

## **DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS**

**March 28, 2013**

### **Public Works & Water Resources**

Over the Good Friday weekend we will have a recycling truck patrol the typical student housing areas to collect recycling materials that were placed at the curb on the Good Friday holiday. The operator also has sweeping duties on Saturday so the overtime commitment is limited, and we hope that the effort will resolve a problem that we have experienced with misplaced recycling materials remaining on the street all weekend.

We are reviewing the curb ramp contract for advertisement in the near future. We have increased the number of curb ramps to be installed this year as we have incorporated previous year funds that have been carried from year to year.

The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system that we have installed at the Paper Mill Road Booster Station is up and running. The ability to remotely monitor the system operation has freed the operators so that they can attend to more pressing matters than visiting the supply and receiving tanks to monitor system performance.

The work of the first phase of the drainage improvements at City Hall are wrapping up. We were able to remove the curb, lower the terrain around the building below the first floor level and slope the ground away from the building. That the joint between the wall and the interior finished floor was below the exterior soil and the soil sloped towards the building was the crux of the problem on this side of the building. Next we will improve drainage at the Sally Port. We continue to ponder exactly what we will do with the walkway that extends around the building to the loading dock.

We are finalizing the paperwork necessary to secure a grant to assist with the removal of bamboo that is hampering the operation of storm water management facilities that the city is responsible for.

### **Electric**

Friday morning, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the line crews responded to a pole hit on College Avenue. Although no power was off, the pole construction and change out took about five hours to complete.

The line crews continued their work installing the smart meter radio network devices on the streetlight arms. They are now getting the more difficult nodes that need substantial traffic control.

The meter technician and line crews have been working on the service for a dairy facility moving into the Sandy Brea Industrial Park and they finished the upgraded service for the University's Hazardous Waste Building on Wyoming Road.

The electricians have been working on SCADA clean up. They are installing uninterruptible power for all communication components of the existing SCADA and general housekeeping.

Engineering has been managing the Smart Meter Project and negotiating with a future tenant of the Star Campus on constructing a substation and power requirements. Engineering also performed a power study for the Health Sciences Building being constructed at the Star Campus.

## **Parks & Recreation**

### **Administration & Planning**

I committed significant time this week working on items relating to the Curtis Mill Park project.

Tom and I visited a property next to park land at Ridgewood Glen to evaluate a downed tree, its effect on that property and determine a remedy.

I prepared and submitted the second and final request for reimbursements for expenditures relating to the Anti-Idling campaign. The Conservation Advisory Commission was awarded a \$15,000 grant through the Delaware Energy Office to promote and publicize the City's Anti-Idling Law.

Along with Public Work & Water Resources and Electric field operations personnel, parks employees attend a meeting conducted by the Deputy City Manager to review FMLA use guidelines.

I submitted a recommendation to award Contract No.13-04 (16' Cut Mower) to the City Manager's Office.

The parks management staff met with the Deputy City Manager to discuss various items relating to human resources.

We're finalizing details for the Refuse Division's take-over of park trash removal. All of our City parks are located in neighborhoods where refuse trucks travel to empty residential trash. The park sites will be added to each respective route. Trash containers in each park will be relocated to be positioned near park parking lots and streets for access by the automated haulers. This efficiency measure will provide the Parks Department additional man hours to take on the new maintenance responsibilities associated with the recent opening of the Pomeroy Trail and the construction of two skate spots and the development of Curtis Mill Park which will occur later this year.

### **Parks Maintenance**

We began painting the collapsible bollards (located on several trails) safety yellow for better visibility.

The crew started repairing damages to a neighboring property caused by an uprooted tree in the Ridgewood Glen neighborhood.

We spent time transitioning our equipment from snow plowing mode to grass cutting mode. This included removing snow plows, installing mower decks and transporting snow equipment to the Olan Thomas storage building. Let's hope spring is finally here!

We made repairs to the tree lights on Main Street and activated them for last weekend's Wine and Dine event.

