

TOWN OF LA GRANGE, NORTH CAROLINA

TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA



**September 12, 2011
6:00 PM**



TOWN OF LA GRANGE

TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA

September 12, 2011

1. **Call to Order** **Mayor Gurley**
2. **Moment of Silence**
3. **Welcome**
4. **Public Hearings** **Mayor Gurley**
 - a. Lenoir County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Approval
5. **Board of Adjustments – No Cases To be Heard** **Heith Harrison**
6. **Public Comment Period** **Mayor Gurley**
7. **Amendments to and Approval of the Agenda** **Town Manager**
8. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. Regular Session Minutes; August 1, 2011.
 - ii. Annual Settlement of Taxes Collected for FY 2010-2011.
9. **New Business & Presentations**
 - a. Hurricane Irene Update.
 - b. Purchase of a generator to power Town Hall.
 - c. Town Hall Improvement(s): Consider Drive Thru Installation.
 - d. Consider modification of credit card payment guidelines.
10. **Unfinished Business & Informational Items**
 - a. PARTF Grant Application – Recreation Master Plan & 2012 Application Process
 - b. Update on Rail Crossing Signalization & Crossing Project and the Charles Street & Railroad Street Traffic Pattern.
11. **Closed Session**
12. **Adjournment**



PUBLIC HEARINGS

AGENDA ITEM # 4

Public Hearings

As established by the Town Council during the February 25, 2006 Work Session, a Public Hearing period has been established and incorporated into the Regular Meeting Agenda. There is one Public Hearing scheduled.



PUBLIC HEARING APPROVAL OF LENOIR COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTION HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

AGENDA ITEM # 4A

Every five (5) years, FEMA and the State of North Carolina require a review of the County's Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan. The review consists of all County Agencies and Municipalities reviewing the plan to determine if changes to the plan are necessary; either because of changes in local conditions or State or Federal mandates required changes to the existing plan.

After the agencies review the plan and make necessary modifications, a public hearing is scheduled and conducted on a County Wide basis. The purpose of the hearing is to receive public comments on the plan and to address any changes. It is then sent to FEMA and the State of North Carolina for approval.

Since that time, FEMA has received and reviewed the plan and have approved the plan, pending adoption by Lenoir County and each participating Municipality. La Grange has always participated in the County's plan in lieu of creating and adopting it's own plan. This means that all the Town now has to do is have the Public Hearing, which you will do on September 12, 2011 to receive any public comments from the citizens of La Grange, and if the Town Council approves the plan, then simply adopt the plan in a formal meeting.

I have attached a copy of a resolution approving the plan if the Council determines it appropriate to do so. Heith Harrison participated in the review process and attended the County's Public Hearing. There are no substantial changes to the plan that is presented for your review and consideration; and staff is recommending approval of the attached resolution which adopts the plan. The plan itself is 149 pages long, I will email you each a PDF version of the plan, as well as have a printed copy on file at Town Hall for your review should you prefer to review a printed copy.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Resolution Adopting the revised Lenoir County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan.

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

LENOIR COUNTY

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the citizens and property within the Town of La Grange are subject to the effects of natural hazards that pose threats to lives and cause damage to property, and with the knowledge and experience that certain areas of the county are particularly vulnerable to flooding, high winds, and tornados; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to seek ways to mitigate the impact of identified hazard risks; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of North Carolina has in Part 6, Article 21 of Chapter 143; Parts 3, 5, and 8 of Article 19 of Chapter 160A; and Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes, delegated to local governmental units the responsibility to adopt regulations designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizenry; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of North Carolina has in Section 1 Part 166A of the North Carolina General Statutes (adopted in Session Law 2001-214 --- Senate Bill 300 effective July 1, 2001), states therein in Item (a) (2) "For a state of disaster proclaimed pursuant to G.S. 166A-6(a) after August 1, 2002, the eligible entity shall have a hazard mitigation plan approved pursuant to the Stafford Act"; and

WHEREAS, Section 322 of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 states that local governments must develop an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan in order to be eligible to receive future Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funds and other disaster-related assistance funding and that said Plan must be updated and adopted within a five year cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Town of La Grange and Lenoir County has performed a comprehensive review and evaluation of each section of the previously approved Hazard Mitigation Plan and has updated the said plan as required under regulations at 44 CFR Part 201 and according to guidance issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management.

