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City of Southport

April 2021 Newsletter

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

April, where the blossoms of spring are even more apparent as the azaleas which adorn our city, neighborhoods, and yards displaying a collage of pink and white bringing beauty and hope to us all.

Could January envision April? Vaccines scarce initially are now available to all beginning April 7th—no longer a group by group event. I urge you to sign up today if you have not received your immunization:

- brunswickcountync.org/vaccine
- novanthealth.org
- walgreens.com
- gallowaysands.com
- commwellhealth.org
- Brunswick County Vaccination Clinic—call 910-253-2339
- Robert Wilson MD on Howe St. Call for an appointment 910-363-5065
- Plan Your Vaccine nbcnews.com

You may also call your doctor's office for assistance in obtaining a vaccine. The Final Four NCAA Basketball Tournament is approaching so “Take Your Best Shot.” We will continue to follow Governor Cooper’s Executive Orders, now order 204 that further eases restrictions concerning COVID-19. *Continued.*

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

(910) 457-7900 www.cityofsouthport.com





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

Continued from previous page.



Our most pressing project, the Sewer Project on Howe Street, continues block by block and as with any major project, there are delays due to certain specifications that must be met. I called a special meeting of the Board of Aldermen to address these changes, and by their actions, and in consultation with city staff in public services, made the necessary decisions to keep the project moving forward. We will continue to work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to keep delays to a minimum.

The First Lady and I visited with many of the businesses and restaurants in our city and we found that the majority of them understand the necessity for this work and are pleased with the city's response to the interruptions due to the Howe Street Sewer Project. I want to thank the Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce for working with the city in supporting our efforts in promoting our businesses. As the signs state: "Pardon our Dust! Sidewalks and shops are open during construction. Thank you for your patience as we update our circa 1913 sewer infrastructure." And in lights: "Businesses and Sidewalks are Open." By April 1st, if not sooner, Howe Street should be open from Bay Street to W. West Street, which includes the first three blocks of Howe Street. I have walked the construction site, seen the mounds of dirt, the big yellow construction equipment, the pavers in the middle of the road, it all sums up in the end as progress.

The City of Southport continues to work on our budget for the next fiscal year in terms of how we pay for the necessary services and infrastructure improvements that will meet the expectations of our citizens. This requires continued strategic planning and innovative revenues for funding.

Our City Dock is being rejuvenated, board by board. Another sign of spring and rebirth.

Another sign of spring, our restaurants all over our city are busy with outside and indoor dining from the yacht basin establishments, to Mr. P's, to Dry Street Pub and Pizza, to Local's Family Diner and Famous Subs and Pizza, our citizens are leaving winter hibernation and tourists are returning to our city. *Continued next page.*





A Community Update by Mayor Hatem, MP, MPH

Continued from previous page.

April is National Autism Awareness Month, we look to our medical doctors, scientists, and researchers for more answers and prayers for a breakthrough. We do the same in April for National Cancer Control Month. National Public Health Week is April 5–11 and we salute our Public Health Community in particular for their unyielding response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and so many more public health initiatives. And we remember April 30, 1975, the fall of Saigon, as we most recently honored the veterans of that war with flags displayed along Howe Street by the Southport Lions Club for National Vietnam War Veterans Day. April 4th is Easter Sunday. This is the time of year when we again celebrate the blessings of family, friends, the rebirth of life, when our tourists begin to return, like the return of the glorious birds of spring, the Ibis flocks, to Battery Island, when our village opens up as people safely venture out and enjoy and embrace the beauty of Southport.

Happy Easter! The Blessings of Spring to you and your family! And may your table have an abundance of country ham, deviled eggs, and potato salad, all Southport favorites.

Joseph P. Hatem MD MPH
Mayor City of Southport

The Story of a Pothole.

By Tom Stanley and Lisa Anderson, reprinted from social media.

Thanks to Hurricane Florence, there is a rather large pothole on Howe St., at the E. Leonard St. intersection. This is a result of a failed storm drain that runs across Howe St. and down Leonard St. You may have come across this pothole in the road on your travels. Literally.

As some of you may know, the street and storm drains are maintained by NCDOT. And, while the Highway Maintenance Division came over a year ago to work on the pothole and repair the storm drain, they have never repaved it.

The City of Southport has lovingly maintained the pothole by keeping it filled with gravel in hopes that DOT would come and fix the issue.

With our sewer project in full force, we are using this very intersection as part of our detour route and the pothole is taking one heck of a beating. The rain has not been kind to the pothole either.

Now, it just so happens that our sewer line runs beneath the storm drain. In just a few months our sewer contractor will be digging up the exact spot of the pothole. Once the construction is complete on this block, we will be paving the pothole as part of our project. So, while the sewer line isn't the cause of the pothole, it will ultimately be the salvation of it.

