

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

April 19, 2013

Finance

I had a meeting with Fulton Bank and identified some areas that require further investigation, such as additional fraud prevention controls on ACH and/or check payments, the ability to deposit check batches remotely and reduce trips to the bank, the manner in which our non-interest-bearing transaction accounts are collateralized, our existing credit card program, and other items. I look forward to issuing RFPs or soliciting quotations on banking services that will increase security, reduce fraud risk, and improve efficiency with respect to our banking operations.

I worked with the City Manager, Councilman Markham, and DEMEC officials in an effort to finalize the McKees Solar Park RFP analysis. The RFP component of the recommendation is still with DEMEC, and I worked on a financial proposal that is targeted for the May 13 meeting of Council. I attended my first DEMEC board meeting as Alternate Director for the City of Newark on Tuesday, April 16.

Customer Service

Finance and Customer Service are working together to identify an ideal layout for the departments once the IT servers are centralized in a secure location pursuant to best practices.

A request from Matt Dutt for lien documentation was escalated to me on Friday, April 12. Jim Smith and I are working together on producing documentation, which will serve as the basis for a follow-up meeting with Mr. Dutt sometime this week or next. It is unclear whether Mr. Dutt wishes to challenge the lien; the underlying documentation is strong, but the charges date back to the late 1990s and are heavily laden with interest charges pursuant to the Code.

Accounting

Accounting, IT and Finance had meetings with our tax software vendor, Harris, to discuss the CltyView 9 upgrade, which will improve tax billing and application of tax payments once implemented.

Staff continues to compile financial data for the 2012 financial statements/CAFR. The audit fieldwork for 2012 is ongoing.

Alderman's Court

This past week we held three Court sessions and one DUI Case Review session. This resulted in 71 Arraignments, 73 Trials processed, 16 Case Reviews and 6 prisoners videoed from prison.

Police

On April 13th, the Newark Police responded to the CSX train tracks in the area of the 100 block of East Cleveland Avenue for a report that a pedestrian had been struck by the train. At approximately 7:25 a.m., a CSX train was traveling westbound when a 20-year-old male entered onto the tracks and was struck by the train. The victim was identified as Nolan Sandlin of Dover, DE. The victim was by himself at the time of the collision and investigators determined that he stepped into the path of the freight train. The investigation is ongoing.

On April 14th, Newark Police arrested 32-year-old Geoffrey L. Amsler of Newark for a residential burglary of an unoccupied home in the 900 block of Aster Avenue, which occurred on April 1st, 2013. The homeowners reported the incident to Newark Police after discovering that several items were missing from the home after they were gone for a short period of time. Those items included loose change, silverware and several pieces of jewelry. NPD detectives located pawn records indicating that Amsler sold the jewelry stolen from the residence at a local cash advance store. Detectives also learned that Amsler had been seen in the area of the burglary by witnesses. Detectives obtained a warrant for Amsler's arrest and he was taken into custody on April 14th. Geoffrey L. Amsler (DOB: 7/17/80) of 924 Aster Avenue, Newark, DE 19711 was charged with 1 count of Burglary 2nd degree, 2 counts of Theft under \$1500, and 1 count of Selling Stolen Property Under \$1500. Amsler was committed to Howard R. Young Correctional in lieu of \$23,000 secured bail.

On April 16th, the third and final suspect in the February 15th robbery on South Chapel Street was arrested. A 16-year-old juvenile male from Elkton, MD was arrested and will be charged with Robbery and Conspiracy. The Maryland State Police assisted with a search and arrest warrant on the first block of Hollingsworth Manor in Elkton and the suspect was taken into custody. The juvenile is currently in the custody of Maryland authorities awaiting transfer to Delaware. During the incident on February 15, 2013, a 19-year-old from Newark was walking on South Chapel Street at Scholar Drive when he was approached by three black male suspects who engaged with him in conversation. While talking to the suspects, the victim was struck from behind and knocked to the ground. The suspects removed the victim's wallet from his pants pocket before fleeing. The victim's credit card was used later that night and the next morning at several locations. Detectives were able to identify the suspects and previously arrested the two other suspects.

