



Pender County Government Update

Department

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Agriculture / CED

- Extension Youth and Families Program (EFYP) program assistant brought back after one month hiatus per federal employment rules. Program delivery has been adjusted for families to account for covid-19 and social distancing protocols.
- Pesticide applicator re-certification classes scheduled for private applicators September 22 (in person) and September 23 (Zoom). NC Extension is offering both to accommodate those with poor internet access and to reduce face to face contact.
- The *Create Bridges Initiative* that Pender County applied for with Bladen, Duplin, Sampson and Onslow, to partner with NCSU and Walmart for rural retail development was awarded to a cluster of counties in NW NC.
- Corn harvest is nearly 50% complete. Rains last week are slowing drying and harvest but are helping soybean crop potential.
- Field corn variety test plots and yield contest plot harvest work in progress. Corn yields across the county are slightly better than average.
- Participated in interviews for Brunswick, New Hanover, Pender Natural Resources Extension Agent position. 52 excellent applicants. Team of six Extension staff were part of the evaluation and interview team.

4-H Programs

- Graduated from the WILMA Leadership Institute
- Became a certified Resiliency Educator in the Reconnect for Resilience curriculum
- Continued work on the Pender County Resiliency Task Force; first meeting will be Tuesday, September 22nd at 10:00am on Zoom.
- Attended 4 days of online training for our Empowering Youth & Families (EYFP) Program curriculum
- Began the Coming Together for Racial Understanding Dialogue Circle with Pender, Brunswick, and New Hanover County Extension Staff
- Attended the North Carolina Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals (NAE4-HYDP) Annual (virtual) conference
- Was elected Secretary for NAE4-HYDP
- Won the NAE4-HYDP Published Photo Award; Was selected as the Southern Region Award Winner as well and will be given that award at the National Conference

Admin Secretary / Urban Horticulture

- Both staff members are on annual leave.



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FACILITIES AND FLEET

Pender County Courthouse (Reference attached progress pictures):

Thomas Construction started the interior scope of repairs on June 1, 2020. Substantial completion is scheduled for December 22, 2020 and final completion is scheduled for January 19, 2021.

The project is currently on schedule with the following highlights:

*Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in's are underway

*Getting mobilized to install sheetrock and perform plaster repairs throughout

*Electrical rough-in's for the full building generator are in process

*Materials have been delivered and the work is about to begin for site drainage improvements on the northeast and northwest areas of the Courthouse Square (the bulk of which will be on the northwest side.) In addition, a French drainage system will be installed around the perimeter of the building.

*Elevator shaft work is on-going

Burgaw (Government Complex) Generator Project:

This project is now complete. In the event of power loss, the fuel depot, portions of the Health Department and all of the Agriculture building will have generator power.

Burgaw Elementary Generator Project:

This project is now complete. A classroom wing of approximately 30 classrooms is now generator ready. This means Pender County Emergency Management can use this building for sheltering purposes for the public during an emergency event.

Covid-19 Preparedness:

The Facilities Team continues to work to provide as safe of an environment as possible for both the employees and public of Pender County. PPE, hand sanitizer, and various sneeze guards have been fabricated and provided when necessary.

























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HEALTH - GENERAL

The WIC Program continues to operate mostly in a virtual manner. Services are provided by phone or curbside to minimize exposure to children and new mothers. There are currently 14 WIC vendors in the county who completed annual vendor training remotely. On-site monitoring has been placed on hold due to COVID. A new food package was put in place in March giving clients more food options.

Health educators are offering occasional outreach activities. They have been of major assistance in these COVID days, developing educational information for those that are being tested for COVID. They are maintaining data bases and dashboards for COVID and updating the county's website. The end of August, staff participated in an overview on Results Based Accountability (RBA) and scorecard training. They are participating in the first official Pender County Resiliency Task Force meeting next week.

The dental clinic at the health department as well as the mobile dental unit are operational. The mobile dental unit is currently at Penderlea School.

The health department is working very closely with the school system to minimize COVID cases in classrooms. We continue to offer daily testing at the health department with a 48-hour timeframe for results. There have been two COVID deaths this week. COVID updates may be found on the health department/county website as well as www.ncdhhs.gov for state information and updates.

A calendar for flu vaccination outreach clinics is in development stage. The health department prefers starting flu vaccinations in October to help assure immunity through the flu season. Staff is working on plans for mass immunizations when a COVID vaccination is available. The focus is on trying to avoid a "twindemic" with flu and COVID. We are hoping the precautions taking place with COVID will help limit the spread of flu.