Rich and Joe sat in on a training webinar provided through Travelers Insurance.

Rich made preparations for the start of some of our seasonal employees this week.

The crew cleaned walls and moved furniture in several offices in the Finance Department.

We removed certain plant material outside of the Police Annex in preparation for the contractor to start his drainage improvements work.

The crew continued cutting back decorative grasses and started mulching throughout the parks system.

### Recreation Services

The State Office of Child Care Licensing completed the annual inspection of the Downes School Before and After School program site. The license has been renewed for another year.

Paula has secured a 12-passenger rental van for the Rittenhouse Day Camp program for the coming summer. She is also researching alternate climbing wall sites for the camp if the indoor wall at the Carpenter Center is not available due to construction.

Paula conducted a coaches meeting for the Adult Summer Softball and Adult Summer Volleyball leagues scheduled to start the end of April. Currently we have 7 softball teams and 31 volleyball teams.

Sharon prepared for and conducted the annual Egg Hunt at White Clay Creek State Park. There were 255 vehicles that entered the park during the hunt with an estimated 800 attendees. Volunteers, staff and participants had a wonderful time. Approximately 10,000 eggs were collected and local businesses donated almost \$2,500 worth of merchandise and gift cards for the event's special prizes.

Sharon prepared and emailed vendor packages for the 2013 events. Hard copies are available in the Parks and Recreation office and Newark Free Library. They can also be obtained from the City website.

Sharon prepared and distributed the Fireworks Request for Proposals for this year's July 4 display.

Sharon also attended a Memorial Day Parade Committee meeting in preparation for this year's event.

The latest session of the CATCH Afterschool Homework Club at Downes School concluded on Wednesday, March 20. We had 18 children participate this winter.

Tyler met with tennis instructors regarding upcoming lessons. The wintry weather has delayed the start of several classes.

Joe conducted a recreation supervisors' staff meeting.

Joe attended the superintendents' staff meeting conducted by Charlie.

Joe attended several meetings to discuss items that we can do in-house and/or get in-kind contributions for the skate spot project.

Joe is organizing the summer e-newsletter that will be distributed to our mailing list on April 19.

## **Finance**

### **Administration**

My first day was Monday, March 25, 2013, and I'm still getting caught up with phone access, computer program access, banking logins, authorized user setups with vendors, etc. There won't be much beef to this first administrative report, but I look forward to my transition into this role.

I set up a recurring staff meeting with my group for every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. in my office, starting next Tuesday, April 2, 2013.

### **Customer Service**

Larissa Jones hosted a meeting about the utility rate structure and how the rates will be populated in Harris. John Herring (and before him, Debbie Harrington) was solely responsible for updating the rate tables in Harris. In an effort to reduce the reliance on one user, John will cross train Larissa Jones and Deb Keeley on the Harris rate functions. Training is expected to take place on Thursday, March 28 and/or Tuesday, April 2.

I met with Larissa at length on Tuesday, March 26 and Wednesday, March 27 to get oriented with Larissa's area of responsibility and personnel.

I met individually with Diane Daniels to get a feel for her position and major responsibilities.

### **Accounting**

I met with Wilma Garriz at length on Monday, March 25 and Tuesday, March 26 to get oriented with Wilma's area of responsibility, personnel, and open issues.

I completed the required paperwork to (i) get authorized with Fulton Bank, (ii) get authorized with M&T Bank, and (iii) replace Rob Uyttebroek as the Authorized Rep for Medicaid Mandatory Reporting.

Proposals for audit services in response to RFP No. 13-01 were received March 26 from incumbent Clifton Larson Allen, BDO, SB & Company, and Barcane, Thornton & Co. Wilma, Cenise and I will serve as the selection committee.

I met individually with Jim Smith, Debi Keeley and Daina Montgomery to get a feel for their positions and major responsibilities.

I had a discussion with Paul Murray of Morgan Stanley to reinvest the proceeds of matured investments on March 27.