City Manager's Office

Personnel

- Convened a joint meeting with all three (3) union representatives to discuss City policies.
- Met with Carol, Lou and Wilma to work out the timelines and process for FY2014 Budget season.
- Assisted several employees with their self-directed retirement accounts (ICMA-RC 457 Plans).

- Participated in the renovation/safety discussion for the Finance Department and 1st Floor of City Hall.
- Marta and I met with Chief and the Captains to discuss the next officer recruitment; they provided suggestions to adjust our next recruitment and testing.
- Working with Lou on several personnel cost analysis.

Community Affairs Officer

I have just about finalized the summer 2013 municipal newsletter. I am still waiting on a couple items to complete the newsletter.

I have spent some time continuing to work on planning the Administrative Professional's Day luncheon.

I have been preparing for the Food and Brew Fest planning meeting/Wine and Dine post event meeting on April 18 at 2:30 p.m. at Mayor Funk's law office. I have been acquiring quotes for services and products we normally use for the event that Event Allies does not cover.

I attended the Main Street Mile Battle of the Bartenders planning meeting.

I spent some time updating the website with Council Member Hadden's information, as well as TV 22 and the New Resident Booklet.

I spent some time with Cenise Wright and Cathy Trykowski reviewing the Bid Posting Module for the website to decide if it is something we want to use instead of the way we currently post bidding opportunities. We will be using the module offered through CivicPlus on our website in place of what we do now. It will allow those interested in receiving bid opportunities to sign up for the specific types of bids they wish to be notified about. Every time we post an opportunity, a notification will automatically be sent to those signed up to receive them. We expect to use the module with the next bidding opportunity.

I distributed a press release for the April 23 Comprehensive Development Plan Workshop.

I attended the City Council Organizational meeting on Tuesday night for photo opportunities.

I have spent some time increasing activity on the city's social media accounts.

IT

- Projects
 - Cityview Upgrade
 - Conference call was held Monday with Finance (Jim Smith) and the Real Estate Tax module developer. I want to make sure there is communication on development and testing between both parties. A recurring weekly call has been setup.

- Change order complete for external interfaces (MUNIS, banks, mortgage companies).
 - Harris Project v6.4 Upgrade
 - Currently in the validation project phase. Met with Larissa to review project items. Requested she submit testing issues as soon as discovered so the vendor has time to resolve. We need to make next month's go live. I will be maintaining the testing issues list.
 - Smart Meter
 - There was some confusion over the process of entering the new meters. There are a few large meter change outs beginning this week. Had communications with both the Honeywell (Stewart) and PMI (John Cummings) project managers. The large meters will be manually entered. They are working with Harris on the mass meter change out process for next month. We still need clarification on how this process is going to work.
- IT Operations
 - Morning briefings with staff.
 - Public Safety T1 outage last weekend which knocked out communications with the State. A pump failure on S Main and Amstel Ave caused a conduit to flood, shorting out several hundred pairs of copper wire, including the 4 T1 connections we have (police network, radio link, 911 GIS update). On Sunday 911 servers were rerouted to RECOMM (as a precaution, this system never went off line), radio communications were rerouted to another circuit. With the help of DTI, Monday at 3:30 the Public Safety State network communications was back on-line. Verizon was responsible for fixing this failure.

Planning & Development

Planning

On Thursday morning, I attended the staff meeting.

On Thursday afternoon, I met with Councilmen Clifton and Morehead to discuss rental/apartment housing in Newark.

Some time was spent on Chapter 17 amendments.

Some time was spent preparing for the upcoming Planning Commission meeting. To date, the following items are proposed for review:

1. A minor subdivision of a portion of the property located at 276 S. College Avenue. The applicant is requesting minor subdivision in order to insert a lot line between a residential rental property located at 15 Indian Road and the St. Thomas Church property located at 276 S. College Avenue to create two parcels. No new construction is proposed.

2. Amendments to the Subdivision Regulations for rezoning and subdivision application expiration and bike storage facilities.