Staff is actively working on re-accreditation benchmarks. The health department was scheduled for re-accreditation in August but the State cancelled activities until 2021. Therefore, the site visit for re-accreditation will be August 2021.

Health and DSS are working closely to finalize the design for a new HHS facility.



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LIBRARY

GRANT PROVIDES FREE FACE MASKS

Pender County Public library was awarded a \$750 Covid-19 Response Mini-Grant to reimburse the department for needs related to the pandemic. With most of the needs already met by County government when the grant was offered, the library applied to buy face masks to give-away to the public.

The library purchased 2,000 disposable masks to distribute to library customers should they not be wearing one when they enter the facilities. Posters from the Health Department are displayed about wearing masks as well as an educational poster that states: 'My mask protects you. Your mask protects me. Free masks available at the desk should you need one.'

Recently Center for Disease Control Director Robert Redfield testified before Congress that the "face mask is more guaranteed to protect me against Covid than when I take a Covid vaccine. If I don't get an immune response, the vaccine is not going to protect me. This face mask will."

The masks that the library received best fit smaller faces than many adults have, so they will also be available by the box to child care and day care centers, schools, and other institutions serving young people, said Mike Taylor, library director. Taylor can be contacted at the library in Burgaw by calling 910-259-5113.

The grant is made possible by funding from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (IMLS grant number LS-00-19-0034-19).



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PARKS & RECREATION

- A reminder that playgrounds have reopened. Playground users should bring hand sanitizer or disinfectant wipes with them. Please be considerate of others when visiting the parks. If you or your children do not feel well, please refrain from using the playground equipment. Park users are encouraged to practice the 3 w's Wear, Wait and Wash.
- The Holly Shelter Shooting Range remains closed until further notice.
- On Monday we met with Carolyn Moser to review the NC return to play guidance and requirements. This information has been passed on the our youth recreation partner programs.
- On Monday we had our biweekly meeting with Facilities staff to ensure that we communicate all park related activities and maintenance request.
- On Tuesday we had our Parks and Recreation Advisory board meeting.
- On Wednesday staff met with leadership from Pender Youth Soccer Association before the Fall season begins.
- Staff has spent time working on the Penderlea Property by hauling away unwanted materials, meeting a plumber to repair water leaks and meeting with a contractor to repair damaged ceilings.
- On Thursday Oct. 1st from 3pm -6pm we are hosting a drop in community recreation input meeting at the Penderlea Auditorium classrooms located at 220 C R Dillard Road Willard, NC 28478.



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PLANNING

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) - Hurricane Florence: The HMGP Florence Expedited Program is moving steadily, and the Board of Commissioners have established Just Compensation to begin the property acquisition process on every parcel included in the program. Official offer letters were already mailed out and there are a few properties that have already been closed on, with more closings scheduled for the coming weeks. Additionally, Planning staff received word this week that the deadline for demolition of structures in this program has been extended to March 14, 2021\ . This deadline was originally mid-September. Reimbursement requests from Pender County related to this grant are being developed and sent out as well.

The overall HMGP for Hurricane Florence is still awaiting final approval from the State. FEMA requested supplemental documentation from a number of applicants for acquisition beyond what preliminary figures showed would be included in the grant. We are hopeful that that request indicates that there may be more funding available than first thought. Properties that are not funded will move to an unmet needs list and be applied for mitigation through the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program that is yet to be funded.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) - Hurricane Matthew: The HMGP Hurricane Matthew program is in the final stages – the remaining projects include two property acquisitions and two home elevations on Topsail Island. The elevations are currently being reviewed by the NC Division of Coastal Management. Pender County has recently received reimbursement for a number of items under this grant, and the State is currently reviewing additional reimbursement requests as well.

Disaster Recovery Act (DRA): All policies, memorandum of understandings, indemnity documents are completed. The Construction Committee of the Long-Term Recovery Group is putting together projects now for the initial round of funding. Currently, nine total projects have been approved. The cost to execute each of these projects totals \$203,418.59\ . Of the nine projects, Habitat has two (one home repair and one home replacement), WARM has six (all home repairs) and Baptists on Mission have one (elevation and home repair). There has also been recent movement by the Construction Committee on homes that were originally part of the DRA program for Hurricane Matthew. The Construction Committee and Long Term Recovery Group as a whole are doing amazing work and should be commended for their efforts.

