

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

May 3, 2013

Police

Lieutenants George Stanko, William Hargrove, and Mark Farrall have completed the course work and testing for the Forty-Third West Point Command and Leadership Academy. The course was created by the West Point Military Academy and the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs' of Police. The course has been adopted and sponsored by the New Castle County Police Department. The lieutenants attended class in New Castle County each week and were subject to rigorous testing throughout the course. A graduation ceremony will be held on May 23rd. Chief Tiernan and command staff will be attending the ceremony.

As another school year is coming to an end, Newark has experienced another dramatic decrease in crime. Comparing the time period of January 1-April 27, 2012 to the same time period in 2013, Robbery has decreased by 46.1%, Aggravated Assault decreased by 28.6%, Simple Assault has decreased by 54.8%, Burglary has decreased 46.3%, Theft has decreased by 14.4%, Criminal Mischief has decreased by 14.4%, and Motor Vehicle Accidents has decreased by 7.3%. Alcohol arrests have increased by 42.4%, Drug arrests have increased by 32.8%, and arrests for Criminal Mischief have increased by 122.9%.

This dramatic reduction in crime and accidents is a credit to the men and woman of the Newark Police Department, the assistance of the University of Delaware Police Department, as well as increased awareness and caution exhibited by residents of Newark and students attending the University of Delaware.

The Newark Police Department will have eight additional officers working on Saturday and five additional officers on Sunday to assist our uniform and plainclothes officers during the Cinco de Mayo weekend.

City Manager's Office

Personnel

- I was invited by Ms. Gabriele Bauer of the International Caucus at the University to speak at an engagement for international professors and post-doctoral candidates. The meeting was engaging and a wonderful opportunity to connect with a portion of the City's citizen groups and promote many City services and amenities.
- There was follow up meetings regarding building security and prioritizing available funding to best secure the City facilities and the employees.
- Met with Carol and Chief to discuss application feasibility for the latest COPS grant process.
- Representatives from the Blood Bank met with me regarding the 2013 Summer Blood Challenge – I will strongly promote this among the employees to try to double our donations from last year.

- Met with several employees regarding their pension benefits, possible retirement scenarios and planning for the future.
- All three (3) unions have accepted my request to initiate negotiations by August 2013 in lieu of waiting until 2014. This was voluntary for the unions as their respective agreements all expire on March 31, 2014. Successful negotiations this Fall 2013 will allow the outcome of the new successor agreements to be built into the 2014 Budget. Management and the unions now have three months to prepare for the start of negotiations in August.

Community Affairs Officer

I am continuing to work on the Food and Brew Fest. I have sent out restaurant registration packets and am awaiting their return. At the planning meeting, the balloon price was discussed and it was decided that I should reach out to other vendors to see about a better price. I have since done so and have been able to reduce the price of balloons by almost two-thirds by making some changes to our balloon set up and changing balloon vendors. I am still seeking a sponsor for the sampling mugs. I submitted a request to reserve the Academy Building lawn for use the day of the event.

The final sponsor checks for Wine and Dine came in this week from our two biggest sponsors: United Distributors and M&T Bank, so I am just waiting on the invoice from the shuttle and then I can close out the Wine and Dine event.

I spent some time updating the public participation webpage for the Comprehensive Development Plan Update as well as creating a web graphic for the home page and TV 22. A press release for May's workshops will go out early next week.

I spent some time at the stormwater management volunteer planting at The Hunt at Louviers and was able to take photos of the volunteers and immediately post about it to social media.

I assisted the National Drug Take Back Day at the Newark Senior Center on Saturday with Officer Dylan Wiggins and a Delaware National Guard soldier. I just received an e-mail stating that 207.6 pounds of drugs were collected. This year, the program asked people to empty their pill containers and take the containers home with them to be recycled in order to avoid burning plastic when the drugs are incinerated, which they believe accounts for the drop in weight that they normally collect.

I spent some time adding PSAs to TV 22 and adding the pre-produced holiday/special day messages for the next few months (i.e. Memorial Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduation, July 4, etc...).

I spent some time this week working on a Public Works and Water Resources Schedule of Services calendar for a postcard of refrigerator magnet that will hopefully be able to be distributed in mid/late-August, in time for UD students coming back for the 2013-2014 school year.

