

m Rocky Mount

M A G A Z I N E

4th Edition 2015



Rocky Mount City Lake

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

Mayor's Message	3
What's Happening in the Twin Counties	4-5
The Rocky Mount City Council	6
Meet the City of Rocky Mount's Department Heads	6
In the Community	
Making Moves: Community Update Cites Accomplishments of the Vision and Strategic Plan	7
Good Things are Brewing at the Brewmill	8
Parks and Recreation	
Citizen Involvement + Creative Ideas = Growth for Parks and Recreation	9
History Portrayed in Latest Arts Center Exhibit	10
Making Memories That Last a Lifetime – Co-Rec League Athletics	11
Rocky Mount Senior Center Receives National Accreditation	12
Energy Resources	
City Manager's Column: "A Light at the End of the Tunnel"	
City Council Makes Landmark Decision of Approving Rate Decreases in Electric and Natural Gas	13
How We Restore Power	14
Completion of Point of Delivery Station Means Greater Reliability for Customers	15
Energy Resources Director Appointed Chair of National Association	15
Police	
A Chance to Change	16-17
Bimonthly CompStat Helps Police Identify Trends and Improves Communication	18
Fire Department	
City Selects New Fire Chief	19
Automated External Defibrillators...Keeping the City's Hearts Beating	19
Public Works and Water Resources	
It's Our Responsibility: Community Anti-Litter Coalition Needs Your Help	20
Keeping the Tanks Clean...Inside and Out	21
Behind the Scenes in Public Works and Water Resources	22
Planning	
Several Affordable Housing Projects Underway in Rocky Mount	23-24
Downtown Development	
Crowd Hears About Facility Plan	25-26
Group Works to Create Renewed Energy in Downtown Rocky Mount	26
Diversity	
Four-Phase Process Utilized to Establish City's Diversity and Inclusion Plan	27
Marketing	
City Uses New Marketing Efforts to Promote Events and Programs	28-29
City Expands Social Media Footprint	29
Human Relations	
Reaching Beyond Disability	30
Upcoming Events For 2015 And 2016	31-33
Budget	
Cost of Public Service	34
2014 Operating Budget and Property Taxes	35
Frequently Dialed Numbers	35



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Here's to Success!

“Here’s to Success!” This phrase was coined by the Positive Image Action Group, a part of the Twin Counties Vision and Strategic Plan Process, and it has been gaining momentum throughout the Twin Counties. Led by co-chairs Dorsey Tobias and Don Williams, the Positive Image Action Group has made this phrase a part of various advertisements. And, they have appropriately named their website herestosuccess.org. I encourage you to visit the website and check out events, watch promotional videos, and see the great news happening in our region.

While “Here’s to Success” was adopted to tell the positive stories also happening in Nash and Edgecombe counties, the city of Rocky Mount is excited to be a part of this regional success too, and the third edition of *MY Rocky Mount* magazine exemplifies our personal successes, made possible by citizens like you.

Inside, you will find a column from City Manager Charles Penny highlighting the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency’s sale of their generation assets to Duke Energy Progress. This means customers are experiencing an overall 14 percent decrease in their electric bills and an overall 7 percent decrease for natural gas, undoubtedly the most monumental success for the city of Rocky Mount in 2015!

Another noteworthy success is the number of construction projects on the horizon, such as Beal Street,

construction of duplexes in the Holly Street area, renovation in Harambee Square, new homes in Genesis Estates and developments on Beal and Howell Street. The revitalization of housing is not only a major goal for the city of Rocky Mount, but is a part of the visioning project’s Quality of Life in Underserved Neighborhoods’

action group. (An update on the Twin Counties Vision and Strategic Plan Process is also featured in this edition of *MY Rocky Mount*).

“Here’s to Success” regarding the progress taking place in downtown Rocky Mount. Thanks to Downtown Development Manager John Jesso and the Central City Revitalization Panel, new marketing has piqued the interest of potential investors. The group coordinates tours of downtown Rocky Mount, and is also appropriately building on the progress

currently taking place in our area, such as the upcoming Rocky Mount Mills, marketing for a Monk to Mill Trail and the proposed Downtown Community Facility.

While these are just a few of the contents of *MY Rocky Mount*, there’s so much more included about positive initiatives happening in our city. I hope you will take the time to read the magazine cover to cover and be proud to

say, “Here’s to Success” for the city of Rocky Mount and ultimately our region.



Mayor David W. Combs





Rocky Mount's Downtown Live! kicked off in May on the lawn of the Imperial Centre. This year's event was extended through Oct. 1.

The Rocky Mount Police Department hosted Coffee with a Cop. During the event, officers and community members came together in an informal, neutral space to discuss community issues, build relationships and drink coffee.





The biggest crowd in the history of Juneteenth came out to Downtown Rocky Mount for a celebration. They also enjoyed entertainment from R&B national recording artists, Dru Hill.



Mayor David Combs

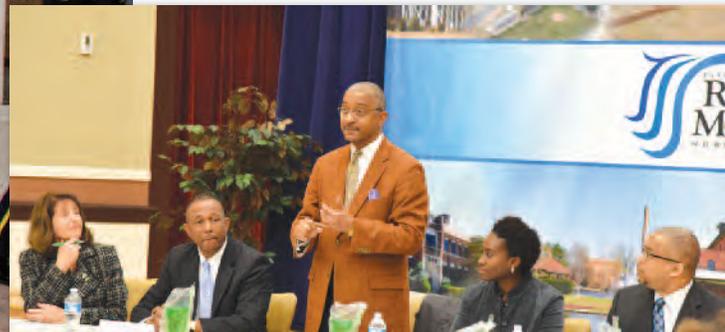


Representative Shelly Willingham

In July 2015, Suddenlink announced that it is now offering, throughout Rocky Mount and in nearby areas, an Internet service with an up to 1 Gigabit per second download speed, making this area and Greenville the first Suddenlink-served communities in North Carolina to receive this service.



Governor Pat McCrory and Susan Kluttz, secretary of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, visited Rocky Mount on a lobbying and awareness tour in an effort to restore historic preservation tax credits.



The Community Health Roundtable brought together the leaders of five federal agencies, city leaders, regional educators, healthcare providers and local nutrition advocates to discuss practical ways to improve health outcomes for individuals and families living in the Rocky Mount region.



(sitting l-r) Tom Rogers, Ward 5; Chris Miller, Ward 7; David Combs, mayor; Reuben Blackwell, Ward 2; W.B. Bullock, Ward 6 (standing l-r) Lamont Wiggins, Ward 3; Lois Watkins, Ward 4; Andre Knight, Ward 1 For Ward maps and more information, visit rockymountnc.gov.

MEET THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT'S DEPARTMENT HEADS



Charles Penny,
city manager



Tasha Logan Ford,
assistant city manager



Thomas M. Moton, Jr.,
assistant city manager



Jonathan Boone,
director of public works and water resources



Pamela Casey,
city clerk



Ken Graves,
director of planning and development



Bruce Harper,
IS manager



Elayne Henderson,
director of human resources



Kenneth Hunter,
budget & evaluation manager



John R. Jesso,
downtown development manager



Archie Jones,
director of human relations



Brad Kerr,
director of engineering



Dariana Moore,
internal auditor



James Moore,
police chief



Tameka Kenan-Norman,
public affairs manager



Amy Staton,
finance director



Mike Varnell,
fire chief



Richard Worsinger,
director of public utilities



Kelvin Yarrell,
director of parks and recreation

Making Moves

Community Update Cites Accomplishments of the Vision and Strategic Plan

By Tameka Kenan-Norman



Sue Perry Cole

Sue Perry Cole, a member of the Community Partners Coalition for the Twin Counties Vision and Strategic Plan Process and president and CEO for the NC Association of Community Development Corporations, challenged the crowd during a recent community update at the Imperial Centre.

“I dare you. I doubledare you to find at least one positive accomplishment that we’re talking about today that you can go back and share with your friends and neighbors,” said Perry Cole.

The community update was held to inform Twin Counties residents of the progress that has taken place since the fall of 2011 when the vision and strategic plan process started. Eric Evans, assistant county manager for Edgecombe County, gave a brief background of the initiative, which resulted from the Rocky Mount Metropolitan Statistical Area being named in Forbes magazine as an impoverished community.

“That became our call to action,” exclaimed Evans. “There were some things we realized we needed to work on, but we also realized that not everything in the Twin Counties was bad. We realized we had some work to do.”

Keynote speaker Ted Abernathy, economic development and strategic planning consultant with Economic Leadership, LLC, said Rocky Mount and other communities fell victim to a volatile economy and as a result, became static. According to Abernathy, today’s persistent new reality is noting that the economy has changed, along with the workforce, talent and customer demands.

The city of Rocky Mount, Edgecombe and Nash counties have confronted this change in part by agreeing to partner and fund the Twin Counties Vision and Strategic Plan Process. SKEO Solutions, a consulting firm, assisted in the process. Over 360 volunteers participated in study circles, highlighting needs and areas for improvement. From there, a Community Partners Coalition was established, made up of representatives from all government entities, and a core team provided ongoing coordination. The groups created eight action areas and a mission and vision statement, finalizing the plan in 2013.

While Perry Cole highlighted all the achievements of the action groups, I am taking Perry Cole up on the challenge and even going a step further, using this space to provide one or two positive accomplishments from each action group and sharing it with you, hoping you’ll continue to spread the word.

Action Group Highlights

- Most say **Crime Prevention and Safety** starts at a young age, which may be one reason why this action group has focused on youth and young adults with the help of law enforcement and community based organizations, like the Opportunities Industrialization Center, the Down East Partnership for Children, Communities in Schools and the Boys and Girls Club.
- Obesity is a major health concern for the Twin Counties, prompting study circle participants to share the need for a **Food Economy** group designed to make healthy food affordable and accessible to residents in each of the communities. A Local Foods, Local Places two-day workshop focused on strengthening the city’s local food economy through strategies that will generate jobs and support the health and well-being of the community. Rocky Mount is one of 26 communities nationwide participating in the Local Foods, Local Places program.
A major milestone for the group was having Rev. Richard Joyner featured nationally as our local CNN hero. Joyner, a resident of Conetoe, was praised for starting a community garden in an area labeled a food desert. The Conetoe Family Life Center now manages over 20 plots of land.
- Investing in improved **Health and Mental Health** is a challenge, but thanks to a corporations recent partnership with the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, a new initiative was formed. According to their website, Healthy Places NC is “aimed at improving the health and overall quality of life for people in rural areas of North Carolina.”
- We are also expecting an improvement in **Job Creation and Talent Development** as new facilities emerge, such as Edgecombe Community College’s Biotechnology and Simulation Center and the recent completion of Nash Community College’s Facilities and Continuing Education Building.
- The **Positive Image** group has worked diligently on marketing many positive aspects of the Twin Counties, utilizing every marketing medium. You are encouraged to visit the website, herestosuccess.org. The Ambassador’s Program is a vital part of Positive Image, using bus tours for residents, in particular those working in the hospitality industry, to give a first-hand experience of what the Twin Counties offers.
- The restoration of neighborhoods is a big component of the **Quality Of Life In Underserved Neighborhoods** group. Thanks to the Rocky Mount-Edgecombe Community Development Corporation, there is continued focus on housing conditions and educating potential homeowners (see housing article on pg. 23 for more information).
- **STEP**, or the **Strategic Twin Counties Educational Partnership**, has developed three sub-groups: literacy at grade three focused on getting students reading on grade level by grade three; graduation rates, which looks at support systems for struggling students; and workforce readiness, including education and corporate stakeholders and the Chamber of Commerce who are planning an education summit.

For the community update in its entirety, visit the new visioning website, twincountiesvision.org. There, you can also find information in the news about the process, resources and accomplishments.



Home to Springboard, Inc. and Capitol Broadcasting

Good Things are Brewing at Rocky Mount Mills By Robin Cox

In 2014, Capitol Broadcasting announced a project that brought smiles to the faces of those in Rocky Mount who knew there was untapped potential just waiting to pour out at the old Rocky Mount Mills. Capitol's objective: create North Carolina's first craft brewery incubator by bringing together several small breweries in one place to catalyze activity in the area.

One year later, renovations of the mill and mill village houses are well underway. Several business are either in negotiations or have signed leases for spaces, and as the result of a partnership with Nash Community College, a degree program in brewing, distillation and fermentation will be offered with classroom space and an incubator brewery located at Rocky Mount Mills for use in the program.

"When you have a company, like Capitol Broadcasting, that has a reputation for taking dilapidated structures and turning them into vibrant systems, it really brings a lot of excitement and hope for the future to the region," says Tasha Logan Ford, assistant city manager for the city of Rocky Mount. "For us to have a private developer that has



Koi Pond Brewery's upcoming location at the Rocky Mount Mills.

taken ownership of the mill, with vision for how they can recreate that space, is phenomenal."

The businesses that either currently reside or will reside at the Rocky Mount Mills are Springboard, Inc, a local group of entrepreneurs who want to help support other regional entrepreneurs as they get their businesses off the ground, and two restaurant/breweries, Koi Pond Brewery and Sweet Taters Brewery. The anticipated opening dates for the taprooms and restaurant are fall of 2015 and spring of 2016, respectively.

For the latest updates on the Rocky Mount Mills, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RockyMountMills/.

Citizen Involvement + Creative Ideas = Growth for Parks and Recreation

By Tameka Kenan-Norman (AECOM also contributed to this article)

The city of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department has already made strides in the completion and implementation of the existing Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, thanks to citizens. The plan is described as a community defined long-range vision for parks, recreation and cultural resources.

Work for the plan began in 2013 when a citywide survey was conducted to gauge the public's perspective on the existing Parks and Recreation system, as well as needs and priorities.

“With visioning, you look out 10 years and ask yourself, ‘how do you want your community to look,’” says Director Kelvin Yarrell.

The final stage of implementation, or action, is currently in the works for the plan which is expected to be adopted by the mayor and city council in December 2015. However, some things have already taken place. For example, the idea of more and better community centers led to the South Rocky Mount Community Center renovation. Currently in the works, with an expected completion date of summer 2016, the center, once completed, will have new restrooms, a new kitchen and weight room, a new air conditioned gym and security system, as well as technology upgrades, a new front entrance and new roadway entrance design, along with multi-purpose rooms.

Although staff was already working on Best Friend's Dog Park before the master plan started, master plan participants had ideas for one of the largest off-leash dog parks in the state. Hence, there is an upcoming third phase for the park in



Citizens attend the grand opening of Best Friend's Dog Park.

which an agility course, shelters, shade canopies and other dog related features will be added.

The renovation of Sunset Tennis Courts was celebrated on April 25, 2015. The master plan called for new fencing, a state-of-the-art lighting system and new netting for courts that had not been renovated in nearly nine years. Bleachers and shade structures for players and spectators have been added, along with eight new full-size tennis courts and four new mini-courts.

Additionally, a digital sign is located outside the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences promoting various Parks and Recreation events, thanks to citizens involved in the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Other ideas borne out of the master plan may be implemented at a later date, and one idea in particular excites Yarrell.

“The city owns over 800 acres along the Tar River,” notes Yarrell. “Comparatively, Central Park in New York is 843 acres. The idea was to tie in City Lake, Sunset Park, Battle Park, Martin

Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Park, our major bridge, the Rocky Mount Sports Complex and other areas to show that our park system has linkage. We have to start focusing on this amenity as a regional asset people can take advantage of.”

Park system linkage is prevalent with the concept of Falls River Park. According to the needs assessment, citizens want venues that would bring attention to Rocky Mount and provide social and economic benefits. The concept of Falls River Park takes advantage of the many facilities available along the Tar River, such as the Rocky Mount Sports Complex, City Lake, Sunset Park, Stith-Talbert Park and MLK Park. This area is also near the Historic Mill District.



