

CITIZENS NEWSLETTER

April – June 2022

MAYOR DAVID HAM



Hiawatha Jones
District 1



Bill Broadaway
District 2



Taj Polack
District 3



Brandi Matthews
District 4



Charles Gaylor
District 5



Gene Aycock
District 6

Goldsboro City Council

Hello fellow Goldsboro residents. We're into the second quarter of 2022 already! Spring is upon us, and time does seem to be moving faster. The events happening locally, nationally and internationally keep us mindful that we live in a fast-evolving time. No sooner do we get our life's plan adjusted for today's situation than we must face a new situation tomorrow. That is true of our city.

The COVID numbers seem to ebb and flow. As the tide of virus infections fluctuates, so does our mental stress level. Just when we think that the epidemic is getting under control, we get another alert advising that a new variant has been identified. So here we go again! For now, we must live with this effect on our lives. City leaders and staff work closely with county and state officials to ensure that we are continually informed of the conditions and are taking the prescribed measures to protect you.

This is the time of the year that our staff begins developing the city's operating budget for the upcoming 2022-2023 fiscal year. Budget preparation is one of the most important functions of any public governmental body. In our case, identifying the needs of the city that support the day-in and day-out services to our residents is of prime importance. As leaders, we must maintain and replace existing infrastructure, provide well-trained, properly equipped and fairly paid employees, while offering amenities that improve our quality of life. These and other elements make up the expense side of the ledger. The other side is the revenue that is needed to fund those expenses. That's the difficult part — trying to marry up expenses with the income. Much like you do at home!

The funds to pay for the expenses mentioned above are derived from essentially two sources — property taxes and sales taxes. Those taxes and some smaller income revenue are placed in the general fund. Revenues collected through utility fees are placed in the utility fund. As mentioned in

my January newsletter message, money from the general fund should not be used to pay for utility expenses. Money from the utility fund cannot be used to pay for non-utility expenses.

The state requires that we have a certain amount saved for emergencies. This savings account is referred to as our fund balance, which, at a minimum, should equal at least 8% of our general fund budget. Most cities our size have 40% in fund balance. Our city currently has 9% in available fund balance.

Unlike most of us who know what our income will be, our staff must project the city's income when building the budget. It's not a wild guess; we continually track revenues from the sources mentioned above. But it's not an exact science either. Our staff does a good job of matching the needs to the funds available. And in those situations where there is an adjustment needed to keep us in balance, that is done.

Therein is the picture our staff is faced with annually. It's a very time-consuming and detailed effort with the end goal to meet those objectives described above and create the very least financial impact on you, the resident, for services rendered. You can be assured that we take the budget process very seriously. We expect to release the draft FY22/23 budget to the public for review and comment in May. We will notify residents of that schedule.

UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS*

April 18 | May 2 | May 16 | June 6
June 20 | July 11

Council meets at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.
*Subject to change with public notice.



Grass Clippings, Yard Debris & Trash Contribute to Flooding Concerns

Public Works

Keep storm drains clear of grass clippings, leaves and other yard debris to help prevent flooding.

The City of Goldsboro needs your help to effectively maintain the storm water infrastructure and minimize neighborhood flooding caused by clogged storm grates and drains. Clogged storm drains and grates are one of the primary reasons streets and neighborhoods experience flooding during normal rain events. When grass clippings, leaves and trash are blown into the street and allowed to collect in our gutters and storm drains, water can back up quickly and cause hazardous ponding in the streets and flooding in our yards.

So, how can you help?

1. Periodically remove any grass clippings, leaves, trash, etc. from paved surfaces, street gutters and storm grates adjacent to your property.
2. Rake and dispose of leaves in your yard before they accumulate and blow into the street.
3. Blow grass away from the street when mowing your lawn to avoid clogging storm drains.
4. Pile vegetative debris, scheduled to be collected by the City's leaf and limb crews, by the edge of the road on your property — avoid putting debris in the street or curb and gutter.

If you are experiencing problems with flooding during normal rainfall events, even after taking these precautions, please contact the City's Stormwater division at 919-739-7402 or 919-739-7419.

Water/Sewer Rate Increase

On March 21, City Council approved a 20% water and sewer rate increase for the 2023 fiscal year. The average customer inside the city limits will pay around \$13 more per month. Customers can expect to see the increase beginning August 1.

The rate increase will generate an estimated \$3.4 million for a total of nearly \$24 million that will help address substantial water and sewer system needs. The City's water and sewer system needs more than \$200 million in upgrades in the coming years in order to continue providing high quality service to our customers.

These increases bring Goldsboro's rates in line with the average for Eastern North Carolina.



Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. This national commemoration, first celebrated in 1949, is designed to bring awareness to mental health issues, remove the stigma associated

with them and encourage people who are struggling to seek treatment to get better.

The Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities encourages you to take this time to learn more about mental health and offer your support to those who need it.



Important notice: Wipes & Personal Hygiene Products Clog Sewer Lines

Public Works

Flushing personal hygiene products can lead to major problems for the sewer system.

Many baby and adult personal hygiene products, along with household wipes and cleaning towelettes, are labeled both DISPOSABLE and FLUSHABLE. While these products may be marketed as a convenience item in this way, the truth is these types of items cause blockages and service problems, not only in the sewer line on your property, but also the public sewer system and pump stations. This is primarily because, unlike toilet paper, these products DO NOT break down once they are flushed.

