



INTEGRITY FOR ALL TODAY
BY MAYOR JOHN KIRKLAND

Some time ago I authored a short essay on integrity. In that article I lamented the general lack of integrity in society today. Forward to the present time and the dilemma that our nation and the world endeavor to solve. It is fair to observe that the need for individual integrity is more important now than ever. It

is important in corporate offices and it is important among every member on the factory floor, and in fact in each of us.

Leadership in all organizations must set the example of integrity that is expected in their organization. The leadership must model the standard that they espouse. The old expression “talk the talk and walk the walk” is the true statement of the need for effective senior leadership. If we can achieve integrity across the entire corporate structure and the entire organizational structure of government many of the national and international problems will be more easily resolved.

Let us all take a vow to master our individual integrity and then encourage colleagues to work on the same acquisition in their lives. As with any vow only through daily consideration of the vow will we become more committed to the nature of guidance that integrity can have in our life. I believe that when we look at the character of persons that we have worked with and persons that we consider to be friends we will easily classify those who live comfortably with the commitment to personal integrity. These persons are wonderful to have as a positive influence in our lives.

The Rotary Four Way Test of the things that we think say and do are stated as follows:

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ROTARY 4 WAY TEST

1. IS IT THE TRUTH?
2. IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?
3. WILL IT BUILD GOODWILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. WILL IT BENEFIT ALL CONCERNED?

This reminder is generally repeated by all members of each club at their weekly meetings. The test is a good reminder to the Rotary members of their commitment to a trait of integrity.



TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

BY TOWN MANAGER DELANE JACKSON

The Town of River Bend is very fortunate to have recently received over \$18,000,000 in grants for water (WTP) and wastewater (WWTP) projects. Securing the grants was a big challenge. These are the two largest grants and projects in the town's history, and we are working on both of them simultaneously. Now that funding has been secured, the really hard part starts- building the projects. At my request, on July 18, the Town Council conducted a special meeting to discuss the projects. There were 21 members of the public present for the meeting. My goal in this edition of the town's newsletter is to summarize the special meeting and provide an update on the two projects. As you can imagine, both projects are very technical and complicated. They have similarities and possible interconnections, but they also have different funding guidelines, deadlines, engineering, review, permitting and other aspects. All of these areas and more must be addressed and approved before ANY construction can begin. These are not off-the-shelf projects. You cannot go to your local hardware store and buy the materials for these projects. In an effort to keep it as simple as possible and short, I will speak in general terms and in round numbers. This summary does not contain all of the details.

First, each grant is for just over \$9,000,000. The WWTP was funded first. We also did some planning for this project many years ago. For those reasons, we are much farther along with this project. After completing a formal Request For Proposal (RFQ) process, we are currently under contract with an engineering firm

on this project. I compare this project to refurbishing an old car. Our WWTP is about 50 years old. This grant will allow us to upgrade the treatment process and replace old parts and build some new components. Imagine taking a 1965 Mustang that has been driven every day for the last 50 years and is really showing its age and sending it to the shop for a major restoration. Our WWTP project will be like rebuilding the engine and transmission in the Mustang and replacing the tires, upholstery, brakes, radio and carpet and finishing it off with a new paint job.

We have already had a bid opening for this project. Sadly, the low bid exceeded our funding by \$10,000,000. We have worked to get that bid down to \$13,000,000 but that is still a \$4,000,000 gap. This project was funded with federal money known as ARPA funding. ARPA funds have a December 31, 2026 deadline by which they must be spent. Funding for this project can only be used for the WWTP project. There is some movement at the state level to shift some funding around and thus remove ARPA guidelines. The state legislature did approve \$800,000,000 for shifting, but guidelines have not been developed yet. As of today, there is no guarantee for when or how that will happen. At the special meeting, the Town Council decided to wait until October 16 to see if any funding changes are made. Essentially, this project is on hold until October 16.