Until then, the City will keep up with the care and feeding of the pothole as best we can. Please continue to be patient as we move forward towards the solution to this long overdue repair and the end of the saga of the pothole.





A message from Southport City Manager, Gordon Hargrove

Spring is here! The birds are singing, trees and flowers are budding and the breezes off the river and ocean seem to be a little crisper. Spring is a time of renewal. The City of Southport is no different. Residents tidy up their yards. Merchants replenish their inventories. Spring is a time of hope and joy. The city readies itself for summer. Projects are springing forward. The city dock project is moving at a fast pace and will soon be ready for use. The Taylor Field Park project is on schedule and moving along nicely. It will be nice to have access to another park (especially one with a dog park). Progress on the Howe St. sewer project started off slowly but is gaining momentum. Budget development is on schedule. The Mayor, Board of Aldermen, city staff and myself are working diligently to prepare a fiscally sound budget for the residents of Southport. I for one look forward to my first spring in Southport. There is no place I would rather be.

Welcome spring! Come on in!

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail" – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Meet... Dorothy (Dorrie) Dutton, Southport City Clerk

Hello, Southport! I grew up in the Sandhills of North Carolina, but it has always been my dream of living near the coast. There is something so wonderful about a charming, historical community. I vacationed at Oak Island quite a bit over the years and always ventured over to Southport to enjoy the sights, sit at the waterfront, and visit the old cemeteries. I feel so fortunate to be the City Clerk for Southport.

In my spare time, I enjoy hiking, working out (especially yoga), crafting, dancing, and traveling. I also enjoy checking out breweries, eclectic shops, and restaurants. Right now, I am mostly looking forward to warmer weather and days at the beach. I am the proud fur-mom to a grey tabby cat named Henry. Oh, and most everyone calls me, "Dorrie."



Prior to moving here, I was the Town Clerk and Development Administrator for the Town of Carthage, NC. I learned so much while I was there and was able to obtain and maintain a few certifications such as Certified Zoning Official and Certified Floodplain Manager. I am also a graduate of the Certified Municipal Clerk's program through the UNC School of Government. My passion is helping people and it is my hope to help build trust between local governments and the people they serve. I am looking forward to working with the Board of Aldermen, the other staff members, and the citizens of Southport!



Meet... Scott Jones, Park and Recreation Advisory Board Chairman



My name is Scott Jones. I have been a volunteer for the Park and Recreation Advisory Board for about 30 years. Currently, I serve as the Chairman.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board seeks to make useful, informed recommendations to the City of Southport staff, as well as the Board of Alderman. The Board listens to residents, engages members of the Board of Alderman, State and Federal officials, and consultants regarding concerns, repairs, and projects for the City of Southport parks and recreational programs. Recent ventures have been a combination of storm repair, maintenance, and new projects. Storm repair underway includes the docks at the Yacht Basin and

Kingsley Park, as well as the weather tower. Maintenance includes upgrading the children's playsets in the parks. New projects would include the implementation of the Taylor Field Park plan.

Because recreational sports and activities were so important to me growing up in Southport, I want to make sure that it continues for years to come. It really should come as no surprise that the wonderful folks who have served and currently serve on this board also want to serve generations of Southport residents.

I am born and raised in Southport. Having worked with three different Parks and Recreation Directors for the City, I have had the opportunity to see many changes with the programs and watched our recreational facilities grow. Playing and coaching athletics has been a passion of mine. I have loved watching my three children grow up in this magnificent area. I am a NC licensed building contractor of over 40 years and currently work on the beautiful campus of the Ft. Caswell Baptist Assembly. In my spare time, I enjoy the waters around the Cape Fear River. Fishing with my family is my most relaxing hobby! I never get tired of the waterfront view of the Cape Fear River; it is my favorite place to visit in Southport.

"Southport to me is about family and a life growing up on the river."



Lowe-White Park playground equipment,
installed summer (2020)



Fort Johnston playground equipment,
installed summer of 2019



A Glimpse of History, The Old Yacht Basin City Dock



The City Dock, site of the annual Crab Derby sponsored by the Southport Park & Recreation Department, last held in 2016.

The City of Southport is located in the southeastern portion of North Carolina where the Atlantic Ocean, the Cape Fear River, and the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway merge. The 2010 US Census states the population of Southport as 2,833, but as Southport is located on the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, it makes the city a popular destination for boaters, both local and transient.

In April 1964, a parcel of property along the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway was deeded to the City of Southport. The City began construction of the Old Yacht Basin Dock in 1967 and completed the project two years later. The dock was built to accommodate several rentable boat slips, including one transient slip.

The Old Yacht Basin City Dock became one of the facilities maintained by the Park and Recreation Department, contributing significantly toward the community's overall quality of life.

