

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

April 12, 2013

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

Last Tuesday we met with the Deputy City Manager to discuss background checks for employees and volunteer coaches.

On Tuesday I took the Deputy City Manager and Finance Director on a parks and open space tour.

On Monday I met with our seasonal maintenance crew, as part of their orientation, to discuss department operations, expectations, public contact, conduct and other items relating to their jobs.

I submitted Letters of Retroactivity to the coordinator of the Delaware Land and Water Conservation Trust Fund (DTF) for grant funding requests that will be submitted for upcoming park improvement projects. I'm also working on DTF project status reports for funded projects that are ongoing.

The contractor has commenced the installation of concrete pads under picnic shelters at George Wilson and Dickey Parks. The project is funded through the Community Development Block Grant program.

Based on comments and suggestion from the public workshop we held for the skate spot project, the design/build consultant has submitted revised plans. We're going through a review at this time.

A local scout troop working with the Delaware Trail Spinners completed the construction of trail bridge at Redd Park as part of that parks trail rehab project.

Tom conducted park inspections and prepared related maintenance work orders.

Tom met with PW&WR staff to discuss and plan for a drainage project in the outfield area at Leroy Hill Park.

Last Saturday the annual Christina Creek Clean Up occurred. Tom coordinated the Newark section clean up. More than 1,400 pounds of debris was removed by volunteers.

Rich continued working with PW&WR personnel preparing for the transfer of park trash pick-up operations to the Refuse Division.

Parks Maintenance

The crew worked on these tasks:

- Placed mulching at several sites
- Began mowing operations
- Began landscape bed maintenance which includes the application of pre-emergent weed control and fertilizing
- Removed and transported two lengths of train rail from along the Pomeroy Trail for possible use in the skate spots project
- We completed several building maintenance tasks

We removed the cur-lex from the South Main Street/Elkton Road traffic medians in preparation for mowing operations.

Recreation Services

Paula conducted interviews for summer camp counselor positions. She will continue through next week.

Staff spent time preparing promotional flyers, PSA's and materials for Channel 22 for summer recreation programs.

Paula sent materials to the Little Slugger registrants in preparation for the class starting April 13.

Sharon has been working on items for the Nefosky Walk & 5K Run and the Spring Community Clean Up.

Spring Break Camp was held at the George Wilson Center all week. We had a great week with approximately 20-25 children participating each day.

Tyler organized supplies and met with the trip leader for our bus trip to Washington, DC on Saturday, April 6. It was a successful trip with a full bus. Unfortunately, we were a day or two early for the cherry blossoms to bloom.

Tyler visited the Delaware School for the Deaf auditorium. We are planning to use it for the end of year dance classes recital scheduled for May 4.

Joe reviewed the new concept designs for the Handloff and Phillips Park skate spots.

Joe is coordinating the Summer E-newsletter that will be distributed electronically on April 29.

Finance

Finance

I met with Fulton Bank to discuss Newark's operating accounts and scheduled a meeting at the branch to discuss commercial services, analysis fees, credit card processing, and purchasing card programs. I will provide an update after the meeting with any action items.

Charlie Emerson spent time with me and Andrew Haines to tour and explain Newark's Parks and Recreation programs and key system assets. I plan on scheduling time with all utility directors to acquaint myself with Newark's critical assets over the coming weeks.

I continue to learn the basic workflow of the department, and I am assuming tasks of Finance Director that were with Wilma on an interim basis, including payroll review and approval, review and approval of check disbursements, review and approval of purchase requisitions, employee performance evaluations, and customer service escalation.

Customer Service

Larissa Jones and I coordinated with Bruce Herron on a delinquent account subject to a settlement agreement. Action is being taken to recover past due accounts receivable.

Accounting

Wilma Garriz and I participated in a Laserfiche/Document Management seminar conducted by Municode.

Wilma Garriz and I met with representatives of SISCO, Newark's new third-party administrator for general liability claims. The relationship was approved by Council on March 25, 2013, and the City Solicitor is currently reviewing the contract.

Alderman's Court

This past week was much lighter after spring break from the University of Delaware; therefore, our calendars were lighter. We held three Court sessions. This resulted in 44 Arraignments, 74 Trials processed (mostly traffic) and 2 Case Reviews. We also had 1 prisoner transported from prison for failure to pay fines.

Police

On March 28th, Captain John Potts was elected to serve as Chairman, for the Board of Managers of DELJIS. DELJIS, the Delaware Justice Information System, is governed by a board of stake holders which include police, corrections, courts, attorney general, public defenders, DTI, and the Secretary of Public Safety. The board oversees the computerized criminal information database for the state.

