

Emerald Tidings – January 22, 2003

Town Unveils New Email Newsletter

The Town of Emerald Isle is always seeking new and effective means of communicating with our residents, property owners, and visitors. We've continued to improve the information available at our website, www.emeraldisle-nc.org, and now we've launched a new Email Newsletter. The Email Newsletter will be sent periodically to everyone on the sign-up list, and will include timely and pertinent information about Town services, projects, and other items of interest. The monthly Emerald Tidings will also be distributed electronically to those on the sign-up list.

To sign up, please visit www.emeraldisle-nc.org and click on "Get on our Email List" in the top left corner. You'll then be prompted to enter your email address. After you enter your email address, you'll be sent a confirmation email that will advise you how to complete the sign up process. It's all very simple, and will take less than a few minutes to complete. Although the Email Newsletter is powered by Yahoo!, access is strictly controlled by Town personnel. You should not receive any unwanted "spam", and there is no ability to start a community email dialogue. It is simply a tool that the Town can use to better keep our residents, property owners informed.

For those of you with email, we hope you'll sign up and take advantage of this additional opportunity to remain informed about Town issues. Those who do not have access to email can continue to learn about Town issues in Emerald Tidings, published monthly in the Island Review.

Storm Water Project Permitting and Design Authorized

At its December 8, 2002 meeting, the Board of Commissioners authorized a contract with Moffatt & Nichol Engineers, Raleigh, NC for permitting and design tasks associated with the Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project. The total amount authorized for the contract is \$299,872. Permitting and design work is expected to take approximately 18 months, with construction scheduled to begin by summer 2004. Construction is estimated at 9-12 months, with project completion anticipated by summer 2005.

The Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project involves the installation of up to 8 pumps at strategic locations along the Coast Guard Road corridor. These pumps will transport excess storm water runoff from various subdivisions to a 40-acre tract of land on the north side of Coast Guard Road (across from Sea Dunes subdivision), where the storm water will filter through natural and constructed wetlands, and eventually infiltrate into groundwater. The project is expected to greatly reduce the duration and intensity of flooding resulting from major rainfall events along the corridor. The total storm water project budget is \$5.26 million, with \$2.58 million of this total funded by grant proceeds and donations.

The Town is also seeking grant funds to construct low-impact park facilities at the site, including walking trails, a public dock, and a canoe/kayak launch area. These improvements will be added to the project scope and budget if the Town is awarded grant funds.

Beach Nourishment Project Updates on Town Web Site

The Town has established a special "Beach Nourishment" page on its website, www.emeraldisle-nc.org, so that residents, property owners, and others can track the project's progress. The new web page includes a summary of the project, a progress tracking map, updated "notes from the beach", photographs, and other links. The Town will be updating the web site at least weekly, and more frequently at times. Please visit our web site to remain up to date!

Town Examining Additional Solid Waste Service Options

Over the past few months, Town staff have been assessing different options for providing solid waste services in Emerald Isle. Despite a new solid waste ordinance in spring 2001, and positive implementation efforts over the past two years, effective solid waste management continues to be a challenge for the Town. Overflowing trash continues to be a

problem in several areas of town, and new containment and rack requirements have been only partially embraced by the community. Town staff have aggressively enforced the 2001 ordinance during the past year, but there is still considerable belief that a more effective solution is necessary.

The Board of Commissioners will review different options during January and February, and may consider adjustments to the solid waste program. Among the options being considered are a requirement for 90 gallon roll-out carts only, elimination of garbage racks on the right-of-way, requirements for roll-out of carts with Town assistance to roll carts back, "backyard" or "under-house" collection, and various hybrid approaches. Any solution will require strong cooperation with real estate rental agencies, effective public education, and recognition by the entire community that we all have to work together to solve our community problems.

Additional information about this issue will be provided as specific options are considered.

New Construction Going Strong

Low mortgage interest rates, poor returns in the stock market, and highly desirable property here in Emerald Isle have all contributed to a strong construction industry in Emerald Isle. Through the first 6 months of this fiscal year, a total of \$14.5 million of new construction has been initiated. This is up 46% from the same time last year, when approximately \$9.9 million of new construction had been initiated. In recent years, the Town has averaged approximately \$17-\$18 million of new construction annually, with the highest annual total in recent years occurring in FY 1996-97, when \$21.1 million was initiated.

2003 Street Resurfacing To Begin Soon

Town staff are currently finalizing a list of recommended street segments for inclusion in the 2003 street resurfacing contract. The Board of Commissioners will consider a contract for the resurfacing of approximately 2.0 – 2.5 miles of Town streets at their February 11 meeting. Street resurfacing crews are expected to begin work in March, with a goal to have all work completed before the Easter holiday weekend.

The Town has a total of approximately 46.0 miles of public streets, and our goal is to resurface at least 5% (2.3 miles) of the total public street mileage annually, subject to the availability of adequate funding. This schedule will theoretically allow for the resurfacing of all town streets every 20 years. The Town relies on State Powell Bill funds, derived from gasoline taxes, to fund its street resurfacing program. The Town receives approximately \$160,000 annually from the State Powell Bill.