Since they do not break down, they collect and cause blockages in your on-site sewer, especially older pipelines that may already have existing grease, roots, or other obstructions. A repair of the on-site sewer line can leave the home or business owner with a very costly sewer repair. These products also cause issues in the public sewer system, requiring expensive repair or replacement of equipment.

What We Can All Do To Help

ONLY flush toilet paper. NEVER flush the following:

- Disinfecting/Surface Wipes
- Mop or "Swiffer" Refills
- Baby Wipes
- Paper Towels
- Jewelry Wipes
- Pet Care Wipes
- Cosmetic Wipes
- First Aid Wipes
- Disposable Diapers or Liners
- Bio-pads (nursing home, home health care, etc.)
- Cotton Swabs
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Toilet Cleaning Pads
- ANY Moist Type Towelettes



The City of Goldsboro provides homebuyer assistance for eligible applicants.

The City of Goldsboro uses HOME funds and program income to provide direct-subsidy assistance to individuals and families seeking to become first-time homebuyers. The City's Homebuyer Assistance Program will provide up to \$20,000 for down payment and closing costs assistance associated with the purchase, through the means of acquisition or new construction, of a single-family dwelling and for principal reduction to increase buyer's affordability.

Applicants must be Goldsboro/Wayne County residents and fall into the low-income or very low-income categories. They must have a signed purchase contract and be able to contribute a minimum of \$750 toward the purchase of the home.

Eligible properties must be single-family, condominium, townhouse or FHA-approved modular home. The purchase price cannot exceed 95% FHA 203 (b) Mortgage limit. For Wayne County, the 95% limits are \$170,000 for existing homes and \$243,000 for new construction.

For a complete list of eligibility requirements and additional information, please visit <https://www.goldsboronc.gov/wp-content/uploads/Homebuyer-Assistance-Quick-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

Send us your FAQs

Got questions about City services, ordinances and more? Submit them to lhenry@goldsboronc.gov to be answered in a future newsletter.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Goldsboro is always looking for great teammates. We are currently accepting applications for the following positions.

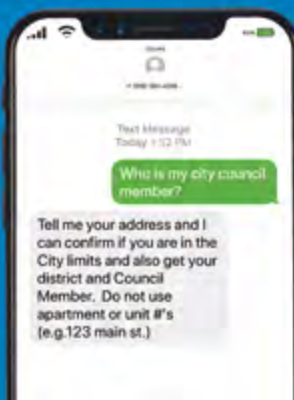
- Assistant Planning Director
- Activity Instructor - Tennis
- Plant Superintendent (WRF)
- Operator I WRF
- Solid Waste Heavy Equipment Operator
- Solid Waste Supervisor (Refuse & Recycling)
- Computer Systems Administrator I
- Solid Waste Equipment Operator
- Programmer Analyst
- Utility Maintenance Mechanic
- Utility Maintenance Technician
- Computer Systems Admin II (Public Works)
- Club House Aide
- Police Officer

These positions are open until filled. Visit our website at goldsboronc.gov to see a complete list of openings, get more information and apply.

Got a question about City services?

Ask our chatbot.

Text 919-580-4299 or visit goldsboronc.gov and click the speech bubbles at the bottom of the page.



UPCOMING SANITATION CHANGES

Good Friday | April 15

Friday routes will be serviced Wednesday, April 13.

Memorial Day | May 30

Monday routes will be serviced Wednesday, June 1.

Independence Day | July 4

Monday routes will be serviced Wednesday, July 6.

No bulk pickup during holiday weeks.

Neglected Lots Can Lead to Hefty Fines for Property Owners

Each year during the spring/summer season, the City of Goldsboro's Code Enforcement Division receives over 1,000 requests to enforce the weeded lot ordinance. According to Chapter 96 of the Goldsboro Code of Ordinances, a homeowner, occupant, or person in control of real property may not allow grass or weeds on their property to grow 10 inches or higher.

In 2021, City code enforcement officers sent weeded lot violation notices to 570 properties; the City contractor cut 382 lots, said Matt Summerlin, Code Enforcement supervisor.

"We want to be proactive with property owners this year and hope they will be team players in understanding how important it is to keep lots cut and maintained during the spring and summer months," Summerlin said. "With only three officers to cover the city, we need all hands on deck to help us keep the city clean, safe and attractive for our residential and commercial communities."

Once a call is received, an inspector investigates the request to verify that the property is in violation of the City codes. If the property is found to be in violation, the property owner receives a certified letter notifying them that the lot needs to be cut within 10 days. If the property owner does not comply, the City's contractor will cut the lot, and the City will invoice the property owner for all charges. This entire process can take as long as three weeks.

If the violation is not abated before the deadline, the violator will be cited with a fine of up to \$125, depending on the lot size. In addition to the civil penalty, the city will impose an administrative fee of up to \$100 and any fines to cover the city's costs of administering a violation.

Upon second and subsequent violations within 24 months of the previous violation being remedied, no notice of the second or subsequent violation shall be given. The city, through its agents and employees, may enter such lots or premises and remove the violation, and the costs and expense to do so will be charged to the owner. Second and subsequent violations are subject to the escalating fine structure up to \$250.

To report a weeded lot, you may submit your request at the City website: www.goldsboronc.gov/planning/code-enforcement/. Please indicate your request as a weeded lot and include a physical address in the comment section.