Mayor Combs cuts the ribbon at the grand opening for the renovated Sunset Tennis Courts.

The concept for Falls River Park would be space for family activities, natural exploration, festivals and events.

Yarrell says everything Parks and Recreation does is citizen focused, and thanks to the mayor, city council members and citizens, strategies and ideas are already being refined and implemented, resulting in an even bigger and better Parks and Recreation system.

Did You Know?

Did you know that this is the city's first Comprehensive Master Plan since 1999 when Hurricane Floyd occurred? Floyd made the then current plan obsolete. An update to the plan was completed in 2005.

History Portrayed in Latest Arts Center Exhibit

By Tameka Kenan-Norman

The Maria V. Howard Arts Center is now home to an exhibition that captures the stories of slaves and their determination to achieve freedom. “Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad,” is currently on display at the center and is a collection of paintings, etchings and drawings of what people experienced during this journey. “Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad” was done by artist Joseph Holston, and the exhibition was facilitated by International Arts & Artists.

“This exhibition depicts the emotions and perseverance of African-American slaves through slavery and into their freedom,” says Alicyn Wiedrich, curator for the Maria V. Howard Arts Center, located inside the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences.

According to Wiedrich, the exhibition, now housed on the second floor of the galleries, is open through Dec. 13, 2015 and consists of 50 works total, including 32 paintings that take the visitor through various periods.

“It goes through four periods called movements,” states Wiedrich. “These movements are when slaves arrived in America, living in bondage, the journey of escape and the color in freedom.”

The images are all approximately 42 inches across and emphasize fine details with color.

“He (artist Joseph Holston) has blank characterizations of people, but the emotions that come across with color alone are expressive,” notes Wiedrich. “He is trying to make an artistic expression of what the Civil Rights Movement meant in general.”

“Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad” has been showcased in Indiana, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Switzerland, Ohio, Massachusetts, Tennessee, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, South Carolina and North Carolina (Durham). It was noticed by Wiedrich through the traveling exhibition facilitators, International Arts and Artists.

“I hope visitors will gain an understanding that art doesn’t have to be a photograph,” said Wiedrich. “It can be something bright or something emotional and can tell a story.”

Alongside “Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad,” is the documentary, “Origin of the Dream.” A research project by Dr. Jason Miller of NC State University, “Origin of the Dream” highlights Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech and its connection to poetry by Langston Hughes. Miller uses the original audio of the speech King made in Rocky Mount in 1962 and remastered it.

Admission to the exhibit and to view the documentary is *free*. The Maria V. Howard Arts Center is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, you may also call 252-972-1266.



These two pieces are a part of the exhibit “Color in Freedom: Journey along the Underground Railroad.” Top: “Sun Warms the Freedom,” Bottom: “Righteous Rejoicing”

Making Memories That Last a Lifetime – Co-Rec League Athletics

By Robin Cox



Softball and volleyball are two of the sports offered by the Parks and Recreation Athletics Division. All create lasting memories.



Hitting a homerun; scoring a goal; shooting a basket; they all have one thing in common—creating lasting memories for adults and children alike. For those who run the city of Rocky Mount’s Co-ed Recreational (Co-Rec) Leagues, it doesn’t matter if your sport of choice is indoors or outdoors, occurs in the winter, spring, summer or fall, their job is all about helping individuals and families make lasting memories.

“It’s not about the sports or athletics we offer,” says Lynn Driver, athletics supervisor for the Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department. “We’re not in the business of training a baseball or basketball player. What we really are about is making memories that last a lifetime.”

And oh the memories! Whether you are three, 93 years old or even older, the co-rec leagues offer something for everyone. Brandon Gallion, co-rec league player and coach, has been involved in the leagues since childhood.

“I played little league baseball when I was younger, then the youth rec league. We had some great times,” remembers Gallion. “After high school sports were over, I came back to

“We’re not in the business of training a baseball or basketball player. What we really are about is making memories that last a lifetime.”

— Lynn Driver,

the leagues. Now, 10 years later, I coach 11 and 12 year-old little league boys, along with playing on league teams.”

Driver and Gallion agree, there is more to the leagues than sports. “It’s as much or more about the social aspect of the league,” says Driver. “The participants, young and not-so-young alike, are meeting like-minded individuals or families who have a shared interest, and they build lasting bonds.”

Gallion, who participates in softball, basketball, volleyball and soccer, understands and enjoys the community facet of league participation.

“It’s a way to stay involved in the community and give back,” he says. “It is my

avenue to meet some people I wouldn’t normally meet, but share a common interest.”

That sense of community is one of the draws for both the co-rec league and the city of Rocky Mount as a whole, according to Driver.

“While having league sports may not be a primary factor for a young professional or a family moving into the area, it is certainly one of those boxes a person checks off when deciding where to live,” Driver says. “With the variety of sports we have, it makes us competitive with other nearby urban areas.”

The Athletics Division of the Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide variety of sports for all ages, including soccer (indoor and outdoor), baseball, softball, volleyball (indoor and outdoor), flag football (ages 5-8), tackle football (ages 8-12), wrestling, cheerleading, and a tennis program is in the works.

For more information, please contact Brenda Bynum, youth program coordinator, or Chris Koufopoulos, adult program coordinator, at 252-972-1160.

Rocky Mount Senior Center Receives National Accreditation

By Tameka Kenan-Norman and Alex Langley



Alex Langley, front row, 2nd from left, is joined by council members and others at a ceremony recognizing the Senior Center's accreditation.



NC State Senator Angela Bryant

lives of older Americans. As a part of their mission, the NCOA established the NISC in 1970. The NISC is a network of professionals that believe senior centers create opportunities for successful aging in our communities, and are committed to supporting the nation's 12,000 senior centers.

According to Alex Langley, Senior Center manager, the Rocky Mount Senior Center is one of three accredited senior centers in the state and one of approximately 1 percent of the 12,000 senior centers in America to be nationally accredited. The entire process took two years for the center to complete, and Langley noted it was both a rigorous and rewarding process that required involvement from the entire community and compilation of a 378 page accreditation notebook.

NISC Accreditation is a quality assurance program that examines nine national senior center operation standards: purpose, community collaboration, program planning, evaluation, financial management, governance, administration/human resources, record keeping and facility.

"Once we made the decision to pursue accreditation, we budgeted for and conducted a Community Self-Assessment," said Langley. This phase included an overall review of the nine standards of Senior Center operations.

"We established a Self-Assessment Committee of stakeholders, city council members, city staff, participants, volunteers and others that met regularly from September 2013 – May 2014. The final part of the process consisted of an on-site review of documentation and the center by a certified peer reviewer, a review of the peer reviewer's findings and recommendation by the National Institute of Senior Centers Accreditation Board.

"We are extremely excited about this accomplishment," states Langley. "It is important for the Senior Center and the entire city of Rocky Mount. Accreditation improves the consistency and quality of operations, enhances our image, positions us as leaders in positive aging, and recognizes us as a vital resource for active, older adults in the Rocky Mount community."

“A Light at the End of the Tunnel”

City Council Makes Landmark Decision of Approving Rate Decreases in Electric and Natural Gas



Charles Penny

On Monday, Aug. 24, 2015, the city of Rocky Mount made a landmark decision. Thanks to the sale of the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency’s (NCEMPA) generation assets to Duke Energy Progress (DEP), Rocky Mount residential

customers are experiencing an overall 14 percent decrease in their electric bills. And, thanks to a recent natural gas study by Kan Huston Associates who recommended a change in the rate structure, customers are getting an overall 7 percent decrease for natural gas. The new rates took effect September 1, 2015.

So, what does it all mean for those who consume electricity and natural gas from Rocky Mount Public Utilities (RMPU)? The average residential customer uses 1,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) per month. Under the previous rate structure, those customers paid approximately \$134.79 for electric services only. Under the new rate schedule, that cost is declining to \$115.00 per month.

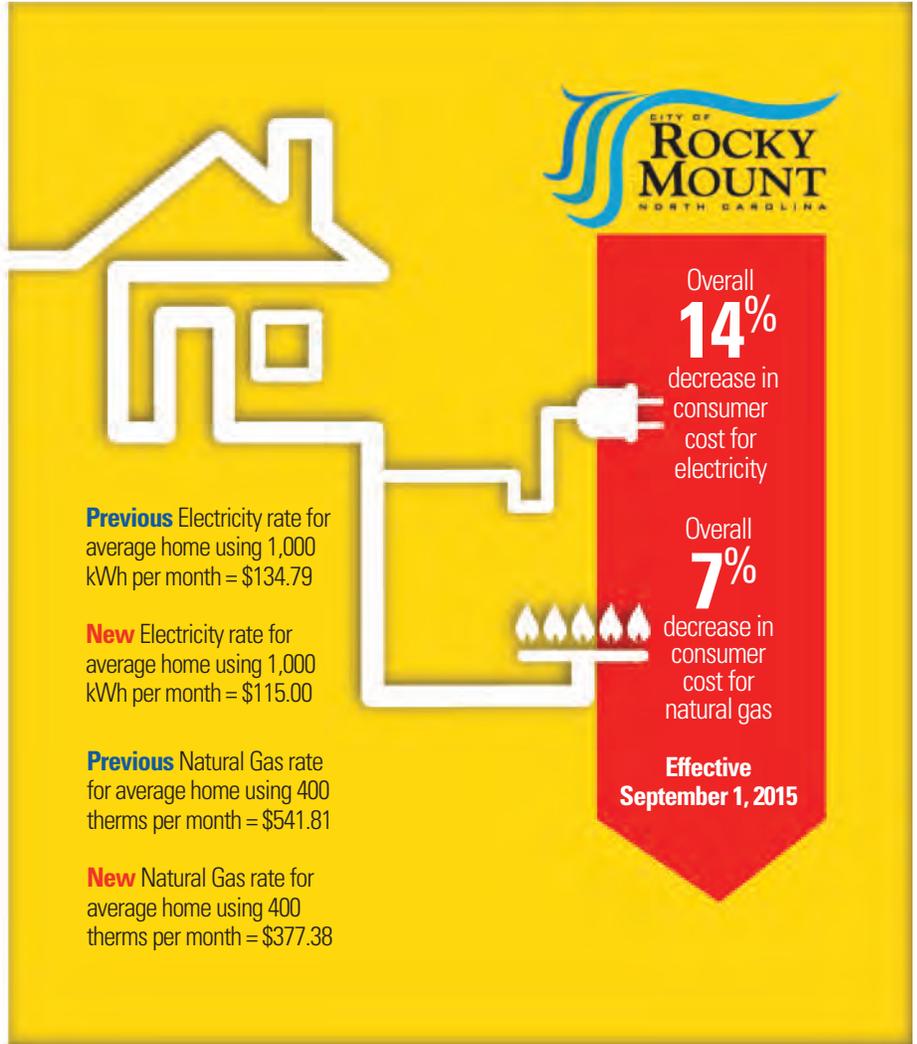
In regards to natural gas, a home using 400 therms per month would have a bill of \$541.81 under the prior rate structure. Now, that natural gas bill has decreased to \$377.38 during the winter months.

Along with the monumental decreases is an increase in the monthly facilities charge to electric customers from \$14 to \$26 to cover system operating costs. However, this cost is defrayed when considering that the rate per kWh has gone from 13.1538 cents to 9.9750 cents.

Likewise, the facilities charge for natural gas is now \$14 April through September and \$34 October through March. The decrease will be evident in the reduction of the per therm rate at .85 cents per therm. The new per therm rate will allow customers to see a significant difference in their utility bills, regardless of the increased facilities charge.

The decreased rate has also made our prices closer in comparison to DEP customers, with our electric customers paying approximately \$115 per month and DEP’s customers paying \$111.54 (based on the average usage of 1,000 kWh), a long way from the previous 19 percent gap.

Thanks to the generation asset sale, the approval of the Rocky Mount City Council, and the years of comments from citizens like you, we have



come a long way from the rates that have been an issue since the 1970s.

NCEMPA, composed of 32 eastern North Carolina cities and towns, including Rocky Mount, was created in 1982. These municipalities jointly owned power generation plants to make sure citizens had reliable and affordable energy. However, unexpected challenges surfaced, such as the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, making the government place tougher restrictions on power plants. This resulted in the price of energy doubling, along with higher interest rates, and some of the debt was passed on to the customer.

Now, I am happy to say we have crossed this hurdle and are passing on savings to Rocky Mount residents, as well as excellent service and reliability.

How We Restore Power

By Amy Blanton



As a public power utility, Rocky Mount Public Utilities (RMPU) Energy Resources department owns and maintains more than 700 miles of distribution lines carrying power to its 27,000+ electric customers. One of the benefits of being a public power community is fewer outages and faster restoration times. Also, public power employees live in the

community they serve and are able to respond quickly in the event of an outage or emergency.

In order to prevent interrupted service, Energy Resources performs preventative maintenance on service equipment and maintains an aggressive tree trimming program. Despite the best preventative measures, however, power outages still occur due to severe weather, striking poles, and animals coming into contact with equipment.

The Energy Resources department's goal is to provide safe, reliable and quality service to its customers. Therefore, when outages occur, the department is prepared to restore power safely and quickly. Until power can be restored, there are steps customers should take to investigate the cause and report the outage.

If You Lose Power

If you experience a power outage, first look outside to see if your neighbors have power. The outage could be widespread or isolated to just your location. If there isn't an outage in your neighborhood, check your circuit breaker panel or fuse box to see if you have tripped a breaker or blown a fuse. If so, you will need to reset the breaker or replace the fuse.

If you see that your neighbors are also without power, look for any tree branches on a line, downed power lines, flashes of light, or any other signs of trouble. **NEVER attempt to touch or try to move power lines or anything in contact with a power line.**

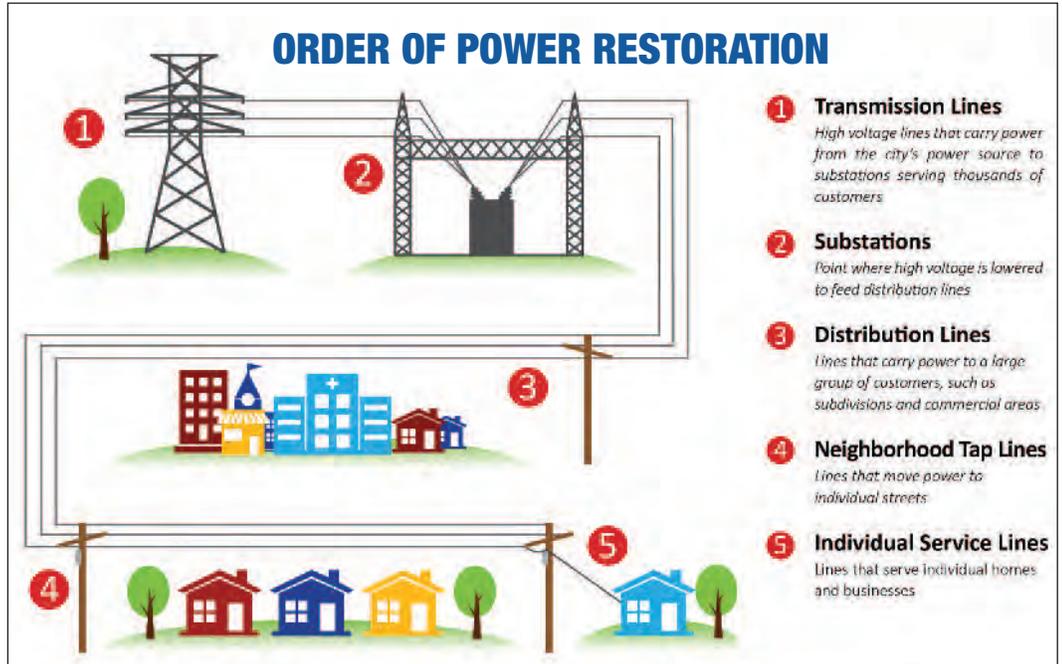
Report An Outage

Call RMPU's automated phone system at 252-467-4800 for reporting electric emergencies, such as a power outage. Dispatchers are on-duty 24 hours per day, seven days per week to take calls. **Tip: Before an outage occurs, call 252-467-4800 to make sure your most current phone number is on file so the outage can be accurately recorded.**

When calling to report an outage, press #1 when prompted unless you have information about damage to wires, transformers or poles. If so, please stay on the line to speak with a dispatcher.