Some time was also spent preparing for a workshop on the role and responsibilities of the Planning Commission. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, May 14th.

Some time was spent on personnel evaluations and issues.

On Thursday, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner participated in an interview with the Newark Post on the Comprehensive Development Plan.

On Monday, Mike had a meeting with State Representative Paul Baumbach and Councilman Mark Morehead on home ownership for College Park.

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the Planning Commission Workshop on Transportation set for April 23rd and the Neighborhood Workshop for the New London community set for May 15th.

Economic Development

This week DNP Administrator and Planner Ricky Nietubicz is attending DEDO-required training through the National Main Street Center.

Community Development

On Tuesday, Mike completed the 7th Financial Draw to New Castle County for the 38th Year CDBG program.

Parking

Parking Administrator Marvin Howard attended the Traffic Committee meeting on Tuesday.

The construction project for the entrance off of Center Street into Lot #3 is progressing, but has encountered a problem with the location of a gas line. We are currently working with DP & L to address it; and anticipate that the entrance will be ready by the end of April as planned.

The new meter heads to increase parking on Main Street have arrived. The Parking Division will have them installed over the next week.

Code Enforcement

This week Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson met with Advantech on the building security system.

Steve also attended a meeting with City Manager Carol Houck and Finance on changes to the layout of the Finance Department.

Steve met with several contractors on revised plans on security upgrades in City Hall.

Steve attended a meeting regarding future City server locations.

UD Materials Management Facility will be issued a C/O this week.

Request for quotes on grass cutting of vacant properties will be put together early next week for review.

155 South Chapel Street had the fire suppression system storage tanks replaced this week.

Public Works & Water Resources

As part of the automated meter reading project we will be converting our billing system from a rate based on a 100 cubic foot unit of measurement to a rate based on a 1,000 gallon unit of measurement. We have found that the cubic foot rate is confusing to people as there is nothing else that one normally uses that is measured in cubic feet.

If one were to express the first tier of our current in city cubic foot water rate in gallons, the rate would be \$4.03 for 748 gallons. Converting to a rate expressed in 1,000 gallons results in a rate of \$5.387 for 1,000 gallons. The cost of the water has not changed. What has changed is how much water you are purchasing with your money. We will be providing our customer service representatives with information regarding this change so that can adequately address questions related to this change.

We opened the bids for the Curb Ramp installation project this week. We received six (6) bids. The apparent low bid was submitted by Castle Construction in the amount of \$121,020. We are reviewing the bid and will have a recommendation for award at the first Council meeting in May.

Merit has completed cleaning the first pond at the Newark Water Treatment Plant. It is hard to believe that there was that much material that had accumulated. They will begin work on the second pond next week.

We held a preconstruction meeting for the Water Line Replacement on Brook Hill Drive. Work should begin shortly.

Except that it looked like and/or rained a little bit each day this week, we had hoped to finish the street resurfacing program. Next week doesn't look much better. We shall see.

Creek levels continue to run below the 25th percentile. At this time of year one would expect to be at or near the average of all flows. We will be tracking our water situation very closely this year.

Electric

The line crews switched feeders at the Interstate Business Park to allow contractors to lower the service to the transformer feeding the Charter School addition, formerly Lear. The crews also turned off a building at Kershaw Street so an electrician could fix the

damaged meter bank. The crews also worked on installed poles needed for police cameras linked to the smart meter project and prepared for a temporary shutdown at Kelway Plaza to fix a service.

The electricians installed a transfer switch at a substation that enables the batteries to charge from different sources in case of emergency, fixed a sump pump problem which caused a false alarm at a substation Friday night, and installed a smart meter radio device on the roof of City Hall. An electrician also accompanied a contractor collecting oil samples from all the substation equipment for yearly testing.

Engineering and the smart meter representative drove to all the difficult remote areas out of the city that need water meters and not electric meters to plan for repeater installations to bring data back to the citywide network. Engineering and the surveyors worked on the McKees Park solar project to locate the proper place outside the property for an electric supply pole. The pole needs to be as close as possible, but not be within the property boundaries to meet DNREC regulations.

