

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, November 8th, 2024.

Items for Newsletters:

1. **Leaf Collection Began October 14 (Heaviest leaf fall happening now):** Citywide leaf collection is now underway. Dry conditions continue to help streamline pickup and creates less wear on the collection trucks. **Residents can now expect collections in their areas every 2 weeks.** Collection will continue until late December to make sure all leaves are picked up. Residents are encouraged to keep their leaves on the yard by mowing or mulching them which helps feed the lawn nutrients and provide beneficial insects with winter habitat. **Small piles may also be put in Yard Waste carts and placed out for collection on regular yard waste collection days.**
2. **Statewide Drought Watch:** The following news brief from Delaware.gov was issued October 25, 2024: Governor John Carney on Friday issued a statewide drought watch after receiving guidance from the Delaware [Water Supply Coordinating Council \(WSCC\)](#). Delawareans are asked to voluntarily reduce outdoor uses of water during the drought watch. This decision follows an assessment of conditions by the WSCC on October 25. The drought watch will remain in effect until further notice.

City water supply update 11.8.24: The City's current supply of water is stable and rain is in the forecast for Sunday evening. While there is a difference between the drought indicators used to determine drought conditions and the available supply of water, the two are linked and water conservation is always encouraged when appropriate. As of this writing, the City is still able to withdraw from the White Clay Creek and supplements with withdraws from the Newark Reservoir as needed. Our South Well Field Water Treatment Plant continues to supplement the overall needs of the City and we are confident in our ability to serve the drinking water needs of the residents and customers. Past and present iterations of City Council have supported redundancy and resiliency initiatives in our Water Utility which are bearing fruit during these dry conditions. We will continue to monitor the conditions and adjust operations as necessary.

3. **City newsletter:** To sign up for the City's email newsletter, [click here](#).

Public Works and Water Resources

1. **Water Main Replacement – Lark Drive and Tanglewood:** Lark Drive is progressing well with individual services being connected over the next week. Tanglewood Lane is moving along and the contractor will complete all restoration before moving to the next location in case the weather turns. Notices have been issued to all customers that will be impacted by the planned improvements.

2. **Street Improvement Program:** All concrete work for curbs and sidewalks are complete for the project. The contractor expects to return to Newark to mill and pave the rest of the streets after Thanksgiving. There is a possibility that the asphalt plants close for cold weather prior to the return, in which case we would look to complete the paving in early 2025. Residents would be notified when the paving is imminent.
3. **PWWR Intern:** Public Works and Water Resources has welcomed a new engineering intern from the University of Delaware. Maggie will be helping to document and verify utility easements for our water, sewer, and stormwater pipes. Utility easements are an important tool to help us maintain our assets and have access to them in an emergency.

Planning and Development

1. Land Use

- a. The Planning Commission met on November 5 where they considered the following items:
 - i. Special Use Permit for a retail marijuana store for Fresh Delaware, located at 800 Ogletown Road, was recommended for approval by a vote of 7-0.
 - ii. Comprehensive Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision to construct a five-story mixed use building at 160 South Main Street and a two-story addition to the mixed-use building at 136 South Main Street. The Comp Plan amendment received a 4-3 recommendation. The rezoning failed 2-5. Due to the rezoning failure, the major subdivision did not receive a vote.
 - iii. Chapter 32, Zoning, amendments to update the City addressing standards was recommended for approval by a vote of 7-0.
- b. Planning staff held Affordable Housing workshops at the Newark Charter Junior High School on November 6 and Downes Elementary School, which concluded the in-person district workshops. Staff will be bringing the collective feedback to Planning Commission and Council to determine next steps in the process.
- c. Staff received a plan submission for the Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning, minor subdivision, and special use permit to construct two two-story office buildings with two accessory storage buildings located at [515 Capitol Trail](#)
- d. Staff issued a Subdivision Advisory Committee comment letter for the Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision to construct three garden apartments with a total of 48 units located at [509 Capitol Trail](#)

2. Code Enforcement

- a. Staff continue to field a high volume of phone calls in working with applicants to create accounts and submit applications through Tyler Enterprise Permitting and Licensing. This has led to a delay in some response times. Staff continue to work to be responsive in a timely manner; however, wait times may be longer than usual during this time.
- b. The Property Maintenance and Fire Teams worked in coordination with Newark PD during homecoming weekend where they responded to multiple residences for

tarps, tents, and litter. They also performed bar occupancy checks throughout the day noting no violations of exceeded occupancy limits.

