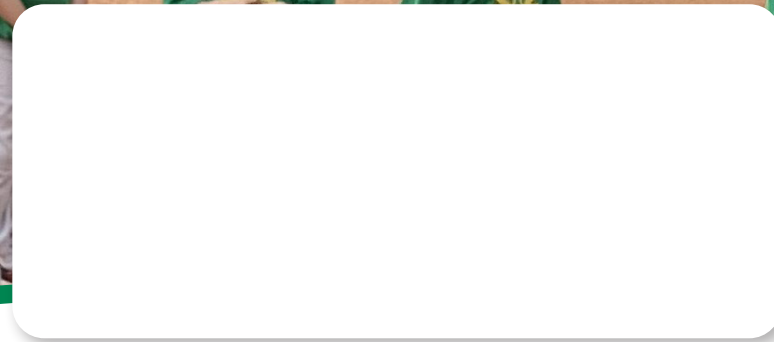




**SPENCER**  
NORTH CAROLINA  
*Rowan's Original Gateway.*

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
MUSKEGON, MI  
PERMIT NO. 429



## FROM THE MAYOR

### Appearances Matter - Taking Pride in Your Community

by Jonathan Williams

In case you haven't noticed, Spencer is on the move, in the news, and up and coming. From folks elsewhere in Rowan County and beyond, we are constantly fielding questions like "what is going on in Spencer?" and "what is all this I'm hearing about Spencer in the news?" The simple answer is "progress." Our wonderful town is gaining interest for all the right reasons - fun-filled events, exciting projects, continued investment, and positive momentum.

This attention should make each of us, as Spencer residents, proud to be a part of our lovely town. I, for one, am incredibly proud of our citizens, volunteers, businesses, and Town staff. Yet, I sometimes stop and think that when folks outside our community ask these questions, it is as if they are surprised by what they are seeing. Why is that? The more I've thought about it, the more perplexed it makes me, because, at its heart, Spencer has always been a great community. From our days as a railroad town to today, we have something that makes us unique - community pride in a town built on generations of hard work, great leadership, neighborly care, and committed individuals.

But I think the reality of the surprise over Spencer's positive press and recent success may be rooted in external appearances. Why? Because, yes, appearance do indeed matter. People believe what they see. So why the surprise? The fact is, despite our progress, there still leaves much work to be done. We still have houses falling into further disrepair. We still have yards that are not maintained. We still have people that don't follow Town ordinances or the law. We still have neighbors

who don't act neighborly. We still have storefronts that remain vacant. When you look at the world through these lenses, the picture looks bleak. However, when we look at our town through the lenses of positive progress, we see the following amazing things happening:

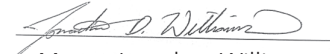
- New businesses coming to town
- Major industries investing millions of dollars into Spencer
- New homes being built
- Citizens renovating historic homes and buildings
- New parks and recreation amenities
- Town cleanup days and citizens helping each other
- People moving to town and making Spencer "home"
- Over 155,000 visitors a year coming to Spencer

And the list goes on. When you look at this picture, as many are these days, our present looks bright, and our future looks even brighter. This is the power of positive thinking and using that positive thinking to make progress in our Town.

So, when things look bleak to you, I encourage you to look around for signs of positivity, and if you can't see it, create it. When your neighbor's yard hasn't been kept up, check and see if they are okay and if you can help. When someone speaks unkindly to you, shower them with kindness. When something doesn't meet your expectation, ask what you can do to make a difference. You see, when things don't meet your satisfaction,

you, and only you, can change the outlook for the better. Let's each work together to focus on progress, positivity, and being better neighbors to each other as we move Spencer forward.

In Stan Toler's book, *The Lasting Impact of Positive Leadership*, he states, "Leaders imagine a future that is better than the present - and they look for ways to make it happen." Let's continue our progress with a positive attitude and work together as citizen leaders to make Spencer a model small town that we can all be proud of

  
Mayor Jonathan Williams

### Spencer Fire Department's newest addition to the fleet

The Town has added a Utility Vehicle to the Fire Department fleet to help staff better serve citizens and visitors. The vehicle, a 2022 John Deere Gator, will provide enhanced response and fire prevention capabilities in a variety of ways. A slide-in skid unit includes an 85-gallons water tank with pump, and space for a backboard. This allows staff to access locations that large fire engines cannot and enhances the ability to respond to emergencies in both current parks and trails, as well as those to come in the future. The department also plans to use the UTV for hydrant maintenance to eliminate wear and tear on apparatus, and public education events throughout the Town of Spencer.