Through the efforts of Daniel Adams, Floodplain Administrator, reimbursement requests are being submitted regularly and payments are currently being received expeditiously.

UDO Update Project: The UDO Update project remains on hold at this time. In the meantime, Staff have brought forward a zoning text amendment to modify the development process in the PD, Planned Development zoning district in accordance with proposed changes in the draft UDO. This zoning text amendment received a unanimous recommendation of approval by the Planning Board at their September 1, 2020 meeting, and will be heard by the Board of County Commissioners on Monday, September 21, 2020.

The Planning Board also received a presentation from Planning Director Travis Henley regarding the UDO Update at their September meeting, in which it was announced that the project will remain on hold until the Planning Division can be brought back to full strength in early 2021.

Census 2020: Reminder to communicate the importance of the Census process. Staff will continue to work with the Complete Count Committee in an effort to have the most participation possible, hopefully exceeding the Governor's goal of 82% participation.

Current Planning: There are a multitude of projects under review in the Planning Department for commercial and residential projects alike. There are multiple Rezoning and Special Use Permits that will be heard by the Planning Board and Board of County Commissioners over the coming months. As a reminder, all projects in the planning process are located online and can be found at:

<http://www.pendercountync.gov/pcd/planning-zoning/pending-and-approved-projects/>



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TOURISM

County Manager's Update, Sept. 8-18, 2020

Tourism Department

- Pender County Tourism has supplied Room Occupancy Tax reports from the municipalities and unincorporated areas of the county to the state as requested for Visit NC data.
- As a member of the board of directors of the Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail, we attended the quarterly directors' meeting, virtually.
- As a member of the North Carolina Beach Inlet and Waterway Association, we are working with their events committee regarding their fall conference in November.
- We met with Burgaw Parks and Recreation, Burgaw Chamber of Commerce, Greater Topsail Area Chamber, and Pender County Parks and Recreation to discuss fall and holiday events amid a pandemic. We are careful to follow protocols of safety.
- As part of the Visit NC Marketing Credits Program, we are working with a team of travel videographers. We have provided the important elements we envision for a video and we have had conference calls with them and a script writer.
- The tourism staff met with Doug Shipley as part of our "know what the department is doing" meeting.
- We attended a Festival and Events webinar to learn more about event protocols; who is continuing, new innovative ways to host an event amid COVID-19, etc.
- The Pender County Tourism Development Authority met Sept. 17\ . We welcomed a new board member, Susan Griffin. New officers were elected.
- We continue our work with NC Coast Host and stay in touch with the membership and board.
- Olivia is developing a Seafood Trail for our visitors (and locals) as well as a Taco Trail. She is updating our Sweet Tooth Trail.
- We continue to receive rave reviews for Hometown Hollywood Film Walking Tour, available on PocketSights.com.
- We worked with our local museums to provide opening information under Phase 2.5 We spoke with many regional museums to learn about their protocols.
- Our fall Southern Living ad, in a co-op with NC Coast Host, yielded more than 187 inquiries in one week from potential first-time visitors.
- We met with our county health director regarding event guidance during the pandemic. We got the green

light on Ghost Walk Drive-in.

- We are working on the NCDOT Great Trails State Plan – which doesn't seem to include portions of the MST.
- Stephanie is updating our portion of the VisitNC entries – which is no easy task – and updating photos on the site.
- We visited two new businesses – Burry Chocolates and Ironclad Brewery which purchased Belvedere Country Club. Both businesses are located in Hampstead.
- We are applying for another promotions and advertising grant from Visit NC.
- We had a nice long conversation with Executive Producer JJ Sanchez from Fireball Run. He is working on a project and he asked for input from a tourism perspective.
- We are using Friday as our NEOGov class work.

Communications

- We continue to post news on the county website, www.pendercountync.gov.
- We continue to post to our social media pages.
- We continue to answer inquiries from the media. The biggest news story was the ATMC grant for broadband in Western Pender County.
- Olivia has completed a Long-Term Recovery guide.
- We completed the Crisis Communications Plan for our team.
- We provided information for Pender County Emergency Management's Hurricane Disaster Plan.
- We review weekly updates and news from FEMA and we post important preparedness tips on the Emergency Management social media page.
- We assisted various departments in issuing news releases.



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UTILITY OPERATIONS

PENDER COUNTY UTILITIES(PCU) & WATER DISTRICTS

-PCU lifted the voluntary water restrictions on September 17th, which had been in effect for the Hampstead & Scott's Hill areas since May.

-Our daily water usage has started its seasonal decline with the passing of Labor Day, and the Annex well has been operational for a few weeks.

-Committee of 5 staff members evaluated the submittals from engineering firms for the RO Plant and the Elevated Tank projects. Scores were tallied and the results discussed by staff, with CDM Smith being chosen for both projects. We are currently in contract negotiations, and plan to request Board approval in October.

-PCU is preparing for interviews for Water Treatment Plant Superintendent and the new Customer Service Representative position to occur over the next few weeks. The recruitment periods ended this week.

-We conducted the selection of a vendor to take care of all PCU power backup generators. We received bids from various contractors and Nixon Power out of the Wilmington branch was selected. The agreement is to perform semi-annual maintenance of all PCU generators and to respond to any unexpected emergency.

WATER PRODUCTION NUMBERS:

January 2020 Daily Avg: 1.141 MGD from Water Plant, 0.625 MGD pumped to Hampstead/Scott's Hill

February 2020 Daily Avg: 1.187 MGD from WP, 0.628 MGD to Hamp/SH March 2020 Daily Avg: 1.283 MGD

from WP, 0.004 MGD from Wallace, 0.704 MGD to Hamp/SH

April 2020 Daily Avg: 1.263 MGD from WP, 0.162 MGD from Wallace, 0.843 MGD to Hamp/SH

May 2020 Daily Avg: 1.300 MGD from WP, 0.286 MGD from Wallace, 0.959 MGD to Hamp/SH

June 2020 Daily Avg: 1.24 MGD from WP, 0.267 MGD from Wallace, 0.939 MGD to Hamp/SH

July 2020 Daily Avg: 1.374 MGD from WP, 0.364 MGD from Wallace, 1.124 MGD to Hamp/SH

August 2020 Daily Avg: 1.58 MGD from WP, 0.038 MGD from Wallace, 0.901 MGD to Hamp/SH

Annex Well August 2020 Total Flow: 786,432 gallons

STAFF WORK AND STATUS UPDATES SINCE LAST REPORT:

-Work on Factory road performed by NCDOT is 100% complete. All water line work completed, including waterline relocation and installation of one insert- valve and one new control valve.

-Met with NC Public water Supply inspector Josh Pack for a follow up visit of the Annex Well.

-Completed 5 new taps.

-Flushed water lines in the River Bend area and Crowne Pointe and Riverland dr.

-Met with Mission Scada representative to receive training in the creation of SCADA screens for wells and tanks.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT:

-Met with Synagro representatives to finalize plans for ferric sludge dredging of North Pond. Removed sections of the guard rails around the pond for access. Work is scheduled to begin before the end of the month.

-Maintenance technician added a valve and replaced a sample line for easier sampling of the pond discharge.

-Met with Carolina Management Team to obtain a preliminary quote for the washing, repairing, and painting of the exterior surface of the two one million gallons storage tanks at the plant site.

-We are reviewing all of the plant's Standard Operations Procedures to begin the process of updating all procedures in place.

-Water production so far for this month: 23.6MG for an average of 1.48MGD.

PCP WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT - MKKAES (Melinda K. Knoezer Adaptive Ecosystem)

-Operators have been performing preventive maintenance on the Ultra Violet Disinfection System. (see attached pictures)

-Wastewater parameters numbers are looking much better this week after some small operational issues experienced last week.

-We have more maintenance projects scheduled for the upcoming months to include, replacing some of the UV System components, and reinstalling an equalization pump.

-The influent pump station is scheduled to be cleaned on the week of Monday September 21st.

SOLID WASTE:

-A walkthrough inspection of the Transfer Station scale house building revealed that the structure is in good condition.

-The department continues to be fully staffed.

-Transfer Station is creating on a daily basis approximately 100 tickets for disposal records. Waiting time is approximately 3 minutes IN and 3 minutes OUT.

-Solid Waste fee collections for new constructions continues, and additional stickers are still provided.

COUNTY DISPOSAL REPORT FOR AUGUST 2020:

736.48 ton of C&D

2493.91 tons of household garbage

117.62 tons of household recycling

45.02 tons of recycled tires

11.69 tons of TV and electronics