### **Alderman's Court**

The weeks are getting busier. This past week we held three full Court sessions. This resulted in 136 Arraignments, 46 Trials processed, and 18 Case Reviews.

### **Police**

The Newark Police Department has been notified that the "National Association of Police Organizations", has selected Sergeant Michael VanCampen to be awarded an Honorable Mention for the Twentieth Annual Top Cops Awards. The Top Cops Awards pay tribute to law enforcement officers from across the country for outstanding service to their communities during the preceding year. The Twentieth Annual Top Cops Awards ceremony will take place during National Police Week. The ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, May 12, 2013 at the Omni Hotel in Washington, D.C. Sergeant VanCampen will be presented with his award at the ceremony. Sergeant VanCampen is a credit to the Newark Police Department and the law enforcement profession.

The Newark Police Department participated in a voluntary program sponsored by the Delaware Office of Highway Safety to target seatbelt enforcement. The Newark Police Department received no grant funding and did not use any overtime to participate in the program. As a result of our participation, the department was entered into a raffle for a LIDAR speed gun. We were informed by the Office of Highway Safety that we won this \$2,000 piece of speed enforcement equipment.

### **City Manager's Office**

#### **Community Affairs Officer**

The Wine and Dine Downtown event was on Saturday and much preparation and day of setting up took place. The event was great and downtown was busy.

I have spent a considerable amount of time doing event wrap up such as thank you letters to the sponsors and an invoice for sponsorship for United Distributors, submitting check requests for payment to the musicians, collecting supplies that were stored elsewhere, etc.

I have been making staff updates to the website for the Finance Department and City Secretary's Office, as well as updates that departments have noticed on their pages.

I have been working on the DNP April events e-newsletter and updating the downtown Newark website's events.

I reviewed the Before and After Care March newsletters for Parks and Recreation.

## **Planning & Development**

### **Planning**

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the upcoming Planning Commission meeting. Items that will be reviewed at the April 2, 2013 meeting are:

1. A minor subdivision of .469 acres at 65-67 E. Cleveland Avenue in order to replace the existing two unit duplex residential building with four (4) townhouse style apartments.
2. A parking waiver for the property located at 46 E. Main Street. The applicants are requesting an 11 space parking waiver.
3. A Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, and the rezoning and major subdivision of .457 +/- acres at 63 W. Cleveland Avenue and 60 New London Avenue to rezone the parcels from BN (business neighborhood) and RM (residential multi-family) respectively to BLR (business limited residential), create one tax parcel and construct six (6) townhouse style apartments, with associated parking and access ways.
4. A minor resubdivision of a portion of the Kershaw Commons subdivision located at Kershaw Street and E. Cleveland Avenue in order to remove parcel lines, reconfigure parking spaces, and construct five (5) townhouse style apartments.
5. Comprehensive Development Plan update discussion.

On Thursday evening, the Board of Adjustment took the following actions on the planning related projects below:

- Approved the appeal of Kevin Mayhew, 47 Church Street, for the following variance:
  - a) Sec. 32-10(c)(7) – minimum required side yard width is 8 feet with a minimum aggregate width of 20 feet. Plan shows both side yards at 2.7 feet in width with an aggregate of 5.4 feet. Zoning Classification: RD
- Denied the appeal of Jennifer Taylor, 141 King William Street, for the following variance:

- a) Sec. 32-47(j) - requires two off-street parking spaces to obtain a rental permit. Applicant has one parking space. Zoning Classification: RM
- Approved the appeal of Tupp Signs, Inc. on behalf of Sentinel Self Storage, 1100 Elkton Road, for the following variance:
  - a) Sec. 32-60(a)(3) – maximum number of roof signs permitted is one per building with the maximum height of 10 feet. Plan shows a request for a 3' x 30' roof sign. Zoning Classification: MI

On Thursday, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner staffed the Newark Bicycle Committee meeting. The Committee is making preparations for Bike to Work Day in Newark, which will be celebrated on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

On Friday, Mike attended an American Planning Association webinar at the WILMAPCO building on ethics for planners.