When Hurricane Matthew hit in October 2016, the City dock suffered major damage. It suffered more damage again during Hurricanes Florence, September 2018, and Isaias in August 2020.

Now, in 2021, almost five years after Hurricane Matthew, funding to repair the Old Yacht Basin City Dock has been secured, a contractor has been hired and repairs are beginning.

Through the combined efforts of Mayor Hatem, City Manager Gordon Hargrove, and Parks and Recreation Director Heather Hemphill along with their teams, this local icon will be returned to its former glory.

In the linked video, local company, McPhereson Marine, begins the demolition to make way for Phase I replacement and rebuilding of the dock.

It is anticipated that Phase I will conclude at the end of June, at which point residents and visitors will be able to enjoy walking and fishing on the dock. <https://youtu.be/U4E6WiQOXu8>

Southport is looking forward to the day we can fish, crab, or just sit and enjoy the wetlands from the Old Yacht Basin City Dock once again.





Southport Beautification Committee

More than just plants!



Southport Beautification Committee volunteers, along with fourteen to fifteen South Brunswick High students, spent a chilly, windy day staining swings and benches at Waterfront Park on the March workday. The students were a tremendous help, working tirelessly to complete the project and adding to their service hours requirement. We look forward to having them back on April 10th, our next monthly workday, scheduled for the second Saturday of the month

due to the holiday. We encourage all to join us as we spruce up our town. Please meet at the old jail annex on the corner of Rhett and Nash streets at 9 a.m. and plan to work until 11 or so. Come meet your neighbors and enjoy the fresh air.

The beautification committee's planning board has two spots opening in June and is seeking candidates who would like to join the other seven members until June 2023. Our by-laws require a minimum of six members to live within Southport city limits and, at most, three members to live outside the city limits, but within the 28461 zip code. The available two spots are only open to city residents, as the board already has three board members from outside the city limits.



Applications are available on the city's website here:

<https://cityofsouthport.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/application-for-appointment-to-board-and-committees-2017.pdf>



Southport Forestry Committee

Situating Your New House or Addition to an Existing Structure in Relation to Protecting the Trees on Your Property

You have at last finalized the plans for the house of your dreams (or that sorely needed addition) but, before you can begin clearing the lot, there are a few things you will need to consider. Additionally, if you have not yet purchased a lot, the items covered in this article should be discussed with your realtor, and especially with your contractor.

The siting of structures is governed by the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). If you have questions about its application, you are encouraged to contact the City Director of Planning at tlloyd@cityofsouthport.com or call 910-4570-7961.

By taking a systematic approach to siting your structure, you can avoid missteps that could result in losing precious time in your construction schedule. To that end, begin the process by ascertaining the setback requirements for your property. The size of your lot, for example, will determine the size of the setback. Knowing the size of the front, back and side setbacks is important because there are different requirements for the removal of trees that are within a setback area and trees that are not. You should also locate the boundary between your lot and the City's right of way (ROW).

Next, acquaint yourself with the tree-related vocabulary that is used in the UDO. For example, the diameter of trees is measured at breast height (DBH), or 4.5 feet from the ground. A regulated tree can be a hardwood greater than 8" in diameter or a conifer greater than 12" in diameter when that tree is located within a setback area. A specimen tree is a tree

of any species whose diameter is 30" or greater that is located anywhere on the property. All trees within the City's ROW are regulated.

Now, look at the siting of the structure that you are contemplating. Will the proposed footprint require the removal of a regulated tree or a specimen tree? If the answer to this is no, then you can proceed as of right (assuming you have your building permit). If the answer is yes, can you avoid this complication by repositioning the structure? Talk to people. There may be an imaginative solution to your dilemma. If nothing comes of these efforts and there are truly no other viable options, you can apply to the City for a tree removal permit. Approval will carry with it certain obligations to mitigate the impact on the City's tree canopy, and staff will inform you of those requirements. There will be a site visit to the property and you will be informed about the mitigation requirements. At a minimum, you will be required to plant trees equal to 25% of the total DBH of all regulated and specimen trees that will be removed. Once you have agreed to the required mitigation, a tree removal permit can be issued.

The City has an obligation to preserve the tree cover, but it is also mindful of the needs of the individual property owner and is deeply committed, within the context of the UDO, to working with property owners to help them achieve their construction goals. If you would like to learn more about these requirements, go to https://cityofsouthport.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/2021-0211-Southport-UDO_Revised.pdf or <https://cityofsouthport.com/forestry-committee/>.



Celebrate Arbor Day April 29th!

Arbor Day, a day set aside each year to celebrate and plant trees, was started by J. Sterling Morton in Nebraska in 1872. Since that first celebration when over a million trees were planted, every State and municipality throughout the country holds this celebration of trees every year.

