



CITY OF NEWARK DELAWARE

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, January 31, 2025.

Items for Newsletters:

- 1. City of Newark Announces Promotion of Jill Hollander to Director of Finance:** The City of Newark is proud to announce the promotion of Jill Hollander, CPA, to Director of Finance effective February 1. Jill joined the City of Newark's Finance team in 2014 and was promoted to Deputy Finance Director the following year. In that position, she managed payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, insurance claims, and monthly financial reporting. Jill also serves as the primary liaison for the annual financial statement audit and is responsible for preparing the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR).
- 2. Backyard Catch Basin and Storm Drain Inspections:** Stormwater crews will begin inspections of catch basins and storm drains in the backyards of homes throughout Newark in early February. Notices will go out to any affected properties. Only inspections will be taking place at this time unless crews uncover a safety concern. Any repairs identified by the inspections will be completed at a later date and revised notices will go out ahead of any work. Please reach out to Public Works if there are any questions or concerns or to verify the crews identity.
- 3. Public Information Session on Newark Charter School's Request for Ball Fields at Folk Park:** We have scheduled a public information session on Newark Charter School's (NCS) request to use a portion of Folk Park for new baseball and softball fields. The meeting is scheduled for February 12th between 6 and 8 pm at the Aetna Banquet Hall at Aetna Station 8 on Ogletown Road. At the meeting we will present information on NCS's request, background on the project, answer questions, and solicit feedback from the community.
- 4. City newsletter:** To sign up for the City's email newsletter, [click here](#).

Public Works and Water Resources

- 1. Delaware Avenue Fiber Installation (Nightwork Feb 10 – Feb 28):** A contractor for DelDOT will be installing fiber optic cables along Delaware Avenue beginning on or about February 10 and lasting approximately 3 weeks. This work will take place overnight and a noise waiver is in place for the work. Lane closures for vehicles and bicycles will be necessary for the duration of the project and flaggers and police will be present during the work. Please use caution and obey any traffic control signage or direction from personnel onsite.
- 2. Bulk Refuse Collection Changes:** Staff will be posting information on the City website regarding the changes to the bulk refuse collection. As a reminder, Council approved a plan to limit the free bulk collection to two (2) per calendar year beginning in 2025. Administrative staff will also be reminding each caller requesting a bulk collection of the new limit. The service will continue to be available for a fee for collections above the limit or above the per collection item limit of four (4).
- 3. New Castle County Sanitary Sewer Agreement:** On Jan 28, New Castle County Council approved the same agreement that City Council approved on Jan 27 for sewer service charges. Staff will work with their team to get the agreements executed and in place ahead of the first bill subject to the agreement in April 2025.

- 4. Veolia Water Rate Application (43% Increase):** Veolia Water Delaware, the water supplier for areas surrounding Newark, has made application to the Public Service Commission for a 43% water rate increase. This increase is almost entirely due to the PFAS regulations and the treatment facility it has under construction to remove them from the water supply. As we have discussed in the past, we will need similar treatment at our Curtis Water Treatment Plant and will result in the need to increase our rates to cover both capital and ongoing maintenance costs. As a reminder, we have this treatment in place at our South Well Field Water Treatment Plant.

Planning and Development

1. Land Use

- a. Staff finalized and posted the agenda and packet for the [February 4 Planning Commission](#) meeting. The Commission will review a presentation from staff on the affordable housing outreach completed in 2024 and provide feedback on the policy items they would like to see move forward. This item has been scheduled for the March 17 Council meeting for their feedback. Once both groups have weighed in, staff will begin working on individual policy items to bring forward in 2025.
- b. Due to the ongoing uncertainty at the federal level regarding the release of grant funding, staff spent time reviewing contingency options for the Community Development Block Grant funding for the current year and subsequent year awards. Interruptions in this funding would affect the Home Improvement Program, the Senior Minor Home Repair and Weatherization Program administered by the Newark Senior Center, childcare for low-income families delivered by the Newark Day Nursery and Children's Center, fee assistance programs through Newark Parks and Recreation, and planned improvements to George Reed Park in the current grant year.
- c. Staff worked on the following agenda items for the February 10 Council meeting:
 - i. Special use permit for an accessory use with impact for Boom Down Towing located at 1164 Elkton Road
 - ii. Special use permit for a body art establishment for B13 Tattoos located at 170 East Main Street
 - iii. Minor subdivision to divide two lots into three and construct one additional single-family house at 261 and 263 South Chapel Street
 - iv. Chapter 20 amendments to address towing fees permitted in the City of Newark
- d. Staff issued Subdivision Advisory Committee comment letters for the following applications:
 - i. Rezoning and major subdivision by site plan approval for a seven-story building with 146 apartments and associated parking at 87 South Chapel Street
 - ii. Minor subdivision to divide two lots into three and construct one additional single-family house at 261 and 263 South Chapel Street

2. Code Enforcement

- a. The building permit application for 77 New London Road (St. John's African Methodist Church) has had revisions submitted to include the repairs needed for the most recent vehicle collision with the building. All departments have completed reviews and the permit will be issued once the final review is completed.
- b. Sprinkler line breaks are on the increase with temperatures rising. Staff are working with owners and owners' management to get fire watches in place and repairs expedited.
- c. Condemnation placards posted on 374 Manuel Street and 12 Caldwell Place were removed illegally and have been re-posted. Both condemnations remain in place.

