

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – February 22, 2006 Print Edition

Town to Receive FEMA Funding to Replace Sand Lost During Hurricane Ophelia

First, the good news..... FEMA's Public Assistance program, which provides funding to repair or replace public infrastructure damaged during declared disaster events, will provide approximately \$5.9 million to the Town to replace sand lost from the Town's nourished beaches during Hurricane Ophelia this past September. The Town's consultants will soon begin design and permitting work to replace approximately 570,000 cubic yards of sand, which represents approximately 22% of the total nourishment volume placed on the beach since 2003.

The Town was fortunate to avoid significant oceanfront damage from Ophelia, in large part due to the storm protection provided by the Town's previous beach nourishment projects. The replacement of the lost sand will restore the beach to pre-Ophelia conditions, and will provide additional storm protection for future storms. Design and permitting work will begin in the coming weeks, and construction is expected to occur between November 2006 and March 2007 in order to comply with State and Federal environmental regulations. The new sand will be dredged from the US Army Corps of Engineers' Offshore Dredged Materials Disposal Site off of Atlantic Beach which contains many years of dredge spoils from the Beaufort Inlet maintenance dredging. This material is of excellent quality. Sand will be placed in approximately 2 mile long segments along the eastern and central areas of Town.

Storm Water Mitigation Grant Denied by FEMA

Now, the not so good news..... The Town was recently notified by FEMA's Mitigation Division that the Town's \$1.25 million grant request for Phase II of the Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project was denied. The Town had hoped to utilize these grant funds to construct two new storm water pumps and associated piping in the Lands End community, and one new storm water pump and associated piping in the Island Circle area.

The Town remains committed to addressing the storm water issues along the Coast Guard Road corridor, and the Board of Commissioners will consider a revised project financing strategy over the next few months as the Town's FY 06-07 operating budget and 5-Year Capital Replacement / Improvement Program are developed.

Phase II Bicycle Path Construction Contract Awarded

The Board of Commissioners has awarded a \$151,450 construction contract for Phase II of the NC 58 Bicycle Path project to David N. Johnson Construction Company of Maysville, NC. Phase II will connect to the Phase I path at Merchants Park and will run east on NC 58 through the main business district to Black Skimmer Drive.

Johnson Construction will begin work on the Phase II path in February, and expects to complete the project by April prior to the prime tourism season. Special efforts will be made to limit any construction impacts on businesses in this area of Town.

This project is primarily funded with a \$140,000 grant from the NC Department of Transportation. The Town is eager to complete Phase II, which when connected to the Phase I path will provide a safe and enjoyable route for bicyclists, walkers, and runners through the highest traffic area in Town.

Emerald Isle Continues to Enjoy Low Tax Rate

With a 15.5 cent General Fund property tax rate, Emerald Isle enjoys the 8th lowest tax rate of the 21 beach towns in North Carolina. Emerald Isle's tax rate is based on property values as of 2001, and the next tax revaluation is scheduled for 2007. Emerald Isle's rate is expected to drop significantly after the 2007 revaluation.

General Fund Tax Rate Comparison North Carolina Beach Communities FY 2005-2006

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>
1	Southern Shores	\$ 0.085
2	Duck	\$ 0.095
3	Indian Beach	\$ 0.100
4	Sunset Beach	\$ 0.130
5	Ocean Isle Beach	\$ 0.140
6	Wrightsville Beach	\$ 0.143
7	Nags Head	\$ 0.147
8	Emerald Isle	\$ 0.155
9	Holden Beach	\$ 0.180
10	Pine Knoll Shores	\$ 0.180
11	Kitty Hawk	\$ 0.180
12	Kill Devil Hills	\$ 0.200
13	Caswell Beach	\$ 0.210
14	Atlantic Beach	\$ 0.230
15	Kure Beach	\$ 0.295
16	Topsail Beach	\$ 0.310
17	Oak Island	\$ 0.330
18	Surf City	\$ 0.350
19	Carolina Beach	\$ 0.380
20	North Topsail Beach	\$ 0.450
21	Bald Head Island	\$ 0.465

Emerald Isle EMS Offers Reflective Address Signs

Every second counts in an emergency, and the Town wants its emergency responders to be able to find our residents and visitors as quickly as possible in their time of need. A quick emergency response depends on many factors, however, one way to help promote a quick response is to make sure that the address of your residence is clearly visible from the street – either on your structure and/or near your driveway.

To help make it easier to find the correct address, Emerald Isle EMS is currently sponsoring a Reflective Address Sign Program for Emerald Isle residents and property owners. For a \$15 donation, Emerald Isle EMS will have a reflective address sign manufactured with your house number in 3" reflective white numbers on a 6" x 18" green background. The signs will be mounted by Emerald Isle EMS volunteers at the street in front of your house, preferably on your mailbox or newspaper box stand, and installation is included in the \$15 donation.

For more information, visit Emerald Isle EMS at their station at 218 Cedar Street or call 252-354-2249. Please take a moment and drive down the street to your residence and put yourself in the shoes of an emergency responder who is trying to find your residence at night, in a rainstorm, etc. and who doesn't have a prior understanding of which residence is yours. Ask yourself if you've made it as easy as possible for an emergency responder to find you or your guests without wasting precious time. If identifying your residence may take up that precious time, then contact Emerald Isle EMS and order your reflective address sign today!

Police Department Implements New Organizational Structure

Emerald Isle Police Chief Bill Hargett has announced a new organizational structure for the Police Department and the promotion of two members of the department to leadership positions. The Assistant Police Chief position, previously occupied by now-Chief Hargett, has been eliminated, and 2 additional Police Lieutenant positions have been created to improve the management of the department. The new structure is designed to improve the overall quality of the Police Department's work, enhance the department's ability to serve Emerald Isle residents and visitors on a daily basis, allow for the expansion of community relations programs, and improve the records management function.

Lieutenant Jeff Waters, a 21-year veteran, is now responsible for oversight of the police patrol, response, and community relations functions. Lieutenant Tony Reese, a 6-year veteran, was recently promoted from Police Detective to the Lieutenant rank, and will oversee the investigations function, internal affairs, and provide general management assistance to the Chief. Lieutenant Paul Cheshire, a 12-year veteran, was recently promoted from Police Detective to the Lieutenant rank, and will oversee the communications and narcotics functions. The old Assistant Police Chief position is now a new Patrol Sergeant position, which is currently vacant. The additional Sergeant position will enable the department to round out its supervisory team, and insure better supervisory coverage of the patrol and response functions.

Class Action Suit Against Time Warner Cable Settled

As a result of a class action lawsuit settlement, Time Warner Cable subscribers during the period from January 1994 and December 1998 are eligible for free cable services. Current Time Warner Cable subscribers are eligible for either one free month of any additional Time Warner cable service that the subscriber does not currently have, or two free "Movies On Demand". Former subscribers are eligible for either one free month of any TWC service with free installation or they can assign their settlement benefit to someone else. For more information, call 1-800-291-3831 or www.twcsettlement.com.