## SPENCER'S COMMUNITY GARDEN IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

The Spencer Community Garden is an ambitious project to promote gardening, education, and food security in Spencer. You may sign up or learn more information at [spencernc.gov/garden](http://spencernc.gov/garden). Continue reading for more gardening history and how you can participate.

When they first heard that the Town was interested in supporting a new community garden, local business owners Amy Ray and Anthony Nero immediately knew they were on board. The couple, who not only own Pinocchio's Italian Restaurant but who also serve on the Town's Community Appearance Commission (CAC), have long been advocates of healthy, local food. Amy and Anthony understood that this was exactly the right moment to bring Spencer together around a shared green vision: to promote garden education and food security, and to show what can be achieved by many hands moving the earth.

"A small but strong town like Spencer is perfectly suited for this kind of gardening program", said Ray. "We will have a produce stand to offer fresh produce to the community, as well as a blessing box to offer common pantry items. These small steps will help support food security in Spencer and will offer a chance for folks to mingle with and get to know their neighbors." Ray added that she has been dreaming of this garden for years.

Today, due to the hard work and dedication of countless volunteers, that dream is becoming a reality. The Community Appearance Commission, with special support from Town Alderman Steve Miller and a partnership with Spencer Presbyterian Church, has been hard at work raising funds, coordinating volunteers, and physically constructing the new Spencer Community Garden. Anyone passing through Spencer recently has probably noticed the new wooden archway, produce stand, flowers, and several garden beds sprouting up at the corner of Second Street and Salisbury Avenue. These are just a few early hints of the garden's ambitious master plan which, when fully built out, will be not only a functional garden, but also an attractive community gathering space.

The future of the garden will have raised beds around the perimeter of the lot and a gazebo in the middle, accompanied by fruit trees and bushes. The vision includes a flexible

gathering space for events like gardening workshops, plant swaps, yoga on the lawn, outdoor services and celebrations, movie nights, and holiday events, just to name a few.

"I am so delighted to see how this garden is taking shape and how many people want to be involved," added Ray. "Spencer Presbyterian Church, the Town of Spencer and its Community Appearance Commission, Public Works and the Spencer Fire Department have all done incredible things to get this project going. The partnerships have been incredibly encouraging and heartwarming, showing that this truly is a community effort."

### How to Participate



Individual garden boxes are available to anyone interested in gardening; experience is not required! A successful garden depends on contributions of many kinds of volunteers, from beginning gardeners to experts and everything in-between. Success will also depend on the help of skilled project managers, coordinators, and those who can take on leadership positions to sustain the project over the long term.

The success of a community garden also depends on donations, sponsors, and support from the community. To help meet our goals, we are looking for individuals, families, groups, organizations, or businesses willing to sponsor the building of 8'x4'x2' garden boxes. We also need volunteers to help plant and maintain the boxes, including weeding and watering.

If you would like to donate, first of all - thank you! Your donation will help ensure

this community garden grows into something truly special for Spencer. The garden fund is currently being managed by Spencer Presbyterian Church, who are the owners of the garden property. Checks can be written to: Spencer Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 4, Spencer NC 28159. Please write "Community Garden Donation" in the memo.

### Contact Us:

If you're interested in volunteering, donating materials, making a restricted donation, or need more information, please email [SpencerCommunityGarden@gmail.com](mailto:SpencerCommunityGarden@gmail.com). You can also find us at "Spencer Community Garden" on Facebook! More information on the Town's website at [www.spencernc.gov/garden](http://www.spencernc.gov/garden), or in the front lobby of Town Hall, 460 South Salisbury Avenue.