How We Restore Power

Whether outages are widespread or isolated to a small area, the Energy Resources department's priority is always to restore power to the most people at one time. Therefore, RMPU will prioritize repairs based on the Order of Power Restoration as long as weather conditions allow. (See the illustration for the Order of Power Restoration).



Until Power Is Restored

When an outage occurs or lasts for an extended period of time, a heavy burden is placed on the system at the moment the power is restored. This high demand can cause an overload on the system, and you could lose power once again. To ensure power is restored safely and effectively, turn everything off in your home except one light. Make sure the surface elements on your range have been turned off. Also, turn off any heat-producing appliances because, if left on, they can pose a serious fire hazard after the power has been restored.

When the light you've left on lights, you'll know the power has been restored. Over the next five minutes, slowly switch your appliances back on and gradually return thermostats to their normal settings.

Leave a porch light on so crews know that your power has been restored.

Stay Connected

During an outage, RMPU posts restoration updates using social media. Customers can stay connected by following us on Facebook and Twitter and using Nextdoor, the free and private social network for neighborhoods.

Customers should not report outages through the city's social media pages. Instead, always call 252-467-4800 for electric, gas, water and sewer emergencies.

For more information, visit www.rockymountnc.gov/utilities/emergency.html.



Completion of Point of Delivery Station Means Greater Reliability for Customers

By Amy Blanton



Point of delivery substation on Greyson Road.

Prior to the summer of 2015, the power for all 27,000+ city of Rocky Mount electric customers was received from a single point of delivery¹ station on Old Mill Road. After the completion of the second point of delivery station in June, the city now has a second supply point for receiving and delivering power to customers.

The site of one of the city's substations on Greyson Road was expanded to 10.5 acres to accommodate the new point of delivery station, along with a workshop for the substation crew. Although contractors were used for site preparation and foundation work, the bulk of the construction was performed in-house. Energy Resources department staff assembled the steel structure, placed the circuit breakers on their foundations, installed control wiring, tested the equipment and furnished the interior of the workshop.

"This was a substantial accomplishment given the complexity of a transmission substation," said John Maclaga, Energy Resources engineering manager.

Although construction on the site began in 2012, the need for an additional point of delivery was recognized by Rich Worsinger, director of Energy Resources, when he began working for the city in 2001.

"The best way to describe reliability in the electric industry is to use the belt and suspenders analogy," said Worsinger. "You must have a secondary system in place to keep your pants from falling down."

In the event of a widespread outage, the city would need a secondary power supply. That became a reality in August 2011 when a raccoon temporarily knocked out power to the entire city. Since then, adjustments have been made to reduce the chances of an animal causing a blackout. The city now has the ability to serve the entire system, if necessary, from the new point of delivery or the old point of delivery. This means maintenance or repairs can be performed at either site without interrupting power to our customers. Having a second delivery point also provides for faster restoration of power in the event of an outage due to lightning or a car striking a pole.

"The completion of the station on Greyson Road is a testament to the determination, hard work and dedication of our employees," said Worsinger. "This accomplishment also meets our core mission of providing safe, efficient and reliable services to all of our customers."

¹ The point of delivery is the location where high voltage transmission lines receive power from Duke Energy Progress and deliver it to substations. The high voltage power is lowered at the substations so it can be distributed to customers.

Energy Resources Director Appointed Chair of National Association

By Amy Blanton



Rich Worsinger

"As the APGA chairman, Mr. Worsinger brings the necessary experience and institutional knowledge to deal with the many issues facing local utilities."

— Bert Kalisch,
APGA president and CEO

The American Public Gas Association (APGA) has named Rich Worsinger, director of Energy Resources for the city of Rocky Mount, as chairman of the APGA Board of Directors.

Worsinger was elected during the APGA annual meeting in Broomfield, Colo., for a term of one year. APGA is a national, not-for-profit association representing over 700 publicly-owned natural gas distribution systems in 37 states. APGA is the only trade association that solely represents the interests of public natural gas systems at the federal, legislative and regulatory levels.

"APGA is very pleased to have Mr. Worsinger as our chairman as we enter an important time here in Washington," said APGA president and CEO Bert Kalisch. "As the APGA chairman, Mr. Worsinger brings the necessary experience and institutional knowledge to deal with the many issues facing local utilities. His leadership ability and knowledge of energy issues, especially with natural gas distribution utilities, will serve our members and industry well."

As chairman, Worsinger will be the principal officer of APGA, which will include presiding at all association, Board of Directors and Executive Committee meetings. Worsinger will chair the APGA annual meeting and communicate matters

or make suggestions to the association or Board of Directors in order to promote the welfare and increase the usefulness of APGA.

"With the many natural gas issues our industry faces in Congress, the administration and federal agencies, public natural gas systems are presented with numerous challenges and opportunities," said Kalisch. "Our current supply projection provides the country with a unique opportunity to utilize domestic natural gas resources to reduce our energy dependence, increase overall energy efficiency and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. This is best done by both accommodating the greater direct-use of natural gas and putting more natural gas vehicles on the road. Mr. Worsinger understands these opportunities and is prepared to successfully lead APGA through these times."

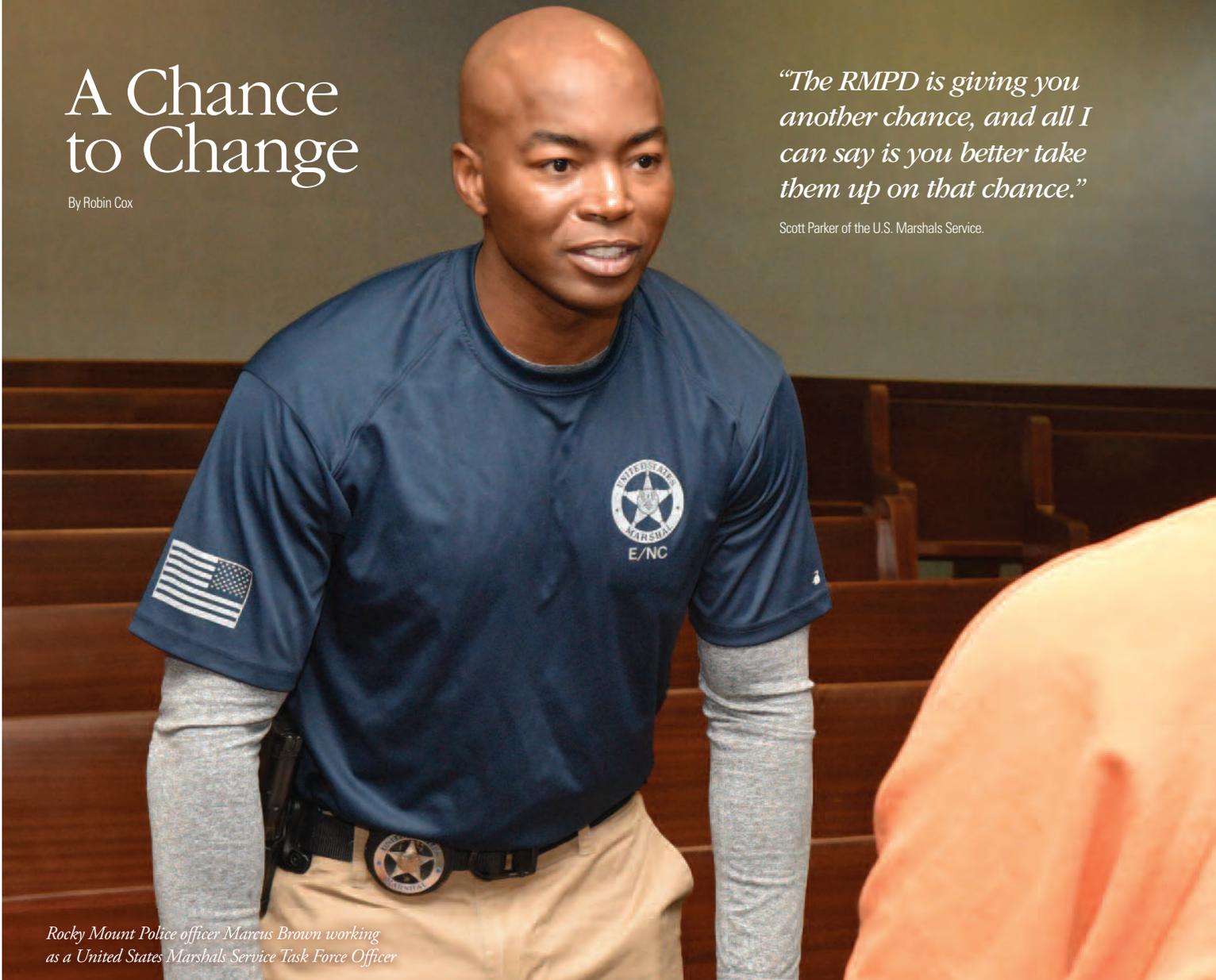
City Manager Charles Penny said, "I am very honored to have a member of Rocky Mount's leadership team to be elected as the chairman of the board for a national organization. I am proud of Rich Worsinger."

A Chance to Change

By Robin Cox

“The RMPD is giving you another chance, and all I can say is you better take them up on that chance.”

Scott Parker of the U.S. Marshals Service.



Rocky Mount Police officer Marcus Brown working as a United States Marshals Service Task Force Officer

Focused Deterrence Violent Crime Reduction Call-in.

The title of the meeting is a mouthful, but the purpose of it is very clear to the participants – a warning, a chance to change and the resources to help facilitate the transformation. The participants are criminal offenders who are at the proverbial end of their rope in the justice system. This meeting is their opportunity to get on the

road to bettering themselves. Capt. Mike Paul of the Rocky Mount Police Department’s Special Operations Division did not mince words when he opened the meeting.

“You’ve been called because of your criminal history,” said Paul. “What we are going to do today is give you a message. It’s a warning personalized just to you. Each one of you are given an opportunity at the end to make a decision.”



But before they could make a decision, they needed information and inspiration. Guest speakers from across the region, including representatives from the Rocky Mount Police Department (RMPD), Department of Justice (DOJ), Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Federal and State Probation and Parole, United States Marshals Service (USMS), community business and religious leaders and representatives from organizations such as Project Reentry, Peacemakers, N.E.W. Reentry, Rocky Mount Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) and others had an opportunity to impart wisdom, warning and hope to those in attendance.

The wisdom came from people like David Joyner and Mae Parker. Joyner is assistant general manager for Doubletree by Hilton and the Gateway Convention Centre, and he is a community leader. He was deeply affected by a violent crime in 2012 when his brother was shot and killed while going to the mailbox.

“The two things I took away from that day—the power of your name and powerlessness,” Joyner said. “Powerlessness is what I felt that day, and powerlessness is what my family still feels as they go through the process of losing someone.”

Joyner then explained how that feeling of powerlessness relates to the participants.

“I cannot imagine being in a situation where all the individuals in this room, who are reaching out to you this way, are telling you that if you don’t change, you will lose power over your own life. You will be told what to do, day in and day out,” spoke an emotional and impassioned Joyner. “I could not imagine that. There is nothing more precious to me than freedom.”

Mae Parker, a stalwart in the Rocky Mount community, had a simple but powerful message to deliver.

“I care a lot about you guys. Do you realize how much the community cares about you?” asked Parker. “Do you know that you could straighten your life out today? There are so many resources and opportunities out there to help you do better. Promise me you will do better.”

While individuals from various law enforcement agencies communicated the warning portion of the meeting loud and clear, they also strongly encouraged participants to take advantage of the situation.

“The RMPD is giving you another chance, and all I can say is you better take them up on

that chance,” said Scott Parker of the U.S. Marshals Service. “If you commit a crime, RMPD, DEA or another agency will swear a warrant out on you and then the U.S. Marshals are going to hunt you down, and we’re not going to stop until we get you.”

Echoing Parker’s sentiment were officers and attorneys from multiple agencies, including Chief James Moore of the RMPD.

“We really want you to utilize the resources and take this message back to your associates. We’re doing a lot of work to get your case adopted federally, because I don’t think you can change,” said Moore. “Prove me wrong. Come back to me one day and say, ‘Hey, how do you like me now, Chief Moore? You were going to lock me up, but look at me now!’ Show me. Show your family. Show us all you can change.”

Representatives from various assistance agencies spoke to the participants regarding the help available to assist with reentering the community and the workforce.

“Our goal is to keep our communities safe and to help you. The resources are out there. We will give them to you,” said Debra Ricks with Project Reentry. “All you have to do is come see me.”

Organizations like Project Reentry, N.E.W. Reentry, Rocky Mount Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) and others work with incarcerated individuals, both pre and post-release, to assist them with job placement, connect them with other agencies in order to learn a skill or trade, and provide them with resources to help them stay on the right track.

All the encouragement and all the pleas did not fall on deaf ears. When the meeting was over, one of the participants said, “It made me realize that if I get convicted of another crime, I may be facing federal charges,” he said. “I have to change. For my kids’ sake, I have to change. I can go out and get a job. I didn’t think I could do that before. It will be different this time.”

Whether he changes or not is still to be determined, but watching the participants afterwards as they started availing themselves of the provided resources, there seemed to be something there that was not there before, hope.

Bimonthly CompStat Helps Police Identify Trends and Improves Communication

By Robin Cox

In the first nine months of 2015, overall violent crime in Rocky Mount has dropped significantly. In 2014, Police Chief James Moore also indicated a decrease in crime, specifically, a 20 percent reduction in property crime, a 17 percent drop in violent crime, a 17 percent decrease in burglaries and a 21 percent decline in larcenies. These positive numbers can be attributed to community initiatives implemented by the Police Department, training, and in part, because of a bimonthly program called CompStat.

Computer Statistics, or CompStat as it is commonly known, is a data-driven management model first used by the New York City Police Department. The department has been credited with decreasing crime and increasing quality of life. Due to its success in New York, CompStat quickly spread across the United States and has become a widely embraced management model focused on crime reduction.

“We are using a data driven approach for our assignment of manpower and how we address crime and other issues within the city,” explained Capt. Brian McGrath of the Rocky Mount Police Department. “We are able to see the trends early and can stop the pattern before it goes too far.”

Established in 2012 as a monthly meeting, CompStat is currently held twice each month at the Rocky Mount Police Department. According to shift commanders, it is an important part of their crime reduction initiative.

“Doing CompStat twice a month helps us establish patterns that are happening in a district,” said Lt. Chris Ballard, north district shift commander. “Once we establish those patterns, we can allocate necessary resources to

address those issues and help prevent or slow down the trend.”

Patterns are not the only aspects of CompStat. A primary focus for the program is also sharing information with colleagues, creating an environment of communication and making the department more proactive.

the captains and division leaders, it gives needed information to help combat crime on multiple fronts.

“From the support side, we are also looking at how things are trending in the community and what the needs are for the different work units so our support units can provide

information, manpower or whatever they need to address the crime,” said Linda Jones, division manager for Support Services. “For example, our crime prevention folks will work with the shifts to help get the word out about how to prevent auto break-ins if those are trending upward.”

