

June 2020 Message from Mayor Rick Cross

Since coming into the role as Mayor for Bermuda Run just 5 short months ago, much around us has changed. What hasn't changed is the commitment I and the Town Council have made toward implementing our town's vision statement - *"The Town of Bermuda Run will be a welcoming small town with a diverse economic base and excellent quality of life"*. My commitment to the Town remains high and my resolve to lead our community has only grown.

As we approach the mid-point of 2020, I want to share a few thoughts on topics of interest for our town.

2020-2021 Town Budget

COVID-19 Update for our community

CENSUS 2020 Update for our community

Around Town

2020-2021 Town Budget

Clearly, a key influence in the proposed budget projections is the on-going effects of COVID-19 and the economic impact that has yet to be fully determined. Although Bermuda Run is not immune, the hard work, forward thinking, and pragmatic fiscal management of our town's elected leaders over the years puts us in a position to weather the impacts of the current pandemic. I want to make a few comments about the proposed 2020/2021 Town Budget:

- **Town Revenues** - There are COVID-19 related projected reductions in revenue reimbursements and sales tax during the first 6-9 months of the upcoming budget year. These projections are based on information received from the NC League of Municipalities, the NC Association of County Commissioners, and the UNC School of Government.
- **Town Core Services** – Street maintenance and paving, trash pick-up, street light maintenance, and other necessary services will remain a priority.
- **Town Fund Balance** – Fund balance (savings) will not be used to offset reduced revenues to pay for core services. The Town Fund Balance will allow us to cashflow operations until potential delays to tax revenues are received. The Bermuda Run Town Council has a policy in place that requires a minimum 50% of its annual operating expenses be maintained as a fund balance at all times.
- **Town Projects** – The Town has historically done a very good job leveraging resources and partnerships when planning capital projects. These projects are typically tied to state or federal funding. Currently, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is experiencing an unprecedented shortfall as a result of, among other things, lost gas tax revenues due to COVID-19. Funding for several key projects is tied to NCDOT.

- The Blue Heron Trail, which is currently in the planning stage, has been put on hold by NCDOT. 80% of the projected construction cost is to be paid through federal highway funds, (much like the roundabout project back in 2014). We will work with NCDOT to resume this project as funds are available. In the meantime, we will search for other possible funding opportunities.
- The I-40 widening project will continue until completion, which is scheduled for January 2021. The pedestrian bridge over I-40 and pedestrian tunnel under I-40, which are part of this project, will be installed later this year as planned.

In summary, our town is in a strong financial position to meet current needs and to be prepared for future projects.

COVID-19

As we proceed through Phase 2, let's continue to remember the **3 "W"s** (**Wear** a face covering. **Wait** at least 6 feet apart. **Wash** your hands often.). The intent is to ensure that each of us does all we can to be safe, and to not overwhelm the healthcare system at any point in time. Thanks for what you all are doing to keep us safe.

Davie County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) continues to increase its number of contact tracers. This will allow a more rapid response to individuals that may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. We thank the County for their leadership in this endeavor.

2020 CENSUS

Bermuda Run has now surpassed the 75% response rate...way to go! Getting an accurate and complete count for the Census period is critical because it impacts our representation, as well as resources and funding from federal and state sources. BE COUNTED AND MAKE IT COUNT!

AROUND TOWN

- **Community Officer Program** – Our Community Officer, Jason Robertson, is being promoted within the Davie County Sheriff's Department. Transitioning in to the Community Officer position over the next few months will be officer Zach Williams. Davie County Sheriff JD Hartman says of the transition, *"I have been very blessed to have great officers working for the Sheriff's Office. Deputy Robertson took a new position in Bermuda Run and has done an outstanding job developing the role of Community Officer. I am pleased to see him moving up and on to new challenges. Bermuda Run will again have one of our best officers in Deputy Zach Williams. Zach has quickly proven to be an outstanding officer and will provide the best services possible in his tenure as the Bermuda Run Community Officer."*

Please join me in thanking Officer Robertson for three great years of service to the residents and businesses in Bermuda Run, and welcoming Officer Williams as he joins our community.

- **Summer Concert Series** – Due to COVID-19 restrictions, our June 20 concert has been cancelled. Our next scheduled concert is August 29. We will continue to monitor on-going guidance from the CDC and the NC Department of Health and Human Services to determine if the August 29 concert is a “go” or “no go”.

Finally, I want to give a shout out to our entire community.

Our **businesses** continue to be there for us and have adapted nobly to this ever-changing environment. Special thanks to the Davie County Chamber of Commerce and the Bermuda Run Tourism Development Authority, who have worked tirelessly to make sure our business community has the resources it needs.

Our **non-profit organizations** have endeavored to be there for the community during these unprecedented times...they still need our attention and support.

Our **essential workers** have been on the job meeting our needs without disruption.

Our **Town Council, Town staff, County Government partners, and regional/state agencies** have all worked with tremendous energy to identify and quickly address challenges and obstacles.

Most of all, you, our **residents**, have shown an incredible commitment to doing your part during these unsettling times to make Bermuda Run a wonderful place to *Just Be!*

While there is undoubtedly much that lies ahead for us, I wanted to take a brief pause to keep you informed about things that affect our town. I look forward to the time when we can again gather as a community. In the meantime, I will continue to reach out across our town. I want to hear from you. You can reach me at rcross@townofbr.com or 336-391-1992.

We are in this together and together we will emerge stronger.

- Rick Cross