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# City of Southport

## January 2021 Newsletter

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### *A Community Update from Mayor J.P. Hatem, MD, MPH*

It is a New Year, with a new beginning, with new ideas, goals, priorities and endeavors as we continue to build a foundation for success in 2021.

We bring with us projects from 2020, some completed, some with more work to be done. Regardless, the City of Southport has embraced “A Better Way Forward” as we continue the work of the people, guided in part by the principles of public health, including policy and leadership. I look forward to every challenge, every goal, every opportunity to make our city a better place to live, improving the quality of life and preserving the optimism of the human spirit.

We will prevail in 2021. First by protecting our city and our citizens by immunizing our way out of this pandemic, to protecting our environment, our historic heritage, while improving infrastructure and promoting our economy.

As your Mayor, as a doctor, as a public health advocate, I pledge to you that I will continue to dedicate myself to the success of our city and to the protection of its citizens.

I wish you the blessings of good health, happiness, success, and a much improved New Year in 2021.

Joe Pat Hatem, MD, MPH

Southport City Hall, 1029 N. Howe Street, Southport, NC 28461

(910) 457-7900 [www.cityofsouthport.com](http://www.cityofsouthport.com)





### *A message from Southport City Manager, Gordon Hargrove*

As we usher in the new year, it's hard to believe I have been with the city for seven months. During my interview to serve Southport's residents as city manager, I was asked the question, "What do you know about Southport"? I replied that I thought Southport was a fantastic community and that I could see myself calling Southport home. I had been to Southport numerous times during the past few years and had the opportunity to interact with residents during those visits. Everyone was so friendly, helpful, and kind. Southport's sense of community impressed me and made my family and I feel at home. So what is a community? According to one definition, "community is a feeling of fellowship with others, resulting in sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals." Here in Southport, whether you are a native, local, or new arrival like me, we all have the same common goal: to make Southport the best place possible to live, work, and play. While listening and communicating with one another and respecting Southport's history, we as a community can ensure Southport's success both today and into the future. That's what I know about Southport!

*"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day."* Charles Swindoll

### *Southport Planning and Inspections Department*

The purpose of this column is to educate citizens on the City's new tree protection and landscape preservation regulations that were adopted on September 23, 2020. I will discuss the purpose of the regulations, what constitutes a regulated tree and requires a permit, mitigation requirements if a tree must come down, and the permit process itself.

Our urban forest is extremely important to Southport's heritage and character and a healthy tree canopy provides a wide range of benefits to the citizens of Southport. Aesthetically, the nurturing of trees and tree canopy provides for a pleasant and beautiful community in which both residents and visitors can enjoy. A robust tree canopy also provides a consistent cooling effect on our community and individual properties. Property values are also enhanced

when trees are part of the landscape. Trees also have positive effects on storm water and help mitigate damage caused by wind during tropical storms and hurricanes. For all of these reasons, the City of Southport places great value on protecting our urban forest and **because of our efforts**, Southport has been recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation for 16 consecutive years as a Tree City USA, (our 17<sup>th</sup> is on the way.)

I will first talk about when a tree permit is necessary. A permit is **not** required to prune trees on your own property. The City does encourage citizens to use proper pruning techniques and more information on pruning and tree care can be found on the Forestry Committee's website: [www.cityofsouthport.com/forestry-committee/](http://www.cityofsouthport.com/forestry-committee/)

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### *Southport Planning and Inspections Department,*

It is also important to note, a tree permit **would** be necessary if a property owner is interested in pruning or removing a tree in the City right-of-way.

For residential lots, a tree removal permit is required to remove any regulated tree within any setback; or a specimen tree located anywhere on the property. Regulated trees are defined as hardwoods greater than 8" diameter at breast height (DBH) and greater than 12" DBH. Specimen trees are defined as **any** tree greater than 30" DBH. If a healthy regulated or specimen tree is removed on a property, the property owner will be required to mitigate the removal by planting 25% of the DBH of the tree back. For example, if a 40" tree is removed on a property, the property owner would be required to plant 10" of trees back. This can be accomplished by planting both canopy and understory trees. The City encourages trees from our native tree list: [Southport-Native-Trees.pdf](#). For nonresidential, multi-family, or major subdivisions, a tree removal permit is required to remove regulated or specimen trees located anywhere on the site. These uses are required to mitigate the total DBH of all applicable regulated and specimen trees that are removed. This is the link to the tree protection and preservation section of the UDO. [2020-09 23 Southport-UDO ADOPTED.pdf](#)