- c. The Property Maintenance and Fire Teams worked in coordination to perform bar occupancy checks on Halloween night. No major violations were noted at any of the bars or restaurants.
- d. Code Enforcement vacancies in process include the following:
 - i. The vacant Property Maintenance Inspector position closed on November 1 with 23 applicants. Applications currently are under review with interviews to take place before Thanksgiving.
 - ii. A conditional offer of employment was extended to and accepted by a candidate for the vacant part time Administrative Professional I position with a tentative start date of November 18.

3. Parking

- a. Staff participated in a kickoff meeting with Axon to prepare for the body worn camera rollout for the City's Parking Ambassadors on November 8. On site training is scheduled for November 20.
- b. The additional repeater required to get the new Parking radio system online has been received and staff is working with IT and Public Works to coordinate installation.
- c. Parking vacancies currently in process include the following:
 - i. The vacant evening Parking Ambassador interviews were held on October 31. One candidate has been moved to references and staff anticipates issuing an offer.
 - ii. Interviews were completed for the vacant part-time Parking Ambassador positions on October 28. Four candidates have moved to references on the candidates moving forward in the process. This position posting remains open until filled.

Police

1. **Axon Road Show:** On Monday, November 4th, Axon came to NPD with their "Axon Road Show." This event was used to showcase and provide an overview of many of the products and services that NPD uses from Axon as part of the recently approved 10-year contract. Mayor Clifton, City Manager Coleman, and members of the Police Advisory Committee attended the event as well as members of NPD and allied law enforcement agencies.
2. **Election:** On Tuesday, November 5th, NPD officers were ready to respond to any election day complaints or incidents. No police related incidents were reported.
3. **Town and Gown:** On Wednesday, November 6th, Victim Service Coordinator Melissa Pennachi and Lieutenant Andrew Rubin attended a UD Introduction to Policing Class. Ms. Pennachi provided an overview of victim services and the role of working with victims of crime. Lt. Rubin provided insight into how victim advocates and police work together on

cases, especially domestic violence cases where there is usually a higher safety concern for the victim due to the nature of the relationship to the offender. The class was attended by approximately 50 students.

4. Operations:

- a. On Wednesday, November 6th, Deputy Chief Feeney, and Sgt. Micolucci from the Street Crimes Unit attended a meeting with Planning Director Bensley and her team, City Manager Coleman, and representatives from the Red Roof Motel to discuss ongoing issues at the property.
- b. During UD Homecoming Weekend, there were no major incidents and the weekend was uneventful. Also during that weekend, NPD participated in the Prescription Drug Take Back event. NPD Officers collected over 100lbs of prescription medication during the event. This medication, along with another 285lbs of medication which had previously been collected in the drop box since the last take back event, was turned over to the DEA for destruction.
- c. During the week NPD initiated a month-long pedestrian, bicycle and scooter education and enforcement campaign funded by the Delaware Office of Highway Safety.

Purchasing, Facilities, Records, and Communications

- 1. Photo of the Year Contest:** The City's first Photo of the Year Contest began on Friday, November 1st. Staff received 39 photo submissions in the first week—highlights are posted in a new video on the City's Facebook and Instagram pages. The submission link for the contest can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewarkPhotoContest>.
- 2. Meeting with Czech Delegation:** On Wednesday, October 30th, Mayor Clifton; Directors Del Grande, Filasky, and Martinson; and CPPO Martindale met with representatives from the UD Institute for Public Administration as well as a delegation of local government officials from the Czech Republic who were visiting to understand local governance in the United States. The conversation covered our budget, utilities, parks, and more. We were glad to meet with the delegation and share our best practices on an international level!
- 3. Municipal Center Light Fixtures:** The remaining 1970s-era bulb-style lights at the Municipal Center have been replaced with LED lights to match the rest of the property. The lights replaced through this round were from the bus stop to the visitor parking lot and near the loading dock.
- 4. Energy Savings Performance Contract Two-Year Update:** Staff met with Seiberlich Trane Energy Services this week to overview the project's performance since completion in 2022. A video highlighting the project's success can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ez5uzbQ7OMU&t=30s>

- 5. RFP Review:** Staff completed second round interviews with vendors last week for our Emergency Management Consultant Services RFP (No. 24-01), and a recommendation will come before Council on Monday, 11/11 for approval. Staff additionally completed reviews of RFP 24-03 (Provision of Auditing Services) this week and will bring a recommendation to Council later in November.

