

News aRound the Hill

A Community Newsletter for Round Hill, Virginia

March 2015

Circulation 1,400

New Utility Study Supports Lowered User Rates

The Round Hill Town Council is currently reviewing and preparing to adopt a new utility rate study. If the Council adopts the current recommendations of the 2015 rate study, combined utility rates will be reduced 14% starting July 1 for both in- and out-of-town users.

The current rate structure was set from the June 8, 2007, Water and Sewer Rate Study prepared by the Utility Committee of the Town.

At that time, the financial position of the utility system was very weak. Inadequate user fees and rapidly escalating labor and energy costs had drained all reserves, and the system faced a regulatory deadline to perform costly Biological Nutrient Reduction (BNR) upgrades on the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). In addition, the housing market was about to crash.

Despite few availability fees, the Town's financial position is much stronger today than it was back in 2007 due to a series decisions including:

- adopting utility increases recom-

Utility Rate Structure Proposed in 2015 Water Rate Study

In-Town Rates	Current	FY16* Proposed	% Change	Annual Escalator	Out-of-Town Multiplier
Water Availability	\$5,405	\$7,500	38.8%	3%	1.5
Sewer Availability	\$12,407	\$11,400	-8.1%	3%	1.5
Combined Availability	\$17,812	\$18,900	6.1%		
Water Usage (per 1000 gal)	\$7.60	\$7.60	0.0%	3%	1.5
Sewer Usage (per 1000 gal)	\$11.38	\$8.70	-23.6%	3%	1.5
Combined Usage	\$18.98	\$16.30	-14.1%		

* From February 16, 2015 Draft of Round Hill Water and Sewer Rate Study

mended in the 2007 rate study;

- revising or delaying capital improvement plans to avoid new debt;

- refinancing existing bonds to lower rates and delay payments;

- holding operating expenses well below projections.

The utility system has been running an operating surplus since the 2007 rate study in order to rebuild operating reserves from where they were back in 2007 (almost zero).

That rebuilding process finally completed last year, and utility finances are back to normal health.

After analyzing the current financial position of the system, review-

ing a final draft of the 2015 Water System Planning Study prepared by the Town engineer, generating a revised capital plan and reviewing various assumptions in the financial model, the Town of Round Hill Utility Committee has prepared a draft 2015 Water Rate Study that recommends water user rates be held at their current levels for the next fiscal year and sewer rates be reduced 24%, for a combined decrease of 14%. Both are then recommended to increase at 3% annually thereafter.

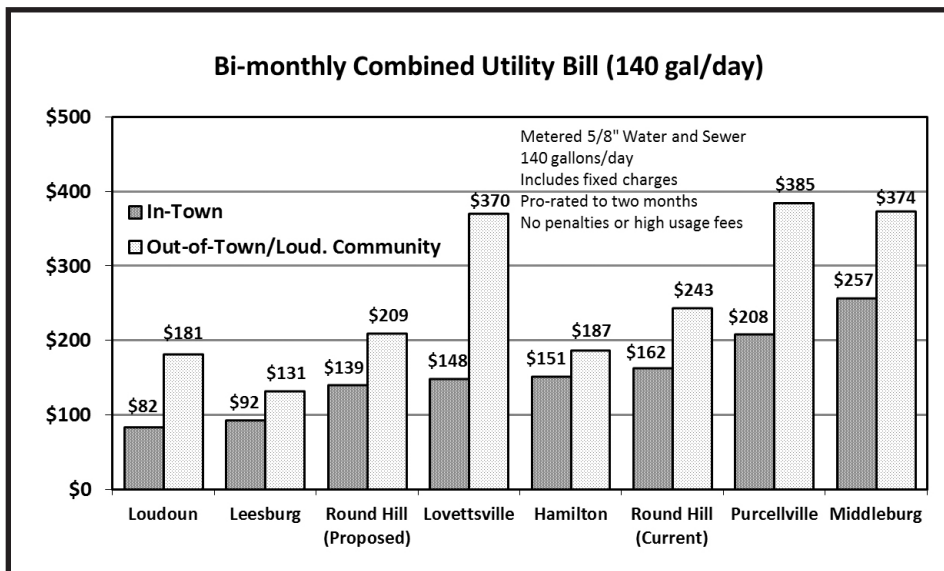
Water availability fees are recommended to increase substantially, and then both water and sewer availability fees are recommended to continue escalating at 3% per year.

These rates are based on a conservative growth model (35 new users/year).

If user growth is substantially above or below this figure, or if other key assumptions are incorrect (such as the required capital program, or a change in Town boundaries or service area), then it is recommended this study and the financial model be reviewed before five years.

The Town Council is set to vote on new rates during this spring's budget process. New rates would go into effect at the beginning of the new fiscal year, July 1, 2015.

