



CITY OF NEWARK DELAWARE

Administrative Report

June 27, 2025

Items for Newsletters

1. **HB 34 – Enrollment Based Tax on University of Delaware:** HB 34 was signed by the governor on Tuesday of this week. This means the City can now move forward with a local ordinance to charge UD a tax equal to up to \$50 per enrolled student each fall and spring semester. We plan to have an initial discussion with Council at the 7/14 council meeting and use direction from that discussion to prepare an ordinance for implementation, ideally in time for the fall semester. This afternoon, we confirmed that the \$2 million we received in the Grant in Aid bill (HB 230) last year has been eliminated this year. Unfortunately, since we lost that funding, we will be roughly in the same place financially with funding from HB 34 taking the place of the lost Grants in Aid funding.
2. **Main Street/Downtown Safety:** We held a meeting of the Main Street Safety Committee to get a status update from our engineering consultant and to review preliminary signage and striping plans. We have begun pricing out different components of the project and will start ordering equipment as early as next week. We were notified that the University was able to secure \$600,000 in the State's Bond Bill for the project, which is great news. We should know by early next week if the legislature is going to provide any additional funding as part of the City's separate request for funding (\$900,000 request) which we requested through the Community Reinvestment Fund.
3. **Diversity and Inclusion Commission:** We have many current openings on City committees, including 5 vacancies on the Diversity and Inclusion Commission. Unfortunately, due to the number of vacancies, D&I will not be able to meet until at least two more appointments have been made. A full list of current vacancies can be found here: <https://newarkde.gov/113/Boards-Committees-Commissions>
4. **Upcoming Events**
 - Liberty Day and Fireworks – Preparations are in full swing for this event scheduled Friday, July 4 at the UD Athletic Complex. We are expecting over 30 vendors and looking forward to having the Magical Mystery Band and Mike Hines & the Look perform. Fireworks banners are up around Newark
 - Parks on Draft – the second one of the summer is scheduled Friday, July 11 at Handloff Park from 5 - 8pm
5. **Free Parking:** Downtown parking will be free on Saturdays and Sundays from June 21 through August 10.



6. **New Castle County Review of Volunteer Fire Service:** NCC’s consultant has released the “New Castle County Fire Service Financial Review and Analysis” report that was begun under then County Executive Meyer. The report can be found at this link: [FINAL-FACETS-REPORT-for-NCC---12-26-2024](#). I am not sure when this was first made available (it is dated the end of December) but I was just made aware of it this week.

As for the contents, it reviews all fire companies in New Castle County and is a behemoth, 481 pages. Here are a few helpful bookmarks so you can quickly find important sections:

- Executive Summary – Page 8 (I suggest reading this section, if nothing else)
- Municipal contributions – Page 51 (Newark provides the most money based on the total provided)
- Aetna’s Report Card – Page 62

Here is a screenshot of the summary report card for Aetna:

Financial Health Report Card—Factor Trends Summary 2019-2023

Aetna Hose, Hook, and Ladder

#. FACTOR	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	TREND
1. Revenue per call	\$372.59	\$413.01	\$377.82	\$335.80	\$371.64	Unfavorable
2. Expenditures per call	\$157.47	\$367.06	\$517.25	\$404.00	\$407.80	Unfavorable
3. Employee benefits	17.14%	16.26%	17.64%	26.48%	25.12%	Unfavorable
4. Cash position	22.2419	9.2757	17.8605	11.8652	16.5817	Unfavorable
5. Debt service	0.74%	0.57%	0.42%	0.66%	0.53%	Favorable
6. Debt per capita	\$59.87	\$52.27	\$36.49	\$80.67	\$58.98	Unfavorable
7. Operating position	0.8838	0.9153	0.9579	1.1060	0.9081	Favorable
8. Revenue shortfalls	1.0673	1.0379	1.1422	1.0920	1.3539	Unfavorable
9. Expenditure overruns	2.2317	1.0689	0.7993	1.0039	1.1205	Favorable
10. EMS user fees	148.98%	171.71%	191.22%	175.85%	164.25%	Favorable
11. Capital outlay	74.09%	67.43%	17.72%	10.32%	7.03%	Unfavorable
12. Fund balance	13.15%	9.25%	4.39%	-9.59%	10.12%	Unfavorable
13. Solvency	13.64%	15.09%	10.14%	18.00%	13.45%	Favorable

FINANCIAL HEALTH GRADE KEY

STATUS	Description	Numeric	Est. Sustainability
GREEN	Fire company is in excellent financial health and likely to survive	100-90	16+ Years
YELLOW	Fire company is in good financial health and might survive	89-80	11-15 Years
ORANGE	Fire company is in fair financial health and might survive	79-60	4-10 Years
RED	Fire company is in poor financial Health and unlikely to survive	59 or below	1-3 Years



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

Planning and Development

1. Land Use

- a. Staff completed and posted the [agenda and packet](#) for the July 1 Planning Commission meeting, which will include the following items:
 - i. [Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision by site plan approval](#) to construct 13 additional townhouse-style apartments at the properties located at 55 and 67 West Cleveland Avenue and 46, 52, and 54 Church Street as Section II of the existing Cleveland Station development.
 - ii. [Potential amendments](#) to Chapter, 32, Zoning, to create separate site plan approval criteria for redevelopment projects.
- b. The following Subdivision Advisory Committee comment letters were issued by staff this week:
 - i. [Comprehensive Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision by site plan approval for 55 and 67 West Cleveland Avenue and 46, 52, and 54 Church Street](#) to construct 13 townhouse-style apartments on June 23.
 - ii. [Major subdivision with two special use permits for 900 Ogletown Road](#) to construct a new automobile service center on June 25.
- c. Due to the cancellation of the June 23 Council meeting, staff spent significant time working with the City Secretary's office to schedule and reschedule upcoming agenda items. Items of interest that will be coming to Council prior to the beginning of the FY2026 budget hearings are as follows:
 - i. July 14

