



Town of Holly Ridge

Mayor's Message

MARCH 23, 2026



Happy Monday, everyone. I hope you had a great week and weekend. Officially welcome to spring. Spring arrives like a quiet celebration, softening the edges of winter with longer days and warmer light. Buds begin to open, birds return with familiar songs, and the air carries a sense of renewal that invites people outside again. It's a season of fresh starts—gardens awaken, welcoming bees as a bee town, colors return to the landscape, and there's an unmistakable feeling that something new is beginning. We have a lot of new things planned for Holly Ridge. I wish you all a great week ahead. God bless you and your family, our Town, our State, and our great Country.

1. Last week, the Town Manager and I participated in the regional Elected Official Meeting with the US Marine Corps to discuss collaboration opportunities and updates on their initiatives.
2. On behalf of the Town, I met with the School System Superintendent and the Chief Operating Officer to discuss our potential growth over the next 8 years and plans for additional schooling. Currently, plans include a new elementary school and the expansion of middle and high schools. The school budget is directly related to the tax base and population projections. I shared our plans because of annexation so that they would have that in mind. They are very supportive.
3. We continue our collaboration with ONWASA on the application to the US Department of Commerce for a grant for a water tower. We are fortunate to receive sponsorship and support from Senators Budd and Tills, as well as Congressman Murphy and Senator Lazzara.
4. The Town Manager and I attended the regional municipalities leaders meeting with the County officials to share news and discuss joint opportunities and projects.
5. Following the previous week's downtown development conference, we have begun discussions with various sources. Based on recommendations from the NC Secretary of Commerce, Honorable Lilley, we are contacting the State Economic Development Partnership Agency regarding various strategic initiatives we are pursuing.
6. We have completed the first draft of the Grant Management Program, which will be presented to the Town Council for their approval at the next meeting.
7. The staff and Bee Committee are doing a lot of great work in preparation for our Bee Festival.
8. Next week, we will have the first meeting on the newly formed Beautification Committee.
9. Next week, we will develop and charter a new Citizen Advocacy Committee to be proposed to the Town Council. This committee will allow volunteer citizens to serve as a conduit for the rest of the Holly Ridge Citizens in their areas to discuss issues and concerns, and to make recommendations to improve communication with the Town and Council.

10. Next week, because of my request, a couple of citizens are meeting with the County Tax Assessment Director to discuss anomalies and discrepancies we have observed—more on this to report next week. As I have reported previously, the County will go through its budget process to consider adjustments to its tax rate, and we will follow accordingly.
11. We will have our next Town Council Meeting on April 14, and the next public Quarterly Work Session is on April 23.
12. Please keep up with Town events using our website and Facebook. The Town team is working hard to initiate and sustain various programs. Our Public Information Officer is doing a fantastic job of communicating with the citizens. Keep an eye out for the next issue of The Buzz. I will have office hours this week on Tuesday and Thursday, 1–4 p.m. I am available to discuss any subject by appointment, by phone at 336-865-0884, or by email at pparnian@hollyridgnc.gov. We appreciate your confidence and support. Please keep our service members who are or will be in harm's way in your prayers.

Mayor Pete Parnian