Tree Permits can be applied for on the Planning & Inspections website. Property owners with existing residential structures on their lot can apply for the tree permit only. New construction provides their tree permit information in the building permit. Once the permit is applied for, staff will check to make sure it is complete. Once it is determined to be complete, staff will then schedule an appointment for a site visit to look at the tree. If mitigation is required, staff will



Southern Magnolia, *Magnolia grandiflora*, located on the Fort Johnston Garrison lawn.

then let the property owner know what the mitigation requirements are. Once the property owner has agreed to plant the required mitigation, the permit will be issued. You may send any questions on the tree removal process to [tlloyd@cityofsouthport.com](mailto:tlloyd@cityofsouthport.com) or call at 910-457-7961. This is the link to our tree removal permit: [www.cityofsouthport.com/viewpoint-cloud/](http://www.cityofsouthport.com/viewpoint-cloud/)

It is important to know that the intent of the Tree Preservation article and the permitting process is not specifically to prevent the removal of trees – the intent is to ensure that when removal is desired, or necessary, that new trees are planted in order for us to maintain and improve the health of our beautiful and beneficial urban forest landscape.

### *Meet... City Planner, Thomas Lloyd*



My name is Thomas Lloyd and I have been the City Planner for Southport since August of 2016. It's hard to believe, it seems like I just started here just yesterday. I came to Southport after completing my Bachelor's and Master's degree at North Carolina State University. Go Wolfpack! Getting a job down here at the coast was a dream come true considering I am a native of this area. I am originally from Oak Island.

As the City Planner, I am responsible for Administering the Unified Development Ordinance and the City's zoning map. You might ask, what is the Unified Development Ordinance? The Unified Development Ordinance is a collection of all the City's development rules and regulations. This includes rules for the administering the ordinance, our review procedures, zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, the flood damage prevention ordinance, stormwater regulations, and wireless communication facilities regulations. Administering the ordinance means ensuring that development meets the standards of our UDO while also making necessary changes to the UDO as needed. The UDO is a living document, we recently completed a full rewrite in September. I also help coordinate and facilitate the development review processes for the City. This includes zoning permits, floodplain permits, tree permits, CAMA minor permits, minor site plans, major site plans, major subdivisions, planned unit developments, zoning text amendments, zoning map amendments, variances, special use permits, and appeals to the Board of Adjustment. Due to this, I work closely with the Board of Aldermen as well as other appointed committees. I serve as the City Liaison to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Forestry Committee, and the newly appointed Yacht Basin Overlay District Committee.

My favorite activities in Southport include swinging at Waterfront Park, sitting at the Garrison lawn, enjoying the scenic view at the Marsh Walk, and frequenting our wonderful restaurants. In my spare time, I enjoy live music, exercising, hiking and camping in the mountains, sailing, playing tennis, and playing and watching sports.

Southport is home. It's been a blessing to start my public service career in an area near and dear to my heart.



*The City of Southport wishes you a happy and healthy New Year!*

### *Southport Tourism and Communications Department*

Welcome, I'm Randy Jones a native son of Southport and I would like to introduce you to the Department of Tourism and Communications. It is my honor to have served almost 15 years as the City of Southport Tourism Director and most recently, the added responsibility as the Public Information Officer. Our mission has grown over the years, but our ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of life in Southport. We never quite know what a day ahead will bring us, but we welcome the challenge. With this past year bringing with it a daily unknown of what to expect we needed to look at every situation with a Plan A and a Plan B. Keeping our core goals in focus, the Department worked with any opportunity that would help highlight Southport and help everyone get thru this difficult time.



With the leadership of Sharon Venis, Asst. Director of Tourism, and Lisa Anderson, Asst. Director of Communications, our Department has been able to find new ways to meet this task.