In the end, CompStat is one component in the department’s overall goal, crime reduction and eradication in Rocky Mount.

According to Ballard, it is working. “I pulled a chart from 2012, and I can see on the chart how the numbers go directly down,” said Ballard. “CompStat, along with other factors such as consistency in reporting and our efforts involved in enforcement, is



Police Chief James Moore



Rocky Mount Police Department Officer Asheley Tess

“Commanders don’t all work the same shift,” said Lt. John Feagans, south district shift commander.

“This way we can coordinate and I can make sure that my shift addresses any problems occurring in other districts and vice versa.”

The reason for the information sharing is clear to all attendees.

“Reduce crime and make Rocky Mount an even safer community,” said Captain George Robinson, west district shift commander.

While CompStat gives a measure of accountability to the shift commanders, for

making a difference.”

While that is good, for the men and women who live the job every day, they want to see the numbers go down even more. According to Rocky Mount Police Chief James Moore, “We want to be one of the best departments in the state.”

City Selects New Fire Chief

By Tameka Kenan-Norman



Fire Chief Mike Varnell

In March 2015, Charles Penny, Rocky Mount city manager, selected Mike Varnell to serve as fire chief for the city of Rocky Mount Fire Department.

Varnell has been a member of the department since 1989. Prior to his selection as the new fire chief, Varnell served as assistant fire chief. In that role, his responsibilities included supervising the daily functions of 142 personnel in the operations, training and logistics

divisions, to managing all capital projects and eight fire facilities.

Varnell joined the city of Rocky Mount Fire Department as a firefighter and emergency medical technician. He later worked as a fire captain and battalion chief in the operations division.

Varnell holds a Master of Science degree in executive fire service leadership from Grand Canyon University, a Bachelor of Science in business administration from the University of Mount Olive and an Associate of Applied Science in fire protection from Wilson Community College.

Additionally, Varnell received the Chief Fire Officer Designation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence and is a graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program from the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md.

Varnell volunteers locally for the United Way Tar River Region, Williford Elementary School's leadership program and the Nash Community College Public Safety and Emergency Management Advisory Committee. Recently, Varnell was appointed to the Professional Development Higher Education Committee of the Executive Fire Officers section for the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

"I am excited about the appointment of Mike Varnell as the city's new fire chief," said City Manager Charles Penny at the time of Varnell's appointment. "Mike is a career employee of the Rocky Mount Fire Department, and he brings a global perspective of best practices from his work as peer assessor for the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. He aided the department in becoming one of only 19 nationally accredited departments in the state and one of 196 agencies accredited internationally. This perspective, coupled with his years of experience and additional skills he has acquired in the field, make Mike a good fit for this position."

In his new capacity, Varnell has a myriad of responsibilities, some of which are overseeing the city's firefighting, emergency services, fire prevention, accreditation and disaster programs; coordinating emergency activities with federal, state and local agencies as well as intra-governmental officials; serving as a lead member of the city manager's emergency operations staff; and preparing and administering the department's capital improvement and annual operating budgets.

Automated External Defibrillators... Keeping the City's Hearts Beating

By Robin Cox



You're in a crowded restaurant and someone at the table next to you has a heart attack and needs cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); could you give it? With each tick of the clock, their chances of survival decrease; what do you do?

The scenario is not that far from reality. Just ask Steve Strange, district manager for Gardner Foods, Inc.

"We had an incident last year at our store on 301 where a person was choking and needed the Heimlich maneuver," he says. "After that incident, it struck me—the importance of having my crew trained to handle an emergency like that."

Wanting to make sure his employees were properly trained, Strange contacted his nephew and Rocky Mount Firefighter, Capt. Corey Strange. The younger Strange told his uncle about a project the Fire Department had undertaken called the Public Access to Defibrillation Demonstration (PADD) project and put the elder Strange in touch with Phillip Davis, life safety educator for the Rocky Mount Fire Department.

Davis administers the PADD project, a three-year grant awarded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services with special consultation through the International City/County Management Association. The grant provides for the placement of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in various public areas throughout the city.

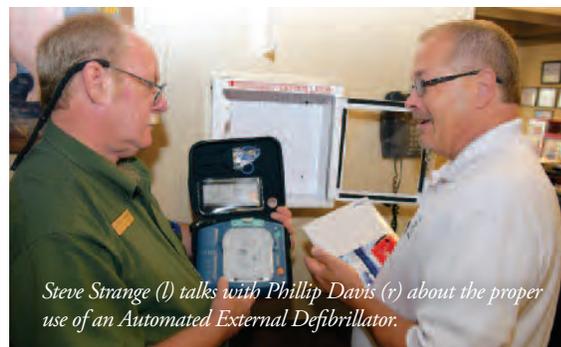
With the purpose of providing basic life training to the community, at the conclusion of the grant in December 2015, 151 AEDs will be in place in 141 locations throughout Rocky Mount. Davis estimates close to 10 percent of the Rocky Mount population, including residents, emergency personnel and medical professionals, could be trained in CPR and on the AED by the end of the grant's term.

"We train in both CPR and in use of the AED," says Davis. "In some places it may take a minute for a person to retrieve the AED. If someone performs CPR during that minute, instead of just waiting for the AED to arrive, there is a 10 percent greater chance of survival for the victim."

Strange recognizes the impact the multi-pronged training had on his employees.

"I'm fairly confident that if one of my employees, who took the training, had an emergency at home or away from the restaurant, that individual would be able to handle that situation," he says. "The training was very informative and at a level that anyone could understand."

According to Davis, community support for the project has been wonderful and the success exceeds expectations. As the grant's administrator, Davis will be nominating Rocky Mount for the Heart Safe Community Award issued through the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Requirements for recognition include training of first responders, bystanders and residents, placement of AEDs and partnerships with EMS and hospitals.



Steve Strange (l) talks with Phillip Davis (r) about the proper use of an Automated External Defibrillator.

It's Our Responsibility

Community Anti-Litter Coalition Needs Your Help

By Tameka Kenan-Norman



Tim Dutton takes pride in his community. That's why the Rocky Mount native and owner of Carolina Tire Company, located on North Wesleyan Boulevard, was disappointed when he began noticing that litter was becoming a growing problem in the area.

"It was candy bar wrappers and cups that would be thrown out first," acknowledged Dutton. "Now, people are chucking out entire bags from restaurants on the side of the road."

Dutton approached Councilmember Chris Miller, a long-time Carolina Tire customer, asking her assistance to alleviate the issue.

"When citizens recognize a community issue and, rather than complaining, step forward with suggestions and a personal offer to help, the entire community benefits," said Miller.

According to Miller, Dutton was passionate about litter prevention and community appearance and so is she. After meeting with appropriate city of Rocky Mount staff, the Community Anti-Litter Coalition was formed. The group, comprised of individuals representing the city of Rocky Mount, the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce, Nash County Travel and Tourism, media and area colleges, meets monthly.

The coalition's goals are varied, some of which include heightening public awareness about the litter issue in Rocky Mount and encouraging the public, including churches and civic groups, to pick up the trash they find along the highways and local roads. The group also asks that everyone participate in events like the Twin County Big Sweep and the Great American Cleanup. Committee members agree that these cleanup efforts are important for business recruitment, tourism and neighborhoods.

"The Chamber got involved in this initiative for several reasons," stated Theresa Pinto, president for the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce. "It makes business sense in terms of attracting new business to the community. It's easier for our existing retail businesses to attract more and new customers, and it begins the discussion, education and awareness of how to build a sustainable community," noted Pinto.

Alex Boncek, director of Nash County Travel and Tourism, knows the anti-litter effort is especially significant for the tourism industry.

"North Carolina is known for its scenic highways and byways, and Nash County/Rocky Mount is a hub of transportation," exclaimed Boncek. "Having North Carolina be known for its beauty, we have to keep up with that. We have to meet the traveler where they are, which is on the road, and we have to make sure our roadways are as beautiful as they expect them to be."

Councilmember Lois Watkins is also adamant about the litter in neighborhoods, often relaying to her constituents that trash in neighborhoods sends a negative message to residents and visitors.

"If we truly want to see our neighborhoods look better and cleaner, then we have to put forth the effort to ensure this happens.

I encourage church groups, fraternities and sororities, civic clubs and many others to clean our neighborhoods consistently," said Watkins. "Often, cleaning neighborhoods and littered areas to our city's gateways can make a tremendous difference and send the message to potential residents that Rocky Mount would be a great place to live."

According to Public Works and Water Resources Director Jonathan Boone, one of three city staff persons on the committee, the city of Rocky Mount and the North Carolina Department of Transportation



Residents participate in the Twin Counties Big Sweep Challenge.



(l-r) Jonathan Boone, director of Public Works and Water Resources; Mark Wilson, Rocky Mount Telegram publisher and Assistant City Manager Thom Moton are members of the Community Anti-Litter Coalition.



Individuals were excited to get involved in the Twin Counties Big Sweep Challenge, with a chance to win up to \$750.

(NCDOT) already has work underway. However, the city has budget and staffing constraints. Currently, the Parks and Recreation Department has hired contractors to remove man-made litter from 54 parks in Rocky Mount. The department is also responsible for maintaining planted medians from Sunset Avenue to the Stoney Creek Bridge on Buck Leonard Boulevard.

The Public Works and Water Resources Department performs litter abatement along several major thoroughfares and high traffic areas such as the interchange along U.S. 64 bypass. Furthermore, clean up of Downtown, City Hall and the Helen P. Gay Historic Train Station is completed, along with addressing illegal dumping of trash and debris on a regular basis.

The Keep America Beautiful (KAB) Program, coordinated by one staff member for the city (Cornelia McGee), in partnership with Nash and Edgecombe counties, encourages the removal of litter through programs like the Great American Cleanup, the Adopt-A-Spot program, the annual Riverkeeper Cup Cleanup Challenge and the Twin County Big Sweep. And, KAB visits the school system and civic groups to provide information regarding waste reduction, reuse and recycling.

Annually, the city of Rocky Mount spends approximately \$125,000 to control litter, often assisting the NCDOT by removing litter along state maintained highways. And, while there are 48 active Adopt-A-Street volunteer groups, more assistance is needed.

“We have to get serious about cleaning up, and we must start with schools, churches and civic clubs,” said Sheila Martin, executive director for the Dunn Center at North Carolina Wesleyan College. “We can’t leave it up to the city and the county to clean. We must prevent it from happening in the first place, stopping it at the source.”

The closing of Fountain Correctional Center meant the loss of a number of inmates who were a tremendous resource for litter reduction. To mitigate the loss of this resource, citizens can make a difference by adopting a street, participating in KAB’s programs, getting educated about the different forms of litter, such as illegal roadway signs, and spreading the word that litter can create a negative image of any community.

“I talk about litter to my six-year-old grandson,” noted Martin. “We have got to start early and help them understand how it (litter) makes us look and feel about the place we live.”

Currently, the Community Anti-Litter Coalition is brainstorming a theme and other innovative initiatives to make Rocky Mount better. Since forming February 2015, the group has done their homework. Miller says they have reviewed white papers, case studies and best practices from across the country.

If you are interested in adopting a street or finding out how you can help with the effort, please call 252-467-4920.

Keeping the Tanks Clean... Inside and Out

By Robin Cox

Painting the city’s seven elevated water tanks isn’t about beautification. It’s about maintenance and protection. Sure, they look better, but the real reason is because “tank maintenance is necessary to provide clean and safe drinking water for residents and is more cost effective than replacing a tank,”

according to Mike Tolson, Water Resources assistant city engineer for the city of Rocky Mount.

In 2013, the city entered into a 10-year contract with Southern Corrosion in Roanoke Rapids that included inspecting, painting and other maintenance issues with the tanks.

“Elevated water tanks are up in the air and require someone certified to climb the tank,” says Jonathan Boone, director of Public Works and Water Resources. “We don’t have anyone on staff with those credentials, so that work is farmed out to an outside vendor.”

To keep the tanks in good working order, the exterior must be inspected annually and the interior every five years. While painting the tanks is not an annual occurrence, it is a recommended industry best practice to take place every 10-15 years. Unfortunately, the last time the tanks on Marigold Street and Paul Street were painted, it was more than 20 years ago.

The Marigold and Paul Street tanks are scheduled for painting internally and externally in the next year. Residents living in the area should not see an interruption in service and can expect the contractors to take between 90-120 days to paint each tank. To minimize the risk to property and vehicles, the paint used is a dry-fall paint.

“When it falls to the ground, it becomes like a powder and will not affect property in the area,” assures Tolson. “Also, as a secondary layer of protection, the tanks cannot be painted in windy or rainy conditions.”

For further information on water tank maintenance and painting, contact the Public Works and Water Resources Department at 252-972-1290.



(l-r) Employees Ricky Lynch and Kevin Sholar stand in front of the water tank on Airport Road.

Behind the Scenes in Public Works and Water Resources

By Robin Cox



(l-r) Dennis Carpenter, James Whitaker and William Harkins stand in front of screw pumps¹ at the Tar River Wastewater Regional Treatment plant.

For just a moment, look at the water and wastewater parts of your utility bill. Now, think about how many times a day you turn on a water faucet or flush a toilet. Whether the water is flowing into or out of your home or business, Public Works and Water Resources is the department tasked with water and wastewater management.

“Water and wastewater aren’t sexy,” says Mike Tolson, Water Resources assistant city engineer for the city of Rocky Mount. “But a city cannot survive without them; therefore, keeping the system in good working order is critical to operations.”

With that in mind, and with the approval of the Rocky Mount City Council, the Public Works and Water Resources Department recently began a Water and Sewer Asset Management Plan. Jonathan Boone, director of Public Works and Water Resources, says the plan is about preparation, maintenance and renewal.

“This plan is a way to look at our water and sewer system and how we operate and maintain our system,” says Boone. “We want to take a more proactive versus reactive approach. We do that by looking at the assets that comprise the system, from the treatment plants to the individual pumps, and how we maintain each of the components that comprise the system in order to minimize the life cycle costs.”

Due to the wide scope of the plan, the city hired the environmental and engineering consultants at CH2M Hill to help determine what projects needed to be addressed and the criticality of those projects. The plan, now in phase three, includes 22 separate projects over a five to seven year period. Currently, four of the 22 projects are complete with another six set to be addressed during phase three.

“Most of our customers will never see what happens behind the scenes to provide water and wastewater services to their homes or businesses, and they will never know all that it takes for them to turn on their faucets and have water come out,” says Boone. “Our goal with the Water and Sewer Asset Management Plan, however, is to keep the system working effectively and efficiently so they don’t have to worry about it.”

¹ A screw pump pumps water to the head of the wastewater treatment plant. Gravity will move the water through the remainder of the treatment process. The screw pump also serves as a mixer for wastewater coming in. This mixing effect controls odor.

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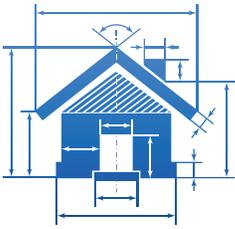
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Several Affordable Housing Projects Underway in Rocky Mount

By Tameka Kenan-Norman



The city of Rocky Mount's Planning Department has been working diligently to strengthen relationships with nonprofit organizations, work with developers

suitable for specific projects, and secure the necessary funding to improve housing in the city. Thanks to these efforts, groundbreakings will be held soon for new, affordable housing in areas like Beal Street, Holly Street, Genesis Estates and more. Here's what is in store:

Beal Street Redevelopment

In August 2015, Third Wave Housing, based in Winston-Salem, N.C., in partnership with Workforce Homestead in Tryon, N.C. and JOIN Development in Rocky Mount, was awarded low-income tax credits for the redevelopment of four city blocks in Happy Hill centered on Beal Street. Beal Street Square will be a mixed-income, mixed-use project and will be completed in phases.