### FIRE DEPARTMENT OFFERS SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Although Summer is a fun and exciting time when family and friends come together to relax, camp, and enjoy the outdoors, safety should be your first priority. According to the US Fire Administration, the warm summer months are one of the most dangerous periods for fire-related accidents, injuries, and deaths from the results of fireworks, grilling, and lawn equipment. Here are some simple steps you can take to stay safe this summer:

- **Grilling:** keep your grill at least 15 feet away from your home and any overhanging branches, and remove all grease build-up after it cools down. NEVER leave unattended.
- **Fireworks:** closely supervise all fireworks. No fireworks are truly safe for a child to handle without adult supervision. Under the right conditions even sparklers can cause serious burns and ignite fires.
- **Open burning & fire pits:** within the Town of Spencer open burning is only allowed for cooking or recreational purposes. This must be done in an approved fire pit constructed of either steel, masonry, or block. The container cannot be larger than 3ft in diameter and must be a minimum of 15 ft away from all structures or combustible materials.

<p><b>Mayor</b> Jonathan Williams</p> <p><b>Board of Aldermen</b> Patti Secrest (Mayor Pro-Tem) Andrew Howe Steve Miller Sam Morgan Rashid Muhammad Pat Sledge</p>	<p><b>Town Manager</b> Peter Franzese</p> <p><b>Staff Leadership Team</b> Stacy Craven, Town Clerk Steve Blount, Planning and Zoning Mike File, Police Chief Kyle Harris, Planner Christie Hutchinson; Act. Finance Officer Michael Lanning, Fire Chief Joe Morris, Special Projects Planner Joel Taylor, Public Works Director</p>	<p><b>Contact Us</b> <a href="http://spencernc.gov">spencernc.gov</a> <b>Text us: 704-870-0720</b> Town Hall: 704-633-2231 Fire: 704-637-6135 Library: 704-636-9072 Police 704-633-3574 Public Works: 704-633-5331 Call 911 for Emergencies Rowan Co Public Safety Non-Emergency line: 704-216-8500</p>
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# MANAGER'S NOTES

**FY23 budget embraces a bold vision while practicing stewardship**  
by Peter Franzese

Across North Carolina, local government managers have worked with their teams over the last months to prepare balanced budget recommendations for their governing boards to consider. The process is established by State law, calling for a recommendation before the end of May, and for the governing board to hold a public hearing as it considers the budget for the coming year. Each local government must have a balanced budget adopted by June 30, prior to the new fiscal year starting on July 1.

It was an honor to work with Spencer's staff to propose a roughly \$5 million budget

for the 2022-23 Fiscal Year. As of the time of writing this column, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen have received my recommendation and are in the process of receiving public input and considering what adjustments to the recommended budget they would like to include.

The Town of Spencer has continued to make progress on the goals and priorities identified in the Town's Strategic Plan during a challenging two years of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The last two years also brought opportunities to improve the way the Town communicates with the public and uses technology, and the funding opportunity of the American Rescue Plan Act.

Revenues in the current year (FY21-22) are trending better than expected, and we project modest revenue growth for the upcoming year. At the same time, over the

last two years the Town has significantly invested in recruiting and retaining a talented staff, and construction of the new Town Hall and Police Department. The proposed FY23 budget accommodates a five percent structural increase to the Pay Plan to remain competitive in the labor market and continues the developmental increase program, funds the first year of full-time Fire Department staff coverage, and includes the first of 30 annual debt service payments for the \$2.8 million USDA loan.

Spencer is one of approximately 19,000 units of local government to benefit from the American Rescue Plan's State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), provided to state and local governments for the purpose of responding to negative economic impacts of stemming from COVID-19. The Town of Spencer's allocation is just over \$1 million. The Town has been developing a spending plan based on feedback from the

community, staff, and elected officials. The resulting project ideas will be accomplished not with the SLFRF allocation itself, but rather through the "supplanted funds" created by the revenue replacement model. The FY23 budget recommendation includes appropriating \$586,000 to cover staff salaries for the coming fiscal year, thereby freeing local tax dollars to achieve several projects.

Other key recommendations include seed funding for a business incubator concept; continuing support of local tourism and events, including sponsorship of Spencer's Winterfest; planning a safer and more efficient garbage collection process starting July of 2024; 17th Street stormwater project design; construction of Yadkin River Trailhead; exterior maintenance at Spencer Public Library, including window replacement; a significant street resurfacing program, and more. Please be sure to visit [spencernc.gov](http://spencernc.gov) to learn more about the FY23 budget.