Prior to the Fort Johnston - Southport Museum and Visitors' Center closing its doors on March 17th, we had a yearly average of 40,000 people thru our doors, with a volunteer group of over 45 Ambassadors eager to help with their welcoming smiles as one of the benchmarks that ensure visitors enjoy their time in Southport. Our office has produced over 15 brochures that highlight everything from a map and merchant guide, movie locations, biking routes, the history of Fort Johnston, and a scavenger hunt of the museum. One example of how we were able to adapt was the Southport Virtual Merchant Showcase. It is a way for everyone to learn that not only is a business safe, but they had multiple ways to receive their products and services.

Our Department works very closely with many of the nonprofits that help to give us a full schedule of events to enjoy in Southport. Examples of those are the Black History weekend, Spring Festival, NatureFest, Memorial Day, NC 4th of July Festival, Wooden Boat Show, and Winterfest. Over the past year, we were able to still represent these events by working to make them available as a Virtual Event.

Communications is the one area that we have worked to grow over the past year. Our website is one of the best ways to learn about daily happenings in the City. We have developed many new ways to make Southport more accessible to our citizens. We are now live-streaming all Board of Aldermen meetings, filming multiple messages from the Mayor, citizen email blasts, and a multi-layered social media approach.

The City of Southport's website: [www.southport.com](http://www.southport.com) and on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cityofsouthportnc/](https://www.facebook.com/cityofsouthportnc/)

### *Southport Visitor Center Volunteers*



### *Meet... Visitor Center Volunteer, Barbara Stockbridge-Davidson*



My name is Barbara Stockbridge-Davidson. I am proud to say I am the first volunteer the City of Southport has ever had for their Visitors' Center. I began in 1997 when the Visitor Center was on Nash Street (currently the Southport Fire Substation). When the Visitors' Center changed locations to Moore Street and eventually to the Fort Johnston Garrison House, I relocated with them. This will be my 24th year as a volunteer!

I work with a team of volunteers to welcome guests to Southport, providing maps and brochures and answering LOTS of questions.... everything from, "What should we do while we're here?" to "When was the Fort built?" The most enjoyable part of my job is talking with people. We frequently have visitors from out-of-state, and even out-of-country. It amazes me that so many find our hidden gem, Southport.

One time, I was talking to a couple from California. It was their first time here, and they had lots of questions. Lots of laughs later, they looked at each other and said, "We have to move here!"

I was so surprised when three months later, I saw them back at the Visitors' Center. I greeted them, and they were so excited to tell me that they were now official residents of Southport! They had come back to thank me for introducing them to such a wonderful place.

I grew up in Portland, Maine. My father was a sea captain, and we lived right by the water. He ferried people to the many islands off the coast. I spent my summer vacations with him on his boat, playing with my dolls in the captain's quarter. It was the best childhood a person could ever have. Since then, I have always lived close to the water. When my husband and I bought our house in Southport 26 years ago, it was because of the view! We had to renovate the 150-year-old building, but strived to keep it as original as we could.

My favorite place is sitting with my husband on our front porch, overlooking the Cape Fear River, watching the boat traffic and the ibis flying overhead. We can see the Yacht Basin, Battery Island, the Oak Island Lighthouse, and Baldhead Island.

Southport is a slice of heaven. It is the absolute best place to live!



### *Southport Forestry Committee*

“Winter” is pruning season!

Most folks have been taught or are aware that winter, when trees are dormant, is the time to prune. That’s true, particularly if you live up north where most species do go “dormant” or at least slow their growth. Down here in Southport where “winter” can be any number of things, the rules aren’t so strict given our climate. That being said, this time of year is still a great time to take a look at the young trees in our yard and see if they need a little cleaning up.

So why do we prune? Pruning is done for a variety of reasons – there can be branches that are dead/dying/or diseased (these should be removed any time of the year). There are branches that should be taken care of while the tree is young to avoid problems later as well. There may be branches that are broken, crossing other branches, growing inward towards the trunk, all of which should be dealt with earlier rather than later. There are also those suckers coming out of the trunk, water sprouts coming out of the roots, or branches at severe (acute) angles that potentially can be a limb’s weak spot. All should be removed before the tree reaches maturity.

Sometimes we want to prune for shape to make the tree more attractive. We can decide what we want the lowest remaining branch (LRB) to be so that we don’t have to dodge it later while cutting the grass.