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GOVERNMENT

TOWN ASKS RESIDENTS TO UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

The Town of Round Hill is asking all area utility users to update their contact information with the Town Office so that the Town will be able to alert residents in the event of an emergency — such as a water main break — or about high usage on accounts or questions regarding payment received for utility bills.

Please contact Kim McGaha, Utility Billing Administrator at 540-338-7878 x 301 or email her at kmcgaha@roundhillva.org to update utility account contact information. All contact information is kept private.

COMMUNITY SURVEY PROCESS COMPLETE

Melissa Hynes, town planner and zoning administrator, would like thank everyone who participated in the 2014 Round Hill Community Survey. She received 221 completed surveys. All input, comments and feedback will be used in discussions at upcoming Planning Commission

and Town Council meetings, as Town officials continue to work on drafting the Town's long term planning document called the "Comprehensive Plan." The final 2014 Community Survey Report will be posted on the Town website on Mar. 25.

PLANNING COMMISSION AND TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUE REVISING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan is on track for adoption in December 2015. The plan serves as the Town's guide to community, physical, social, and economic development. It is based on a community vision that portrays the dynamics, unique qualities and concerns of a community to achieve the long-range planning goals for the general development of Round Hill.

The primary goal of this plan is to protect and improve the quality of life of citizens by providing for the public health, safety, convenience and welfare of the Town. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1993.

DEVELOPMENT

CREEKSIDE APPLICATION ADVANCES TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR APPROVAL

The application for Creekside at Round Hill received a recommendation for approval by the Loudoun County Planning Commission on Feb. 19. This project originally received full approval in 2005, but the new owners have requested amendments to the plan, which requires County approval.

The revised application is scheduled for a Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing on Apr. 8. If approved by the BOS, the owner is looking to start construction later this year.

This neighborhood will feature 95 single-family detached homes and a new 8-acre Town park. It will be located on about 50 acres between 719 and Evening Star Drive, along the northern border of Town.

NEW NEIGHBORHOODS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Several new neighborhoods are preparing to open doors to new residents. Lake Ridge Estates has currently under construction eight of the 31 homes approved at their location to the South of Loudoun Street, along Airmont Road.

The Walraven subdivision has three of the five homes approved for their location on West Loudoun Street.

STREETSCAPE PROJECTS SEEK EASEMENTS TO PROCEED

The two streetscape projects in Town that will bring new sidewalks and stormwater improvements are currently in the land acquisition phase. The East Loudoun

Ground Breaking



PHOTO COURTESY TOWN OF ROUND HILL

On Feb. 12, the County Sheriff Office broke ground on their new Western Loudoun Substation, which will be located west of Round Hill on West Loudoun Street. Construction is expected to be complete by summer 2016. Participating in the ceremony were, from left, Loudoun County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Chris Harmison, Sheriff Mike Chapman, Board of Supervisors Chairman Scott York, Round Hill Town Administrator Buster Nicholson, Round Hill Mayor Scott Ramsey and Round Hill Vice Mayor Mary Anne Graham.

project, known as the County Franklin Park Trail, as well as the Round Hill Main Street Enhancement Project, both plan to have all of the necessary easements and right-of-ways acquired by this fall so that both projects can move forward together toward construction in 2016.

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COMMUNITY

AQUATIC CENTER HIRING

The Loudoun County Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) anticipates a grand opening to the new Round Hill Aquatics Center on Evening Star Drive this spring.

According to Claire Smith, communications and public relations coordinator for the parks and rec department, however, PRCS must complete all punch list items on the building and complete the hiring process prior to opening.

PRCS is currently seeking instructors and lifeguards. Interested applicants can find more information at www.loudoun.gov/jobs. Lessons offered at the center may include swim lessons, lifeguarding, water aerobics and CPR.

AQUATIC CENTER INFO:

Hours

Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Saturday 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Sunday 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Prices (Loudoun County residents)

Under age two	\$1.00
Under 18	\$2.50
Adults 18-54	\$3.00
Seniors 55 & older	\$2.50

25-use punch passes will also be available.

Non-Loudoun County residents will be charged a 50% higher fee.

**Prices and hours are subject to change.*

RHVFD SCHEDULES FLOWER SALE, SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Round Hill Volunteer Fire Department would like to thank the community for its support of their fund drive and other events during 2014. The department had a very successful year and is looking forward to another good year in 2015.

The RHVFD will sell Easter flowers on Saturday and Sunday, Apr. 3 and 4 as well as Mother's Day flowers on Saturday and Sunday, May 8 and 9. A variety of plants and prices will be available.

The department is also seeking new members. Interested volunteers are encouraged to take a look at www.roundhillvfd.org or come one of the monthly meetings, held the fourth Monday of every month.

VOLUNTEERS HELP SPREAD HOLIDAY CHEER

The Round Hill Volunteer Fire Department and Round Hill Junior Women's Group spread holiday cheer throughout the community in December.

