

Town Manager's Weekly Report: (# 138)

For the Week-Ended: Friday, October 2, 2015

- You all may recall that Cricket Wireless is one of the three current, cell-antenna lease-holders on the Town water tower on North Oakland Street, and they were scheduled to complete their lease and leave effective December 31, 2015. Instead, however, we have had our contracted consultants, Cityscape, negotiate an Exit deal now which has Cricket paying the Town \$22,500.00 (of which the Town receives \$16,875.00 and Cityscape receives \$5,625) and leaving immediately – leaving their antennas and equipment in place. In turn, our consultants assure us that the next potential lease-holder, who will occupy the space, will either use the cricket equipment or portions thereof, or pay the costs to properly remove what they don't want or need. In this way, we now have immediate space available as well as \$16,875.00 in unbudgeted revenue for the Water/Sewer Fund.
- We have confirmed with the Divisional Office of the North Carolina Department of Transportation that the anticipated repaving of Gaston Avenue in the Town of Dallas, from Trade Street to Robinson-Clemmer Road will occur within the next two weeks.
- This week the Town of Dallas received its latest NPDES Discharge permit (required by the State to lawfully operate) for the Water Treatment Plant – specifically allowing filter backwash discharge into the South-fork River. The Permit is effective October 1st and expires in five years on July 31st, 2020. The permit essentially extends the current requirements for the Town WTP with the singular exception that certain reporting requirements must now be submitted electronically rather than by mail.
- On behalf of the Town, Electric Director Huffman and I participated in the latest conference call of the Wholesale Purchase Power Customers of Duke Energy, in our efforts to develop a unified and cohesive front on the matter of negotiations over future contract and price effects of Duke's complying with the new environmental regulations for the clean-up, mitigation, and elimination of coal ash. This matter poses the possibility of very significant expense to the Wholesale Power customers and, as a result – ultimately to our retail customers/citizens. Because of such possibility, these negotiations could become difficult, protracted, and require litigation. I hope to brief the Board on this matter at the upcoming, October 27th, scheduled Work session. Duke would like the various Wholesale (municipal) purchasers to settle this complex and significant matter in October, and very clearly that is not going to happen.
- As we continue to both analyze the operations and effectuate possible improvements or efficiencies at the water treatment Plant designed to increase productivity and minimize the overly-costly chemical usage; we have found that our filter is in dire need of a complete rehab and that preventative maintenance has been neglected for a long period. As such, we have had

to immediately undertake a re-build which is likely to cost approximately \$44,000. This work is being pursued currently with all due priority –since we are having to purchase water wholesale from Gastonia/Two Rivers during the time the filter is down.

- The September results for on-line utility bill pay are now in and we continue to see exponential growth in the number of Account-holders taking advantage of this method. Specifically, for July we had 114 users. For August, it had grown to 257; and, now in September, there was 449. We expect this trend to continue well into next year.
- Town crews have spent much of the last several days preparing for the expected heavy rains over the weekend as a result of Hurricane Juquin and the associated low pressure front. Storm drains have been cleaned and cleared; pump stations and pumps checked and prepped; manholes checked and cleaned; and crews will be on high alert for possible response to flooding, trees down and/or electrical disruption.
- I will be getting the October 13th Board Packet out next week prior to noon on Wednesday and then taking much of the remainder of the week off on vacation in order to spend some time with family members who are visiting from out of state. I will be available throughout by cell phone.
- Representatives of Rehab Builders (the contractor who completed the historic Courthouse renovation) were in town this week to examine the “water-seepage” issue on the interior front wall of the lower-level gallery and will be getting back to us soon with their proposal for a remedy. It is almost certain to require some type of additional water-proofing and then some repair of any impacted surface areas.

Respectfully Submitted,

James M. Palenick, Interim Town Manager