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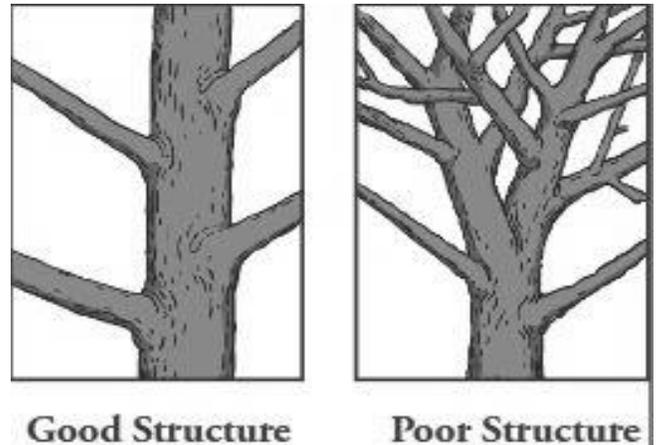
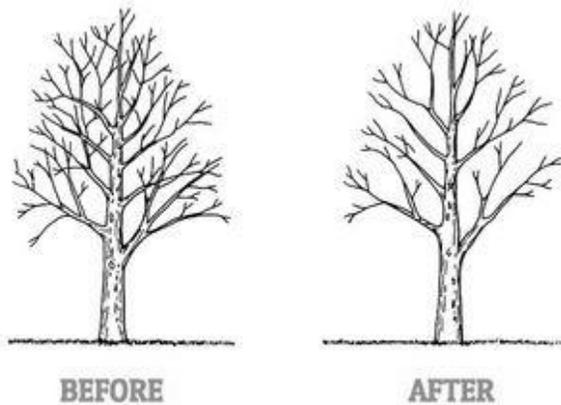
### *Forestry Continued*

We might also want to remove a branch that is out of balance with the form of the tree, or may be a hazard later by growing too close to the house. We also may want to clean out the inner branches a bit to lessen the trees wind resistance and allow more light to the interior. The important thing is to know the “growth habit” (i.e. what a good specimen looks like) is for that species, and work towards that ideal.

Finally, remember that pruning is a process – it may take several seasons to gain the desired effect from our efforts. We also don’t want to remove more than about 25% of the canopy at any one time as we don’t want to cause any stress on the tree. Trees are resilient, so don’t be afraid, but be mindful and have a plan.

**Happy New Year!**

**Scott A. Len Chairman**



### Southport

### A “Tree City” Since 2004

Tree City USA Standards

To qualify as a Tree City USA community, FOUR STANDARDS established by the Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters must be met.

These standards were established to ensure that every qualifying community would have a viable tree management program and that no community would be excluded because of size.

There are some good resources available on the Forestry Committee web page: <https://southportnc.org/forestry-committee/>

- Pruning Young Trees: [https://cityofsouthport.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pruning\\_YoungTrees.pdf](https://cityofsouthport.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pruning_YoungTrees.pdf)
- Tree Owner’s manual: [https://cityofsouthport.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TreeOwner\\_final.pdf](https://cityofsouthport.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TreeOwner_final.pdf)

### *Southport Beautification Committee*

#### **Garden Steward Program**

This past year the Southport Beautification Committee launched a new and exciting Garden Steward Program. This newly formed program works hand in hand with our main beautification program and its hundred volunteers dedicated to keeping our town “beautiful.”

The city currently has twenty garden areas that the Beautification Committee plants and maintains. Our garden steward volunteers agree to spot check and help care for one of these specific areas for a period of one year, November through October.

This involves visiting their assigned area at least once a week to see how it is doing. The program involves maintenance of the spot by watering, deadheading, and light weeding, all done at the steward’s pace and on their own timeframe. We ask that each steward be the “eyes” of the site they have been assigned. Are the plants suffering from the heat? Are weeds getting out of control?

When more extensive action is required at a spot, the Garden Stewardship Coordinator puts in a request for help on that site during the next regularly scheduled Saturday workday or pop up. We always work as a team, drawing from the full membership of the beautification volunteer group to pitch in on workdays to assist in addressing any site’s needs.

