

RIVER BEND NEWS

FROM TOWN HALL

www.riverbendnc.org



THE OPERATION OF RIVER BEND UTILITIES

BY MAYOR JOHN KIRKLAND

The Town of River Bend owns and operates the water and wastewater utilities for the Town. In 1995 the Town held a referendum and decided to purchase the water and sewer utility from Carolina Water Service (CWS). The utilities had been constructed by the original developer of the Town. That developer then sold the utilities to CWS.

The Town Council decided to expand the water service to every street on the east side of Highway 17 shortly after acquiring the system. This project also involved building the 300,000 gallon elevated tank on Plantation Drive. The original service area for water service did not include Barbara Drive and the Piner Estates subdivisions which were served by the City of New Bern water utility. The Council later negotiated the purchase of the New Bern assets and converted the subscribers in those areas to River Bend customers. Those customers had been paying twice what a New Bern resident would pay for water service. This practice is authorized by act of the North Carolina General Assembly. That authorization extends to all municipalities. On average this change in ownership saved most of the involved customers about \$500 per year.

“The Council later negotiated the purchase of the New Bern assets and converted the subscribers in those areas to River Bend customers.”

More than ten years ago the Council engaged a consultant to develop a “rate model” that could be used by the Council each year for setting the rates for the utilities. This study has been very useful in providing sound management of financing for the ongoing utility operations. With the input data to populate the model, the

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rate recommended can be justified to customers who may question the validity of utility rate.

The bonds issued for the purchase of the utilities and expansion of the water service will be paid off in the 2027 fiscal year. The North Carolina State University publishes an annual “Dash Board” that displays the cost of utility operations for municipalities in similar size population peer groups. River Bend is consistently in the mid-range of all elements being evaluated in our peer group.

The day to day operation of the utility system is directed by Public Works Director Mr. Brandon Mills. Brandon and his staff hold a number of State issued licenses required for personnel operating public utilities. The following is a list of these Town employees and the licenses that they hold. The state Division of Water Resources also performs periodic unannounced site inspections of our facilities. The records of the daily operations and testing results of the output are examined for both in house and contract laboratory testing. The staff has been diligent in the operation of the utilities. These state inspections have not resulted in any notice of violations over the years that the Town Staff have been responsible for utility operations.

During the present COVID-19 emergency and the recent hurricane preparations the Staff has faithfully performed their duties and we have had no interruption of utility service. Not every municipal or privately operated utility can make such a claim. We all need to express appreciation to Brandon and members of his staff. That staff and their qualifications are as follows:

<u>Brandon Mills</u>	<u>Thomas Harper</u>	<u>James Jones</u>
Grade III Wastewater	Grade II Wastewater	GradeII Wastewater
Grade III Collections	Grade II Collections	Grade II Collections
Grade I Physical/Chemical	Grade I Physical/Chemical	Spray Irrigation
B-Well	B-Well	C-Well
A-Distribution	B-Distribution	B-Distribution
Cross Connection Control		Cross Connection Control



TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

BY TOWN MANAGER DELANE JACKSON

River Bend is a waterfront community. Living in close proximity to water can certainly have some benefits. The Trent River and the Plantation Canal system provide many water-related opportunities to our residents. If you have lived in River Bend for very long, you are also aware of some vulnerabilities that exist due to our proximity to water. In addition to being a waterfront community, some of the town is also located in an area where the ground level elevation is very low compared to sea level. Much of this area is located in and around Channel Run.

During Hurricane Florence many homes in the Channel Run area sustained flood damages. A large portion of our official flood zone is located within this same area. Drainage is an important component in all of River Bend but it is of particular importance in the flood zone and in other low lying areas. Due to the winds, we can sometimes have minor flooding in River Bend on a sunny day when there is no storm. The recent threat from Hurricane Isaias, reminded us all of how important drainage is. In River Bend, there are regulations about the maintenance of drainage systems. Much of the responsibility for storm drainage is the responsibility of the landowner. There is currently a tab on our web page that addresses these regulations in greater details and it also includes some pictures as examples. You can visit our page at www.riverbendnc.org and then click on the "Your Responsibility For Flood Mitigation" tab at the top of the page. The best time to do your part in this process is before the next storm arrives.

With financial assistance from FEMA, the Town Council has begun a plan to address drainage improvements in the Channel Run area. Over the last few months, the town's engineer has been surveying and investigating the drainage system in the Channel Run area. He recently reported his findings to the Town Council. Based on those findings, the Town Council has authorized the start of a project to improve the drainage in that area. The town is currently accepting bids on the project until

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September 10. We anticipate award of contract and project construction soon.

One problem with the drainage system is that over the years, many obstructions have been placed in the street rights-of-way or in other drainage easement areas. Many times, owners were unaware that land they assumed was theirs was actually owned by the Town. Obviously, to be most effective, drainage areas need to be clear and unobstructed. Part of the drainage improvement project will include removing obstructions. If you have anything (such as a fence, structure, planter box, tree, vegetation, headwall, building, kennel, flag pole, etc.) within the town's rights-of-way or in a drainage easement area that obstruction is subject to be removed. The town is not responsible for replacing it or compensating the owner for it, because it should not have been placed there. Many street rights-of-way in town are 50 or 60 feet wide, though a few are narrower. The street is not just the paved portion.