According to Lea Henry, community development administrator for the city of Rocky Mount, the city envisioned the project a decade ago and designated Beal Street as a redevelopment area in 2007. For the next several years, the city allocated much of its Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds for Beal Street.

"We have acquired more than 30 properties and demolished homes in a four-block area," said Henry. "After several requests for proposals and many visits from interested parties, we engaged a developer January 2015. Third Wave Housing, LLC applied for low-income housing tax credits with the N.C. Housing Finance Agency and were awarded the tax credits in August."

Beal Street Square Apartments will be comprised of 20 one-bedroom and 60 two-bedroom energy efficient apartments, with income and rents set for 60 percent of the area median income, meaning the apartments will cater to those in the workforce making approximately \$8 to \$15 per hour, as well as retired seniors. A clubhouse building, sidewalks, playground, front porches and common green spaces are planned.



Holly Street duplex housing

The development will occur in three phases. The first phase, Beal Street Square Apartments, will begin construction spring 2016. Phase two includes plans for a possible commercial development along the Grace Street corridor. Phase three consists of market rate housing filling in the remaining areas. There are no income restrictions for market rate housing.

Other projects on the horizon are:

Holly Street Area

The Rocky Mount-Edgecombe Community Development Corporation (RMECDC) and the city of Rocky Mount have been working together since the '90's on renting and selling housing in the Holly Street area. Now, the RMECDC is constructing four duplexes on Holly Street and Park Avenue for completion before the end of 2015. Another two duplexes should be completed



Holly Street new construction

late 2016. The affordable two-bedroom units are targeted for people at 40 to 60 percent of the area median income.

The city invested HOME* funds and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)* funds for the Holly Street area construction.

*The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides grants to fund activities like building, buying and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership. The program also provides direct rental assistance to low-income people. The NSP is a recovery act program targeted to high poverty areas, as well as areas with foreclosures and abandoned homes.



build four units comprised of two-bedroom duplexes at the corner of Beal and Howell streets complementing the already established units in that location.

The Southeastern Community Development Corporation is currently working on eight units of duplex style housing called Russell Jackson Village, located on Beal Street. The eight, one-bedroom units are for permanently disabled individuals.

The city of Rocky Mount contributed the property for the development of Russell Jackson Village, purchased with HUD funds, along with a small loan of HOME funds.

“We previously acquired and demolished the

property that was previously there,” said Henry. “After we cleared the land, we turned it over to them and made a small contribution of HUD funds towards construction.”

These units are scheduled for completion in late 2015 or early 2016.

Clairmont

Clairmont Apartments at 521 Ravenwood Drive in Rocky Mount has been an eyesore for quite some time. The city of Rocky Mount is actively pursuing demolition of the current apartments and options for building apartment homes. Unfortunately, developers have been unsuccessful in obtaining tax credits for Clairmont as the process was extremely competitive. Current plans are to replace the more than 100 dilapidated units with up to 80 rental townhouses for families at 60 percent of area median income.

For additional information on ongoing construction in the Rocky Mount area, visit the city’s planning and development page at rockymountnc.gov/planning.



Harambee Square

Harambee Square, located at 158 South Washington Street in Rocky Mount, is also getting a facelift.

Comprised of 24 units of affordable housing

designed for the elderly (age 55+), all 24 units will be rehabbed, including new heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, new appliances and flooring, as well as roof repairs and other repairs as needed.

Thanks to HOME funds from the city and funds from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, the housing is expected to be affordable for the next 20 years for those at 60 percent of the area median income or below.

Genesis Estates

Recently, the city of Rocky Mount signed an agreement with RMECDC to begin building new homes for sale in Genesis Estates. Genesis Estates, a subdivision located off Meadowbrook Road in

Harambee Square

Edgecombe County, has a number of single family homes built in the last decade, but there are a number of lots with infrastructure and ready for building. The city made a grant of HOME funds which will be used for building a model home and a spec home for sale. (A spec home is constructed prior to a buyer being identified).

“The economy has rebounded and it’s time to get more homes built,” said Henry.

Single-family homes, along with three-bedroom and two-bath homes, will be for sale. According to Henry, a price point has not yet been set, but homes will be affordable to families at or below 80 percent of area median income.

“We do not yet know the price of the homes,” stated Henry. “The developer will help people who need to find subsidies and can provide homeownership counseling.”

The expected completion date is by the end of 2016. And according to Henry, as these homes sell, the proceeds will be used to build additional homes.

Beal & Howell Street Developments/Russell Jackson Village

The Housing Authority and the Southeastern North Carolina Community Development Corporation are also working closely together to

Crowd Hears About Facility Plan

By Brie Handgraaf, Staff Writer/Rocky Mount Telegram

A crowd gathered Monday, Sept. 14, 2015 in the Rocky Mount City Council chambers to hear from the team hired to design and build the proposed downtown community facility (DCF).

The facility, estimated to cost \$32 million, is proposed to be built north of the Douglas Block in downtown Rocky Mount and serve not only as a venue for indoor sports, but concerts, graduations and conventions.

“I will say this facility is very flexible and, as you see the elements of the building today, I hope you’ll agree with me on that,” City Manager Charles Penny told the audience. “The building really is like a gym on steroids that can host a variety of events beyond youth and amateur sports.”

The consultant team showed the attendees visualizations of how the facility’s entrance would face North East Main Street, but the other sides of the building would use a mixture of building materials – including glass – to be welcoming to the public from all the surrounding thoroughfares. Vines Architecture President and Principal-in-Charge Victor Vines described the project as a 360-degree site, integrating the historic setting and new development in the downtown area.

Sink Combs Dethlefs Architects CEO Don Dethlefs showed different layouts for the main floor of the approximately 150,000-square-foot, two-level facility. He referenced other projects Sports Facilities Advisory – which was hired to do the pro forma for Rocky Mount’s proposal – has worked on, adding how they are less adaptable for multiple uses than what the consultants are planning for the Twin Counties.

“What is really unique and exciting for downtowns is doing big tournaments, arena shows and exhibitions that do way more



DCF rendering (North East Main Street and Goldleaf)



DCF rendering (North East Main Street and Douglas Building)

economic development for downtowns,” Dethlefs said. “This is in the center of it and by having all these, you’ll find that in the life of the building, you’ll be able to do whatever you need to. We’re building that into the pro forma, the cost and the approach, and that is what will make this building really unique in the country.”

Only five questions were asked by residents, but the nature of the concerns were more about the footprint of the site and the impact on existing businesses and churches. One resident did ask about the growth projections for sports in the coming decade and Penny referenced the feasibility studies performed during earlier phases of the staff’s due diligence, characterizing the

sports tourism industry as “very strong and robust,” stating continued expansion is anticipated.

Penny also referenced the pro forma projection of \$264 million direct economic impact to the area in a 10-year period with 9,000 additional room nights anticipated in the first year of operation and 46,000 additional room nights by the fifth year.

“Sports Facilities Advisory identified the project could cash flow by year four and they’ve been involved in this design process,” Penny said. “All the elements to this program and the financial viability is included in the design as outlined this evening.”

Group Works to Create Renewed Energy in Downtown Rocky Mount

By Tameka Kenan-Norman

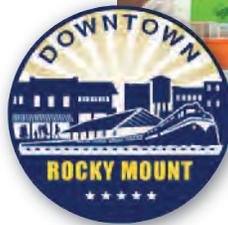
Downtown Development Manager John Jesso and the Central City Revitalization Panel are taking steps towards creating a renewed energy in Downtown Rocky Mount, following Main Street's Four Point Approach¹. Those steps include community visioning, marketing, transformation strategies and implementation and measurement.

Although these objectives are an ongoing process, Jesso says marketing and promotion efforts have sparked an interest in downtown buildings and ultimately economic development. For example, the group has worked with a graphic designer to implement a new downtown logo. Emblazoned in the colors yellow and gold, the logo depicts a thriving downtown area with the railroad as a focal point. The tagline for the logo embraces what downtown offers—CHARM: Enjoy the CHARM of Downtown-Central, Historic, Arts Rocky Mount.

A historic downtown business investment guide has also been created, indicating the eight reasons for doing business in Rocky Mount, such as the location, educated workforce and resources just to name a few. A rack card will also be disseminated soon with shopping, attractions and eateries listed for residents and visitors. And, the panel has taken time, in partnership with the Rocky-Mount Edgecombe Community Development Corporation, to revamp a Douglas Block brochure, highlighting the mixed use development's apartments, streetscape and other historic preservation projects.

Jesso has taken the initiative to showcase Rocky Mount during class reunion tours as well. The Rocky Mount Blackbird Classes of '55 and '69 and the Rocky Mount Gryphons class of '75 are examples of individuals who enjoyed an opportunity to experience the Douglas Block, the Rocky Mount Brewmill, Nash UNC Hospital, the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences, Edgecombe Community College and more. Upcoming tours will be held for the RM Gryphons Class of '70.

The city of Rocky Mount is also working with the N.C. Department of Transportation to determine if certain exit signs on limited access highways can be modified to guide visitors to historic downtown. There is also a new bus for tours.



*Above: Crews work to complete the new Southern Bank building. It will be located on Church Street.
Below: Edgecombe Community College's new Biotechnology and Medical Simulation Center is scheduled to be completed January 2016.*

¹ The National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historical Preservation, works to help communities revitalize their downtowns. The center outlined the Main Street Approach.

Renewed Energy Results in New Business

This marketing and promotion, along with an overall renewed energy in downtown revitalization, has piqued the interest of potential downtown investors. According to Jesso, local community banks have expressed an interest in supporting investors and entrepreneurs on various projects. Architectural and design firms from Raleigh, Charlotte and Durham have made multiple visits downtown seeking business development opportunities. Southern Bank, which is relocating to Church Street, is investing \$5 million into the move, consolidating their back office operations and creating a campus of over 150 people.

Additionally, JOIN Development, operated by entrepreneur Vann Joines, purchased an office for his development firm. Located on Northwest Main Street, JOIN Development has created four co-working spaces now leased by four fellow entrepreneurs. James Mills has purchased 116 Northwest Main Street to move his insurance office, and a local restaurateur is working to open a sandwich shop at 215-219 Northeast Main Street. Twitch Bar and Grill is also now open and is located at 119 North Washington Street.

Most have seen Downtown Rocky Mount evolve as Edgecombe Community College works to finish their Biotechnology and Medical Simulation Center. Nash Community College and North Carolina Wesleyan College are a part of the momentum too. North Carolina Wesleyan College and Parks and Recreation staff are working together to bring the college's competitive dance/cheer program to the Imperial Centre's Education Building, and Nash Community College is seeking to move some programs downtown.

Finally, we are seeing development along the future Monk to Mill Greenway. The new southern cotton seed plant is being conceptually developed as an entertainment, restaurant and retail venue, and we can expect the redevelopment of the China American building.

"Word is spreading that Rocky Mount is ready for growth," says Jesso. "Thanks to our prime location near Interstate 95, U.S. 64 and Raleigh, the ongoing investment in our center city, and events that pull individuals in from other communities, we are seeing renewed efforts to increase economic development activity in all of Rocky Mount."

Four-Phase Process Utilized to Establish City's Diversity and Inclusion Plan

By Tameka Kenan-Norman



Rocky Mount City Council members discuss diversity at the 2015 retreat.

Photo provided by the Rocky Mount Telegram

The city of Rocky Mount has been working to create a Diversity and Inclusion Plan. Since April 2013, the city's leadership team has worked alongside Visions, Inc. to develop strategies for attracting, developing and retaining a talented and diverse workforce.

"This initiative's aim is to better equip all employees with more knowledge and tools to interact with each other in a manner that reinforces the value each of our differences and similarities bring to the workplace," stated City Manager Charles Penny.

The Diversity and Inclusion Initiative includes a four-phase process, and according to Assistant City Manager Thomas Moton who is leading the effort, it aligns with the City Council's goal of improving workplace diversity throughout the city.

"With the completion of this plan, we will have an ongoing guide that will lead us in creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce," said Moton.

The first phase of the four-phase process included each member of the leadership team speaking with Visions' consultants Thomas Griggs and Deborah Walker.

"Our goal in talking with you is to better understand your diversity and inclusion challenges and to answer any questions you might have," said Walker in an e-mail to all participants.

The second phase was comprised of a number of workshops in which participants learned more about diversity and ultimately the desired components of a Diversity and Inclusion Plan. During phase two, focus groups were also created. The focus groups sampled a cross-section of the city's employees to ensure that their voices would be included in the development of the city's plan. Comments from the focus groups were anonymous and were reported to the leadership team.

Phase three refined the process, with the establishment of a Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee. The members of this committee used what they learned during diversity training, as well as discussion with other leadership team members and focus group feedback, to devise a Diversity and Inclusion Plan. In addition, a Diversity and Inclusion Group Formation Subcommittee was created with leadership team members with the intention of creating a Diversity and Inclusion Employee Group (DIG) using the principles learned.

Currently, the DIG has been created, with members representing various departments throughout the city. Made up of 24 employees, the DIG team will offer feedback on the Diversity and Inclusion Plan, serve as ambassadors, and help implement some of the plan's initiatives.

According to Moton, the first indication of the city's efforts to establish a diverse work environment was in 1978. It then reemerged in 1988, and the final indication of a committee geared towards maintaining diversity was in 1999.

"While the plan will be complete, the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative is ongoing," said Moton.

About Visions

Visions is based in Roxbury, Mass. although the consultancy and training firm has its roots in Rocky Mount, N.C. The firm has over 30 years of experience providing organizational assessment, consultancy and training to governmental entities, businesses, nonprofits and educational institutions working to improve their diversity and inclusion environment.

City Uses New Marketing Efforts to Promote Events and Programs

By Tameka Kenan-Norman

Marketing Rocky Mount's over 30 events, new initiatives, programs and assets is an on-going effort. In the 2014 edition of MY Rocky Mount, I highlighted the various mediums utilized by the Public Affairs Office to spread the word about this area's positive attributes. Now, that effort has grown even more as the office continues to incorporate a mix of digital and traditional advertising to reach a diverse audience, an audience within Rocky Mount and beyond. Here's what we have added in 2015:

For over four years, the city of Rocky Mount has been advertising on various Suddenlink networks. This year, that promotion was taken a step further, including the airing of city videos during Monday night football games on the cable subscriber, and video pre-roll advertising on thousands of websites in partnership with Suddenlink. Pre-roll video is simply the name for an online video commercial that appears prior to the online video a visitor wants to see.

Targeted demographics and zip codes are determined for each event, initiative or program, and the videos are shown only to those individuals who meet the chosen demographics. And the best aspect for this marketing is two-fold—you can't skip the city's pre-roll video, and viewers can click on the video to be directed to the city's website for additional information.

If you don't have access to Suddenlink, the city signed an agreement with CenturyLink August 2015. For eight months throughout the year, videos on the city of Rocky Mount are being featured via CenturyLink networks.

CenturyLink

While the city's events are also on several vinyl billboards, including the most recent Imperial Centre billboard by the Premiere Movie Theater on Benvenue Road, we have now opted to also feature Rocky Mount digitally. Find information about what's happening in the city on the U.S. 301 digital billboard in front of Applebee's.

Facebook has continuously gained momentum, and the city wants to join in on its popularity. In addition to utilizing it as mentioned in the article on social media tools, the Public Affairs Office has invested in Facebook ads.

The city has also started text marketing. Be the first to learn about upcoming events and new initiatives by texting **CITYBEAT to 55469**. To learn about fire department events and initiatives, text **RMFIRE to 55469**.



