent the recommendation for the change to senior command and received no quick turnaround. He then released the communications to channel outside the official “chain.” This resulted in his relief from command. This illustration is not intended to be critical of the U S Navy. Certainly the same need to upgrade policy exists in the State Department and I am confident that every major industry in the country suffers from the need for upgrade.

3. The new norm will require solutions that demand international cooperation. Every aspect of society will either face this need and work through the implementing detail or struggle with trying to continue to operate with their pre-pandemic procedures.

The exercise of management has always demanded integrity and hard work. Those demands are more in vogue today than ever before. These are exciting times and the rewards of engineering the new norm will result in a more equitable standard of living for every person in every city and town of our country, and also in every corner of the world.



TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT
BY TOWN MANAGER DELANE JACKSON

On March 11, 2021 the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) became law. It is a \$1,900,000,000,000 (that's trillion) economic stimulus package. \$350,000,000,000 (that's billion) of it is for state, local, territorial and tribal governments across the nation. The money will be distributed based on population. Collectively, towns in North Carolina will receive \$1.3 billion. Counties in North Carolina will receive about \$1 billion. The Town of River Bend is expecting to receive \$890,000. That is about \$300 per River Bend resident. Craven County is expecting to receive \$19,810,000. For comparison, the state's largest city, Charlotte, population 864,000, is expecting to receive \$148,940,000. The state's smallest town, Fontana Dam, population 21 (yes, 21) is expecting to receive \$2,000. This distribution is one of many examples of funding that is distributed based on population. That is why it is so important to get everyone counted during the Census. If only 200 River Benders were missed during the Census, that means we lost \$60,000 in this program alone.

The money is intended to help recipients across the nation respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and/or its negative economic impacts. As you can imagine, there are regulations and guidelines that will dictate what the funds may be spent on. As of the writing on this article (May 2, 2021), the U.S. Treasury Department has not fully released a detailed set of guidelines. However, it has been stated that the funds can be used to make necessary investments in water, sewer or broadband infrastructure. At its April 8, 2021 meeting, the River Bend Town Council unanimously approved using the funds to construct a new Public Works Building, which houses our water and sewer departments. Until we receive more project eligibility guidance from the federal government, we do not know for certain if the project will be approved. We are pre-planning for that project in anticipation of its eligibility. All of the funds associated with this part of the ARP must be spent by 2024.

The funds will be distributed in two equal allotments. The first half will be distributed to NC towns by June 15, 2021. The final allotment will be distributed twelve months later. There are still many unknowns related to the ARP but we do know that the funds have been approved by Congress, the Act was signed into law by the President and the funds are on the way.



WRD/PW REPORT

BY BRANDON MILLS
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

In March, Public Works cleaned up our parks by pressure washing and adding mulching. We have some plans to make the playground area more attractive and functional. In addition, the walking path was sprayed to keep the path more defined. There are areas on the path that need more rock, and we have that on our schedule to do ASAP. The front entrance pond was sprayed with an aquatic herbicide to remove unwanted vegetation. We generally apply

herbicide to the pond 3 times per year to control weed growth. Public Works also started installing blue hydrant markers around Town to mark the location of fire hydrants. This helps the fire department to locate hydrants quickly; especially during at night in the event there is a fire.

Water Resources has continued to do a great job at maintaining our water and sewer systems. We replaced a faulty 4-inch water valve on filter# I located at the Well #3 treatment facility. Additionally, the chlorine booster pump pressure gauges and plumbing system was replaced for Well #1 treatment filter located at our other treatment facility. Water Resources had to pull two pumps at one of our lift stations to remove debris/material that had clogged them up. When pumps become clogged, they pull high amps, and trip out the pump starters. This was quickly identified and repaired promptly by our staff. During the week of April 18th Water Resources will be flushing the water system beginning on the 18th, and completed on the 23rd.

"Water Resources has continued to do a great job at maintaining our water and sewer systems."

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. They will get in touch with the on-call utility system operator.

If you have any questions concerning the Water Resources/Public Works Department, please call us at 638-3540, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. After hours water and sewer emergencies can be reported by dialing the Town Hall at 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 systems operator will return your call. If you do not receive a call back within ten minutes, please notify the Police Department at 638-1108, and they will get in contact with the on-call utility systems operator.

COMING EVENTS

Budget Workshop
May 4
4:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Parks & Recreation Advisory
Board Meeting
May 5
7:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

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

Budget Workshop
May 11
4:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Budget Workshop
May 13
4:00 p.m.
Town Hall

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

Budget Workshop
May 18
4:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Budget Workshop
May 20
4:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Council Meeting
May 20
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Memorial Day
Town Hall Closed
May 31

Planning Board Meeting
June 3
6:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

Council Work Session
June 10
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.

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Leaf & Limb Collection Schedule for 2020-2021

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

Zone 1 Pick Up Begins

July 6, 2020
(July 1, 2020)
September 7, 2020
(September 2, 2020)
November 2, 2020
(October 28, 2020)
January 11, 2021
(includes Christmas trees)
(January 6, 2021)
March 8, 2021
(March 3, 2021)
May 10, 2021
(May 5, 2021)

Zone 2 Pick Up Begins

July 13, 2020
(July 8, 2020)
September 14, 2020
(September 9, 2020)
November 9, 2020
(November 4, 2020)
January 18, 2021
(includes Christmas trees)
(January 13, 2021)
March 15, 2021
(March 10, 2021)
May 17, 2021
(May 12, 2021)

Pinecones, pine straw and
leaves must be bagged. For
additional important informa-
tion about River Bend's Leaf
& Limb collection program,
please see our Ordinance online
at www.riverbendnc.org. ■

Town Council 2021 Meeting Dates

Work Session January 14
Regular Meeting January 21
Work Session February 11
Regular Meeting February 18
Work Session March 11
Regular Meeting March 18
Work Session April 8
Regular Meeting April 15

Work Session May 13
Regular Meeting May 20
Work Session June 10
Regular Meeting June 17

Work Session July 8
Regular Meeting July 15
Work Session August 12
Regular Meeting August 19

Work Session September 10
Regular Meeting September 16
Work Session October 14
Regular Meeting October 21

Work Session November 10
Regular Meeting November 18
Work Session December 9
Regular Meeting December 16

Budget Meetings

Budget Session April 27
Budget Session May 4
Budget Session May 11
Budget Session May 18
Budget Session May 20

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.

All Council Budget Sessions will be held in
the River Bend Town Hall beginning at 4:00
p.m.

**Green type indicates a completed leaf & limb collection*

etc.



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 2021 registration decal. Decals for 2021 were available beginning December 2, 2020.

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 2021 were due by March 31, 2021. All River Bend dogs and cats must be registered annually. Registration is \$10 per pet, and may be placed in our payment drop box while Town Hall is closed to the public.

Owners must present proof of rabies vaccination at the time of registration. Please include documentation with your payment.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.



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. Dog park rules are also posted at the entrance to the park.



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

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



River Bend has a functional Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). For more information about this group, or to volunteer, please contact the CERT Liaison, Corporal Brandon Rhors and/or visit our web site at www.riverbendnc.org.



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.