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THE VILLAGE OF SUGAR MOUNTAIN
251 Dick Trundy Lane
Sugar Mountain, NC 28604
Manager's Monthly Report
May 20, 2025

Hurricane Helene: Work continues throughout the Village on assessing damages and repairs from Hurricane Helene. The process of the debris removal by the FEMA contractors has ended in the Village. The Public Works staff will continue cleaning the ditches of debris and other debris remaining from the contractors over the upcoming weeks. A report from Avery County showed there have been 44,712.8 cubic yards or 1,406 loads removed from Sugar Mountain as of April 26, 2025. There have been 627,605.1 cubic yards or 14,010 loads removed as of this date in Avery County.

The Village has submitted to FEMA, reimbursement requests for the Golf Course Pond debris cleanout in the amount of \$105,739, the replacement of the HVAC unit at Village Hall for \$12,240, staff labor and equipment used for debris removal for \$253,135, and for temporary/emergency road repairs in the amount of \$264,691; a total of \$635,805. We have received payment for the HVAC replacement to date in the amount of \$12,240.

Golf Course: Repairs to the golf course are expected to begin in the upcoming weeks. Dail Golf will be on site to begin bunker repairs. Based on initial estimates, the not to exceed cost for this work has been set at \$136,861. This part of the repairs is expected to be completed by June 1st. The engineers are currently working on the design elements of the overall project and preparing to submit the permit application with the US Army Corp of Engineers to perform the stream restoration needed.

We opened the course for play with **eight** holes on Friday, May 16th. As work progresses, we will open additional holes and have a better idea of an anticipated date of completion of the repairs to the entire course.

2025 Tennis: Tennis opened for the 2025 Tennis Season on Monday, May 12th. We will see the start of several of the regular season players returning in the next couple of weeks at which time a regular schedule of play will begin. The fence on courts 1 and 2 that was damaged by Helene will be repaired and posts replaced soon.

Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Board Meeting: The TDA Board met on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. The Board adopted a letter requesting reconsideration on the timing of the closure of the Blue Ridge Parkway from Linville to Blowing Rock for repairs and paving. The Board held a budget workshop for the FY 2025-26. The Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed \$900,860 budget on Wednesday, June 11th. Dalton Kilby of Bramble Marketing submitted the attached April 2025 marketing update.

The March 2025 collections of the occupancy tax showed a decrease of 13% in comparison to March 2024. The occupancy tax collections for the period April 2024 through March 2025 (\$727,533) have shown a \$132,940 or 15.45% decrease in comparison to the same period of 2024 (\$860,473).

Billboard Tynecastle Highway: Seven months ago, Hurricane Helene's winds brought down the billboard at 2515 Tynecastle Highway. It lay on the ground for several months, then was dismantled and it lay in pieces until recently when the owner of the property began to reconstruct it. The Village issued a stop work order on March 24, 2025. The owner has applied for a sign permit to rebuild the billboard. The application has been denied due to the structure being more than 50% damaged. The applicant has received the denial letter and has appealed to the Board of Adjustment. The Board of Adjustment will meet on Tuesday, May 27th to consider this appeal.

This is the same applicant that has petitioned the Council to consider a zoning ordinance amendment to allow him to rebuild the billboard due to damage caused by a natural disaster.

There is also a billboard on Hwy 105 that was more than 50% damaged during Helene. This particular billboard was also damaged in 2019 and allowed to be rebuilt following an ordinance amendment adopted by the Council. The Council then repealed this amendment. The Village has notified the owner that it cannot be repaired. To date, we have not received an application for a permit to repair or a request for the Council to consider an ordinance amendment as in 2019.

Homewood Suites (Morlin Hospitality, Tynecastle Hwy): The Board of Adjustment will meet on Tuesday, May 27th at 10am to consider an application from Morlin Hospitality to amend the Special Use Permit previously granted. Morlin Hospitality is requesting an amendment to the permit to be able to divide the 22.76 acre property into two parcels; one 8.56 acres that the hotel will be constructed on and another tract of 14.20 acres.

Property Tax Collections: Of the \$1,435,955 total 2024 levy, \$1,428,223 or 99.46% has been collected with a balance of \$7,732 uncollected through May 16, 2025. A balance of \$1,176 remains uncollected for the 2015-2023 tax years. Taxes were due by Monday, January 6, 2025 and now all unpaid taxes have begun to accrue interest and penalties. The 2024 tax liens on real property have been advertised in the April 23rd edition of the Avery Journal.

Administrative Matters: The Village office will be closed Monday, May 26th for the Memorial Day Holiday. The residential trash pick-up schedule will be on Tuesday and Thursday this holiday week. The Avery County Solid Waste Centers will also be closed on Monday, May 26th. The Police Department will be on a regular schedule throughout the holiday weekend.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Susan Phillips", with a stylized, flowing script.

Susan Phillips