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the La Grange Town Council to fulfill this obligation in order that the County will be eligible for federal and state assistance in the event that a state of disaster is declared for a hazard event affecting the County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the La Grange Town Council hereby:

1. Adopts the Lenoir County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and

2. Vests the Town Manager and Staff with the responsibility, authority, and the means to:
 - (a) Inform all concerned parties of this action.
 - (b) Cooperate with Federal, State and local agencies and private firms which undertake to study, survey, map and identify floodplain areas, and cooperate with neighboring communities with respect to management of adjoining floodplain areas in order to prevent exacerbation of existing hazard impacts.

3. Appoints the Town Manager and Staff to assure that the Hazard Mitigation Plan is reviewed annually and every five years as specified in the Plan to assure that the Plan is in compliance with all State and Federal regulations and that any needed revisions or amendments to the Plan are developed and presented to the La Grange Town Council for consideration.

4. Agrees to take such other official action as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the objectives of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Adopted on this the 12th day of September 2011

By: _____
Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor

Certified by: _____ SEAL :
Kyle J. DeHaven, Town Clerk

Date: September 12, 2011



BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS

AGENDA ITEM # 5

There are no Board of Adjustments cases to be heard.

RECOMMENDATION: N/A



PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

AGENDA ITEM # 6

Public Comment Period

As established by Council Action, the public has a designated time period during the Town Council's Regular Council meeting each month to address the council regarding items not included on the printed agenda.

All comments are subject to the "Public Comment Policy". The Council allotted time for up to five (5) citizens to address the council for up to 3 minutes each. Citizens **are required** to sign in with the Town Clerk between 5:45 and 6:00 on the night of the council's regularly scheduled meeting. A response from the Council or Town staff is **not** required during the Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: None.



AMENDMENTS TO AND/OR APPROVAL OF AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM # 7

At this time, the Town Manager will recommend that the agenda be approved as submitted or he may recommend the addition of item(s) or deletion of item(s) from the printed agenda to be addressed during the Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Agenda as Recommended by Town Manager during the meeting.



CONSENT AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM # 8

Attached for your review and consideration are items submitted for the consent agenda. These items, if the agenda is approved, will be handled with a single action of the Council. If for any reason, a member of the council wishes to move an item from the consent agenda to the Items for Discussion and Approval, it is an automatic process that places that item(s) at the end of the printed agenda to allow for a more detailed discussion of the item.

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR CONSENT:

8. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. Regular Session Minutes; August 1, 2011
 - ii. Annual Settlement of Taxes Collected for FY 2010-2011.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Items submitted for Consent.



APPROVAL OF MINUTES

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM # 8A

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Attached for your consideration and approval are the minutes for the meetings since the last regularly scheduled Council Meeting.

8. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. Regular Session Minutes; August 1, 2011

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Minutes as submitted as part of Consent Agenda.

REGULAR MEETING

The Town Council of the Town of La Grange, North Carolina met in Regular Session at the Town Hall on August 1, 2011, at 6 p.m. with the following present:

Mayor Woodard H. Gurley; Mayor Pro Tem Bobby Wooten; Council Members Larry Gladney, David S. Holmes, Clifton Harrison, Greg Rouse, and Veronica Lee; Town Manager, John P. Craft; Town Attorney, George Jenkins, Jr.; Town Clerk, Kyle J. DeHaven.

Absent: 0

Guest: 13

ITEMS 1, 2, 3: CALL TO ORDER, MOMENT OF SILENCE, WELCOME

Mayor Gurley called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence. Mayor Gurley gave a warm welcome to the visitors and citizens in attendance.

ITEM 4: PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

ITEM 5: BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS

None

ITEM 6: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

ITEM 7: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Manager Craft recommended the approval of the agenda as submitted.

Motion to approve the agenda as submitted was made by Council Member Gladney, seconded by Council Member Lee. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

ITEM 8: CONSENT AGENDA

Manager Craft recommended the approval of the consent agenda, which included the June 6, 2011 Regular Session minutes, the June 7, 2011 Special session minutes, and Approval of the Fire Department contract with Wayne County.

Motion to approve the consent agenda, which included the June 6, 2011 Regular Session minutes, the June 7, 2011 Special session minutes, and Approval of the Fire Department

contract with Wayne County was made by Council Member Gladney, and seconded by Council Member Holmes. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

ITEM 9A: EAST CAROLINA COUNCIL PRESENTATION

Larry Moolenaar, Executive Director of the East Carolina Council (ECC) was present and made a presentation to the Council about the services provided by the East Carolina Council to Lenoir County and the citizens of La Grange. The Council asked Mr. Moolenaar some clarifying questions, but no action was taken regarding the ECC.

