



### *Newton : Water Tank Gets New Purpose, Facelift*

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**NEWTON, N.C.** -- It's seen better days but officials hope the water tank in Newton can continue to be a landmark and generate some income.

Newton City Council approved a budget ordinance amendment to the city's water and wastewater fund for \$22,750 on Tuesday night. The \$22,750 is for the 2010-11 fiscal year and is revenue generated from renting space on its water tank to AT&T/New Cingular Wireless.

Work to restore the 500,000-gallon water tank started last week. The tank was erected in 1948 but the city stopped using it in 1994, according to information from the city.

Gary Herman, public information officer for the city, said Utility Service Company of Spartanburg, S.C., was contracted to do the work for \$275,000. The money for the refurbishing will come from the city's water treatment plant budget and will be spread out over five years, Herman said. The financing agreement for the work is interest-free, according to information from the city.

Any revenue from leasing the space would be returned to the water plant's budget.

Work on the tank will include sandblasting and applying a prime coat on the inside and sandblasting the exterior and restoring the Newton logo on it, Herman said.

In October, the Newton City Council discussed different options for the tank, including demolition, before it decided on refurbishing. Council members were told the tank will likely never be put back into use.

In late 2008, the city council agreed to enter a contract to lease space on the water tank to SunCom/T-Mobile to use for a cell tower for five years. The city made \$36,000 each year for the first and second year. The contract calls for the city to get \$39,000 for the third and fourth year and \$42,000 for the fourth and fifth year, according to information from the city.

The city council recently agreed to lease more space on the water tank to AT&T/New Cingular Wireless for 10 years. The first year, 2010-11, would garner the city \$22,750 in revenues and \$36,000 in revenues in 2012. The third and fourth year would each bring \$39,000; the fifth year would bring in \$42,000; the sixth year would bring \$43,000; the seventh and eighth year would each bring in \$45,000; and the ninth and 10th year would each bring \$48,000, according to information from the city.

Before work on the tower started, AT&T/New Cingular Wireless installed a "corral" atop the tower, which look like spikes extending from the tower, according to information from the city. T-Mobile has removed its antenna and now has a mobile cell site at the location and when the work is complete, T-Mobile and AT&T will put their antennas on the corral, the information says.

The project is expected to take about four weeks, city officials say.