Parks and Recreation

1. Capital Projects

- a. Dickey Park improvement construction bids were received – construction looking to start mid-November, property line and trail was staked out this week, answered follow up question from Thorn Flats and awaiting response
- b. Devon Park – clevises installed for the swings, scheduling reopening event for December 10
- c. George Read Park improvements – construction delayed until February/March 2025 due to changes of trail design
- d. Old Papermill Road Park – bids were received, references checked by JMT, memo to Council scheduled for November 11 meeting

2. Maintenance/Operations

- a. Prepped Wilson Center for Election Day voting
- b. Added dump boxes to both Community Gardens in preparation for final clean up events on November 7
- c. Worked with volunteer group on along Pomeroy & Hall Trails installing over 50 trees as part of the TEDI (Tree for Every Delawarean Initiative).
- d. Installed kiosk for Bike Newark at Hillside Park - all four they purchased are now installed
- e. Fixed rubber play surfacing at Hillside Park
- f. Assisted working at the Halloween Parade
- g. Staff attended First Amendment training
- h. Started cutbacks of ornamental grasses and liriopse
- i. Winterizing water fountains at Preston's Playground and Hillside November 1
- j. Scheduling replacement of barrier gates for Rittenhouse and Folk Park with contractor
- k. Working on the forestry and arboricultural services invitation to bid package

3. Events

- a. Halloween Party at the George Wilson Center was held on 10/24
 - i. The Police were there with the PAL trailer
 - ii. Cosmic Foam party was held outside the George Wilson Center at the end of the party
 - iii. Turnout was lower than previous years and we anticipate changing the time next year. Currently 4-5:30pm

- b. Halloween Parade and Trick or Treat Main St was held on 10/27
 - i. 55 registered groups participated in the parade and Trick or Treat Main Street had 10 registered participants and several other businesses participating.
 - ii. Group participation was down a bit from previous years.
- c. Preparations are ongoing for upcoming events
 - i. Turkey Trot – 11/23
 - ii. Thanksgiving Day Breakfast – 11/28
 - iii. Winterfest – 12/6
 - iv. Santa's Secret Shoppe at GWC – 12/7
- d. We are starting to receive several 2025 Special Event Permit applications
 - i. Several 5k events from Fusion Racing have been submitted (12)

4. Recreation Programming

- a. Recreation Supervisors continue to make plans for 2025 Winter Spring programs. The program brochure will be available at the end of December
 - i. Submitted Christina School District facility requests
- b. George Wilson Center
 - i. For the week of 10/21, we had 11 long term rentals and 3 short term rentals. For the week of 10/28, we had 13 long term rental and 3 short term rentals. We are continuing to add rentals to the calendar for 2025.
 - ii. No School Day of Play was held on 11/4 with 14 enrolled. Another one is scheduled for 11/11
 - iii. Voting machines have been delivered and Election Day was held on 11/5 with very long lines throughout the day
- c. Preparations are ongoing for the youth basketball leagues for grades 2-8 which are scheduled to begin in November
 - i. The kickoff skills night was held at Newark High on 10/30
 - ii. Recruiting volunteer coaches and part-time staff and referees.
- d. Adult volleyball leagues at Newark Charter are scheduled to begin 11/13. Captains meeting was held on 10/30
- e. Recent and upcoming programs beginning include Chess Club, Fitness classes, Pottery classes and the new session of swim lessons beginning 11/2
- f. Tennis and pickleball classes have concluded for the year
- g. Our fall youth soccer league at Kells Park concluded on Sat, 11/2. 55 children participated in the program that began in September.
- h. Before/After Care staff training was held on Tues, Nov. 5, on appropriate responses to child behavior. It was a good turnout with local schools and UD students off classes due to Election Day

5. Volunteers

- a. Halloween Party: 34 volunteers devoted 113.75 total hours
- b. Halloween Parade: 31 volunteers devoted 112.5 total hours

- c. Special Project Volunteer Event - A group from Citi Bank planted trees along the Pomeroy Trail on Friday, 10/25, from 10am to 12pm. 15 volunteers devoted a total of 30 hours.
- d. Hillside Park: 2 people from the Stickley family devoted a total of 1.5 hours picking up trash.
- e. George Wilson Park: 1 person from the UD Graduate Student Government devoted a total of 1 hour picking up trash on 10/26.