ITEM 9B: VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA PRESENTATION

Eric Cantu, VVA Project Director was to be present to make a presentation to the Council regarding "The Wall That Heals". Mr. Cantu did not attend the meeting and as a result, no presentation was received by the Town Council. There was no discussion nor was there any action taken relative to the item.

ITEM 9C: REQUEST TO USE PARK FACILITY

Ravon Ravenell formally requested to be allowed to reserve the ball field portion of the park downtown for a "Back to School Revival" to be sponsored by Deeper Life Ministries out of Goldsboro. Mr. Ravon Ravenell, of 301 Fire Tower Road, is a minister at Deeper Life Ministries. He proposed to hold the event on August 26-27, with events on Friday from 6-8 pm, Saturday from 5-7pm.

Mr. Ravenell presented this request to the Council for consideration and approval. He is asking for use of the field, additional garbage carts for refuse collection, and the presence of LCSD when possible. Manager Craft recommend that the use of the facility not limit the public's access to the remaining portions of the park (the Sprayground, playground, picnic shelter, and walking trail) and that Mr. Ravenell provide the Town proof of liability insurance and name the Town as additionally insured.

After discussion, Council Member Wooten made a motion to approve the use of the facility contingent on the conditions mentioned above and to close a portion of Railroad Street as necessary, second by Council Member Holmes and the motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 10A: UPDATE ON PARTF

Manager Craft explained that the PARTF grant was not funded in either funding cycle last year, and had not been funded in the first cycle of this year. Manager Craft went on to explain that a Master Plan for the Town's athletic complexes was needed to be successful. Manager Craft explained that he will use the \$20,000 in the FY 11-12 budget to complete the plan.

ITEM 10B: UPDATE ON WWTP IMPROVEMENTS

Manager Craft updated the Council on the WWTP improvement grants. The Reuse Project is now complete. The Clarifier, Headworks & Control System Improvements are 100% complete, as well.

ITEM 10C: UPDATE ON RAIL CROSSING SIGNALIZATION AND CLOSING

Manager Craft updated the Council on the Rail Crossing Signalization. The repaving is 100% complete. Signalization has been completed on Wooten St. and is expected to begin soon on Charles St. Curb and Guttering has been installed on North Railroad St. with grading and asphalt to begin soon, and South Railroad St. is to begin work soon. Striping of parking spaces and installation for parking bumpers are both 100% complete.

ITEM 10C: UPDATE PERTAINING TO CHARLES ST. & RAILROAD ST. TRAFFIC PATTERN

Manager Craft updated the Council on the traffic pattern at Charles and Railroad St. He spoke of a conversation with Dwayne Alligood of NCDOT regarding the count and recommendation. Mr. Alligood agreed to a "limited" count. Manager Craft stated he would tell of the results and NCDOT's recommendation when it becomes available.

Manager Craft then recommended that the Council go into Closed Session as authorized by General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (6) (7) (8).

Motion to go into Closed Session at 7:22pm was made by Council Member Wooten, seconded by Council Member Lee. Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

ITEM 11A: CLOSED SESSION

Motion to proceed with the purchase of McConnell Property was made by Council Member Wooten, seconded by Council Member Gladney. Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Mayor Gurley recessed the meeting for a five minute break.

ITEM 12: ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the June 2, 2011 meeting was made by Council Member Gladney, seconded by Council Member Rouse. Motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Kyle J. DeHaven, Town Clerk

Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor



ANNUAL SETTLEMENT OF TAXES FOR FY 2010-2011

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM # 8B

Attached for your review and consideration is a letter and a certified statement from Darrell Parrish, Lenoir County Tax Collector; that lists the persons owning real property and personal property whose property tax for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 and from prior years since 2000 remains unpaid. This report and the Annual Settlement of Taxes is required by North Carolina General Statute 105-373.

The settlement of both current and prior year's taxes has been made to, and is satisfactory with, the Chief Accounting Officer for Lenoir County. Based on the report submitted, the collection rate for 2010-2011 taxes is 92.44%. Prior year's collection rates range from 97.22% - 99.12%; which means that the majority of taxes that remain uncollected at year end are collected over the course of time.

In 2010-2011; the tax levy was \$598,706.44 with lien cost and interest collected added totaling \$601,035.83. Of this \$601,035.83; \$28,171.21 remains unpaid from real property taxes and \$17,289.10 remains unpaid from personal property taxes. In summary, \$45,460.31 in taxes remains unpaid as of July 26, 2011.

The Council needs to receive and accept the report from the Tax Collector, approve the attached Resolution accepting the Annual Settlement of the Lenoir County Tax Collector, and each Council Member will be required to sign the Resolution, so please do so after the meeting is adjourned.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Resolution Accepting the Annual Settlement of the Lenoir County Tax Assessor.