The official day for National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April. However, official state and local celebration dates can vary due to seasonal variations in planting dates. The official Arbor Day date for North Carolina is the first Friday following March

15th. Given that our planting season here in Southport is even earlier being on the coast, the Southport Forestry Committee, in coordination with the City Grounds Crew, typically plants our new trees around the first of February. This year, there are ten new Live Oak trees scattered throughout the city that join the hundreds of new trees planted over the last 22 years the Committee has been active. These annual plantings will ensure that Southport's beautiful tree canopy and shaded streets will last for Southport's citizens for generations to come.

This year, the Forestry Committee in coordination with the Tourism Department will air a virtual Arbor Day "celebration" on the 29th; keep your eye on Southport's official web page, as well as Facebook feed, to join in.

In the meantime, think about planting a tree in your yard and joining in the celebration!





Animal Protection Services

National Dog Bite Prevention Week is April 11-17

Any dog can bite in stressful situations or if provoked.

Please be a responsible pet owner.

Not everyone around you knows how to correctly act around dogs.

Keep your dog current on Rabies and all other vaccinations.

Keep your dog on a leash and in control.



GOOD DOG.... BAD SITUATION!



Coyotes are one of the most adaptable mammals on the continent. In North Carolina, coyotes are found in all 100 counties and in a range of habitats.

The animal's unique ability to adapt to a wide range of habitats, including suburban environments, along with rapid human population growth across the state, has led to an increase in sightings. While in most cases coyotes are harmless, people can take steps to prevent conflicts with these animals.

You can find more information on the NC Wildlife Resources Commission website www.ncwildlife.org and a link to "Co-Existing with Coyotes" [Coexist-Coyotes-v2.pdf \(ncwildlife.org\)](http://Coexist-Coyotes-v2.pdf (ncwildlife.org)).

The Humane Society of the United States also has good resources for discouraging neighborhood coyotes: Coyote hazing: Guidelines for discouraging neighborhood coyotes | The Humane Society of the United States

Spotlight on Red Fox

Fox sightings are increasingly common across North Carolina, because of the abundance of food and den sites available to foxes in suburban environments.

As with other wildlife, red foxes are adapting to changes in habitat. Fox attacks on people, including children, are rare. While it is in a fox's nature to be curious, and even bold sometimes, they are not aggressive.

More information can be found on the NC Wildlife Resources Commission website www.ncwildlife.org and a link to Co-existing with foxes: [Co exist with foxesUpdate-2018.pdf \(ncwildlife.org\)](http://Co exist with foxesUpdate-2018.pdf (ncwildlife.org))





Recipes Southport Style

Hummingbird Cake

Recipe by: <https://thesouthernladycooks.com/hummingbird-cake/>

The hummingbird cake is commonly believed to have originated in Jamaica. One of the first known publications of the recipe in US print was written by L.H. Wiggins, in the February 1978 issue of *Southern Living*. Later that same year, the cake won the Favorite Cake Award at the Kentucky State Fair. Hummingbird cake is customarily a banana-pineapple spice cake with pecans and a cream cheese frosting. It has become a favorite family tradition in many homes across the Southern United States.

Hummingbird Cake Ingredients:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 3 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups oil (I used Canola)
- 1 (8 ounce can) crushed pineapple, undrained
- 2 cups bananas, mashed or about 3 large bananas
- 1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped

Combine flour, sugar, soda, salt, cinnamon. Mix together with whisk. Add eggs, vanilla extract, oil, pineapple, bananas and pecans and mix with a spoon until all ingredients are wet. Spray 3 (9 inch) round cake pans or a 9 x 13 inch pan. Add batter and bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 30 to 35 minutes until cake is done in center. Frost with cream cheese frosting. Enjoy!



Cream Cheese Frosting:

- 1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 stick butter or margarine or 1/2 cup or 8 tablespoons
- 2 cups confectionery sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla

Whip all frosting ingredients together with mixer until smooth and of spreading consistency.



UPCOMING CITY MEETINGS

Board of Aldermen

2nd Thursday of each month
April 8, 6 p.m. - (SCB)

Forestry Committee

2nd Tuesday of each month
April 13, 5 p.m. - (ITMH)

Park & Recreation Board

2nd Tuesday of each month
April 13, 6:30 p.m. - (ITMH)

ABC Board

2nd Wednesday of each month
April 14, 5 p.m. - (ITMH)

Planning & Zoning Board

3rd Thursday of each month
April 15, 6 p.m. - (SCB)

Beautification Committee

3rd Monday of each month
April 19, 5 p.m. - (ITMH)

Zoning Board of Adjustments

4th Tuesday of each month
April 27, 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