Reaching outside of the Rocky Mount market has also become a priority. Thanks to ads from April through August on WTVD/ABC Channel 11, Raleigh residents traveled to Rocky Mount's

Juneteenth Community Empowerment Celebration, helping to make it the biggest Juneteenth thus far. Additionally, the city's Parks and Recreation Department set a record for classic car entries at the Rockin' Classic Auto & Motorcycle Expo. Several of the cars on display were entered by Raleigh residents.



The Raleigh News and Observer is yet another medium featuring Rocky

Mount ads twice per month in the newspaper and online at newsobserver.com.



The City continues to promote events and more using the following:

C.I.T.Y. (Connecting Information to You) TV/19

Whiteboards at six different locations

Radio ads (Life 103.1, Soul 92 Jams, 98.5 the Big Dawg, Power 95.5, 98.5 Rock City)

Rocky Mount Telegram (newspaper and online)
Nashville Graphic
Spring Hope Enterprise

Rockymountnc.gov (a new, mobile-friendly website is coming soon).

Press releases

City Beat e-newsletter (sign up by visiting rockymountnc.gov).

MY Rocky Mount magazine



City Expands Social Media Footprint

By Tameka Kenan-Norman

For quite some time, social media has played a significant role in getting information out to the public. For example, the share of internet users with college educations on LinkedIn reached 50 percent according to a study conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2014. The study also indicated that for the first time, more than half of all online adults 65 and older use Facebook. And, 52 percent of adults use multiple social media sites.

As evidenced by the numbers, social media has gained so much traction that it adds to the marketing repertoire for most companies. However, the key to advancing the popularity of social media tools like Facebook and Twitter, is to like and share as much information as possible.

That's why you are encouraged to visit and peruse the city of Rocky Mount's many social media tools. Like us, and please share the city's many events and initiatives with your friends.



Currently, there are several city departments on Facebook, including the main Facebook page that represents our city, Rocky Mount Government Offices. Also featured on Facebook are Rocky Mount Public Utilities; Rocky Mount, N.C. Police Department; Maria V. Howard Arts Center; Rocky Mount Senior Center; Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences and Rocky Mount Fire Department. Type the highlighted names into the Facebook search box to easily reach the page you would like to see.



Twitter is also home for many city of Rocky Mount departments. Search Twitter for Rocky Mount Fire, @RockyMountFire; Rocky Mount Public Utilities, @rmtpu; Rocky Mount Police, @RMPD1875 and city of Rocky Mount, @citybeattweet. The Rocky Mount Police Department is also on Instagram. Follow them at rmpd 1875.



Relatively new for the city is membership to the social media site, nextdoor.com. Currently, only two city departments (Rocky Mount Public Utilities and the Police Department) are utilizing the website that allows users to keep up with everything in their neighborhood. Over 64,000 neighborhoods across the U.S. use nextdoor.com.

Additionally, please visit the city's website at www.rockymountnc.gov for postings of C.I.T.Y. TV 19 videos on YouTube, or visit the YouTube page



directly at www.youtube.com/user/CITYTV19. And, if you missed a city event, a photo gallery on the city of Rocky Mount's homepage (rockymountnc.gov) is directly linked to event photos on the social media site, Flickr.

In your spare time, please visit the various departments on social media, like our Facebook pages, and help the city of Rocky Mount spread a positive message.

FOR THE LATEST NEWS YOU CAN USE

Suddenlink customers should tune in to **C.I.T.Y. TV 19**.
We are Connecting Information to You. Also, visit
youtube.com/CITYTV19



Save the Date for

TACKLE THE TAR

Contributed Report

Tackle The Tar & You'll Run Into A Lot Of Fun!

On **Saturday, May 14, 2016** the

Rocky Mount Rotary Club is hosting, and the city of Rocky Mount and Roger Taylor & Associates are sponsoring, a **Tackle The Tar family fun day**

at the

Rocky Mount Sports Complex.

The first heat begins at 10 a.m.

and festivities will continue throughout the rest of the day.

There's a 5k Obstacle Course Race that courses through the Rocky Mount Sports Complex and the E.B. Grain Company property. It comes complete with a Mud Pit and 15+ Obstacles to overcome.

Suggestion: Don't wear your Sunday best to run the course!

There's a Food Truck Rodeo where you'll find all types of food being offered including local home-style favorites and some food items you've probably never tried.

Suggestion: Don't eat for two days before the event so you can taste all of the wonderful food varieties.

There's Live Entertainment to keep your toes tapping and your hands clapping.

Suggestion: Bring someone who likes to dance on the grass with you.

Run For A Good Cause since proceeds from Tackle the Tar will be used to fund scholarships for local students going to local colleges.

Suggestion: Run with the idea that you're sending kids to camp and other kids to college.

So, save the date, and visit tacklethetar.com for updates.

Reaching Beyond Disability

By Robin Cox

“We are all just one breath away from being disabled,” says Tammy Longmire of Vocational Rehab and recipient of the Mayor’s Commission on Persons with Disabilities Citizen of the Year award. “If I became disabled today, I would still want to be treated with the same respect and dignity.”

The Mayor’s Commission on Persons with Disabilities is a 15 member board comprised of individuals appointed by the Rocky Mount City Council. From advocating for fair housing to encouraging employers to hire the disabled, the Mayor’s Commission seeks to make a difference in the lives of the disabled community.

“Our goal is to serve and make known the needs and abilities of people who are disabled,” says Allen Mitchell, chairman of the commission. “We work to remove barriers.”

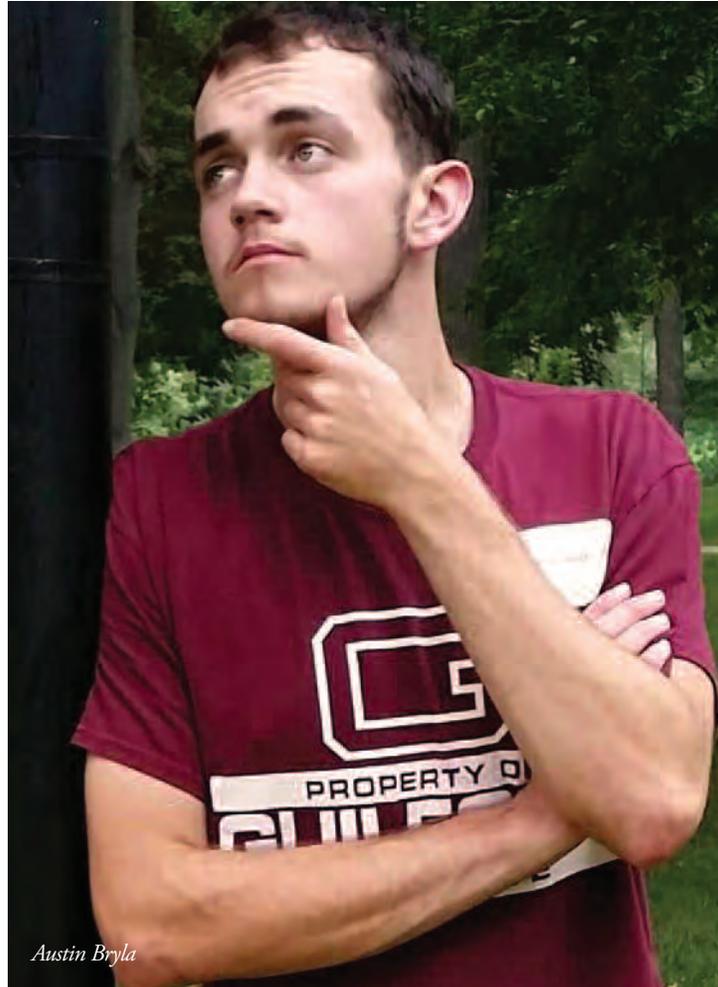
Not all that long ago, having a disability meant a person was incapable of making a significant contribution to society. Persons with disabilities could not find employment, rarely attended college and were typically overlooked. But Austin Bryla, a scholarship recipient from the Mayor’s Commission on Persons with Disabilities, is not someone who will be ignored. In fact, putting any kind of label on Bryla is ill-advised.

As a child, Bryla was diagnosed with epilepsy and had to take medication to keep the seizures under control. But as he matured, his epilepsy diminished, and he was able to eliminate the medication. However, he still had difficulties in class.

“I always seemed to have trouble focusing in class,” says Bryla. “My mind would always wander from one place to the next.” Bryla was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder, better known as ADD/ADHD.

ADD/ADHD is a disorder that typically appears in early childhood and makes it difficult for people to inhibit their spontaneous responses. In Bryla’s case, that response is attentiveness. The disorder, controlled somewhat by medication, makes it hard for him to concentrate in class, but while things may be more difficult, Bryla doesn’t let it stop him.

A 2015 graduate of Southern Nash High School, Bryla now attends Guilford College in Greensboro, majoring in peace and conflict resolution studies.



Austin Bryla

“Our goal is to serve and make known the needs and abilities of people who are disabled. We work to remove barriers.”

—Allen Mitchell

“I believe in possibilities,” says Bryla. “It is my vision to help other people.” Bryla’s heart for service mirrors that of the Mayor’s Commission on Persons with Disabilities from whom he received the scholarship.

The commission’s annual awards reception, held on June 4, 2015, also recognized Employee of the Year, Felicia Sessoms; Employer of the Year,

Piggly Wiggly #68 (Thomas Street location) and Miss Tiara Battle, another scholarship recipient. Each of these winners either works hard to make a difference in the lives of the disabled community, or they have overcome obstacles to succeed. Congratulations to all!

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Calls for Environmental Services have now been merged to the city’s automated phone system. City of Rocky Mount customers may now call **252-467-4800** for all of the following:

- Community Code: overgrown weeds; abandoned/ junked vehicles on private property; vector control (mosquitoes and rodents); minimum housing code enforcement; public health, safety and nuisance issues; rollout carts left at curb after day of collection; litter and/or illegal dumping
- Downed power lines
- Garbage pick-up
- Gas leak
- Power outage
- Street light outage
- Street maintenance/ drainage (e.g. potholes, sidewalk repairs, ponding water in street, debris in street)
- Water and sewer services



2016 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratorical Contest
Date & Time: Jan. 9, 2016, 9 a.m.
Location: 270 Gay Street, Imperial Centre Theater, Rocky Mount
Event Description:

The purpose of the Oratorical Contest is to enable youth to learn about and respect the customs and culture of other people in order to promote unity, appreciate diversity and to relate the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to their daily lives (Don't talk the talk, but walk the walk). (Grades 6-8 and 9-12)

Price: Free
Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/humanrelations
Contact: Archie Jones, director, city of Rocky Mount Human Relations Department, 252-972-1181

Spring 2016 Artist Reception

Date & Time: Feb. 6, 2016, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Location: Maria V. Howard Arts Center at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences
Event Description: This year's HANDCRAFTED juror, Kimberly Winkle, will announce award winners and merit awards. Solo exhibitionist, Margaret Smithers-Crump, will give a guided tour of her exhibition. Light refreshments will be served and there will be time to meet the artists and experience the exhibits.
Price: Free and open to the public
Website: www.imperialcentre.org/arts
Contact: 252-972-1266

Franc D'Ambrosio

Date & Time: Feb. 12, 2016, 7:30 p.m.
Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount
Event Description: Famous for his acclaim as the world's longest running phantom in "The Phantom of the Opera," this incredible talent returns to The Dunn Center with his highly touted one-man show. A multitalented performer, D'Ambrosio is also active in film, television and theater and has even appeared with Olympic skaters Brian Boitano and Dorothy Hamill. Welcome back this star-studded champion of Broadway and allow him to dazzle you with his Dunn-amite voice.
Price: \$21 per person
Website: www.dunncenter.com
Contact: Dunn Center Box Office, 252-985-5197



Black History Celebration

Date & Time: Feb. 25, 2016 - time TBD
Location: Rocky Mount Senior Center
Event Description: This is a pot-luck special event that includes entertainment held in honor of Black History Month
Age: 55 and older.
Price: Free
Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564



Lion King at the DPAC

Date & Time: March 2, 2016, 2:30 p.m.
Event Description: Broadway performance of "The Lion King" at the Durham Performing Arts Center and dinner.
Age: 55 and older
Price: \$105 per person (includes transportation and ticket). Dinner is on your own
Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564



Ray Live! Tribute to Ray Charles

Date & Time: March 4, 2016, 7:30 p.m.
Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount
Event Description: Pete Peterkin does such an amazing re-creation of the legendary Ray Charles, who *Rolling Stone* ranked 10 on their *100 Greatest Artists of All Time*, that you'll think you really are watching an actual Ray Charles concert. Listen to all your favorite hits as you witness dead on vocals, authentic costuming and great choreography created by a versatile impressionist. And best of all, *Ray Live!* is an audience participation show.
Price: \$21 per person
Website: www.dunncenter.com
Contact: Dunn Center Box Office, 252-985-5197



2016 International Festival of Cultures

Date & Time: March 5, 2016, 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Location: 522 N. Old Carriage Road, Brown Auditorium, Nash Community College, Rocky Mount
Event Description: The festival's mission is to promote awareness, appreciation and acceptance of the diverse cultures of this area. (food, dancing, fun and music)
Price: Free (vendor booths available)
Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/humanrelations
Contact: Archie Jones, director, city of Rocky Mount Human Relations Department, 252-972-1181

Tar River Orchestra, "Musical Prodigie - Kids Play the Darndest Things"

Date & Time: March 5, 2016, 7:30 p.m.
Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount
Event Description: Throughout history the musical world has marveled at the inexplicable genius of its young prodigies. From Mozart to Michael Jackson, or Chopin to Earl Scruggs. Our March concert will showcase some of the most beloved and well known examples of music by the prodigies from pop and classical genres. And speaking of youthful genius, our award-winning Tar River Children's Chorus will make a special appearance, and we will introduce you to an up and coming piano performance prodigy. Sixteen-year old pianist Jane Zhao, our 2015 Young Artist concerto competition winner, will



offer a stunning performance of Chopin's Piano Concerto No. You won't want to miss this opportunity to catch a rising star!
Price: \$15 per person
Website: www.tarriverloveitlive.com
Contact: Jennifer Harris, 252-883-4090



Tar River Swing Band, "Celebrate 30 Years of Live Music"

Date & Time: March 12, 2016, 7:30 p.m.
Location: Brown Auditorium, Nash Community College
Event Description: Anytime this group performs, it is a party. And what better way to celebrate 30 years of great music than a birthday party featuring the Tar River Swing Band. Members of the band have performed at various times with superstars such as Woody Herman, Clark Terry, Tony Bennett and others. The Tar River Swing Band features classic swing band sounds from the all-time greats: Ellington, Basie, Goodman, Dorsey and more. The band also cuts loose with contemporary big band sounds with selections made famous by the likes of Stan Kenton, Buddy Rich, Sammy Nestico, Les Brown and others. You will also always find some great vocal tunes featured straight from the most famous big band singers.
Price: \$15 per person
Website: www.tarriverloveitlive.com
Contact: Jennifer Harris, 252-883-4090

Down East Senior Games Spaghetti Lunch

Date & Time: March 17, 2016, 11 a.m.
Location: Rocky Mount Senior Center
Event Description: This is a fundraising event to provide financial assistance for Down East Senior Games.
Age: 55 and older
Price: \$10 per plate
Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564

Easter Eggstravaganza

Date & Time: March 19, 2016, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Location: TBD
Event Description: Largest Easter egg hunt in Rocky Mount!
Age restrictions: 3-12
Price: Free
Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/parks/events
Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151



StarLab
Date & Time: Jan. 12, 2016, 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Location: Braswell Memorial Library, Warner Room
Event Description: Exciting adventure in the planetarium StarLab that makes an interactive, hands-on learning experience for participants.
Price: Free
Website: www.braswell-library.org
Contact: Linda Bunch, 252-442-1951, ext. 244 or lbunch@braswell-library.org

2016 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast

Date & Time: Jan. 18, 2016, 7 a.m. (breakfast), 8 a.m. (program)
Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount
Event Description: The purpose of our annual Unity Breakfast is to honor the legacy of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Price: Free
Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/humanrelations
Contact: Archie Jones, director, city of Rocky Mount Human Relations Department, 252-972-1181



Arts Center Exhibits Open
Date & Time: Feb. 2, 2016

operating hours (Tuesday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.; closed Monday)
Location: Maria V. Howard Arts Center at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences
Event Description: Solo Artist Margaret Smithers-Crump, 2016 HANDCRAFTED juried show, and the National Arts Honors Society of North Carolina exhibition.
Price: Free
Website: www.imperialcentre.org/arts
Contact: 252-972-1266



Biltmore House Trip

Date & Time: April 2016

Event Description: Springtime at the Biltmore House, 3 days and 2 nights

Age: 55 and older

Price: single occupancy, \$429 per person; double and triple occupancy, \$349 per person; \$100 deposit and travel protection insurance, \$51

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564

Rocky Mount Citizens Police Academy

Date & Time: April 5, 2016 - May 10, 2016, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. or 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Location: Rocky Mount Police Department Training Room

Event Description: Some of the topics covered during the Citizens Police Academy include Crime Scene Investigation, Alcohol, Drug & Gang Awareness and Use of Force along with a Mock Court Trial and Firearms Training. Class sessions are held every Tuesday for six weeks and citizens can choose to attend in the morning from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. or in the evening from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. The program concludes on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 with a graduation ceremony and reception.