County of Lenoir

Office of the
Tax Administrator

Drawer 3289
Kinston, N.C. 28502

July 26, 2011

Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor
Town of LaGrange
PO Box 368
LaGrange, NC 28551

Dear Mr. Gurley:

Re: Annual Settlement of Property Taxes Collected for Fiscal Year 2010-2011

As required by North Carolina General statute 105-373, attached is the annual settlement of all property taxes collected for the Town of LaGrange for the fiscal year 2010-2011 and prior fiscal years from 2000.

Enclosed is the required list of persons owning real property whose taxes for the preceding fiscal year remain unpaid and the principal amount owed by each person.

A second required list of persons not owning real property, whose personal property taxes for the preceding fiscal year remain unpaid and the principal amount owed by each person, is also enclosed. Attached to this list is a required report of insolvents and a request to declare these unpaid personal property taxes to be insolvent.

This settlement of both current and prior years taxes has been made to, and is satisfactory with, the Chief Accounting Officer of Lenoir County.

Sincerely,

Darrell Parrish
Lenoir County Tax Collector

Lenoir County Finance Officer
Copy: Town Councilmen
John P. Craft, Town Manager

July 26, 2011

2010-2011 Levy

CHARGES

1. 2010-2011 Levy	\$598,706.44
2. Lien Cost and Interest Collected	<u>2,329.39</u>
TOTAL	\$601,035.83

CREDITS

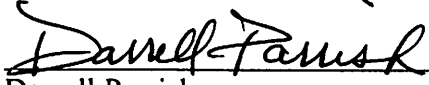
1. Amount deposited in bank	\$555,575.52
2. Principal real tax owed	28,171.21
3. Amount of insolvent taxes owed (pers)	<u>17,289.10</u>
TOTAL	\$601,035.83

Percent Collected 92.44%

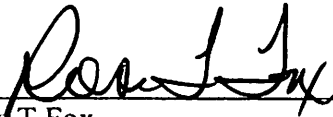
Collection of Prior Years Taxes

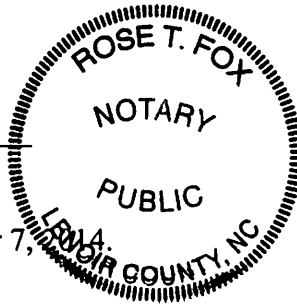
	<u>Levy</u>	<u>Taxes Collected</u>	<u>Percent Collected</u>	<u>Taxes Uncollected</u>
2009-2010	\$599,721	\$583,060	97.22%	\$16,661
2008-2009	576,436	565,363	98.08%	11,073
2007-2008	573,925	566,665	98.73%	7,260
2006-2007	564,040	557,648	98.87%	6,392
2005-2006	552,393	547,456	99.11%	4,937
2004-2005	540,247	536,439	99.30%	3,808
2003-2004	531,699	527,779	99.26%	3,920
2002-2003	516,689	511,634	99.02%	5,055
2001-2002	483,319	479,852	99.28%	3,467
2000-2001	393,036	389,562	99.12%	3,474

I, Darrell Parrish, do so solemnly swear that all statements and all figures shown in the Annual Report are correct to the best of my knowledge.


Darrell Parrish
Lenoir County Tax Collector

This is to certify that Darrell Parrish personally appeared before me this 26th day of July, 2011 to sign this statement.


Rose T Fox



My commission expires November 7, 2014.

**Resolution Accepting the Annual Settlement
Of the Lenoir County Tax Collector
2010-2011Fiscal Year**

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute 105-373 requires the Tax Collector to make full settlement with the governing body for all taxes, and

WHEREAS, The tax Collector of Lenoir County has provided the Town of LaGrange's Town Manager, Mayor and Town Councilmen a complete report of all taxes in his hands for collection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Mayor and Town Councilmen that: The Town Councilmen accept and approve the settlement of taxes as submitted by the Lenoir County Tax Collector. The Town Councilmen's approval does not release the Tax Collector or his bondsman of any liability or any shortage hereafter discovered, nor does it release him in any way of his duties to use all lawful means at his disposal to collect all delinquent taxes in his hand.

The Town Councilmen acknowledge with appreciation the diligent efforts of the Tax Collector that has resulted in a 92.44% collection for the fiscal year 2010-2011.