“Keeping all rights-of-way clear maintains our ability to easily access our town owned utilities and fire hydrants. It keeps those areas safer by eliminating obstructions to vehicles that may wander off the pavement.”

Anything located within the street right-of-way is on property owned by the Town of River Bend. No landowner in town owns property to the edge of the pavement. A visit to the Craven County GIS site will give anyone a good idea of where their property boundary is located. When you click on a parcel, it will be surrounded by a blue line. Anything outside of the blue line is not a part of that parcel.

If you have any items, other than a permitted mailbox, on the town's property it should be removed immediately. This applies to all of town, not just the Channel Run area. Keeping all rights-of-way clear maintains our ability to easily access our town owned utilities and fire hydrants. It keeps those areas safer by eliminating obstructions to vehicles that may wander off the pavement. It allows street signs and traffic signs to be easily seen. It also allows access to privately owned utilities such as Suddenlink, Duke and Piedmont Natural Gas. Please do your part and keep these areas clean and unobstructed. In the event of an emergency, we do not want our staff, emergency staff or other utility crews looking through bushes trying to find a utility box, meter box or fire hydrant. Any time wasted doing so could cause more serious damage.



**WRD/PW
REPORT**

BY BRANDON MILLS
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works sprayed herbicide around the towns walking/exercise path to remove unwanted grasses from growing up through the rock path. This keeps the path more defined, and gives it a good appearance. The front entrance pond was also sprayed to remove unwanted aquatic weeds. In the system, some aquatic weeds are necessary to remove nutrients from stormwater runoff. However, when there are too many weeds present it could cause a drop in dissolved oxygen levels. This could lead to fish kills and odor problems. This is the main reason we treat the ponds several times a year.

Water resources continued to do a good job at keeping up with locating our utilities for Suddenlink and CenturyLink contractors. Again, we have to locate our utilities to lower the chance of other contractors damaging them. The clarifier gearbox on the large wastewater treatment plant broke. We had a spare on hand and replaced it very quickly. The purpose of this gearbox is to turn the clarifier skimmer which is a critical part of the treatment process. I would like to thank my team for a job well done on the quick repair.

“Water resources continued to do a good job at keeping up with locating our utilities for Suddenlink and Centurylink contractors. Again, we have to locate our utilities to lower the chance of other contractors damaging them .”

If you have any questions concerning the Water Resources/Public Works Department, please call us at 638-3540, Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm. After-hour’s water and sewer emergencies can be reported by dialing 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.

**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.

COMING EVENTS

EWAB Meeting
September 7th
7:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

Work Session
September 10th
5:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Council Meeting
September 17th
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Work Session
October 8th
5:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Council Meeting
October 15th
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Work Session
November 12th
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
John Kirkland

TOWN COUNCIL
Don Fagle
Brian Leonard
Harry "Bud" McClard
Buddy Sheffield
Irving "Bud" Van Slyke, Jr.

TOWN MANAGER
Delane Jackson

TOWN CLERK
Ann Katsuyoshi

FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR
Margaret Theis

POLICE CHIEF
Sean Joll

**DIRECTOR OF
PUBLIC WORKS**
Brandon Mills

**ASSISTANT
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**
Allison McCollum

**GRAPHIC DESIGN &
TYPOGRAPHY**
Jennifer Barrow

Contact Us:
45 Shoreline Drive
River Bend, NC 28562
252.638-3870
www.riverbendnc.org

**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
2020 Meeting Dates**

- Work Session January 9
- Regular Meeting January 16
- Work Session February 13
- Regular Meeting February 20
- Work Session March 12
- Regular Meeting March 19

- Work Session April 9
- Regular Meeting April 16

- Work Session May 14
- Regular Meeting May 21

- Work Session June 11
- Regular Meeting June 18
- Work Session July 9
- Regular Meeting July 16

- Work Session August 13
- Regular Meeting August 20

- Work Session September 10
- Regular Meeting September 17

- Work Session October 8
- Regular Meeting October 15

- Work Session November 12
- Regular Meeting November 19

- Work Session December 10
- Regular Meeting December 17

Budget Meetings

- Budget Session..... March 24
- Budget Session..... March 31
- Budget Session..... April 7
- Budget Session..... April 14
- Budget Session..... April 21
(if needed)
- Budget Session..... April 28

*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*



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 2020 registration decal. Decals for 2020 were available beginning December 2, 2019.

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.



Registration is Required for all Dogs and Cats

All River Bend dogs and cats must be registered annually.

Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Registration is \$10.00 per pet.

Owners must present proof of rabies vaccination at the time of registration.



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 Town Hall for a brochure or view details on 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 Police Department or visit our web site. CERT meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall.



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.