Garden stewards are paired with another volunteer throughout the year, so they can alternate duties and cover for each other when someone is out of town or otherwise unavailable. Stewards are always encouraged to offer any suggestions they may have for future site improvement.

We currently have volunteer opportunities for new stewards and alternates at some newly created sites. It is a fun way for people to get involved in our wonderful town, doing it at a time that is convenient for you.

Visit us at:

<https://cityofsouthport.com/beautification-committee/>

For more information on becoming a garden steward, please contact:

Lynne Geiman, Coordinator

Southport Beautification Committee  
Garden Stewardship Program

scarlet517@hotmail.com or

973-356-7081



*Volunteers visit one of the 20 sites BC maintains and offer suggestions on care and maintenance.*

### *A Glimpse of Southport History*

#### **Rice Plantations in the Lower Cape Fear**

Beginning in the mid-1700s, due to the natural advantages of climate, soil, freshwater, and access to Atlantic shipping lanes, at least thirty-five rice plantations lined the banks of waterways in the lower Cape Fear region. Some plantations close to Southport were Howe, York, Orton, Kendal, Snow's point, and Lilliput. The 10,000 acre Orton Plantation, situated on the west bank of the Cape Fear River about halfway between Wilmington and Southport, was among the largest and the first to produce rice.

At an auction in 1824, Orton's natural advantage was described: "...land of a strong and fertile soil, which...will produce at least 100 lbs. of cotton or 4 tierces (Barrels) of rice, to the acre...more capable of being well-drained than



any on the river...included...is a very superior and never failing Mill stream...thus rendering Orton one of the most valuable Rice plantations in the country." (*Wilmington Chronicle*, August 28, 1824). *The Big Book of the Cape Fear River* by Claude V. Jackson III, edited by Jack E. Fryar, Jr.

#### **History of Hoppin' John**



Hoppin' John is found in most states of the South, but it is mainly associated with the Carolinas. Hoppin' John is also known to many as Carolina Peas and Rice. Gullah or Low Country cuisine reflects the cooking of the Carolinas. Black-eyed peas, also called cowpeas, are thought to have been introduced to America by African slaves who worked the rice plantations. Hoppin' John is a rich bean dish made of black-eyed peas simmered with spicy sausages, ham hocks, or fat pork, and rice.

There are many variations to traditional Hoppin' John. Some cook the black-eyed peas and rice in one pot, while others insist on simmering them separately. Some also like to add the collard greens to the pot. The favorite way to eat a Hoppin' John meal is with collard greens and cornbread. Each item on the plate has a symbolic meaning for the New Year. Black-eyed Peas represent "coins," collard greens represent money or "greenbacks", cornbread represents "gold," and if tomatoes are added to Hoppin' John it symbolizes "health".

The first written recipe for Hoppin' John appeared in *The Carolina Housewife* in 1847. Most food historians generally agree that Hoppin' John is an American dish with African/French/Caribbean roots.

<https://whatscookingamerica.net/History/HoppinJohn.htm>

## January 2021 Newsletter

### Southport Style Recipes

Southern saying on eating a dish of Hoppin' John on New Year's Day:

*"Eat poor that day, eat rich the rest of the year. Rice for riches and peas for peace."*

#### Hoppin' John

Serves: 4 to 6

Hands On Time: 45 minutes

Total Time: 2 hours and 20 minutes



[www.southernkitchen.com/recipes/side-dish/hoppin-john](http://www.southernkitchen.com/recipes/side-dish/hoppin-john)

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound dried black-eyed peas
- 8 cups chicken stock
- 1 ham hock
- 1 yellow onion, peeled and halved
- 1 carrot, peeled and halved
- 1 rib celery, halved
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 8 slices smoky bacon, sliced 1/2 inch thick
- 2 cups Carolina Gold Rice
- 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped Italian parsley
- 6 to 8 scallions, thinly sliced