I am working on the UDon't Need It? press release and graphics for the website and TV 22 since that will begin later this month.

I attended the Newark Police Memorial Ceremony in the atrium.

IT

- Projects
 - Cityview Upgrade
 - Working with Finance to clean up duplicate licenses for the new system data conversion.
 - Vendor project status call today. We will be scheduling a project team meeting the week of May 13, 2013.
 - Harris Project v6.4 Upgrade
 - Validation phase sign off is due Friday, May 3rd. The upgrade is scheduled for the weekend of **May 11th**. We will be holding a vendor conference call tomorrow at 11:00.
 - A vendor web-ex was held to review several v6.4 features.
 - Smart Meter Project
 - The vendor is still working on the process for the mass meter exchange. We have requested additional pieces of data be included. We are waiting on a response from Harris.
 - A new Harris project manager has been assigned, Mark Miller. Mark replaces Rich Percival.
- IT Operations
 - Monthly I.T. staff meeting was held with Andrew, May 1, 2013.
- Other
 - Attended a meeting with Renee Bensley and Delaware Public Archives to discuss information retention schedules and archive process.

Planning & Development

Planning

This week considerable time was spent preparing for the upcoming Planning Commission meeting. The following will be reviewed:

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.
3. Comprehensive Development Plan update discussion.

On Thursday, I accompanied City Manager Carol Houck and Electric Director Rick Vitelli to the DEDO Infrastructure Grant Hearing as the public sponsor for The Data Centers.

On Thursday afternoon, I met with a developer to talk about potential development along S. Chapel Street.

On Friday morning, I hosted a meeting of City staff with the developers of The Cottages at the Plaza to discuss construction requirements and sequencing.

This week the Council packets for consideration of the Krohe property (65-67 E. Cleveland Avenue) and Kershaw Commons minor subdivisions were prepared and submitted to the City Secretary's Office.

Some time was spent preparing for the Planning Commission workshop on their roles and responsibilities, and the planning process scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Some time was spent this week preparing for the upcoming Subdivision Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 7th to review the Barksdale Green and East Village development applications.

Some time was spent on items potentially slated for the June Planning Commission. Potential projects include One South Main and Trader's Alley, as well as subdivision and Zoning Code amendments.

On Friday, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner interviewed graduate student interns for the City's summer internship with the Planning and Development Department.

Mike also created flyers and other promotional material for the Planning Commission Workshop on Environmental Quality and Natural Resources for the Comp Plan update. The workshop will be held on May 21st at 7 p.m. in City Hall.

Economic Development

Some time was spent reviewing materials and providing suggestions for promotional pieces prepared for the Greater Newark Economic Development Partnership.

Considerable time was spent reviewing materials for the Delaware Today special supplement on downtown Newark scheduled for the June issue.

On Tuesday, I joined you at the Executive Committee meeting for the Greater Newark Economic Development Partnership.

On Wednesday morning, DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz staffed the Merchants Committee meeting – the members present reiterated the need to gather additional input and support from the wider merchants' community and, therefore, decided to hold an "open forum/meet and greet" event in June, after Newark Day but before the beginning of New Student Orientation on June 17th. The week of June 10th was considered to be the best.

This week Ricky began reaching out to merchants who have not yet submitted registration materials to Parks & Recreation, who have a history of participation in Newark Day.

Community Development

Mike approved a loan for the Promoting Owner Occupancy of Homes (POOH) program. The property purchased, and taken off the rental market, is in Lumbrook. This is the first recipient of the loan since the program was reinstated.

Parking

On Monday morning, Parking Administrator Marvin Howard and I joined City Manager Carol Houck, City Solicitor Bruce Herron, and Finance Director Lou Vitola in a meeting with the Newark Development Trust to discuss the potential Lot #1 Parking Garage project.

On April 16, 2013, the City of Newark Parking Division launched a beta version of its Violation Tracking Data Base, which tracks vehicles leaving Lot #1 without making payment at the automated pay stations. Violations recorded from March 8, 2013 to present have allowed us to immobilize 10 vehicles and collect a total of \$970.00 owed to the City.