Congratulations to new Police Chief Michael File, who was selected after a thorough search process. Chief File has 16 years of law enforcement experience and has been with the Town of Spencer since 2017. He has a passion for service, and embraces Spencer Police Department's role in partnering with the community to provide law enforcement services, promote community safety, enforce criminal laws and municipal ordinances, and address violations and other public nuisances. He has a vision for a two-way relationship of engagement with the community in all these areas. He is committed to our partnerships with the North Carolina Transportation Museum and Rowan-Salisbury Schools. Most importantly, he is dedicated to supporting and developing our Police staff and embraces a spirit of teamwork with colleagues across all Town departments. This is an exciting next step for the Town as we continue to build an outstanding team of

professionals. Please read more about this on this page.

I hope you have a safe and enjoyable summer and have an opportunity to spend lots of time with family and friends. Our many community events are a great time to do that—please mark National Night Out on Tuesday, August 2 on your calendar and stay tuned for more details!

## SUMMER CRIME PREVENTION TIPS FROM SPENCER POLICE

- If you are going out of town, you can notify the Police Department and set up vacation watch. Do NOT post your vacation plans on social media while away.
- Remove all valuable items from vehicles.
- Do not leave vehicles unattended with windows down or doors unlocked.
- Do not leave children or pets unattended in vehicles, excessive heat can cause serious injury or death.
- Be a GOOD neighbor, if you notice any unusual activity alert the Police Department directly, **in an emergency please dial 9-1-1.**

Weapons Carrier (\$1.00 fee). All other activities are free.  
**Food Vendors:** Roadway Dogs, The Old 97 Kettle Corn, and Chill Shak.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

Have news to share for an upcoming issue? Contact Town Clerk Stacy Craven at [scraven@spencernc.gov](mailto:scraven@spencernc.gov) or 704-633-2231.



### File Promoted to Police Chief

Congratulations to Michael File, who officially began a new role as Spencer's Police Chief on May 30. He was selected after the Town conducted a thorough search process, which attracted dozens of candidates from across the United States. File served as Chief of the Spencer Police Department since November of 2021. File has 16 years of law enforcement experience and joined the Spencer Police Department in 2017 as a criminal investigator. File later served as Sergeant with responsibility for criminal investigations and school resource officers. His recognitions include being named officer of the year multiple times, and he was recently honored by the Terrie Hess House Children's Advocacy Center with the Multidisciplinary Team Partner of the Year Award.

"I am excited to have earned the opportunity to lead the Spencer Police Department," said File. "I have worked toward the goal of becoming a police chief during my career, and I have learned from many fantastic mentors over the years. We have a great group of officers here, and my desire is to build upon the foundation we currently have to create a model small-town law enforcement agency that is noted for its best practices, outstanding service to the community, and culture of teamwork and collaboration."

**A formal oath of office ceremony will be planned in the coming weeks, which will include an opportunity for the community to meet and greet Chief File.**

### Grants to fund vintage sign restoration

The Town of Spencer is excited to announce that many of the painted vintage signs in downtown Spencer will soon experience new life and a fresh coat of paint. Thanks to grants received from the Blanche and Julia Robertson Foundation and the Martha Woodson Foundation, the Town will be able proceed with this process over a much shorter period of time than originally planned. The Town's has contracted with a mural restoration artist to restore these historically important signs to their full color. Many of these signs represent businesses that helped build Spencer, and their restoration will help bring their history with us into the future. If you have photographs of any vintage signs in Spencer, sharing them with the Town would help us.



**Please contact LFNC Fellow Skye Allan at 704-633-2231 ext. 29 or [sallan@spencernc.gov](mailto:sallan@spencernc.gov).**

### Helpful reminders about our Solid Waste program

Did you know that in addition to your weekly garbage collection, the Town also provides weekly yard waste and bulk item collection at no extra cost? Here are some helpful hints to remember about our Solid Waste program:

