



Town of Holly Ridge

Mayor's Message



DECEMBER 16TH, 2024

Hi, Everyone. This is my last weekly newsletter for the year. More information is below. In the previous few months, it has been an honor to be your mayor and represent the citizens of Holly Ridge this year. I have worked with the Town Council, a great Town Staff, County Commissioners, and our Economic Development partners.

1. We had a well-attended Town Council meeting. Most of the discussion revolved around the rezoning of the acreage off Tar Landing Road. The public has made many passionate comments concerning infrastructure, transportation, schools, etc. Below is a summary of the Town Council's decisions. The Town Council members and I are more than happy to discuss this. I have open office hours and am available for one-on-one discussions also.
 - Rezoning Request by Tar Landing Group – Passed 3-2
 - Text amendment to the Holly Ridge Zoning Ordinance – Passed 5-0
 - Zoning Map approval by J&Y properties 17 and 50 – Passed 5-0
 - Park irrigation system update – Passed 4-1
 - Strategic Planning meeting and workshop on Feb 6&7 – Passed 5-0
 - Policy change prohibiting pornographic viewing – Passed 5-0
 - Funding Request for Bee Committee – Failed
 - Bee Festival discussion – Direction was given to the Town Manager to implement
 - Workshop with Fire Department on the 19th – approved 5-0 to proceed
 - Replacement of lights on ballfield – Passed 4-1
 - Easement for ONWASA for Pipe upgrade – Passed 5-0
 - Budget amendment for use of RCCP Grant – Passed 5-0
2. I want to make a general comment since the interactions on social media continue. I realize that social media is the most prevalent form of communication in the new times. I believe in-person communication with questions & answers are still the most effective interpersonal communication. These assumptions and accusations of various members' intent are uncalled for. The town officials make the best decision based on their opinion in the best interest of the current or future of Holly Ridge. As indicated, disagreements and debates are healthy in a democratic process. I think the lack of information, processes, interdependencies, push communication on our side, and proper strategic planning contributes to some of the views. As you have seen, even the Town Council has disagreements and debates, so there is no malicious intent. We need to do a better job of informing the community, and I take responsibility for that. We will try to hold Town Halls and other forms of meetings and communication processes to keep citizens informed, allow them to express their opinions, and reduce frustrations.

3. The Onslow County manager, Mr. David Smitherman, presented briefly on the County's strategic focus. As I have indicated, we are working to align our strategic plan with the County, get appropriate support to improve our infrastructure, and get additional support to sponsor us with State and federal entities as we grow.

Strategic Focus Areas



4. On behalf of the town, I attend the Executive Steering Committee Meeting in Jacksonville. In partnership with us, Jacksonville Onslow Economic Development (JOED) is investing in Phase III of the Camp Davis Industrial Park and following on residential development during the next 3-10 years. This is the most significant initiative in their portfolio. They have initiative in all municipalities in the County. As soon as there are more details, I will be happy to share them. Again, I am glad to show you where we stand and our possible plans during office hours.
5. As I previously indicated, members of our Town Council partner with Town Management to work with external partners such as ONWASA, North Carolina DOT, and the County (for EMS and Fire). You are invited to contact me or the Town Council members I named in the previous weekly update and ask questions.
6. We had an employee appreciation luncheon on Thursday. I have come to appreciate the dedication and hard work of the staff during the past few months. This work may not be evident to you, but our limited staff does an excellent job for a growing town like ours.
7. Last week, we had the ordinance update Town Council Special Meeting. The Ordinance committee, comprised of community volunteer members, spent hours reviewing and bringing our ordinance documents that do not relate to Land-Use up to date. We appreciate

their effort, and the council approved the changes. As you may know, the land use documents will be updated after the New Year.

8. The Town Council, the Town Manager, and I are working on a long-term strategic plan and associated mission, vision, and objectives that will be our guide. It will be a living document but a good place to start. As mentioned above, the Town Council will have a facilitated workshop on February 6th & 7th. This workshop will be public, but with no public participation. Once we have developed an initial draft, we will have a Town Hall meeting to present and receive citizen feedback. The strategic plan will also help us connect with State and Federal Representatives to get additional financial support and grants to improve roads, parks, facilities, and other initiatives identified.
9. This week, the Town Council will meet with the Volunteer Fire Department's management to discuss our concerns and future EMS and Fire requirements. We will keep you posted.
10. The Town Manager and I attended a County and Municipalities monthly gathering to compare notes and discuss various topics with the County Manager and other Municipal Managers and Mayors. We will continue this dialogue, and I represent The town in every Commissioner meeting to keep our requests and concerns front and center.
11. I will be on vacation for the next two Mondays, so there will be no Monday message, but the Town Council Members and the Town Management will be available on working days. Some calendar events are below, and Mayor Pro-Tem Patti will have the mayoral duties during this vacation.

- Monday, December 16th, 2024 – The New Toddler Time Program is held in the Community Center and begins at 10:00 a.m. This is a free event. This will be the last Toddler Time this year!
- Tuesday, December 17th, 2024 – Planning Board Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.
- Thursday, December 19th, 2024 – Special Meeting of the Holly Ridge Town Council beginning at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.
- December 24th, 25th, 26th, 2024 – Town Administrative Offices Closed in Observance of Christmas.
- Wednesday, January 1st, 2025 – Town Administrative Offices Closed in Observance of the New Year.

12. I would like to wish you the best holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah, and in any other way, you can celebrate this joyous time with friends and family. We hope you will have a successful 2025, which will be an excellent year for our Town. We are blessed to be citizens of this great Country, State, County, and especially our wonderful Town.

Please feel free to contact pparnian.hollyridge@gmail.com

Mayor Pete Parnian