TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager

REF: City Manager's Weekly FYI ~ July 12, 2019

COPY: Email Distribution

1. Last week, the City received a copy of the Dominion Energy North Carolina rate filing (Docket No. E-22, sub 562, sub 566). In those filings, Dominion has proposed an increase of approximately 10.5%. The Information included in this filing suggests that their new winter rate will be $118.05 and their summer rate will be $134.27 based on 1,000 kWh per month usage. The City charges the same rate for summer and winter usage, and the cost per 1,000 kWh used is $117.24. I believe this is the first time in over 30 years that the City’s electrical rates will be less than Dominion Power’s. The primary reason for the City’s lower electrical rate is the sale of our Generating Units to Duke Energy Progress in 2015. According to our existing rate plan, we are anticipating a 3% wholesale rate increase in April 2020; however, even with the rate increase, the City of Elizabeth City’s electrical rates are very competitive, and are some of the lowest in the southeast region. We have received our NCEMPA power bill for the month of June; staff has now determined that from the sale of our generating assets, our savings for FY 2018-19 was $6,023,403.15. Since 2015, our customers have saved $24,575,116.61.

2. For the third month in a row, the City experienced a reduction in our health insurance utilization. During the month of June, the City paid $203,626 in health insurance premiums, while only paying out $153,605 in claims. Our medical loss ratio for the month of June was 75.4%. To date, the City has paid premiums of $1,237,486, while only paying out $960,364, which is a medical loss ratio of 77.6%. The City continues to experience a substantial growth in our pharmacy charges. In June, the City’s pharmacy charges were $41,862, while the medical was $111,742. This is a growing trend in the Health Insurance Industry and is responsible for a good part of our health insurance cost. During a special meeting on Wednesday, the City Council approved an agreement with Chesapeake Regional Healthcare to provide clinical services. The creation of the employee clinic is one of our efforts to continue to keep our Health Insurance
premiums low. An added benefit to having the clinic is that it will be an excellent recruitment tool for future employees.

3. In August of 2017, I appointed April Onley as Interim City Clerk for the City. The interim status title was given to her until she had met several conditions including attending the UNC School of Government course entitled Municipal and County Administration and to become a Certified Clerk. April recently graduated from the City and County Administration Course and has successfully completed all of her course work to become a Certified Municipal Clerk. She lacks just a few contact hours, which she would have received; however, the course was cancelled due to a storm in the Chapel Hill area. Those contact hours will be made up during this year's Clerk's conference. I have decided to remove the Interim title to complete the appointment process. April has done an outstanding job as City Clerk. Congratulations and well done!

4. This week, I received the resignation letter of Andy Pollard our Electric Distribution Superintendent. Andy began working for the City of Elizabeth City over a year ago. During his time with the City, he has seen several projects through including the GIS mapping project, the completion of the 2nd drive-thru window at City Hall, and lighting down Halstead Boulevard just to name a few. Andy has decided to move to the City of Bushnell, Florida to be closer to his son Jeremy and his family. His last day with the City will be July 23, 2019. I have appointed Bob Vannoy as the Interim Electric Distribution Superintendent. Mr. Vannoy recently retired from Dominion Power. He has more than 40 years of diverse electric utility experience. He will be joining our team on July 16th.

5. With just two weeks into the new fiscal year, the Police Department has given two recruitment presentations to community colleges in the Northeastern NC region. Lieutenant Darrell Felton, Division Commander of the Field Operations Divisions, gave a recruitment presentation at Martin Community College on July 1st, where 11 students/prospective employees attended. Administrative Police Officer Mike Boone gave a recruitment presentation at Edgecombe Community College on July 3rd, where 12 students/prospective employees attended. The students at both presentations were especially interested in the different divisions of the Elizabeth City Police Department, as well as salary. In total, 19 job applications were given out, and our staff is keeping in contact with the school directors of each school to monitor progress of those students who are enrolled in BLET (Basic Law Enforcement Training). Chief Buffaloe and his executive staff continue to work diligently to fill vacancies within the department.

6. This week, the Elizabeth City Police Department’s Community Resources Unit hosted the agency’s 6th Annual Junior Police Academy. This year, the week-long day camp was held at Mid-Atlantic Christian University with
participants ranging from 13 to 18 years of age. Officers assisted throughout the week by teaching classes and giving presentations on various topics. A Drone Presentation, CSI Fingerprinting Class, Texting & Driving Presentation, Bullying Presentation, Report Writing Class, and Gang Awareness Presentation were among the many activities, along with daily Cadence Drills. The camp concluded with a Graduation Ceremony with Magistrate Leonardo Custis serving as the guest speaker. Students were very enthusiastic and eager to learn all week long and many expressed a desire to pursue law enforcement as a career.