- It is important to place all your waste inside your cart for collection, and to bag all waste securely. This not only keeps your cart cleaner, but it helps keep our crews safe and keeps the routes running on time.
- If an item is too big to fit inside your cart (like an old piece of furniture), it is considered bulky waste. All bulky waste should be at the curb on your regular collection day. It will be located by our crews as they pick up your garbage, but not collected until later in the week (typically on Thursday).
- Some items are not part of our curbside collection program, such as tires and household hazardous waste (HHW). Many of these items are recyclable at no cost through Rowan County's recycling locations. Find out more at [rowancountync.gov/533/Recycling](http://rowancountync.gov/533/Recycling).
- The Town maintains a recycling convenience center at the Public Works shop, located at 600 Sowers Ferry Road. Site hours are from 7 am-3:30 pm weekdays, and from 9 am-noon on the first and third Saturday of each month. Items accepted include: cardboard, #1 and #2 plastics only, paper, steel and aluminum cans, and glass.
- The Town cannot collect old paint. The best option for what to do with old paint is to take it to the Habitat Restore (S. Main Street in Salisbury), where it can be recycled and used again! Learn more at: [habitatrowan.org/restore](http://habitatrowan.org/restore). Empty paint cans can be collected in bagged garbage, as long as the residual paint has been allowed to dry inside first.
- Paint and many other HHW items are collected by Rowan County during a special event each October at the facility in East Spencer. County staff can be contacted at 704-216-8589 for more information about this.

### Checking in at the Spencer Public Library



#### Discover Your Superpower!

This summer we are inviting all children from ages 3-12 to our Discover Your Superpower Summer Reading Program. Each Tuesday through July at 3pm, you'll get to meet a local superhero, listen to related stories, and enjoy superhero prizes and snacks! We kicked it off June 13 with "Wonder Woman," demonstrating her superpower of hula hooping and athletic capabilities. For more information and to sign-up follow the Spencer Public Library Facebook Page, or call 704-636-9072 (Monday- Wednesday)

We thank everyone who celebrated the Fabulous Fifties with us and Central United Methodist Church on Saturday, May 7! This event brought children, teens, and older adults together for a day of fun with food and lots of entertainment.

*The Spencer Public Library, located at 300 Fourth St., is independently funded by the Town of Spencer and not a branch of Rowan Public Library. Wi-Fi is available.*

### Let's work together to park the right way

Spencer's history brings a unique parking-related challenge that many other communities do not have. Many of the historical homes in our community do not have garages, and some do not have driveways. **The Town wants to make sure everyone understands that in general, parking on lawns is not allowed.** Parking cars on the grass in your front or side yard is not only unattractive, but it also causes damage to the grass and eventually soil erosion with harmful sediment flowing into our stormwater collection system and eventually into our creeks and streams.

The Town recently adopted Ordinance 22-

### Monthly cruise-in events all summer, Free Fireworks at NCTM coming July 2

We've planned a fun Saturday afternoon for you at the 2022 Cruisin' Spencer series! Each event will be in front of the new Town Hall, 2-6 p.m. on the 4th Saturday of each Month from May through October. Show off your favorite wheels, or simply come to meet your neighbors and enjoy a food truck. For more information call 704-633-2231.

**Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy a night of family fun at the N.C. Transportation Museum for Fireworks Over Historic Spencer Shops on Saturday, July 2!** Museum buildings and exhibits will be closed at 5 p.m. The museum grounds will open to the public for free at 7pm and wrap up with the fireworks show beginning at 9:15pm.



On display will be the Ride of Pride trucks from Daimler Trucks North America's Cleveland, NC plant. Activities include a balloon twister, inflatables, corn hole, and other lawn games. A DJ will play fun dance music. Patriotic music will be played during the fireworks show. Guests are invited to take a ride in a WW II era Dodge

**CRUISIN' SPENCER**

2PM-6PM DOWNTOWN

MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
28	25	23	27	24	22

EVERY 4TH SATURDAY FROM MAY TO OCTOBER

**SPENCER NORTH CAROLINA**  
Rowan's Original Gateway

007, enhancing previously adopted regulations that prohibit parking on erodible surfaces (grass, dirt, etc.) and requires that cars, boats, and trailers be parked in specifically designed and



paved parking areas.

Vehicles can be parked in a garage, carport, driveway, or a paved (asphalt, concrete, or compacted gravel with edging) parking area. Street parking is allowed in most areas; however, ALL tires must be on the paved surface. The street cannot be used for permanent storage of unfrequently used vehicles, boats, or trailers. Vehicles parked in the street cannot block traffic or use of the street for emergency vehicles. You can be cited and fined for violation of this ordinance. The Town wants to work with you to solve any problems you might have. A permit is required to create a new parking area or to install new driveways. For more information, please contact: Steve Blount, James Osborne, or Joel Taylor at 704-633-2231.