

---

**For Immediate Release**

**Date:** July 13, 2021- Updated

**Contact:**

Susan B. Weis

<mailto:sweis@fuquay-varina.org>

Office: 919-552-1417

Mobile: 919-605-0765

---

## Fuquay-Varina Mayor John W. Byrne to Retire in December

Fuquay-Varina Mayor John W. Byrne announced his retirement tonight and that he will not seek re-election in the upcoming November election. He has served as mayor of Fuquay-Varina for 20 years.

“I set goals when I became mayor. I made a commitment to those goals, and I’ve been able to achieve those goals along with the help of some fantastic Town Commissioners and a first-class Town staff. My wife and I are in good health, and we are at a stage in our lives where we want to do some things that require a time commitment that would frankly take away from the responsibilities of being Mayor. This is a great opportunity to step down on a high note and transition to the next phase in our lives,” said Mayor John W. Byrne. “It has been the greatest honor of my life to be Mayor of Fuquay-Varina.”

Mayor Byrne further stated that, “I think we have the best Town Board we’ve ever had. I especially want to thank Blake Massengill for the wonderful job he has done as Mayor Pro Tem. Blake has helped me more than he knows, and he is a great ambassador and leader for the Town. His experience and input is invaluable. I also want to thank the Town Manager and his team of directors. We have some of the finest professionals in the state working for the Town and its citizens.”

The citizens of the Town of Fuquay-Varina have greatly benefited from Mayor Byrne’s 20-year tenure. Mayor Byrne led efforts to complete the Judd Parkway loop around Fuquay-Varina. The 7-mile loop improves traffic flow and commuter times for residents and regional commuters from Southern Wake and bordering counties. He also led significant streetscape investments in both the Fuquay and Varina Districts helping to revitalize them into thriving business areas.

Under Mayor Byrne’s guidance, the town received tens of millions of dollars in grant funding for community improvements and the Town received a Triple A Bond rating from Standard & Poor’s, the highest municipal bond rating issued for units of government. The Town made significant investment in infrastructure including the expansion of Terrible Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, which increased

treatment capacity from 1 to 3 million gallons per day. Additionally, a new Public Service Center was added to accommodate a growing population and Town Hall relocated back downtown.

Also under Mayor Byrne's leadership, a former Belk department store building was refurbished into a thriving Arts Center. The Town purchased and revitalized the Fuquay Mineral Spring Park, for which the town was founded and gets part of its name. The Town's park inventory grew to 20 parks with more than 500 acres of active and passive land spread throughout town. Most notably, the town recently accepted 140 acres of land from Wake County, which is now Hilltop Needmore Town Park and Preserve and completed a \$5.5 million upgrade to Fleming Loop Park.

Mayor Byrne has always been a champion of preservation. Under his guidance, the town of Fuquay-Varina was selected to participate in the North Carolina Main Street program in 2006 and continues in this program today. In conjunction with strong volunteerism, the program has helped to strengthen the Town's two downtown districts.

Mayor Byrne also has personally given back to the community. In his 20-years as Mayor he has contributed both financially and through the donation of land to the Town. Notably, he and his wife Patty are Friends of the Arts Center and made a sizeable donation to the Arts Center theatre. Mayor Byrne also donated land to the Fuquay-Varina Fire Department to allow for an expansion of Fire Station No. 1.

Mayor Byrne has advocated for investing in employee education, competitive wages, and benefits. A particular point of pride for him is that he has given the oath of office to most incoming police officers in his 20 years as mayor.

"Mayor Byrne has been an incredibly strong leader in helping to navigate the explosive growth the Town of Fuquay-Varina has experienced over the past 20 years," said Town Manager Adam Mitchell. "His strong vision and commitment, and quite honestly, his affection for this town have left an enduring mark on Fuquay-Varina."