



State of the City

March 5, 2020

The City of Charleston had a successful and industrious year. 2019 closed with a positive operating income of over \$47,000. This was 163% better than 2018 which closed at a deficit. During the year, the city government accomplished the following:

- Replaced aging police unit, returning the truck to the City Fleet
- Metered city water to track usage and identify any potential leaks
- Hired a Project Coordinator which lead to the application of eight grants; three were received totalling over \$132,000
- Installed a shade structure at the playground
- Revised the community center ordinance in efforts to make it more attractive for rental
- Performed an in depth water rate study to ensure the correct rates were implemented
- Allowed City workers to move to a Flex schedule during the summer, allowing for more time at home with their families
- Hosted a successful United Way Day of Caring
- Started working through the process to upgrade the crosswalk at School Street and Highway 22
- Made the decision to replace the wastewater treatment plant which will address items in the consent order from ADEQ
- Decided to replace remaining water meters with smart meters which will allow the city to detect leaks and slow unbillable water loss
- Increased trash rates to keep up with the demand of rising landfill prices
- Approved the construction of 26 single family homes and eight duplexes on School Street
- Identified the need to increase Branch's sewer rate

- Received an extension on the consent order from ADEQ
- Last but not least, who could forget the speed humps

While a lot was accomplished in 2019, it is anticipated that 2020 will be just as successful.

I have provided year to date comparison for both the City of Charleston and Water and Sewer. As you will see, the City of Charleston is slightly behind last year's revenue number by .9%. Expenses continue to grow exceeding last year's expense by 9%. This is primarily due to increased insurance and wages. As a result of the newly implemented water rates, Water and Sewer are no longer operating at a deficit. Year to date, gross income is 65% more than the same period last year. Expenses have increased slightly at 2%. Net income is 350% higher than last year and this company is now sustaining operations.

In closing, I would like to thank the employees of the City of Charleston who work tirelessly to keep this City running. Their service to our community is invaluable. I would like to thank the council for their commitment to continue to improve our city. Finally, I thank the citizens of Charleston for their participation in studies, surveys and community roundtables. Their input is critical to the future of Charleston.

Thank you,

Tabitha Hester

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Mayor