#### DIRECTIONS

- Rinse the black-eyed peas in water and remove any pebbles. Transfer to a large bowl and add water to cover by at least 2 inches. Let soak at room temperature overnight.
- The next day, drain the peas.
- In a large stock pot, combine the chicken stock, ham hock, onion, carrot, celery and bay leaves. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to low and simmer until the broth is fully flavored, about 1 hour. Add in the soaked and drained peas, return to a simmer, and cook on low heat until tender, about 1 hour. Turn off the heat and remove the ham hock, onion, carrot, celery and bay leaves. Pick the meat from the hock and add it back to the peas. Stir in the vinegar and season to taste with salt and pepper.
- Meanwhile, cook the bacon in a large skillet over medium heat until crisp, about 10 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and let cool. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the rendered bacon fat.
- Wash the rice with cold water until the water runs clear.
- Put rice in a large saucepan and cover with the water, the reserved bacon fat and 1 teaspoon kosher salt. Cover, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to low and cook until the water is absorbed, 10 minutes. Turn off the heat, but leave covered to steam for another 10 minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork.
- In a large bowl, gently mix the rice and peas with the parsley, half of the bacon and half of the scallions. The mixture should be moist, but not runny. Scatter the remaining bacon and scallions on top and serve.



### UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS

- **Forestry Committee**  
*2nd Tuesday of each month*  
January 11, 5 p.m. - (ITMH)
- **Park & Recreation Board**  
*2nd Tuesday of each month*  
January 11, 6 p.m. - (ITMH)
- **ABC Board**  
*2nd Wednesday of each month*  
January 12, 6:30 p.m. - (ITMH)
- **Board of Aldermen**  
*2nd Thursday of each month*  
January 14, 6 p.m. - (SCB)
- **Beautification Committee**  
*3rd Monday of each month*  
January 18, 5 p.m. - (ITMH)
- **Planning & Zoning Board**  
*3rd Thursday of each month*  
January 21, 6 p.m. - (SCB)
- **Zoning Board of Adjustments**  
*4th Tuesday of each month*  
January 26, 4:30 p.m. - (SCB)

*City meetings are open to the public. Seating is limited. Social distancing and facial coverings are required.*

*The City of Southport does not discriminate on the basis of disability.*

*If you need an auxiliary aid or service or other accommodation in order to attend or fully participate at this meeting, please contact the Clerk's office as far in advance of the meeting as is possible so that your request can be considered.*

Southport Community Building (SCB)  
223 East Bay Street  
Indian Trail Meeting Hall (ITMH)  
110 West Moore Street

City offices will be CLOSED: January 1, New Year's Day and  
January 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

### *Southport ABC Board*

The Southport ABC Board is a non-profit state-controlled Liquor Store. All of our profits go to the City of Southport, Law Enforcement and Alcohol Education/Rehab. The store is self-sufficient. We pay our own employees and our own bills. The state or local government does not pay any of our expenses. The State controls the prices and what items we can carry. We have a Local ABC Board that is appointed by Southport City Alderman. The Board members are on 3-year terms and after their term is up they ask to be reappointed or if they do not the city puts out applications for a new Board Member.

Our Current Members are Board Chairman – William Davis, Board Members – Angela Wadsworth and Zach Zuehlke. Our liaison between the ABC Board and the City is Alderman Mark Spencer.

As mentioned previously our distributions go to 3 different entities:

- 5% goes to the City Of Southport Police Dept.
- 7% goes to Alcohol Education/Rehab – We support the Anchor Initiative through the Brunswick County Sheriff's Dept. This program helps pay for rehab for people who want to go. The following link will give you more information about the program: <https://www.brunswicksheriff.com/community-programs/anchor-initiative>
- The rest goes to the City of Southport General Fund.

Last Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2020 we distributed the following funds:

- City Of Southport Law Enforcement - \$18,989
- Alcohol Education/Rehab (Anchor Initiative) - \$26,585
- City Of Southport - \$449,196

This Fiscal Year for Quarter 1 – July 1st through September 30th distributions are as follow:

- City Of Southport Law Enforcement - \$6400.00
- Alcohol Education/Rehab (Anchor Initiative) - \$8961.00
- City Of Southport - \$147,131

Our goal is to provide the best service and product choices that we can for the City of Southport, surrounding areas and its visitors. Thank you for your support and patronage we look forward to continuing to serve and provide product to the City of Southport and surrounding areas. If we don't have a product that you are looking for please ask and we will do what we can to get it if available.

Todd Dunn, General Manager

Southport City Hall, 1029 N. Howe Street, Southport, NC 28461

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