On Sunday, April 7th, at approximately 1:09 a.m., Newark Police responded to the 100 block of East Cleveland Avenue for a report of an assault in progress. It was learned that the victim and one of the suspects had bumped into each other while walking on East Cleveland Avenue. Words were exchanged and then one suspect punched the victim in the face. The second suspect then punched the victim in the head several times. The victim was knocked to the ground and the second suspect kicked the victim in the head several times. Officers responding to the scene were able to locate the two suspects after they fled the area. Arrested were Dalton Penn, a 21-year-old male from Delaware City and Robert Tschoepe, a 21-year-old male from Lewes. They were charged with Assault 3rd Degree and Conspiracy.

On Tuesday, April 9th, at approximately 12:52 p.m., Newark Police responded to the 100 block of South College Avenue for a report of a three year old child locked inside of a vehicle. A passerby heard a child crying and banging on the rear window of a vehicle parked in a metered space on South College Avenue. The temperature at the time was in excess of 80 degrees and the window was open slightly. The passerby was able to get the child to climb to the front of the vehicle and unlock the front door. The passerby then called police. Police, Aetna Ambulance and DFS responded to the scene. It was determined that the child had been left in the vehicle for approximately forty-five minutes prior to her discovery. The father of the child was located and was attending class at UD and left the child in the car. The father was charged with Reckless Endangering 2nd Degree and Endangering the Welfare of a Child. He was released on \$2,000 unsecured bond. The three year old was released from DFS custody to family members.

On Tuesday, April 9th, at approximately 5:35 p.m., Newark Police responded to the Newark Shopping Center to check on the welfare of a female subject who was reportedly pan handling in the center. As officers arrived to the shopping center, the described female was observed being chased by a male. The female was running with a tip jar in her hand from a restaurant. The female was taken into custody. It was learned that Alexis Orzechowski walked into the No. 1 Chinese Restaurant and subsequently stole the tip jar. She was being chased by an employee as officers arrived to the center. The tip jar was recovered and Orzechowski was charged with one count of Theft Under \$1,500 and released on \$100 unsecured bond.

City Manager's Office

Community Affairs Officer

I created new web graphic panels for the city's website for upcoming events and workshops. I added additional event info to the DNP website that did not make it to me in time for the monthly e-newsletter.

I have spent a considerable amount of time preparing the summer 2013 municipal newsletter and e-newsletter. I am still waiting on a few items to complete the newsletter.

I worked with City Secretary Renee Bensley to make sure that the election results were announced to the media in a timely fashion and was able to send out the press release, update the website and TV 22, and update social media shortly after the announcement Tuesday night.

I am 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 not had a great response from restaurants, yet. I plan to send a reminder on Monday.

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

I have been assisting Officer Dylan Wiggins with dispersal of Drug Take Back Day flyers and posters.

I disseminated a press release about the parks and recreation's new parks trash policy and a press release about spring community cleanup on April 20.

I have reviewed the Before and After Care newsletters for Downes and West Park elementary schools.

I have purchased a camcorder and tri-pod for the city's use. I spent some time familiarizing myself with the new equipment.

I spent some time photographing new developments around the University and on South Main Street for the Finance Department to use in the CAFR.

Planning & Development

Planning

On Wednesday afternoon I met with representatives of Hillcrest Associates to discuss a potential land development project and the height restrictions in the Zoning Code.

Follow up work was performed this week on items considered at the April 2, 2013 Planning Commission meeting in order to move projects forward for Council consideration.

Some time was spent preparing for the May Planning Commission meeting, which, at this point, includes a minor subdivision for St. Thomas Church, and amendments to the subdivision regulations for application sunseting and bike racks.

On Thursday, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner did a TV interview for a UD network on the use of "sharrows" for Downtown.

On Friday morning, I joined City Manager Carol Houck and Electric Director Rick Vitelli in a meeting with representatives of The Data Centers to discuss their proposed development on the STAR Campus.

Also on Monday morning, I joined Carol Houck, Rick Vitelli and representatives of The Data Centers in a meeting with DEDO Secretary Alan Levin and staff to discuss infrastructure needs and funding assistance for the project.

On Tuesday morning, I hosted and Mike attended a meeting of the City's Subdivision Advisory Committee to discuss the rezoning, major subdivision and special use permit applications for One South Main Street. Some time was spent organizing comments and providing same to the developer for a revised plan submittal.

On Tuesday afternoon, I met with an engineer to discuss the New Center Village overlay district and its applicability to new construction.

Considerable time was spent preparing for the Planning Commission Workshop on Transportation scheduled for Tuesday, April 23rd, at 7 p.m. in Council Chamber at the Newark Municipal Building.

