



Town of Holly Ridge

Mayor's Message



FEBRUARY 2, 2026

Happy Monday, everyone. I hope you had a great week and weekend, despite the freezing weather. I hope everyone is safe and did not experience any crises during the cold weather. Hopefully, we are past the worst and only a few weeks away from warmer weather. This is going to be an excellent month for our town. Several meetings are scheduled as we move forward with the direction voted by the citizens of Holly Ridge. God bless you and your family. Here are some updates from last week and this week's plans.

1. Over the weekend, we received a direct notification from Congressman Dr. Greg Murphy that our funding for the Community Center expansion was approved as part of the Congressional funding package.

I received the following message from our Congressman: *"Mayor Parnian, this is Congressman Greg Murphy. I wanted to inform you that the House just voted to pass the Appropriations bill that contained \$1,200,000 for the expansion of the Holly Ridge Community Center. I am thrilled we were able to secure this funding, and I hope this expansion will help the residents of Holly Ridge as the town continues to see rapid growth!"*

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT WINS FOR NC-03**

- McCotter Canal Improvements: \$6,000,000
- Holly Ridge Community Center Expansion: \$1,200,000
- Fire Department Headquarters Construction: \$1,000,000
- Firefighter Training Facility Construction: \$750,000
- Water Tower and Looping Project Upgrade: \$1,000,000

U.S. CONGRESSMAN
GREGORY F. MURPHY, M.D.

We are so blessed to have this approval. There are so many people to thank since this is not done by one person alone. It included write-ups, justifications, coordination, continued responses to congressional inquiries, and much more. Thanks to the Town Manager, Heather Reynolds; our very capable CFO, Chuck Strickland; our Parks and Recreation Director, Rachael Greene; our Public Information Officer, Amber Ward; and, of course, the Congressman's Raleigh staff and regional representative, who worked tirelessly with us to get this done. Congratulations to the citizens of Holly Ridge!

2. At the last Onslow County Commissioners Meeting, the County approved the school system's annual budget unanimously, and both parties signed it. The county allocates nearly 33% of the \$389M budget to the school system, including long-term investments in new construction. As reported previously, we will have a new Dixon-area elementary school breaking ground in April, and expansions at the Middle and High Schools in the Dixon area. Walter Zabicki, who was a Council Member, has been appointed as our point of contact at the school system, and we have met several times with the COO, Dr. Gartner, and the Superintendent, Dr. Barnes, to show our growth projections for future planning.



3. I have had great visits with citizens during my office hours and also several calls. I want to thank the passion of our great town's citizens who want to get involved in any way they can. The town staff and I welcome the involvement.
4. We continue to have conversations with regional Mayors about common issues. The Mayors of Onslow and Pender counties are meeting with our District 16 Representative, Carson Smith, this week to discuss grants and funding for our

regional projects. There are several common areas where we need support beyond the county commissioners.

5. As I mentioned previously, we are restarting some committees and forming new ones, as listed below. Please consider actively getting involved as a member or an interested party in our plans. Some members of the committees who have been inactive will resume activities and work in 2026. The Committees are as follows:
 - a. Political Connection Committee
 - b. Marketing and Branding Committee
 - c. Friends of the Park Committee
 - d. Bee City USA Committee
 - e. Beautification Committee

6. I continue to receive comments on potential annexation and the development plans the council will vote on in February. A couple of points to have in mind. Every step of this process is standard for any project like this. Citizens can ask developers questions and make public comments to the Town Council before any vote. Keep in mind that the annexation was explicitly one of the two platforms offered to citizens during the past election. One platform was a moratorium and no growth, while the other was aggressive smart growth. The citizens made a clear choice and direction for elected officials. Although I am not a voting member, this subject was front and center in the Mayoral election. As always, I am honored to have been elected by such a wide margin.

7. Speaking of elections, it's primary election season. On March 3, we have the first primary for various positions, ranging from County Commissioners and the School Board to our State Representative. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard. Before the last election, during the September 9th Town Council Meeting (Vimeo Recording available on the website), and during the Town Council Comments, our own Councilman Patti gave some instructions to the citizens (time @ 1.59:14) that were profound enough that I would like to repeat them as they apply to this election as well. He said:

"An election's coming up; it's your job to stay informed and do your due diligence. What I mean by that is the choices made in these elections will directly shape the future. It's essential that you, as residents, take the time to learn about the candidates, their priorities, and their vision, rather than succumbing to loudness, rumors, and texts. Getting to know who is running ensures that your vote is not just a ballot cast, but a meaningful decision is

made with a clear understanding of the people who seek to serve the community. So please pay attention. Do your homework and ask questions."

Thank you, Councilman Patti, for these great words, and I encourage each one of you to explore the background and experience for each job that the candidates have registered for.

8. Upcoming Events:

- Tuesday, February 10, 2026 – Town Council Regular Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Center.
- **Wednesday, February 11, 2026 – Public Information Session to include community discussion & Information with the Developer and representatives of the Town. This meeting will take place at the Community Center and begin at 6:00 p.m. in a Q&A format.**
- Tuesday, February 17, 2026 – Planning Board Meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers of Town Hall.
- Thursday, February 19, 2026 – Town Council will hold a Special Meeting (Public Hearing) to receive public comments regarding annexation. This meeting will take place at the Community Center and begin at 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 10, 2026 – Town Council Regular Monthly Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Center.

9. I will have office hours this week on Tuesday and Thursday, 1–4 p.m. (Please note the administration office hours may be affected by the weather). I am available this office subject by appointment, by phone at 336-865-0884, or by message. We do appreciate citizens' interest in our management of our great town. We may disagree on issues, but we are open to discussing and hearing from you. You are a critical part of the process. You elected the members of this Town Council and the Mayor based on the goals and ideas we presented to you. We appreciate your confidence and support. God Bless you, and God Bless our Town, County, State, and our great Country.

Mayor Pete Parnian