Woodard H. Gurley, Mayor

David S. Holmes

Bobby Wooten, Mayor Pro-Tem

Veronica N. Lee

Gregory Rouse

Larry Gladney

Clifton O. Harrison

Attest:

Kyle DeHaven, Town Clerk

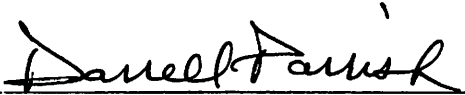
REPORT OF INSOLVENTS

To: LAGRANGE TOWN COUNCIL

The undersigned tax collector respectfully reports that certain personal property taxes levied for the year 2010 remain uncollected, such uncollected taxes being set out on the attached list. Said taxes are not liens upon real estate. The undersigned tax collector has made diligent efforts to collect said taxes by use of remedies against personal property as provided by law but has been unable to locate sufficient property belonging to delinquent taxpayers out of which the taxes might be collected. In every instance in which the tax collector has been able to discover through diligent inquiry the existence of property belonging to delinquent taxpayers within other taxing units in North Carolina, the undersigned has proceeded under the provisions of G. S. 105-364.

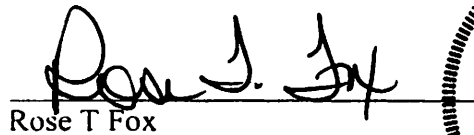
The undersigned requests the attached list of personal property taxes be declared insolvent and credited upon annual settlement.

This 26th day of July 2011.

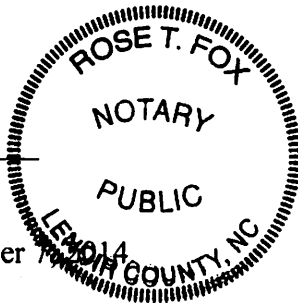


Darrell Parrish
Lenoir County Tax Collector

This is to certify that Darrell Parrish personally appeared before me this 26th day of July, 2011 to sign this statement.



Rose T Fox



My commission expires November



HURRICANE IRENE UPDATE

AGENDA ITEM # 9A

As you all know, Hurricane Irene caused significant damage to the town in several different ways. The intent for the agenda item is to give a overview of the affects of Hurricane Irene on the Town, the current status of the recovery efforts underway or completed, to provide our current best estimates as to the cost of the storm to the town, and what we learned from our response to the storm.

First of all, the winds from the storm really began to pick up here in La Grange around 11:00 pm and steadily increased over time until it was at its worst around noon on Saturday. Over the course of what really spanned two different days, the Town saw more than 7.5" of rain. The combination of the wind and rain caused many trees to be downed. These trees cause electrical primary lines to be torn down and knocked down/broke many electric poles, and blocked many town streets and the State Roads as well. This storm was different that the past several storms because it hit during the day, which prevented us from working in the daylight as much as we would have liked.

To complicate things, the Progress Energy Transmission line that feeds the Town and Tri County had trees down on it. This was what knocked out the Town's power, which occurred at 6:45 am. This outage affected the entire town. At that time, we only had one problem on our system, which was on West James Street, where a limb had fallen into the line and blew a fuse. Although the outage from Progress cause a total outage from us, the outage prevented the trees that eventually fell on our lines from causing additional damage that would result in additional damage to electrical facilities and increase hazards for citizens in the area of fallen lines and broken poles. The fact that the lines were not energized also allowed us to work faster and significantly reduced the hazards of working energized electrical lines. These facts probably accelerated our restoration efforts for all customers, but certainly delayed the restoration of service to 80% of our customers who would have had power restored by 11:00 pm on Saturday evening; had Progress Energy's lines been up and delivering power to the Town. We had requested assistance from T&D Electrical Construction (formerly E&R) who had indicated that they would supply the Town with two additional bucket trucks and a line truck. These crews were never supplied. Contact was made with Electricities Emergency Assistance Program Manager, who for this storm was Don Mitchell from Monroe, NC. Mr. Mitchell promptly dispatched two bucket trucks, a line truck , and six lineman to assist in our recovery effort. These crews arrived Saturday afternoon and worked until nearly 2 am. At that time, the restoration estimates from Progress Energy were unavailable; their only response was that they had not yet been able to adequately evaluate the situation. By Sunday, this estimate was made available, and turned out to be 2-3 days. Our crews began by clearing

the feeder that supplied the town, even though this section of line was not ours; because without it, power could not be delivered to the town. As you know our crews, in conjunction with the Monroe Crews were able to restore power to 98% of our customers by 4:00 pm on Sunday afternoon, which is when Progress Energy reenergized the feeder that provides power to La Grange. The power was restored to 100% of our customers (those of who did not have damage to their services and could be reconnected) by 10:30 pm on Sunday.