On Wednesday, Mike attended UD's Institute for Public Administration focus group with other local government officials on regulatory barriers to "Complete Communities"

Economic Development

This week, Planner/DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz hosted and Parking Administrator Marvin Howard attended a Main Street Mile meeting with main sponsors, hosts, organizers and beneficiaries to finalize details for the race to be held on October 5th and guest bartending fundraiser event (8/16) – we are looking forward to the best turnout yet.

This morning Ricky sent recruitment information to targeted retail businesses for vacancies on Main Street.

Community Development

This week, Ricky began processing first quarter invoices for agencies receiving Revenue Sharing funds.

Ricky is monitoring the progress on repairs being done through a Home Improvement loan at 710 S. College Avenue – work is progressing quickly and the house is beginning to look much better.

Parking

On Monday morning, I joined Carol Houck, City Solicitor Bruce Herron, Marvin and the appraisers for Lot #1 to discuss their remaining information needs before a final report can be issued. All information requested was provided immediately after the meeting.

The Parking Division is continuing to monitor the 1hr parking limit in Lot #3, which seems to be working well.

Worked with IT staff to go live with a pilot software project to increase efficiencies with tracking non-payments and increase payment compliance.

Code Enforcement

On Thursday afternoon, I hosted a meeting of Code Enforcement staff, Aetna Fire Chief John Rudd and engineers from Parsons Brinkerhoff to discuss the Newark Regional Transportation Center and applicable Fire Code regulations.

On Friday morning, Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson and I met with Councilman Morehead to discuss the 2012 ICC Property Maintenance Code and our proposed amendments to Chapter 17. The meeting was very productive and follow up work was performed. We should have a revised ordinance for Council consideration shortly.

Fire Prevention Inspector Bill Street attended the Jurisdictional Fire Marshals meeting in New Castle. Bill came back with an update on the Board of Electrical Examiners fire alarm wiring installation. The new requirement is that all fire alarm systems will now require an electrical inspection by the third party underwriters and inspection tags must be present in the fire alarm box prior to a C/O being issued.

The Exxon gas station on South College Avenue is reopened after interior renovations.

A permit has been issued for the 17,000 sq. ft. addition to Pilgrim Baptist Church on Barksdale Road.

Fire and alarm testing is complete at the U/D ISEB Building.

Footing and foundation work has begun at Kate's Place on Main Street.

Public Works & Water Resources

Kelley has secured a grant and matching funds for a bamboo removal project at the New London Water Tank/Leaf Disposal Facility. This is part of a city and state wide effort to remove invasive species in favor of native plants that support the native wildlife.

We continue to evaluate modifications to all of our operations so that we can make them more efficient. As we do so we are reminded of the imperative that we have reliable equipment. The trash trucks, for instance, are requiring more frequent repairs. It seems we get one fixed to have something else break the next day. As we work to maximize efficiency of the operation, we will need to put increased emphasis on the timely replacement of our equipment. The lack of reliable equipment can significantly affect our ability to work in an effective manner.

The pre-bid meeting was held this week for the curb ramp program.

I continue to watch the creek levels. We are currently at a flow of 63 CFS. I am concerned that we are still below the 25th percentile (84 CFS) of all stream gauge readings for the 19 years that records have been kept. At this time of the year I would like to be at or near the average flow of 119 CFS. We have been getting rain but for some reason it has not affected the base creek flow. As the weather warms up and trees start to draw more water, the situation will only get worse. This summer we will be watching the water supply very closely.

Mike Clark and Brian Laws have finished the survey work for the Cherry Hill Manor paving project. Pusey is preparing the documents so that we can contract for this work.

Pusey and Jim have been coordinating with the Newark Charter School regarding the pavement improvements necessary to have the road accepted by the city.

Jim Angelo has been inspecting the work being performed by Diamond Hill as they install the curb work associated with the Parking Lot #3 work along Center Street.

We are working on the 2013 water line rehabilitation project and are looking at additional rehabilitation materials that are coming to the US market.

Electric

The line crews worked on installing radio devices for the smart meter system, pulled aerial wires across Christina Parkway for the Bloom project, evaluated a collapsed underground conduit across Chestnut Hill Road using the PW&WR Department's camera system, and worked on the services at the Newark Preserve.

The electrician's installed an antenna at a substation for SCADA and changed the batteries at another substation.

Engineering and the line supervisor methodically inspected all the locations proposed for radio equipment outside the City needed to for the smart meter project to receive information from water meters. Delmarva's cooperation will be needed for these installations. Engineering also met with a prospective tenant of the STAR Campus about generating electricity and feeding the excess load into the City.

CSH/mp