Diamond Hill Construction continues to work in the entrance into Lot #3 off of Center Street and has advised that they anticipate completion by the end of next week.

Code Enforcement

This week, Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson attended a meeting on building security.

Council Chamber chair lift construction is ongoing.

Four C/O's were issued for the first townhouses in Newark Preserve.

Public Works & Water Resources

We have started to use the first lagoon at the Newark Treatment Plant. The contractor has begun working on the second lagoon.

We will hold the pre-bid meeting for the Paving Contract this week. Bids will be opened on the 14th of May. I plan to have a recommendation to Council on the 27th.

We have been in discussion with contractors regarding the work in Cherry Hill Manor and have determined that the work is significantly different than the paving contract that we will be bidding the Cherry Hill Manor work with other paving projects. Site conditions at Cherry Hill Manor will require the use of smaller equipment. Contractors with that equipment may not be big enough to compete for the paving project in general excluding them from bidding and/or they might be a sub-contractor and we would pay a mark-up through the prime contractor. The larger paving project is also a state prevailing wage project. I don't know what the difference will be, but I want to bid this project without state wage rates. I am confident given the bidding climate that we will get competitive pricing with this project.

With regard to the Cherry Hill Manor project and on a different topic we are investigating the location of utilities in the alleyways that we intend to pave. So far we have found several locations where the utilities are very shallow. We may need to modify the construction method and/or arrange for the utilities to relocate their facilities.

We have sent notices to residents who will have their sidewalks inspected this year. The actual inspections will take place in May.

Electric

The line crews responded to a power outage on a circuit Saturday night. During switching operations it was discovered that control wiring inside the distribution transformer had burned up, making the unit inoperable. Engineering and electricians are working to rapidly rewire the controls.

Engineering and the line supervisor met with a crane contractor at a substation to work out the details of removing a substation transformer to be repaired. The 35,000 lbs. transformer will be removed next week after the line crews and electricians remove equipment and piping to the unit.

The meter technician helped the electricians with the control wiring and changed several batteries in meters that were showing errors. Also, an electrician continued the infrared scans of circuits and substation equipment with a contractor.

Engineering worked on a CSX railroad crossing application needed for a fiber optic line necessary to pick up the western side of the City's smart meters and worked on fuse coordination for Cottages at the Plaza which will use a new underground feeder scheme with inline fusing.

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

Last Wednesday Tom, Joe and I met with representatives of DeIDOT, Delaware State Parks and the Delaware Trail Spinners at the north end of Redd Park to continue discussion about connecting the Redd Park trail network to Possum Park Road.

Joe and I attended a training/presentation session on parliamentary procedures last Wednesday afternoon.

Tom and I visited various park facilities to evaluate their condition as part of our planning for the 2014-2018 Capital Budget.

On Friday I completed a tour of our park system with the Finance Director and Deputy City Manager.

On Friday I gave a very brief orientation on the Parks and Recreation Department to new City Councilmember Hadden. I also scheduled to give her a tour of our park system in May.

We reviewed two subdivision plans and forwarded comments.

We continue to work with Grindline to finalize the design concepts for the two skate spots. We hope to have them nailed down very soon so that they can prepare construction specs.

Tom conducted park inspections and prepared maintenance work orders.

He followed up with the developer on play unit installation at the Villages at Twin Lakes.

Tom attended a meeting concerning the proposed Cottages at the Plaza subdivision at Suburban Plaza.

Tom began soliciting speakers for the 2014 Delaware Recreation and Parks Society Conference. The committee is in the early stages of planning for the 2014 conference.

Tom met with Special Projects Coordinator to view and discuss the condition of street hockey court at Stafford Park.

The League of American Bicyclists recently announced their rankings for Bicycle Friendly States. Delaware was ranked number 5 up from the 10th position in 2012. The work the City and its various partners have and continue to do has most definitely contributed to Delaware's improved ranking.

We are preparing to begin planting the annual (flower) beds on certain South Main Street/Elkton Road medians.

Rich attended a DEMA training session.