This effort was only made possible by the outstanding effort and team work by all town departments. They worked as a single unit, and shared resources as necessary to get the job done.

Wesley Sutton and his crew worked to keep the Wastewater Treatment Plant up and running while simultaneously working with the Fire Department and Tyrone's crews to cut trees and clear the streets. Tyrone's crews cleared clogged/blocked catch basins and worked alongside Keith and Wayne to restore power to our customers. Heith worked with the Electric crew on Saturday. The Finance Department manned the phone lines and got information to us, and our customers allowing the other crews to get things back to as close to normal as possible. Considering the scope of the work to be done, it went extremely smoothly; and could not have been possible without the extraordinary effort of our town employees. Individual employees worked as much as 44 hours on Saturday and Sunday alone. If you see your town employees, please let them know how much you appreciated their efforts.

In short, it was a total town employee effort to get through the storm and restore things to normal as quickly as possible. After the lights were back on, the clean up begins. Having met with FEMA and NCEM on two different occasions, we have estimated 500 loads of debris will have to be removed and carried to the landfill. This will be done largely through the debris management contract that we entered into over a year ago with Lenoir County, the City of Kinston, and Unified (the removal contractor). Two crews began working on Monday (Labor Day) to remove debris from the main roads and the area immediately surrounding the park facilities where the Garden Spot Festival will be held, which adds additional responsibilities and duties to crews already working diligently to return the town to normalcy. Although the contractor is in town, our crews are going behind them to remove leaves, small debris, and construction debris not covered by the contract. This effort will take a significant amount of time, likely to take 4-6 weeks to complete. The cleanup effort (debris removal) could not begin until the landfill was ready to accept the debris that would be carried to them, which is the reason why that effort did not start until Monday. Obviously, special pick up fees were waived during the storm debris removal process. We will notify our citizens in advance of the date that special pickup fees will begin again. I will be better able to determine that date as we get a bit closer to completing the removal of debris from the town.

As for estimated costs that we can expect, they are impossible to determine exact numbers at this point. Our best estimates are that we will have between \$75,000 and \$100,000 in damage to the electric system, with storm debris removal costs estimated at \$100,000. As you know, Lenoir County was declared a disaster area, and FEMA will cover 75% of the cost of the recovery effort. Historically, the State of North Carolina has covered the remaining 25%, but the current state budget does not include adequate funds to cover the 25% of the damage that is anticipated for Lenoir County alone. As I mentioned to you earlier, the Mayor and I met

with Governor Perdue, Representative Stephen Laroque, and Senator Brent Jackson, all of whom stated that the State would be there for us. I hope that they will be. I think Governor Perdue said it best when she said “that the proof is in the vote”. If the state does not cover the 25% that the historically have covered, the town can expect to spend \$35,000-\$50,000 for the storm recovery effort.

I will discuss some changes that we will make to further improve our response to future storms; and how we plan to better communicate the Town’s conditions and activities to the Council in future storms. I have become very reliant on email to communicate instantly to all Council members, but due to the loss of the internet services in the area and the fact that the power was out for an extended period of time, email communications was impossible. Phone service was nearly non-existent as well; so we will determine how to best communicate with the Council in the future in conditions similar to these.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational Item – No Action is Required.



PURCHASE OF GENERATOR FOR TOWN HALL

AGENDA ITEM # 9B

In the past, we had briefly discussed purchasing a generator for Town Hall but we had not decided to do that. Hurricane Irene proved the importance of a fully functional Town Hall regardless of the conditions outside. During Irene, the Town Hall was manned and staffed continuously, as we needed to answer our citizen's calls for service. The small portable generator that we have here at Town Hall could run a very limited amount of the Town Hall, and because of the fluctuation of the power produced by smaller generators, caused the phone system to go up and down. Our phone system handles calls after hours, and in the event of a power outage, only has a battery backup with a limited amount of storage capacity to continue to receive and route calls for service. A generator at Town Hall that automatically turns on and runs the Town Hall would ensure that the phone system remains functional, so long as the telephone company lines remain intact.

The cost of a generator to enable the Town Hall to function at full capacity is estimated at \$40,000. This cost would be recovered as we would be able to put the Town Hall on the load management program and generate our power during periods of load management, which would reduce the utility bill each month, while simultaneously reducing our utility demand charges from Progress Energy. The estimated payback for the generator is 6 years, but the benefits of having a fully functional Town Hall at all times justifies the expense.

