

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, January 5th, 2024. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Items for Newsletters:

1. **Free Water for a Year initiative**: We have selected our second winner! There are 2 more chances to win \$1000 worth of free water for anyone who completes a survey before June 2024. Newark Water customers are encouraged to complete the online survey at this link: <https://newarkde.gov/lead> to enter a sweepstakes for free water for a year, up to \$1000 value! The data we collect will help complete a required inventory of service lines and reduce operating costs for the water utility.
2. **Reduced Price Parking**: Off-peak parking rates began on December 16th and are in effect until January 15. On-street meters are \$1.25 per hour and off-street parking lots are \$1.00 per hour. Parking will be complimentary downtown December 24-26, December 31-January 1, and January 15 due to City holidays.
3. **Yard Waste Collection – Winter Schedule**: City-wide Yard Waste Collection will be available by appointment only until March 2024. Residents may call Public Works to schedule a yard waste collection during this period. Pickups will be scheduled for Wednesdays during weeks without a City Holiday.
4. **Fall Leaf Collection is Complete**: Fall leaf collection has been completed and collection trucks will be switched over to snow and ice control. **Any additional leaf pickup must be through the scheduled yard waste cart pickup. Residents can call Public Works to schedule a pickup until regular yard waste collection resumes in March (See #2).**
5. **City newsletter**: To sign up for the City's email newsletter, [click here](#).

Facilities and Purchasing

1. The fence replacement at the Field Operations Complex began on Tuesday this week. The contractor began along B Street and will wrap around the complex until finishing near NCCL School. It is estimated that everything will be complete by mid-February.
2. Facilities will be meeting with Police, Public Works, and Parks soon to discuss the addition of a new impound area at the Field Operations Complex, as approved in the 2024 capital budget. Space at the FOC, like other City facilities, is becoming severely limited. Staff may need to investigate other areas for City storage in the near future to maintain space for adequate equipment retention and care.
3. There are still several punch list items for the Municipal Center parking lot project to be completed. We hope that all is complete and the gates to the PD lot are operational by the end of this month.

Public Works

1. Possible Winter Weather: This weekend's forecasted storm does not appear to be bringing any significant snow to Newark, however, crews and equipment will be ready in case the forecast changes. We are also watching a large storm bringing rain and wind for mid next week. Residents are reminded to help keep storm drains cleared and park in driveways when possible.

Police

1. On Thursday, January 4, 2023, at approximately 1:10 P.M., the Newark Police Department Communications Center received a phone call from a subject claiming that they were outside of Newark High School and were planning to enter the school and shoot students and staff members. Newark Police School Resource Officers along with Christina School District Constables, who were already at the school, immediately responded to the threatening phone call. Additional Newark Police patrol officers also responded to the scene. Officers quickly determined that no shooting or acts of violence were taking place in or around the school. Early investigative efforts led officers to determine that this incident was a hoax or what has commonly been referred to as a "swatting" incident and there was no threat to the student body, staff, or school. Detectives from the Criminal Investigations Unit responded to the scene to assume the investigation. Newark Police Officers remained at the school to ensure the safe and peaceful dismissal of the students at the end of the school day.

This is an active and ongoing investigation. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Detective W. Anderson at (302) 366-7100 extension 3469 or wanderson@newark.de.us. Additional methods for providing information to Newark Police can be found on our tips page, where reward information may also be available.

Parks and Recreation

1. All programs have been updated and are now viewable in Civic Rec for the start of the Winter/Spring registration, which is now open.
2. Maintenance staff removed the holiday decorations and displays in City parks and the Academy Building lawn this week.
3. Maintenance staff repaired play features at Preston's Playground and facilities staff repaired the vandalized doors at the reservoir restroom. The bathroom facilities are now open again.
4. Recreation staff began work to finalize the fall statistics and year-end reports.

Finance

1. Accounting staff are working on the following items: W2's, 1099's, and the processing of accounts payable invoices.
2. Director Del Grande and Deputy Hollander met with USI Insurance Services to discuss our renewal of the City's insurance policies which will expire on March 31st. Current market rates are projecting we will see 10-15% premium increases across our policies due to the current insurance market.
3. The October monthly report is scheduled to be on the Council agenda for January 22nd. We are also trying to have November added to the agenda also.
4. The Finance Department is working on filling four vacant positions (one position is pending retirement):
 - Bookkeeper
 - Accountant II (pending retirement)
 - IT Applications Analyst
 - Meter Reader (title to be determined)
5. Staff closed on the master lease agreement with Banc of America on December 28th, which financed the acquisition of 25 vehicles approved by Council in the 2023 budget. The total amount financed was just under \$1.4 million.