For the WTP, this will be a brand new, from-the-ground-up project. It will be like buying a new 2024 Mustang. This project is also very challenging. The big advantage to this project is that it was funded with state money and it has no ARPA strings attached. Primarily, that means there is no December 31, 2026 deadline looming. The state will also allow us to spend it on other WWTP or stormwater projects. We have done no (ZERO) design or engineering on this project. We have not even completed an RFQ for an engineering firm yet. There is a reason for that. The reason is that we also received a \$100,000 grant to conduct a water supply study. That project is underway and should be complete within 90 days. Obviously, we need the results of that engineering study in hand before we begin designing a WTP. The first milestone for the WTP project is not until April 1, 2025. The town has secured about 4.5 acres on Plantation Drive, adjacent to the town's public works facility, which will be the location of the new WTP.

To say that both of the projects are very important to the town's future would be an understatement. When they are built, our WWTP and WTP should be in very good shape for decades. While there was no official vote to prioritize the projects, at the special meeting the consensus of the Council (in my opinion) was

that the WTP was the highest priority project. The WTP is also my highest priority. In fact, I told the Council that if I had to pick only one project to build, I would pick the WTP. Nobody expressed any opposition to that position. However, it is our goal to get both projects built.

To say that both projects can easily be done would be an even bigger understatement. As you can imagine, with funding from multiple agencies there are many government hoops to jump through. As you can also imagine, since both of these projects have an impact on the environment, there are a ton of regulations, both state and federal, which must be followed. Before we can do anything substantive with either project, the State of North Carolina must review and approve our plans and issue the required environmental permits. Multiple state regulatory agencies are involved and our WWTP even involved the Army Corp of Engineers. Like I said earlier, we are now in the hard part. We cannot just take the grant money and build what we want, how we want, where we want. It will be years before either of these projects are completed. There is a local attorney who uses the line “We’re with you all the way” in his advertising. Like it or not, the State of North Carolina is with us all the way on these projects, and they are in the regulatory and permitting business. It is not going to be simple, quick or easy, but we have staff and engineers with decades of experience in the grant, water, sewer and engineering industry working on these projects.

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.



WRD/PW REPORT

BY BRANDON MILLS
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Public Works Department has consistently done an excellent job maintaining the many areas of town we are responsible for. Recent efforts along our streets were to fill in several low areas around the road edges to prevent them from deteriorating. We also patched several potholes along our roadways with the use of a cold patch. We can use the cold patch on small potholes, and this helps the longevity of our roadways. Additionally, several street signs

were replaced, with more signs purchased to replace other faded and deteriorated signs.

The Water Resource Department also continued to excel in operating and maintaining our water/wastewater systems. A notable achievement within the department was Mike Steffa passing his Grade 1 Biological State Certification. Congratulations to Mike on a job well done! It is always beneficial to have as many team members as possible certified, ensuring that we have qualified personnel ready to operate and maintain our utilities.

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 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, and they will get in contact with the on-call utility systems operator.

COMING EVENTS

Planning Board Meeting
August 1
6:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

RBCOG Meeting
August 5
1:30 p.m.
Municipal Building

EWAB Meeting
August 5
7:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

CAC Special Meeting
August 7
4:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

Parks & Recreation
Advisory Board Meeting
August 7
6:30 p.m.
Municipal Building

Council Work Session
August 8
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Water Fun Day Sponsored
by the River Bend Police
Department
August 10
Soccer Field

CPR Training Class
Sponsored by Parks & Recreation
August 10
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Municipal Building

Regular Council Meeting
August 15
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall

Book/Tech Mobile
August 16
2p.m.-4p.m.
Tech Class 4p.m.-5 p.m.
Municipal Building

Health Fair Sponsored
by Parks & Recreation
12:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
Municipal Building



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 2023-2024

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.

Town Council 2024 Meeting Dates

Work Session January 11
Regular Meeting January 18
Work Session February 8
Regular Meeting February 15
Work Session March 14
Regular Meeting March 21
Work Session April 11
Regular Meeting April 18
Work Session May 9
Regular Meeting May 16
Work Session June 13
Regular Meeting June 20
~~Work Session July 11~~
Regular Meeting July 18
Work Session August 8
Regular Meeting August 15
Work Session September 12
Regular Meeting September 19
Work Session October 10
Regular Meeting October 17
Work Session November 14
Regular Meeting November 21
Work Session December 5
Regular Meeting December 12

All Council Work Sessions will be held in the River Bend Town Hall beginning at 7:00 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 2024 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 2024 were due by March 31, 2024. 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. 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**



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.