I recommend authorizing the Town Manager to determine the appropriate size generator to run the Town Hall at full capacity, take informal bids, and authorize the purchase and installation of the generator at Town Hall at a cost not to exceed \$40,000.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize Town Manager to size, quote, purchase, and install generator for Town Hall at a cost not to exceed \$40,000.



TOWN HALL IMPROVEMENTS

AGENDA ITEM # 9C

We would like to discuss the installation of a drive thru and third collection counter. The third collection point is desperately needed during the busiest days for collections which are generally the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 15th, and 20th of each month. We have had repeated requests by our elderly and handicapped customers to install a drive thru. We have explored the options for this improvement, and have some budget figures for your consideration and review.

The cost for the installation of a Pneumatic Tube drive thru system would be \$17,808. The installation would require minimal changes internally, but would require us to reverse vehicular traffic behind Town Hall which would require us to restripe the eastern portion of the parking lot, which our Public Works staff could do with minimal expense.

This improvement would improve our customer service to all customers, but particularly the elderly and handicap.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the installation of the pneumatic tube drive thru system at Town Hall at a cost of \$17,808.



CONSIDER MODIFYING CREDIT CARD PAYMENT GUIDELINES

AGENDA ITEM # 9D

We need to discuss credit card payment issues that have arisen since we started the EasyPay Program. We are charged \$0.85 / transaction, plus 1% of the transaction in credit card fees. For customers that make multiple smaller credit card payments, the fees have become an issue. We looked at a couple of customers who made multiple transactions and determined that we actually lose money on these customers in that instance. Multiple small payments are not an issue if made in cash, but they are if made by credit card. For example:

One customer made the following **39** payments in a 30 day period:

	Date	Description	Amount	CC PMT	Cost	Net
			\$	\$	\$	\$
1	9/7/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
2	9/6/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
3	9/5/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
4	9/4/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
5	9/3/2011	Online Visa	12.00	12.00	0.97	11.03
			\$	\$	\$	\$
6	9/2/2011	Online Visa	12.00	12.00	0.97	11.03
			\$	\$	\$	\$
7	9/1/2011	Online Visa	12.00	12.00	0.97	11.03
			\$	\$	\$	\$
8	8/31/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
9	8/30/2011	Cash/Counter	15.00	-	-	15.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
10	8/29/2011	Cash/Counter	5.00	-	-	5.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
11	8/29/2011	Cash/Counter	5.00	-	-	5.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
12	8/26/2011	Cash/Counter	35.00	-	-	35.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
13	8/25/2011	Cash/Counter	15.00	-	-	15.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
14	8/24/2011	Cash/Counter	3.25	-	-	3.25

			\$	\$	\$	\$
15	8/24/2011	Cash/Counter	10.00	-	-	10.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
16	8/23/2011	Cash/Counter	10.00	-	-	10.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
17	8/22/2011	Cash/Counter	12.00	-	-	12.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
18	8/20/2011	Online Visa	12.00	12.00	0.97	11.03
			\$	\$	\$	\$
19	8/19/2011	Online Visa	12.00	12.00	0.97	11.03
			\$	\$	\$	\$
20	8/18/2011	Cash/Counter	16.00	-	-	16.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
21	8/17/2011	Online Visa	15.00	15.00	1.00	14.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
22	8/17/2011	Online Visa	1.50	1.50	0.87	0.64
			\$	\$	\$	\$
23	8/17/2011	Cash/Counter	5.00	-	-	5.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
24	8/16/2011	Online Visa	6.00	6.00	0.91	5.09
			\$	\$	\$	\$
25	8/16/2011	Cash/Counter	3.00	-	-	3.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
26	8/15/2011	Online Visa	13.00	13.00	0.98	12.02
			\$	\$	\$	\$
27	8/15/2011	Online Visa	3.00	3.00	0.88	2.12
			\$	\$	\$	\$
28	8/13/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
29	8/13/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
30	8/13/2011	Online Visa	3.00	3.00	0.88	2.12
			\$	\$	\$	\$
31	8/12/2011	Online Visa	15.00	15.00	1.00	14.00
			\$	\$	\$	\$
32	8/12/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
33	8/11/2011	Online Visa	10.00	10.00	0.95	9.05
			\$	\$	\$	\$
34	8/11/2011	Online Visa	3.00	3.00	0.88	2.12
			\$	\$	\$	\$
35	8/10/2011	Online Visa	14.00	14.00	0.99	13.01
			\$	\$	\$	\$
36	8/10/2011	Online Visa	5.00	5.00	0.90	4.10
			\$	\$	\$	\$
37	8/9/2011	Online Visa	16.00	16.00	1.01	14.99
			\$	\$	\$	\$
38	8/8/2011	Online Visa	17.00	17.00	1.02	15.98