3. Parking

- a. As the development project at 141 East Main Street nears building permit approval, staff have begun to work with the property owner regarding the closing of Lot #7. Discussion has begun on a timetable for removing parking equipment once the permit is issued so

construction can start in a timely manner and have a smooth transition. Staff anticipate this will happen sometime in the month of February.

- b. The free parking pilot for the winter off-season ended on Tuesday, January 21. Staff are working to get business owners to complete the survey distributed for feedback in order to bring an agenda item to Council to evaluate the pilot and make decisions about what Council would like to do for the summer off-season and moving forward.
- c. Staff have been working with Path Communications and the FCC on Tuesday to resolve radio transmission issues and found that the repeater located at the reservoir was not functioning properly. The repaired repeater is scheduled to be placed back at the reservoir on Monday.
- d. Interviews were conducted for the vacant part-time Parking Ambassador positions on January 31. Four candidates were scheduled and staff expects to make offers to successful candidates in the second week of February.

Parks and Recreation

1. Capital Projects:

- a. Dickey Park improvement – construction is on-going, progress meeting held
- b. George Read Park improvements – construction delayed until February/March 2025
- c. Old Papermill Road Park – pre-construction meeting will be held the end of January

2. Maintenance/Operations:

- a. Security gates have been replaced at Rittenhouse Park and Folk Park
- b. Completed three hazardous tree inspections
- c. Installing new parking lot rule signs in park parking lots
- d. Working on clearing plantings at the George Wilson Center in preparation for electronic sign installation
- e. Working on presentation including Spring Tree Giveaway information for upcoming CAC meeting

3. Events:

- a. Upcoming events:
 - i. Employment and Volunteer Fair – 2/1 at Newark Library
 - ii. Summer Camp and Program Fair – March 4 at Downes Elementary
- b. 2025 Sponsor and Vendor Packets are now available

4. Recreation Programming:

- a. We want to congratulate Sharon Bruen and wish her all the best in her retirement! Her last day after 25 years of service is 1/31/25.
- b. Staff are working to get summer camps planned and ready for the summer camp guide that comes out in March.
- c. Before and After School Care
 - i. Working to hire new staff and finalize the February schedule.
 - ii. Starting to prepare for the annual licensing inspection at Downes in March.
- d. Staff are finalizing the annual report and program statistics
- e. 2025 Part-time job postings have been updated on the City webpage and include summer camp counselors, lifeguards, before/after care staff and swim instructor

5. Volunteers

- a. Receiving registrations for Summer Camp Volunteers and started setting up phone interviews.
- b. Planning for Volunteer recognition event 2/1.

Police

1. Community Engagement:

- a. On Monday, January 27th, Cpl. Adam Mease represented the NPD Honor Guard at the Philadelphia Flyers' Law Enforcement Appreciation Night. Cpl. Mease joined allied law enforcement agencies and presented the colors during the National Anthem.
- b. The Community Engagement Unit continued to work with elementary school students as part of the in-school mentoring program and West Park Elementary School.
- c. This evening, the Community Engagement Unit and Sgt. Jay Conover will attend the Sean's House boys and girls SL24 Basketball Classic Tournament at the Chase Fieldhouse in Wilmington.

2. Fleet Maintenance:

During this week, Axon completed the installation of the new Fleet 3 in-car camera systems in most of the patrol vehicles that required the refresh. Axon will return later to complete the new vehicles that are currently at the upfitter.

Electric

1. SAC Requests:

Completed our review and provided our comments to Planning for the following SAC requests:

- a. 87 S Chapel St (Major Subdivision)
- b. 47W Delaware Ave

2. CIP and L&G Plan Reviews:

Completed our plan review and provided our comments to PWWR for the following projects:

- a. 141 E Main Street (CIP Review)
- b. The Grove (old Kmart building) (CIP Review)
- c. 129 Lovett Ave (L&G Review)

3. Development Projects:

- a. 134 E. Main Street (Danneman): We installed a primary underground cable and transformer for this project. A scheduled shutdown for Chipotle occurred on 1/28/2025 to pull the new cable. Additionally, we have completed metering for three commercial tenants.

4. Other Items:

- a. Engineering participated in a six-day training program organized by APPA on the best practices for overhead distribution line design.