Age: 18 and older

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/police

Contact: Yvette Jones, 252-972-1436

Bill Leslie

Date & Time: April 8, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount

Event Description:

He's back! It's the quintessential morning man from WRAL-TV. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma calls him "one of the greats in modern Celtic music." Radio personality John Tesh speaks of his "original music and his stunning versatility." An Emmy award-winning anchorman and reporter, he has also garnered World Radio Album of the Year in 2013 with Scotland: Grace of Wild. He's a Dunn-amite storyteller, musician and journalist. Come celebrate spring with Bill Leslie!

Price: \$21 per person

Website: www.dunncenter.com

Contact: Dunn Center Box Office, 252-985-5197



Paws in the Park

Date & Time: April 9, 2016, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Location: Best Friends Dog Park

Event Description: The event provides an opportunity for nonprofit organizations, businesses and dog-loving citizens to advance the humane treatment of dogs and promote responsible pet ownership. The event is fun for all participants – humans and their tail-wagging companions! Activities include a pet parade, pet/owner fashion show(s), pet talent contests, and lots of educational material from dog-related vendors, sponsors and local veterinarians.

Age: all ages (dogs and humans!)

Price: Free

Website:

www.rockymountnc.gov/parks/paws.html

Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151



Blues Brothers Soul Tour

Date & Time: April 16, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount

Event Description: Here's a band demonstrating enormous variety. You'll hear jazz and funk, reggae and swing and practically everything in between. Just grab your sunglasses and your pork-pie hats and come enjoy a rhythm and blues extravaganza, complete with Jake and Elwood, and straight from 10 highly talented musicians. It's a Dunn-amite tribute show courtesy of the Blues Brothers Soul Tour.

Price: \$21 per person

Website: www.dunncenter.com

Contact: Dunn Center Box Office, 252-985-5197

Down East Senior Games & Adaptive Events

Date & Time: May 2, 2016 - May 13, 2016

Location: Various venues in Rocky Mount, Wilson and Tarboro

Event Description: Olympic style athletic competition for older adults. Games also include literary, visual and performing arts competition.

Age: 50 and older

Price: TBA

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564

Jason Coleman

Date & Time: May 6, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

Location: The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, N.C. Wesleyan College, 3400 N. Wesleyan Blvd., Rocky Mount

Event Description: The "piano magic" of esteemed Floyd Cramer resides in the music of his grandson, Jason Coleman. Come witness Cramer's "slip note" piano style so evident in Jason's work. And even though the elder Cramer died when Jason was just 12 years old, their relationship set the stage for the younger pianist's own career to become a glowing tribute to his grandfather's legacy. What better grand finale for yet another Dunn-amite season?

Price: \$21 per person

Website: www.dunncenter.com

Contact: Dunn Center Box Office, 252-985-5197



Public Works Week

Date & Time: May 15, 2016 - May 21, 2016

Location: Citywide

Event Description: Public Works Week is observed each year during the third full week of May. Through National Public Works Week and other efforts, the American Public Works Association seeks to raise the public's awareness of public works issues and to increase confidence in public works employees who are dedicated to improving the quality of life for present and future generations.

As part of the celebration in Rocky Mount, the Department of Public Works & Water Resources typically organizes an equipment show for children and adults to learn more about the equipment utilized to maintain public infrastructure. More details regarding the specifics of this event can be obtained in May 2016 by contacting the department at 252-972-1299.

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/publicworks/

Contact: Department of Public Works & Water Resources, 252-972-1299



Juneteenth Community Empowerment Festival

Date & Time: June 3, 2016 and June 4, 2016, Time TBD

Location: Douglas Block in Downtown Rocky Mount

Event Description: A unity event that highlights community empowerment and celebrates Juneteenth.

Age: All ages

Price: Free

Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151



45th Annual Independence Celebration

Date & Time: June 3, 2016 and June 4, 2016, 12 p.m.

Location: Rocky Mount Athletic Stadium, 1400 North Church Street, Rocky Mount

Event Description: Fun and fireworks for the entire family

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/parks/events

Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151



Alaska Cruise Tour

Date & Time: June 13, 2016 - June 24, 2016

Event Description: This is a 5 day land tour and 7 nights aboard the Celebrity Millennium

Age: 55 and older

Price: \$3,999 per double inside room, \$4,399 per double view room, \$5,099 per double with balcony

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564

Summer Blast

Date & Time: Thursday, June 16, 2016

Location: Rocky Mount Senior Center

Event Description: Bring your family and friends to enjoy a cookout, games, outdoor musical entertainment and prizes. All participants must bring an item in advance to be cooked on the grill.

Age: 55 and older plus family and friends

Price: Free

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564

Rocky Mount Junior Police Academy, June Session

Date & Time: June 20, 2016 - June 24, 2016, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Location: Rocky Mount Police Department Training Room

Event Description: Some of the topics covered during the Junior Police Academy include Crime Scene Investigation, Domestic Violence, Physical Fitness, Alcohol, Drug & Gang Awareness along with a Mock Court Trial. Class sessions are held Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The program concludes with a graduation ceremony and reception.

Age: 13 to 18 years old

Price: \$35 registration fee

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/police

Contact: Yvette Jones, 252-972-1436

Rocky Mount Junior Police Academy, July Session

Date & Time: July 3, 2016, 6 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Location: Rocky Mount Police Department Training Room

Event Description: Some of the topics covered during the Junior Police Academy include Crime Scene Investigation, Domestic Violence, Physical Fitness, Alcohol, Drug & Gang Awareness along with a Mock Court Trial. Class sessions are held Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The program concludes with a graduation ceremony and reception.

Age: 13 to 18 years old

Price: \$35 registration fee

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/police

Contact: Yvette Jones, 252-972-1436

Fire Department 120-Year Anniversary

Date & Time: Aug. 2016, time TBA

Location: TBA

Event Description: Open House event honoring the 120-year anniversary

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountfire.org

Contact: Fire Chief Mike Varnell, 252-972-1490

National Night Out

Date & Time: Aug. 2, 2016

Location: Various locations throughout Rocky Mount

Event Description: National Night Out is an annual community building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods better and safer places to live. Neighborhoods across the nation host block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts and other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events and visits from emergency personnel.

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/police

Contact: Yvette Jones, 252-972-1436

"911 Memorial Service"

Date & Time: Friday, Sept. 9, 2016, time TBA

Location: Life Safety Complex, 404 South Church Street

Event Description: Memorial Service honoring the 15-year anniversary

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountfire.org

Contact: Division Chief Donnie Daniels, 252-972-1378



South Dakota Adventure

Date & Time: Sept. 14, 2016 - Sept. 20, 2016

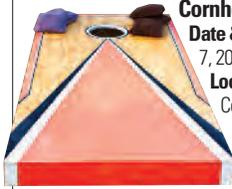
Event Description: This is a seven day trip.

Includes roundtrip airfare, 10 meals, tour director, sightseeing, motorcoach, hotel transfers and baggage handling.

Age: 55 and older

Price: \$2449.00 per double

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center, 252-972-1564



Cornhole Tournament

Date & Time: Friday, Oct. 7, 2016, 6:30 p.m.

Location: 100 Coastline Street in Downtown Rocky Mount

Event

Description: Fundraiser for the Winter Assistance for Rocky Mount (WARIM) Program.

Price: Free admission; vendor items and food will be available for purchase.

Website: www.bbqthrowdown.net

Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151

9th Annual Eastern Carolina BBQ Throw Down & Festival

Date & Time: Oct. 7, 2016 and Oct. 8, 2016

Location: Downtown Rocky Mount near the Train Station, Hammond Street & Church Street, Rocky Mount

Event Description: The Eastern Carolina BBQ Throw Down is a festival you do not want to miss! There, you will find great barbecue, great music and plenty of activities for the entire family. Kick up your heels Friday night at the BBQ Bash. There will be great entertainment with plenty of food and beverages including a beer garden. Continue the celebration into Saturday with a national barbecue competition, more great entertainment, lots of vendors and family activities.

Price: Free to the public

Website: www.bbqthrowdown.net

Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151

Public Power and Public Natural Gas Week Celebration

Date & Time: Saturday, Oct. 8, 2016 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (during the BBQ Throw Down)

Location: Corner of Nash and South Church streets in Downtown Rocky Mount

Event Description: Celebrate Public Power and Public Natural Gas Week at the Rocky Mount Public Utilities exhibit, featuring safety demonstrations, pole-climbing and hurtman rescue, kids activities, prizes and Plinko!

Price: Free

Website: www.bbqthrowdown.net

Contact: Amy Blanton, 252-972-1269

Fire Prevention Week Showcase

Date & Time: Oct. 9, 2016 - Oct. 15, 2016

Location: TBA

Event Description: Public display of equipment and programs

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountfire.org

Contact: Assistant Chief Ron Raper, 252-972-1671



2016 Disability Awareness and Employment Celebration

Date & Time: Oct. 15, 2016, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Location: Sculpture Courtyard of the Imperial Centre, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount

Event Description: This event celebrates Disability Awareness Month by raising awareness about the challenges persons with disabilities face and to also celebrate the successes they've achieved. Community resources, services and support will also be offered.

Price: Free

Website: www.rockymountnc.gov/humanrelations

Contact: Jeffery Walston, human relations specialist, city of Rocky Mount Human Relations Department, 252-972-1182



Special Exhibit - Design Zone 2

Date & Time: Jan. 30, 2016 - May 15, 2016

Location: Children's Museum & Science Center at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences

Event Description: What does it take to create an addictive and fun videogame? How many beats per second does a DJ need to get bodies moving on the dance floor? What goes behind creating a roller coaster or a skate park that produces the most fun and biggest thrills? Design is everywhere we look and in everything we do, and math is behind it all. Behind every dance mix, there's a beat. Behind every thrill ride, there's velocity. Behind every half-pipe, there's a vert ramp. Join us in the Design Zone to use hands-on activities in the creation of your own dance beat, rollercoaster, skate park, video game and more

Price: \$6 per person

Website: www.imperialcentre.org/museum

Contact: Imperial Centre, 252-972-1266

Downtown Live! Summer Concert Series

Date & Time: Every other Thursday beginning June 12, 2016 - Sept. 29, 2016 at 6 p.m.

Location: Douglas Block in Downtown Rocky Mount

Event Description: Fun, food, dancing and music!

Age: All ages

Price: Free

Contact: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151

Lawn Chair Theatre Movie Series

Dates & Times: Every other Friday beginning June 17, 2016 - Aug. 12, 2016

Time: 7 p.m. activities and 8:30 p.m. showtime

Location: Imperial Centre Lawn

Event Description: Enjoy a free night at the movies under the stars! Bring the whole family and enjoy a free movie series with kid's activities and concessions available.

Age restrictions: All ages

Price: Free

Contact Information: City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, 252-972-1151

Ongoing Events

Ice Skating at the Imperial Centre

Date & Time: Dec. 4, 2015 - Dec. 31, 2015, times vary

Location: Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences

Event Description:

Book your next party at the Imperial Centre for Ice Skating. Private rentals available during the day and evening in December. Public hours also available. Visit the website for more information!

Price: Call for more information

Website: www.imperialcentre.org

Contact: Imperial Centre, 252-972-1266



First Friday

IMPERIAL CENTRE

First Fridays

Date & Time: First Friday monthly, Nov. 2015 - May 2016 (except January), 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Location: Imperial

Centre for the Arts and Sciences

Event Description: First Fridays will feature free entry into the Children's Museum, exhibits and demonstrations, art gallery demos and live entertainment on the second floor, live music in the lobby, art and craft vendors, "No Shame" open mic night hosted by the theatre and lots more!

Price: Free admission; small fee for some activities

Website: www.imperialcentre.org

Contact: Imperial Centre, 252-972-1266

By Kenneth Hunter

Rocky Mount continues providing an above average quality of service delivery to residents and businesses at below average costs compared to other similar municipalities in North Carolina, according to the latest results of our annual comparative Cost of Public Services survey.

The recent overall 14 percent average reduction in electric rates helped Rocky Mount actually reduce its combined costs for general government and comprehensive utility services to as much as 7.3 percent compared to last year for an average household.

The fiscal year 2016 Cost of Public Services survey, conducted by the Office of Budget Evaluation & Development, compares Rocky Mount to 14 other North Carolina municipalities with respect to average property tax burden and annual costs for solid waste, stormwater management, water, sewer and electricity services. This year, Rocky Mount residents enjoy average annual costs of \$3,748 in Nash County and \$4,103 in Edgecombe County (difference due to county ad valorem tax rates).

Rocky Mount residents in both counties experience total costs for public services below the overall group average of \$4,346. Nash County residents enjoy the second lowest cost of services within the group, while Edgecombe County residents still have lower costs than households in Wilson and Greenville.

Most notably, Rocky Mount's annual costs for comparable services are noticeably less than Cary (\$5,290); Apex (\$4,048); Wilmington (\$4,985); Monroe (\$4,653) and High Point (\$4,609). While Rocky Mount's costs went down this past year, most of these municipalities saw their costs go up.

The Cost of Public Services survey creates an equal analysis of residential usage and tax burden based on the following conditions:

- Application of municipal and county property tax rates on local median household value and one \$25,000 vehicle
- Electric services at 1,000 kWh/month usage
- Water and sewer services at 3,000 gallons/month usage
- Stormwater management, residential solid waste and recycling fees

"In order to make better decisions, we learn to identify and study the total costs," said Budget & Evaluation Manager Kenneth Hunter. "This study is a reflection of such an effort."

Rocky Mount's consistent position, close to the average for the group, reflects dedication to the essential goals of service delivery and fiscal discipline.