7. On Tuesday, members of the Elizabeth City Police Department had the privilege of being part of Elizabeth City State University’s “Drone Exploration Academy.” This week-long summer academy took place on the campus, in an effort to capitalize on the increasing popularity of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), commonly known as drones, to spark student interest and provide an experiential learning opportunity (ELO) in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Through hands-on project activities, students were engaged in real-world engineering design and scientific investigation using drones. Officers Lamont Butts and Barbara Morgan taught law enforcement uses and implication for drones to students, which was very well received. The above photo, picturing class members listening to the presentation given by Agents Butts and Morgan was actually taken by EC Aerial 1, the Elizabeth City Police Department’s first drone. In addition, the campus constructed their own drone as a part of class, which I found fascinating when I attended the class.

8. “I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream!” Elizabeth City Police Department received a special visit on Tuesday from the Brookdale Assisted Living Center of Elizabeth City, whose staff members distributed ice cream to Elizabeth City Police Department members, as well as Junior Police Academy participants. Everyone enjoyed the time of fellowship; and with
the hot temperatures we have been experiencing, the ice cream was definitely right on time! Chief Buffaloe and staff members are very appreciative to Brookdale Assisted Living Center for making this experience possible.

9. This Monday, the City implemented an electronic application process using NeoGov software. NeoGov is the leader in the software industry for talent management in the public sector. Job seekers have the convenience of submitting an application for any City vacancies from the comfort of their homes, smart devices, etc. Job seekers may simply go to the City’s website, click on the employment button, click on the link in the middle of the employment page, and a list of City vacancies will be displayed. Easy-to-follow instructions will walk interested candidates through creating a user account if they don’t already have one by clicking on the menu feature at the top left of the page. This new process will make applying for multiple jobs very easy. In an effort to ease the public into the transition, the City will continue to accept paper applications through July 31st. Team Elizabeth City is trending in the right direction!

10. The E-City Plaza, LLC project at 511-513 West Ehringhaus Street has been deemed substantially complete by City staff and a grant review team for grant closeout purposes. The former Ace Hardware building was renovated into seven (7) individual retail/restaurant spaces. During its October 22, 2018 City Council meeting, the Council approved a Business Improvement Grant for this project in the amount of $10,000.00. The total estimated project investment is expected to be $560,000.00. As part of the BIG, the owner committed to an initial execution of at least two (2) leases and the creation of at least five (5) full-time jobs. The spaces are being finalized for the tenants at this time. The owners and the contractor have done an excellent job on the renovations and improvements to this building. We are happy with the improvements made and are glad that this building will continue to be an asset to our
City. We thank the developer and owners for their investment in our City.

11. Mariners’ Wharf Film Festival screens “Cabinet in the Sky” on July 16th

Tuesday evenings in the spring and summer come alive on the downtown Elizabeth City waterfront with Elizabeth City Downtown Inc.’s Summer Entertainment Series at Mariners’ Wharf Park. Starting in June, you can enjoy a classic movie at the park on Tuesday evenings beginning at 8:30 p.m. The movies have traditionally been the black and white “classics” from the 1930s through the 1960s, but look for a few more recent classics and movies from different genres again this year. The flicks will still be shown on the big screen, drive-in movie style. The official film season is every Tuesday in June and July, starting Tuesday, June 4th and continuing through July 23rd, with a rain date of July 30th. Mark your calendars for the Tuesday Flicks! Popcorn and drinks sold on site.

In this classic theatrical, fantasy, “folklorish” movie with an all African American cast, chronic gambler and carouser "Little" Joe Jackson is shot by Domino Johnson at Jim Henry's gambling club over an outstanding gambling debt. Little Joe's wife, the God-fearing Petunia Jackson, prays not only for her husband's mortal life, but also his eternal soul as she’s afraid that if he dies now, he, despite not being an evil man, won't make it into heaven. As Little Joe is close to death, he is visited by agents of both the Lord and of Lucifer. They make a deal with him: they will give him six months to atone for the errors of his human life. Once back on Earth, he won't remember the deal, but both the Lord and Lucifer will be watching over him, trying to get him to see things their way. As both sides try to get Little Joe's soul, they figure that some of the most powerful tools they have at their disposal are the women in Little Joe's life: Petunia, on behalf of the Lord, and Georgia Brown, on behalf of Lucifer. As hard as both the Lord and Lucifer try to get Little Joe on their side, they don't factor into the equation human judgment, which turns some of their work against them. Directed by Vincente Minnelli, Busby Berkeley. **Starring:** Ethel Waters, Eddie “Rochester” Anderson, Lena Horne. Run time: 1 hour, 38 minutes. For more information, visit [www.marinerswharffilmfestival.com](http://www.marinerswharffilmfestival.com) or visit the Elizabeth City Downtown,
UPCOMING EVENTS

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City will meet in Work and Regular Session on Monday, July 22, 2019, beginning at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, located on the second floor of the municipal building at 306 East Colonial Avenue.