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

We had a bid opening last Tuesday for the Main Street Tree Pit contract. We have completed a review and a recommendation to award will be submitted to the City Manager soon.

I attended the Conservation Advisory Commission meeting last Tuesday night.

I committed a good amount of time reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding with the Delaware Trail Spinners for the completion of the Redd Park trail building and rehab project.

There are a few items that still need to be completed on the Pomeroy and Newark Rail Trail project. We recently got the go ahead from DelDOT on funding. I'll be working with Pennoni and Merit to complete the work in the near future.

The contractor will complete the installation of concrete pads under picnic shelters at George Wilson and Dickey Parks this week. The project was funded through the CDBG program.

Tom and Rich worked on or accomplished these tasks:

- Conducted park inspections and prepared related maintenance work orders
- Met with a homeowner concerning tree issues in Redd Park
- Attended a workshop on the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
- Met with the new landscape architect for the University about the Main Street tree pit project
- Met with NPD and a person required to do community service time with the City
- Parks personnel met with the irrigation contractor to go over the irrigation systems on three South Main Street/Elkton Road islands

- We are organizing a Saturday invasive plant removal and clean-up of the wooded area along the White Clay Creek at the Curtis Mill Park site. Tom is working on securing volunteers to assist. The tentative date is May 4.
- We met with Teamworks (Christina School District) about doing some work for us in our parks again this year. Through the years they have been very helpful to us and the partnership has provided an outstanding experience for the students in the program.

We have placed signage at the north and south ends of the trail connector from Fremont Road (Fairfield Crest) and Creek Road. The maintenance road/trail serves as a connector to the north end of the Pomeroy and Newark Rail Trail and the White Clay Creek State Park via Creek Road.

Parks Maintenance

- Parks staff continued on ball fields for upcoming season, completed repairs to roof of shelter in Rittenhouse damaged in Floyd, did PM checks at Wilson Center, started mowing park areas, moved trash cans out from interior of park areas, sprayed Round Up as needed, and did limb/branch removal throughout park system.
- Horticulture staff continued mulching park and horticulture areas, did interior planting bed maintenance at City Hall, completed designs for proposed annual plantings on selected traffic islands, started up the irrigation systems on South Main Street/Elkton Road islands and adjusted spray heads as needed, sprayed Round Up as needed, and mowed horticulture areas as needed.
- Both crews did equipment maintenance on mowing units to get ready for upcoming mowing season.
- Teamworks started applying woodcarpet safety surfacing under the play units in Phillips Park.

Recreation Services

Paula continued interviewing for summer camp counselor positions and Before and After Care counselors due to staff turnover and upcoming graduations of current personnel.

Paula reviewed the summer newsletter and sent rosters to fitness instructors for the start of several new program sessions and provided necessary materials to the instructors of Soccer Shots, Science Fun and Little Slugger.

Paula added a second Advanced Archery class from the waiting list.

Sharon has been planning and preparing for two events that will take place this week. The Nefosky Police Memorial Walk & 5K Run, which will be held on Friday evening at 6:30 at the Newark Reservoir and the Spring Community Clean Up will be held on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. with a lunch following provided by the Newark Lion's Club.

We are thrilled to have Debbie Keese back in the office following time off for a medical procedure.

Sharon has been working on a grant/sponsorship application from Dow for community events.

Sharon has been booking Spring Concert Series performers and working on the 2013 Fireworks display for the 4th of July.

Tyler is finalizing staff for summer programs. He continues to review applications and set up interviews for staff for Camp GWC and lifeguards for the outdoor pools this summer.

Tyler completed the information packet for the parents of our dance program participants in preparation for the end of year recital including information on costumes, picture day, rehearsal schedules and the recital scheduled for Saturday, May 4. This year's theme is "Newark in Hollywood".

Joe is organizing the Summer e-newsletter that will be delivered on Monday, April 29.

Joe met with Sharon to discuss logistics for the Nefosky 5K Walk and Run and the Community Clean Up.

Joe and the recreation staff are reviewing summer camp manuals and updating information in preparation for the 2013 summer season.

CSH/mp