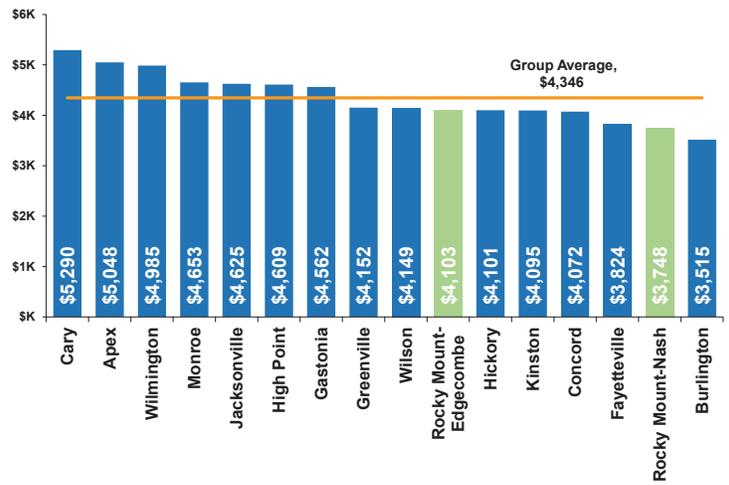
"This city does its best in its day-to-day work to meet and exceed the expectations of our residents," Hunter said. "Our staff know to keep their expenses in line with our ability to pay, minimizing the need for potential adjustments in tax and utility rates."

To learn more about the Cost of Public Services study, visit rockymountnc.gov/budget. A video report of the survey is also available on the city's YouTube channel, youtube.com/city19.

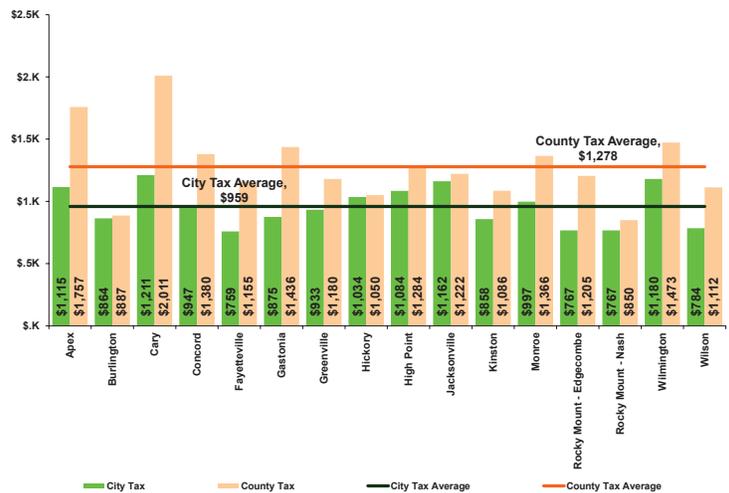
Cost of Living Survey Chart

Rank	City	FY 2016 City Tax Rate	FY 2016 City & County Tax Rate	FY 2016 City & County Taxes	Annual Electric	Annual Water & Sewer	Annual Storm-water & Solid Waste	Total Costs
1	Cary	\$ 0.3700	\$ 0.9845	\$ 3,221.28	\$ 1,308.88	\$ 568.32	\$ 192.00	\$ 5,290.48
2	Apex	\$ 0.3900	\$ 1.0045	\$ 2,872.87	\$ 1,445.76	\$ 533.76	\$ 195.96	\$ 5,048.35
3	Wilmington	\$ 0.4850	\$ 1.0900	\$ 2,653.06	\$ 1,308.88	\$ 625.80	\$ 397.44	\$ 4,985.18
4	Monroe	\$ 0.5863	\$ 1.3893	\$ 2,363.20	\$ 1,548.36	\$ 496.44	\$ 244.80	\$ 4,652.80
5	Jacksonville	\$ 0.6420	\$ 1.3170	\$ 2,383.77	\$ 1,308.88	\$ 692.52	\$ 240.00	\$ 4,625.17
6	High Point	\$ 0.6500	\$ 1.4200	\$ 2,368.56	\$ 1,474.21	\$ 586.68	\$ 180.00	\$ 4,609.45
7	Gastonia	\$ 0.5300	\$ 1.4000	\$ 2,311.40	\$ 1,599.30	\$ 563.88	\$ 87.00	\$ 4,561.58
8	Greenville	\$ 0.5300	\$ 1.2000	\$ 2,113.20	\$ 1,486.32	\$ 505.92	\$ 46.20	\$ 4,151.64
9	Wilson	\$ 0.5150	\$ 1.2450	\$ 1,896.14	\$ 1,400.40	\$ 585.24	\$ 267.48	\$ 4,149.26
10	Rocky Mount-Edgecombe	\$ 0.6050	\$ 1.5550	\$ 1,971.74	\$ 1,509.00	\$ 412.44	\$ 210.00	\$ 4,103.18
11	Hickory	\$ 0.5665	\$ 1.1415	\$ 2,084.38	\$ 1,306.69	\$ 512.04	\$ 198.00	\$ 4,101.11
12	Kinston	\$ 0.6600	\$ 1.4950	\$ 1,943.50	\$ 1,090.20	\$ 736.92	\$ 324.00	\$ 4,094.62
13	Concord	\$ 0.4800	\$ 1.1800	\$ 2,326.96	\$ 1,209.13	\$ 484.44	\$ 51.60	\$ 4,072.13
14	Fayetteville	\$ 0.4860	\$ 1.2260	\$ 1,913.79	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 478.56	\$ 81.96	\$ 3,824.31
15	Rocky Mount-Nash	\$ 0.6050	\$ 1.2750	\$ 1,616.70	\$ 1,509.00	\$ 412.44	\$ 210.00	\$ 3,748.14
16	Burlington	\$ 0.5800	\$ 1.1750	\$ 1,750.75	\$ 1,306.69	\$ 337.92	\$ 120.00	\$ 3,515.36

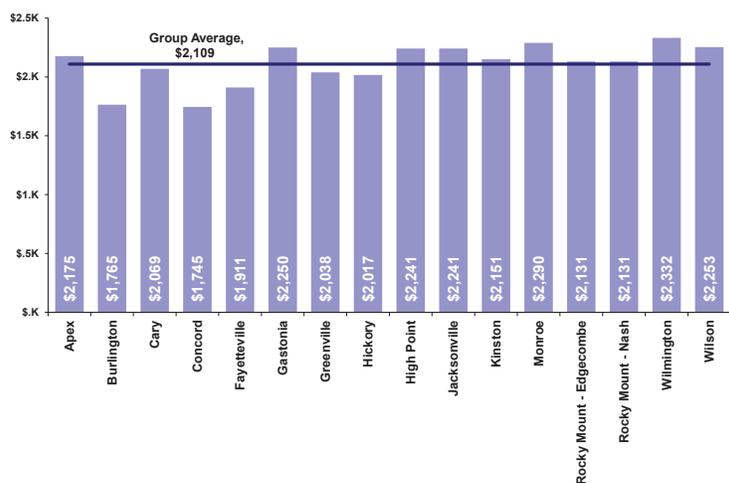
Cost of Living Survey Chart Ranked



Cost of Living Survey Chart Ad Valorem



Cost of Living Survey Chart Utilities



2015 Operating Budget

By Kenneth Hunter

On June 21, 2015, the Rocky Mount City Council adopted their annual operating budget for the 2016 fiscal year (FY), which began July 1, 2015. The budget provides funding for general government operations like police, fire and public works, capital infrastructure, surface transportation maintenance and improvements and delivery of public utility services.

The city balanced its budget for current general government operations within its existing base revenues. An additional \$0.025 increase in the city property tax rate was approved with the budget to provide funding for the proposed Downtown Community Facility, an increase of \$25 for a residence worth \$100,000.

More information on the budget, as well as analysis of residents costs for services compared to other North Carolina municipalities, is available on the city's website at www.rockymountnc.gov/budget.

By the numbers...

\$210.7 million Total FY 2016 Adopted City Budget (0.9 percent increase from FY 2015)

\$60.3 million Total FY 2016 Adopted General Fund Budget (5.7 percent increase from FY 2014)

\$17.1 million Capital Budget for FY 2016, part of \$133 million Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

\$0.56 Of every \$1 of Tax Revenue is used to fund Public Safety (Police and Fire) operations

\$0.605 City Property Tax Rate for FY 2015 (per \$100 Assessed Value)

Budgets

Legislative	\$1,334,100
Administration	\$2,241,100
Finance	\$1,542,860
Public Safety	\$28,681,860
Public Works/Engineering	\$12,146,850
Parks & Recreation	\$11,166,980
Planning & Development	\$3,166,280
General Fund Total	\$60,280,030

Surface Transportation & Capital	\$2,778,000
E911 Operations	\$330,700
Public Utilities (Electric & Gas)	\$117,289,160
Water Resources (Water & Sewer)	\$24,935,730
Stormwater Management	\$5,073,590

Total Budget **\$210,687,210**

Property Taxes

2015 property taxes were due to the city of Rocky Mount on September 1, 2015. However, according to Felicia Taylor, revenue collections supervisor, taxes are still payable without interest until January 5, 2016.

"On January 6, 2016, a penalty of 2 percent interest will be applied on the current year (2015) taxes," says Taylor. "Every month thereafter, the interest rate is 0.75 percent."

For property tax payment arrangements, please contact the city of Rocky Mount's Customer Service Office at 252-972-1250.

Police/Fire/Medical Emergencies 911

General City Information/Switchboard
All Departments 972-1111

City Clerk 972-1319
Clerk of Court (Edgecombe) 212-3102
Clerk of Court (Nash) 212-3100

City Manager 972-1325

C.I.T.Y. TV-19 972-1144

Downtown Development 972-1267

Engineering 972-1121

Finance

Accounting 972-1216
Administration 972-1200
Property and Risk Management 972-1202
Property tax bills 972-1250
Purchasing 972-1226
Revenue Collection 972-1250
Utility Bills/Customer Service (Payments/
New Services/Disconnects) 972-1250

Fire Emergency Only 911

Fire Administration 972-1498
Fire Marshal 972-1376
Safety and Training 972-1556
Employment 972-1556
Public Education 972-1379

Human Relations 972-1181

Human Resources 972-1186
Job Line Phone 972-1199

Parks & Recreation

Administration 972-1151
Athletics 972-1160
BTW (Booker T. Washington)
Community Center 467-4925
Cemeteries
(Battleboro-Northeastern- Pineview) 972-1158
Children's Museum & Science Center 972-1167
Denton Street Pool 977-6231
Imperial Centre 972-1266
Parks Maintenance 467-4922
Park/Picnic Reservations 972-1151
Senior Center 972-1152
SRM (South Rocky Mount)
Community Center 972-1170
Special Events 972-1151
Special Olympics 972-1155
Sports Complex 467-6483
Sunset Park
(Carousel/Train/ Spray Park/Skatepark) 446-0500

Planning and Development 972-1172

Building Permits 972-1109
Business Licenses 972-1110
Historic Preservation 972-1179
Housing Rehab/Community
Development 972-1100
Inspection Services/Plan Review 972-1110
Building 972-1110
Zoning 977-1114
After Hours 972-1350

Police Emergency Only 911

Non-Emergency 972-1443
Non-Emergency TTY
(for the hearing impaired) 442-0975
Animal Control/Stray 972-1390
Animals - Dead Pickup 467-4800
Crime Prevention 972-1436
Crime Stoppers 977-1111
Investigations 972-1450
Police Reports 972-1435

Public Utilities

Utility Bills/Customer Service (Payments,
New Services, Disconnects) 972-1250
Electric (Power Outages/Lines Down/
Repairs) 467-4800
Gas (Leaks/Repairs) 467-4800
Water or Sewer (Leaks/Blockages/
Dirty Water) 467-4800
Utility Emergencies After Hours/
Holidays and Weekends 467-4800

Public Works and Water Resources

Public Works and Water Resources
Administration 972-1290
Community Code Enforcement 467-4952
Abandoned/Junked Vehicles 467-4952
Dilapidated Houses 467-4952
Overgrown Weeds/Mosquitoes/
Rodents 467-4952
Environmental Services
(Trash Collection) 467-4800
Dumpster Service 467-4953
Garbage/Recycling/Yard
Waste/Limb Collection 467-4800
Loose leaf pickup 467-4906
To Schedule a Debris Trailer 467-4800
Fleet Management 467-4897
Keep America Beautiful 467-4960
Streets & Stormwater Division 467-4906
Drainage Problems 467-4906
Stormwater Hotline 972-1500
Tar River Regional Reservoir Wastewater
Treatment Plant 972-1400
Reservoir Water Treatment Plant 972-1292
Sunset Water Treatment Plant 972-1336

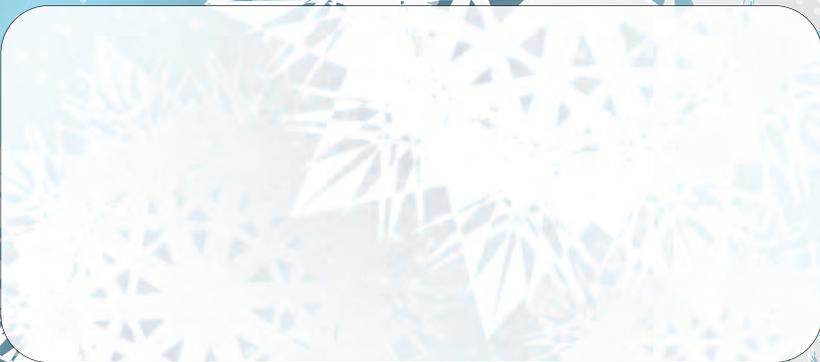
Tar River Transit 972-1174

Area code 252 for all numbers.



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Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1180

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City Manager's Office for all Rocky Mount
Public Utilities customers...



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PNC PRESENTS HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

ICE SKATING AT THE IMPERIAL CENTRE

Date & Time: Dec. 4, 2015-Dec. 31, 2015,
times vary

Location: Imperial Centre for the Arts and
Sciences

Event Description: Book your next party at the
Imperial Centre for ice skating. Private rentals are
available during the day and evening. Public hours
also available.

Price: Call for more information.

Website: rockymountnc.gov

Contact: 252-972-1266

COUNTRY CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST

Date & Time: Dec. 10, 2015, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Location: Rocky Mount Senior Center

Event Description: Enjoy breakfast! Prior to the
event, all participants are required to bring a
breakfast item.

Age: 55 and older and family

Price: Free

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center,
252-972-1564

CHRISTMAS TOUR

Date & Time: Dec. 17, 2015, 6 p.m.-11 p.m.

Location: Nash Community College

Event Description: This is a holiday event that
includes guided bus and van tours of the local
communities' Christmas light display. The tour
starts at 6 p.m. and is followed by a short holiday
program at Nash Community College with dessert,
coffee and entertainment.

Price: Free

Contact: Rocky Mount Senior Center,
252-972-1564

A CHRISTMAS STORY™

Date & Time: Dec. 10, 11 & 12, 2015, 7:30 p.m.
and Dec. 12 & 13, 2015, 2 p.m.

Location: Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences

Description: Humorist Jean Shepherd's memoir
of growing up in the Midwest in the 1940s follows
9-year-old Ralphie Parker in his quest to get a
genuine Red Ryder BB gun under the tree for
Christmas. Ralphie pleads his case before his
mother, his teacher and even Santa Claus himself
at Higbee's Department Store.

Contact Information: 252-972-1266

WINTER WONDERLAND

Date & Time: Dec. 13, 2015, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Location: Imperial Centre for the Arts & Sciences

Event Description: A day of winter time activities
for the whole family! Music, children's activities,
ice skating, carriage rides, and even the big man
himself—it all adds up to a great event to
celebrate the best of winter! Enjoy the snow in the
lobby every hour!

Price: Free, some activities have a nominal fee.

Website: www.imperialcentre.org

Contact: Imperial Centre, 252-972-1266



*For all other Holiday Happenings,
visit rockymountnc.gov.*