Volunteers from the Junior Women's Group decorated the pavilion and walls at the Round Hill Town Park and hung wreaths on the entrance signs to Town in early December. The wreaths were donated by anonymous members of the group. Unfortunately, the group's Tree Lighting event had to be cancelled due to rain.

The Volunteer Fire Department hosted a holiday dinner at the Fire Hall on Dec. 6 and then, on Dec. 20 and 21, escorted Santa and Mrs. Claus through Round Hill's neighborhoods, where they visited with local children of all ages.



PHOTOS COURTESY RENE PETTIT AND KIM RAMSEY



RHUMC TO PACKAGE MEALS AT STOP HUNGER NOW

On Saturday, Apr. 11, from 8 a.m.-12 p.m., the West Loudoun Stop Hunger Now campaign will hold its 5th annual meal-packaging event at Round Hill Elementary School. The event is hosted by Round Hill United Methodist Church. Five hundred or more volunteers are needed to package at least 50,000 meals.

Stop Hunger Now is an international hunger relief organization that coordinates the distribution of food and other life-saving aid around the world.

This manpower-intensive, single day project is an outstanding public service opportunity for individuals, church groups, youth organizations or other community service organizations to get involved in a major service project that is already planned and organized.

Monetary donations are also needed for this event. Donations may be submitted directly to the Round Hill United Methodist Church office at P.O. Box 51, 11 W. Loudoun Street, Round Hill, Va. 20142.

Please sign up and/or donate at <http://events.stophungernow.org/rh2015>.

COMMUNITY (cont.)

HOMETOWN FESTIVAL PLANNING UNDERWAY

The 13th annual Round Hill Hometown Festival will be held on Saturday, May 23, and organizers are already making arrangements for the full day of entertainment and activities in the heart of Round Hill.

The community is invited to come out and participate in all the fun, from the 5k in the morning to the evening concert in the park. Event schedule and other important information will be posted on www.hometownfestival.org and www.facebook.com/rhhometownfestival.

The Festival committee is seeking business and individual sponsors to help make the Festival a success. Sponsorship opportunities range from \$50 family sponsors to the \$500 stage sponsor and all ranges in between.

Volunteers are also needed on the day of the Festival to help work the information table, 5k, parade, derby, pie contest, bounce houses and more.

Information on how to sponsor and/or volunteer will be online and available at the Town Office later this month. Online registration for the 5k and downhill derby, as well as advance purchases for the t-shirts will also be posted as soon as the forms are available.

ON THE AGENDA

Issues the Town Council and Planning Commission will address in the coming months include:

- Update of Town Comprehensive Plan
- Monitor county rezoning process for Creekside development
- Work sessions for FY16 Town Budget and Capital Improvement Plan
- Adopt updated Water and Sewer Rate Study
- Easement acquisition for Main Street sidewalks and Franklin Park Trail
- Update Town web site
- Prepare for Hometown Festival
- Accept Westlake Water Treatment Plant
- Repainting of Evening Star water tower
- Refinancing of existing utility debt
- Well exploration for new water sources
- Sidewalk replacement on W. Loudoun Street
- County zoning approval and bonding for water tank on Yatton Road
- Determine development plans for Sleeter Lake park



PHOTOS COURTESY KIM RAMSEY

Local Scouts prepare to raise the flag during last year's Hometown Festival Memorial Ceremony.

Upcoming Events

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|---|--------------------------|
| ► Planning Commission | Mar. 3 / Apr. 7 |
| 7:00 p.m., Town Office | |
| ► Budget Meeting | Mar. 5 |
| 7:00 p.m., Town Office; focus: utility fund | |
| ► Utility Committee | Mar. 4 / Apr. 16 |
| 8:00 a.m., Town Office | |
| ► Land Use Committee | Mar. 18 |
| 7:00 p.m., Town Office | |
| ► Town Council | Mar. 19 / Apr. 16 |
| 7:30 p.m., Town Office | |
| ► Administrative Committee | Mar. 23 |
| 7:30 p.m., Town Office | |
| ► Board of Zoning Appeals | Mar. 25 / Apr. 22 |
| 7:30 p.m., Town Office (if needed) | |
| ► Budget Meeting | Apr. 2 |
| 7:00 p.m., Town Office; focus: general fund | |
| ► RHVFD Flower Sale | Apr. 3-4 |
| Volunteer Fire Department | |
| ► Public Hearing on Creekside | Apr. 8 |
| 6:00 p.m., Board of Supervisors, Loudoun County Government Center | |
| ► Meal Packaging Event | Apr. 11 |
| 8 a.m.-noon, Round Hill Elementary School | |
| ► Budget Meeting | Apr. 16 |
| 7:30 p.m., Town Office; focus: general fund review, finalize for equalization advertisement | |
| ► Budget Meeting | Apr. 30 |
| 7:00 p.m., Town Office; focus: review and finalize for advertisement | |