On Monday, I met with a potential tenant for the old Blackstone's/John's Grill location in the Shoppes at Louviers regarding alcohol regulations and building fit out needs.

On Monday, the Planning and Development Management employees attended a team meeting hosted by Deputy City Manager Andy Haines.

On Monday night, City Council approved the following planning related items:

1. The major subdivision of .546 acres located at 30, 34, 38 and 42 Chamber Street In order to construct eight new townhouse style apartments in place of four single family rental homes to be known as Rupp Farm.
2. The major subdivision of .8476 acres located at 221 Murray Road (formerly Hanceton Court) In order to demolish the three existing apartment buildings containing 16 apartments and replacing them with 13 townhouse style apartment units to be known as South Main Commons.
3. The redevelopment and major subdivision of .781 acres located at 107-131 New London Road in order to construct a three story single structure with 12 townhouse apartment units to be known as Campus Walk.
4. A special use permit to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages at the proposed new restaurant located at 170 E. Main Street (formerly Groucho's Deli).

On Tuesday evening, Mike and Planner Ricky Nietubicz staffed, and the City of Newark Planning Commission hosted, a Comprehensive Development Plan Workshop held in Council Chamber, in the Municipal Building. A discussion was held on Economic Development.

This week we received a rezoning, major subdivision and special use permit application for a mixed use building at 1 South Main Street (in between the Trabant Garage and Bayard Sharp Hall. The plans were distributed to staff for comment.

## Economic Development

On Thursday, I attended the Greater Newark Economic Development Partnership Steering Committee meeting. Upcoming events and activities were among the items discussed.

Wine & Dine – Another successful Wine & Dine Downtown event was held on Saturday. Restaurants were very happy with the modified event time (starting at 2 p.m.) this year and with the amount of business that they saw. A formal wrap-up meeting will be scheduled in the near future so that we can better plan for next year's event. Several businesses expressed that they were happy to have the additional parking in the University of Delaware's Academy Street lot (44 spaces) during the event.

Main Street Mile – Several sponsorship commitments for the guest bartending (8/16) and race (10/5) have been secured.

Delaware Today Supplement – Ricky finalized the list of photo requests for the special section (photographer was in town during Wine & Dine on 10/23 – good crowds and bright sun!) and continued to refine editorial content.

## Parking

Considerable staff time was spent this week working on how to help alleviate the parking crunch in Municipal Lot 3 caused by the construction in Lot 4. Time limits will need to be set for some prime parking areas to ensure turnover, and accommodations need to be made to monitor lot usage, assist customers in locating parking in that lot, and supplying real-time information about parking opportunities off-site. We plan to have these changes implemented when students return from Spring Break.

Loading zone meters were installed and operational in time for Newark's Wine & Dine event. This improvement would not have been possible without the help of Alden Cleaver of the Public Works and Water Resources Department who, when told of the task at hand, assured us that we could do this in-house, meet the deadline and keep the costs to a minimum. Alden was able to get the poles installed and the new signage up to help increase the metered parking on Main Street before Wine & Dine. The other new meters should be operational by next weekly report.

Free parking will be provided in all municipal pay-to-park lots Easter weekend. This is the continuation of a long standing policy to provide free parking on the Saturday in between the two municipal holidays – Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The free parking will be promoted through the DNP as an opportunity to eat, shop and enjoy oneself over the weekend, compliments of the City of Newark.

## Code Enforcement

This week, Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson attended a meeting with Interim IT Director Sue Oliver, Brandywine Technology and Code Enforcement Officer Brian Daring regarding moving the server room from its current location to a new location on the first floor. This will be for a possible capital improvement project for 2014.

This week Steve also attended a meeting with Tom Coleman and Tim Beardsley regarding a new platform in the City Council Chamber to accommodate the new chair lift. The new cost estimate on the chair lift has been received.

On Monday, Steve attended the management meeting with Deputy City Manager Andrew Haines.

CSH/mp