Parks Maintenance

The crew completed or worked on these tasks:

- Conducted mowing operations.
- Completed painting the bollards along Hall Trail yellow for better visibility by trail users.
- Conducted weed control operations at several park and landscaped sites.
- Repaired turf ruts for the Electric Department.
- Completed several park and building maintenance work order.
- Pruned trees at our open space area at Apple and Winslow Roads.
- We planted two Goldenrain Trees at Karpinski that were donated by the Woodworkers Guild of Delaware.

Recreation Services

Paula worked on employment paperwork for summer camp staff. She also contacted volunteers who expressed an interest in working at our summer camp.

Paula sent out registration reminders to current Before and After Care participants for the 2013/2014 school year and worked on finalizing payments from current registrants for the end of this school year.

Paula posted the adult softball and volleyball schedules on the City website and delivered equipment to the outdoor venue in preparation for the start of the seasons.

Paula completed final evaluations on all Before and After School counselors. She continues to work to secure a substitute staff to help out at the end of the school year due to some of the current staff leaving by the third week in May.

Tyler completed PSAs, flyers and Channel 22 information for summer programs.

The lifeguard training class was held this week. We partner with UD to offer this class held both at UD pool and Wilson Park pool. Nine participants completed the class.

The Spring Concert Series will begin on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. on the Academy Building lawn. Six new performers and two returning will be part of the series this year. Check requests, marketing and performer contracts were done as part of the planning process this week.

Sharon and Debbie wrapped up items from the Community Clean Up and the Nefosky Memorial Walk and 5K Run.

- 900 pounds of trash and recycling was collected during the clean up.
- Over \$5,000 has been raised so far for the Nefosky charities. A Guest Bartender Night is being planned for May 16, and we expect to bring in additional funds prior to making contributions to various charities.

We are continuing to accept vendor/participant applications for upcoming events. Newark Day's deadline for applications (without a late fee penalty) is Friday, May 3rd.

Sharon and Debbie have also been working on the upcoming Memorial Day Parade, which will be held on Sunday, May 19.

Joe has been working on skate spot designs with Grindline Skateparks.

The summer e-newsletter was distributed on Monday, April 29 to over 5,000 customers on our mailing list.

Joe edited flyers and PSA's in preparation for summer program marketing.

Park rentals continue to come in with six (6) rentals permitted issued last week.

Joe completed a park inspection of the Reservoir and Karpinski Park.

Finance

Discussions were held with Paul Murray of Morgan Stanley to reinvest a total of \$250 million in matured and/or called investments in the cash reserve portfolio. The current portfolio consisted entirely of certificates of deposit, but I made an investment in a FNMA federally-backed agency security in an effort to diversify the portfolio's holdings and earn a slightly higher yield without increasing the portfolio's risk. The investment choices relied on the draft investment policy statement that is presented in the City's 2011 CAFR for investment guidance; the federal agency securities are permitted in the amount and credit quality purchased this week (\$250,000/Aaa Moody's/AA+ S&P).

The City registered with the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB) to establish the Finance Director as the authorized agent for the City of Newark, which will allow us to make the required annual filings pursuant to the City's continuing disclosure agreement(s) in connection with prior bond issuance(s) internally.

Customer Service

Larissa and Sue worked together to establish a central location with a standalone PC to use for Harris 6.4 testing and validation, which must be done ahead of the May 11, 2013 go-live date to keep pace with the timing of the Smart Meter project. Some overtime might be required for testing, but Larissa and I have identified coverage and put backups in place to minimize overtime usage.

Large water meter replacements are being deployed, which will require a manual final reading in cubic feet before replacement and conversion to gallons. The conversion to gallons will not automatically necessitate the acceleration to monthly reading and billing frequency; rather, the provision for monthly meter reading and billing will be done with a May 27, 2013 ordinance change effective July 1, but may not be implemented throughout the City until 2014.

Accounting

Staff continues to compile financial data for the 2012 financial statements/CAFR. The CAFR is in draft form and requires updates to the Management Discussion and Analysis, which is underway. The audit fieldwork for 2012 is expected to resume on Monday, May 6.

Alderman's Court

This past week we held three Court sessions. This resulted in 93 Arraignments, 48 Trials processed, 15 Case Reviews and 4 prisoners videoed or transported from prison.

The Court is also in the process of installing a video system for viewing videos for trials. It should be completed next week.

CSH/mp