1. 302 Markus Court special use permit for a marijuana cultivation facility
2. 124 East Main Street major subdivision by site plan approval to add two floors of apartments for a total of four floors for the existing Center Square development
- ii. July 21
 1. Affordable housing next steps discussion (rescheduled from March 17)
- iii. July 28
 1. 101 Leahy Drive special use permit to use a residential house as a temporary model home/office in Briarcreek North
 2. 136-160 South Main Street Comprehensive Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision to construct a new five-story mixed use building at 160 South Main Street and to add two floors of apartment to the northern section of the existing mixed-use building at 136 South Main Street
- iv. August 11
 1. 118-129 Lovett Avenue Comprehensive Plan amendment and major subdivision by site plan approval to construct 12 townhouse-style apartments
 2. Parking Advisory Committee short- and medium-term recommendations and request for feedback from Council on potential parking rate changes and data Council would like from a parking survey

2. Code Enforcement

- a. Planning and Property Maintenance staff attended the Conservation Advisory Commission meeting on June 10 to answer questions regarding the City's property maintenance code in relation to front yard pollinator gardens. Upon receiving additional information on the existing code, CAC determined there was no need for a recommendation for Code amendments on the topic.
- b. Staff issued the tenant fit-out permit for Lefty's Alleys and Eats in the former Kmart building at The Grove.
- c. Work has begun on the repairs for St. John's AUMP Church at 77 New London Road.

3. Parking

- a. The City's free weekend parking promotion began Saturday, June 21 and will continue through Sunday, August 10.
- b. Parking Advisory Committee met on June 17 to discuss potential ideas related to parking. They will be bringing their initial short- to medium-term recommendations to Council on August 11.
- c. Based on a suggestion from the Parking Advisory Committee, City parking maps are now available on the City's AskNewarkDE app. Users can see the map as a whole as well as a location based view showing any parking near the user's location.
- d. T2, the City's vendor for parking kiosks and enforcement software, had a nationwide outage on June 18. Expired meter enforcement was suspended for most of the day to accommodate the kiosks being unable to process payments.

Facilities

1. **Warehouse Expansion:** Construction of the warehouse expansion at the Field Operations Complex is moving along. The roof is complete along with one wall. Work continues on the remaining walls.
2. **City Hall Façade Repairs:** Repairs to the brick façade at City Hall and the Newark Police Department concluded this week. The visitor parking area nearest South Main Street is fully open as a result.

Parks and Recreation

1. Projects:

- a. Dickey Park improvement – progress meetings held monthly, swing set, exercise equipment and pavilion have been installed; benches, and completion of the trail along the parking lot are the next steps towards completion of the project
- b. George Read Park improvements – progress meetings held monthly, trail and basketball court paving completed, must cure for 30 days before lines can be painted on basketball court, parking lot demo and curbing work has begun
- c. Old Papermill Road Park – progress meetings held monthly, completed curbing for parking lot, paving in parking area has begun along with pickleball courts.
- d. Olan Thomas/Kershaw Trail – public meeting held with DelDOT
- e. Folk Park potential project- waiting on final concept design prior to presenting to Council for decision/direction.

2. Maintenance/Operations:

- a. Mowing, trimming, spraying for weeds and crabgrass operations continue
- b. Old play feature removed from Rahway Park in preparation for the installation of the new play feature
- c. Spruced up the exterior of the George Wilson Center in preparation for the Juneteenth event held by FOSHA
- d. Spread wood chips at Curtis Mill Park, Paper Mill island and Karpinski Park
- e. Continue installation of park parking lot rules signs and skate park rules signs.
- f. Preparing for upcoming July 4th Fireworks event
- g. Working on repair of handicap accessible chair for Dickey Park pool and replacement of cover for spigot
- h. Completed inspections of Lumbrook, Elan and Hidden Valley parks.
- i. Assisted with volunteer project for June 27 for Connolly -Gallagher at Olan Thomas Park

3. Completed Events

- a. Spring Concert Series – Concluded on Thursday, June 12. We had a successful series with lively performances and solid turnout. Despite all of the rain in May we only had to postpone one night.

4. Recreation Programming:

- a. Summer camps are in full swing: as usual Rittenhouse and Camp GWC are our most popular and have waiting lists throughout the summer. Camp Real has very limited registration. A large variety of specialty camps have taken place over the last three weeks including Tennis, Basketball, Football, Volleyball, Science Experience, Acting, Learn to Ice Skate and Rittenhouse Rocks. Precautions were taken this week with the excessive heat.
- b. School Age Care: Before and After Care at both sites wrapped up for the school year. Rita's on Main Street donated water ice for the last day of After Care (Tue., June 10), and kids and staff loved it. The last day of Before Care was Wed., June 11, with early dismissal that day. School resumes Tuesday, September 2.
- c. We have a UD student currently working as a Micro Intern (20 hours total) on organizing our vast library of parks and program photos. The opportunity is managed by Parker Dewey (<https://www.parkerdewey.com/about>) and funded by UD's Career Center. We had several applicants.

5. Volunteers

- a. Cup Scout Pack 252 of Newark – 15 volunteers totaled 18.75 hrs picking up litter at Lumbrook Park on 6/11.
- b. A volunteer group from Connolly and Gallagher Law firm is spreading wood chips at Olan Thomas on Friday, 6/27.
- c. We have several teens age 14 and older volunteering at camps throughout the summer.