

Jim Palenick

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Subject: Town Manager's Weekly Report (#103)

Mayor & Board of Aldermen:

Please accept the following as the **Town Manager's Weekly Report for the Week-ended, December 19, 2014.**

- The Town's new Auditing Firm, Lowdermilk, Church & Company, have now fully completed their Audit and have submitted it to the State Treasurer's Office Local Government Commission for approval. I received a copy of the document early in the week which, in turn, allowed me to complete several required State reports which rely on the audited numbers. Specifically, the North Carolina Utilities Commission yearly report on Municipal Electric Sales and Finance; the NCDOT's required Powell Bill Fiscal Data Report; and, along with the folks at Lowdermilk Church, the Annual Financial Information Report (AIFR) for the State Treasurer's office. We have asked representatives of Lowdermilk Church to formally present the Audit findings at the February 10th, Regular Board Meeting.
- On Thursday of this week, we held our monthly progress and update meeting on the Phase IV, CDBG Waterline project, and learned that we continue to be well ahead of schedule on construction, and despite several change-orders for upgrades to pipe from PVC to ductile iron in spots, we also remain on Budget. The CDBG Grant Agreement requires that all work must be fully complete and all monies spent and funds drawn-down prior to March 25, 2015. We feel quite comfortable that we will meet those requirements. In fact, this week we just made a third, Funds draw-down of the CDBG grant monies and, as a result, we now have submitted reimbursement requests for over \$709,000 of the total approved \$750,000 in Grant Award. With the Gaston Avenue addition to the Phase I project also rapidly winding up, we will have the entire water-main reconstruction project complete by Early March. We also hope to be doing this fiscal-years' significant re-paving beginning late February/early March.
- We have formally received an application for the construction of a new, monopole cell tower under our recently-passed fee schedule and policy for review. The developer has provided complete payment of the fees specified and our consultant is reviewing the application for probable discussion at the January Planning Board Meeting and subsequent, February Board of Aldermen Meeting. The Tower is proposed for a vacant, industrially-zoned, small parcel near College and East Church Streets – not far from the historic Downtown District.
- I also met with Jimmy Tanner of the Gaston County Assessor's Office this week to get a sense of how big of an impact the recently-completed County-wide and State-required property re-evaluation will have on the Town's expected property tax revenues for the Fiscal year 2015-16. At this point, it would appear preliminarily that we should expect to see total property taxes decrease by about 3 ½%, or about \$38,000 (assuming we were to maintain the same 38 cents per \$100/valuation as a tax levy) but all of that will be a part of our Budget discussions beginning with our January 24th Retreat. If there is any positive news to this result, it is that many other County jurisdictions have fared worse, as has the County as a whole. I, quite frankly, expected the decrease to be more severe given the depth of the recession and its effect on housing prices.
- Finally, I will be taking some time off for the Holidays and will be visiting family in Michigan from Monday, December 22nd, through Monday December 29th. I will be accessible throughout by cell phone if any questions or issues arise. With that said, allow me to wish everyone a very joyous and safe Holiday season and extend my personal wishes for a successful and fulfilled New Year in 2015 for the entire Dallas Community.

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