39	8/7/2011	Online Visa	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 0.86	\$ 0.14
TOTAL			\$ 396.75	\$ 262.50	\$ 25.58	\$ 371.18

OR

\$371.18

\$

4.56

The customer made 39 payments in 30 days; 12 cash payments, and 27 credit card payments. As a result of the credit card payments, one as low as \$1.00; which cost the town \$0.86 in fees, so we netted only \$0.14 of the \$1.00 payment. All totaled, the credit card payments were \$262.50, with fees of \$25.58. Had the customer made a single payment of \$262.50, the fees would have only been \$3.48, but because there were multiple payments, the fees were \$22.10 higher than they would have been. We particularly lose money when the payments are so small. If payments are \$25 minimum, the fees would have been \$1.10 each time with the fees representing \$11.55 as opposed to \$25.58.

We recognize that there is a need for more frequent payments, but would respectfully recommend that smaller payments be required to be made in cash or by check or money order in the office. Town Staff recommends that the minimum credit card purchase be set at \$25.00 at a minimum. Higher amounts reduce fees. For example, a \$40 payment would generate only \$1.25 fee. So the higher the better.

We can not pass along the fee without compromising our utility rate, which is 1% of the transaction cost as opposed to 2.3% if we impose fees. In order to reduce our exposure, we need to require minimum credit card payment amounts.

RECOMMENDATION: Set minimum credit card payment amount at \$25.



UPDATE ON STATUS OF PARTF GRANT APPLICATION

AGENDA ITEM # 10A

As you are aware, we have been unsuccessful in obtaining a PARTF Grant after two failed applications. Due to the current state of the economy, the funding available for award has been significantly reduced; thereby causing the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund to reduce the number of projects that are funded annually, as a result, the application process is much more competitive making the scoring of individual project more important. One area that we can gain additional points is to have a Recreation Master Plan in place. We originally considered developing a Comprehensive Recreation Plan for the entire Town; but opted not to do that due to the fact that the cost estimates for this plan from consultants was approximately \$30,000 and it was felt that the \$30,000 would be better utilized by using that \$30,000 as matching funds for our multipurpose recreation complex.

Since that time, I have learned that the Eastern Carolina Council (ECC) has staff that can complete the Comprehensive Master Plan for us at a fraction of the cost. The cost to develop this plan utilizing the ECC is \$2,500. Since the cost is significantly lower, I would recommend that the Council engage the ECC to complete the plan and our application for the PARTF application this year, and repeat all necessary steps to maximize the potential points received, if the Council wishes to submit an application in the 2012 funding cycle.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational Item – No Action is Required.



UPDATE ON WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS

AGENDA ITEM # 10B

I will update you on the progress of improvements of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements.

RECOMMENDATION: Informational Item – No Action is Required.



**UPDATE:
RAIL CROSSING CLOSURES,
SIGNALIZATION, AND RAILROAD &
CHARLES STREETS TRAFFIC
PATTERN**

AGENDA ITEM # 10C

As you will remember, representatives of the North Carolina Railroad (NCR) have requested that you consider a change to the traffic pattern at the intersection of Charles & Railroad Streets. Currently, traffic flows freely on Railroad Streets with traffic on Charles stopping at the intersection of both North and South Railroad Streets.

NCR is requesting that you consider changing the pattern to free flowing on Charles Street, and stopping the Railroad Streets Traffic; which would make the traffic flow just like it is at Railroad and Charles.

I think that there are advantages to their pattern, but I am not certain which would be the best pattern for the area. I spoke with Lieutenant Jerry Davis, who thinks that the proposed pattern would be better than the current plan, as it would eliminate the possibility of stalled vehicles on the tracks.

At your November Council Meeting, you instructed me to ask for a traffic count and NC DOT's recommendation relative to the request and report back to the Council. I did ask NCDOT for a recommendation, and a traffic count, but have not heard back from them on this request. I did speak with Duane Allgood (NCDOT) at the Highway 70 Corridor Commission Meeting last month and he is planning a "limited count" of the traffic at that intersection during periods of "peak" traffic, which I requested to include 7-9 am and from 2-4 pm in order to determine the traffic flows while school is taking in and dismissing. I can't advise a firm timeline for that count, and pending recommendation from NCDOT at this time.

RECOMMENDATION: No Action Required – Informational Only.



CLOSED SESSION

AGENDA ITEM # 11

I am requesting a closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) (7) (8).

RECOMMENDATION: