

Town of Sawmills

Spring Newsletter

"Biggest Little Town in the Foothills"

March 2011

Your New Newsletter

Message from the Town Administrator

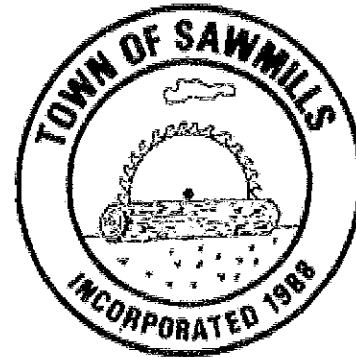
Seth Eckard
Town Administrator

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read your new Town Hall newsletter. Beginning with this edition you will receive a quarterly newsletter. (*Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter editions*) Our goal is to keep you well informed about new policies, procedures, and upcoming events in the community.

Welcome

It is a real pleasure to have the opportunity to serve as your new Town Administrator. I would like to invite everyone to come by Town Hall, sit down and have a one-on-one conversation at your convenience. I'm curious to learn about your experiences, vision and goals for our community.

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Update on Veteran's Memorial Park

If you haven't noticed lately there has been a great deal of construction going on at Veteran's Memorial Park. Beautiful black fencing has been erected along the perimeter of the park as well as construction of two new baseball fields and a soccer field.

Granite Falls Middle School will begin playing soccer at the park in late March. Baseball and softball will begin in April. If you haven't already had a chance to come by and see your new park then we highly recommend that you do. Veteran's Park is absolutely stunning with views of Lake Rhodhiss and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Citizens of Sawmills should be proud to know that they have one of the most beautiful parks in the Foothills.

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It helps me perform my job better when the lines of communication are open.

Concerned Citizens Committee

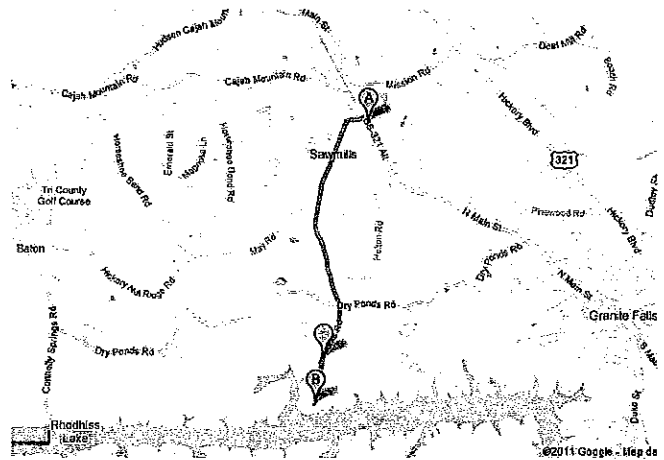
In an effort to improve the lines of communication between elected officials, staff and the public Mayor Bob Gibbs is creating a "Concerned Citizens Committee." The purpose of this committee is to brainstorm new ideas, discuss long term goals and take a critical look at the services your government currently offers. The committee will also be asked to recommend solutions for long term problems the Town faces.

The Concerned Citizens Committee will meet bi-quarterly. This committee is open to all citizens and businesses in the Town of Sawmills. If you would like more information please contact Mayor Bob Gibbs at (828) 612-8790 or bgibbs@townofsawmills.com.

Social Media

The Town has made significant updates to its website recently at www.townofsawmills.com. Beginning March 1st citizens can pay their utility bill on the Town website. We are always looking to improve the website and if you have any comments or suggestions please send them to seckard@townofsawmills.com.

Please check out the Town's new Facebook page! The Town of Sawmills Facebook page is a great place for people to post pictures, comments and share upcoming events. We welcome you to "Like" our page and keep your fellow citizens informed about our community.



Sawmills Address

As of October 15, 2007 all residents in the Town of Sawmills, who use Granite Falls as their "city" in their address, may start using Sawmills instead. An example would be as follows:

John Smith
123 Pleasant Lane
Sawmills, NC 28630

Engineering Update

Road resurfacing projects will begin this spring on Freedom Lane and Millrace Drive. Surveying is taking place on Bucks Drive and Loye Lane. The 321-A Sidewalk project stretching from Sawmills Fire Department to Story's One Stop is under review by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. The proposed Greenway at Veteran's Memorial Park has been delayed due to holdups in the Duke Energy Relicensing process with the Federal Government.

2010 Census Information

The April 2010 Census information is in and Sawmills is still the second largest municipality in Caldwell County with a population of 5,240. This is a growth of about 6.5% over the last ten years.

March 1, 2011
Attention!!!!

On line payments are now available for Utility Bills only at:
www.townofsawmills.com

GETTING STARTED

- ✳ Town of Sawmills customers will be able to make payments on line after receiving the March 2011 bill.
- ✳ Select "Pay Your Bill & Fee Schedule" on the Town's Website Home page.
- ✳ On the right side of the screen will be the link to "View/Pay eBills"
- ✳ Select "Register" to create a *user id and password*. Complete each step and select "Continue". Upon completion, an automatic notification will be sent to the e mail address provided confirming the **user id, password and verification code**. Please go to the address at the end of the message to log in and verify your account. After clicking on the link, enter the information on the verification e mail. Upon completion, customers will be taken to their main account page.
- ✳ Select "View & Pay Utility Bills"
- ✳ "Add an Account"
- ✳ Select "Utility Bill", enter your "Account" # (a 4 digit number on printed bill) and "PIN #" (a 5 digit number in the top center of the printed bill). **Both numbers are required.**
- ✳ After agreeing to the terms, customers will be returned to their profile page with a message indicating they will receive an e mail once their registration has been processed.
- ✳ *****IMPORTANT***** - When registering, the address and zip code must be the same as what is printed on the credit card. You will need to include the security code (3 digit # on the back of the card).

PAYMENTS

- ✳ Customers can pay their Utility Bill by means of either a credit or debit card with a VISA, MasterCard, Discover or American Express card.
- ✳ There will be a .35 transaction fee and a 3% credit/debit card fee for **each** transaction. The fees are paid directly to the Merchant Provider and **not** the Town of Sawmills.

Example:	Paid between the 1 st & 15 th
Utility Bill Total	30.00
3% Credit Card Processing	.90
Flat Rate	.35
Total Transaction:	31.25

- ✳ **If** the bill has not been paid in full by the 15th of each month, late fees will be applied to the customer's account. These fees **can be paid on line.**

Example:	Paid after the 15 th
Utility Bill Total	30.00
Plus late fee	3.00
3% Credit Card Processing	.99
Flat Rate	.35
Total Transaction:	34.34

- ✳ **Please note that if partial payments are made, the fees will be charged to your card each time a payment is made to your account.**
- ✳ **If** the bill has not been paid by the 25th of each month, service will be discontinued to the customer. The bill total and late fees **can be paid on line**, but the customer **will have to pay the re-connect fee** at the Town Hall office.

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR EXAMPLE BILL

EXAMPLE

Town of Sawmills
4076 US Hwy 321-A
Sawmills, NC 28630

PIN #XXXXXX

Account Number		Bill From	Bill To	
XXXX		1/14/11	2/14/11	
Previous Balance		Payments		
22.00		50.00		
Type	Amount	Previous	Current	Usage
WAT	24.00	454	460	5000
SAN	4.00	0	0	

Account Number				Due Date		Amount Due After Due Date		Amount Due By Due Date	
XXXX				3/15/2011		33.00		30.00	
RETURN THIS STUB WITH PAYMENT FAILURE TO RECEIVE A BILL IS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR NON-PAYMENT PAY ONLINE: MARCH 1, 2011 BILLS CAN BE PAID ONLINE AT: www.townofsawmills.com									

Current Amount	30.00
Amount Due Now	30.00
Pay After 3/15/2011	33.00

John Doe
123 Doe Hill
Sawmills, NC 28630

Sawmills Utility Financial Assistance Program Overview

The Town of Sawmills now offers a utility bill assistance program. The purpose of this program is to provide limited emergency funds to help pay the utility bill for a customer experiencing financial hardship resulting from job loss, medical crisis, etc. Emergency funding may cover an applicant's entire utility bill including water, sewer and sanitation.

Qualifications:

1. The applicant must have a Town of Sawmills utility account.
2. The applicant's utility account must be for service to a single family residence.
3. The applicant must reside at the residence.
4. The applicant's circumstances must warrant financial assistance.
5. The applicant's monthly income must be 150% of the federal poverty level, or lower.

# IN HOUSEHOLD	MAXIMUM MONTHLY INCOME	# IN HOUSEHOLD	MAXIMUM MONTHLY INCOME
1	1362	5	3272
2	1839	6	3749
3	2316	7	4227
4	2794	8	4704

*Numbers taken from the 2011 HHS Poverty Guidelines Chart (aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/11pverty.shtml) then multiplied to 150%

Limitations:

1. An applicant may not apply for assistance more than 2 times during any 24-month period.
2. If an applicant has been approved for assistance 2 times within a 24-month period, the applicant must wait 12 months from the date of the last application before applying for additional assistance.
3. The amount of assistance shall be determined by South Caldwell Christian Ministries, a nonprofit corporation; however, in each instance the approved assistance shall be for no more than 3 months and the amount of assistance shall not exceed \$100 in any month.
4. The amount of funds in the Sawmills Utilities Financial Assistance Program is limited and can affect the availability of assistance.

Application Process:

- Applications are available at Sawmills Town Hall.
- The applicant shall first take the completed application to the town.
- Upon the town receiving the application, the applicant will not incur additional late charges and service will continue until a decision on assistance is made.
- Applicants shall then take the application and verification documents to Caldwell County Department of Social Services (DSS).
- DSS will review the application and it will then send the application, along with DSS's recommendation as to whether financial assistance should be approved, to South Caldwell Christian Ministries.
- South Caldwell Christian Ministries will make the final decision as to whether the applicant will receive assistance and, if so, the amount of the assistance.
- South Caldwell Christian Ministries will send a letter to the applicant informing the applicant as to its decision.
- South Caldwell Christian Ministries shall remit to the Town of Sawmills from the assistance fund the utility payments it approves.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BUDGET WORKSHOP

MARCH 24TH 3:00PM – 5:00PM
TOWN HALL

OPENING DAY FOR BASEBALL

APRIL 9TH
VETERAN'S PARK

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 19TH 6:00PM
TOWN HALL

BUDGET WORKSHOP

APRIL 21ST 3:00PM – 5:00PM
TOWN HALL

BUDGET WORKSHOP

MAY 3RD 3:00PM – 5:00PM
TOWN HALL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MAY 17TH 6:00PM
TOWN HALL
PRESENTATION OF THE BUDGET

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

JUNE 21ST 6:00PM
TOWN HALL

Sawmills Officials

Town Council

Bob Gibbs, *Mayor* (828) 612-8790
Gerelene Blevins, *Mayor Pro Tem* (828) 313-0530
Joe Norman, *Councilman* (828) 381-2185
Beverly Fry, *Councilwoman* (828) 396-4422
Donnie Potter, *Councilman* (828) 302-8245
Joe Wesson, *Councilman* (828) 496-7475

Sawmills Town Staff

Administration

(828) 396-7903
Town Administrator Seth Eckard
Clerk Susan Nagle
Finance Director Karen Clontz
Office Manager Kim Trivette
Administrative Assistant Julie Good

Public Works

(828) 396-2300
Public Works Director Ronnie Coffey
Assistant Public Works Director Steve Coonse
Parks and Rec Director Benny Townsend

Charlie Cannon
Rex Arrowood
Chad Duncan
Kenneth Wade
Matt Nagle
Joel Hart

Contact – Please feel free to contact us at (828) 396 – 7903 if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.