

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

August 9, 2013

Finance

I worked with Morgan Stanley to reinvest a total of \$795 thousand in matured investments into CDs and other fixed income products. I plan to develop an investment policy to govern the investments in the capital surplus accounts.

Andrew Haines and I met with our Russell Investments Consultant to review the most recent performance of the funds in the Pension Plan and OPEB Trust. In addition to fund performance, alternative account arrangements were identified by Russell and will be presented formally in the coming weeks.

Andrew Haines, Marvin Howard, Cenise Wright and I served on the smart parking meter pilot selection committee. We met for the purpose of selecting two finalists, each of which is expected to supply us with ten meters for the pilot. IPS and Duncan were the unanimous selections.

Customer Service

During the initial conversion to smart meters, certain cycles are experiencing a delay in the process to read, transmit, upload, and bill to customers. Some customers are receiving bills later than the usual cycle. However, every customer will still have the same amount of time – 20 days – to pay the bill once it is received. A notice will be included with outgoing bills.

Accounting

I continue to work with staff and department directors to produce a budget calendar for the summer and fall months. The June YTD financials will serve as the basis for a “6-6” projection, which utilizes six months of actual data and six months of projected data in an effort to predict 2013 results. The first drafts of the 2014 operating budget will be based on the 6-6 projection.

Alderman’s Court

This past week we held two Court sessions. This resulted in 40 Arraignments, 50 Trials processed and 5 Case Reviews. We had 2 prisoners transported from prison for various reasons.

Police

On August 2nd, our three new police officers graduated the Delaware State Police Academy. The graduation ceremony was attended by City Manager Carol Houck, Chief Tiernan, and several other members of the police department. The new officers have begun working with their Field Training Officers.

Patrol Lieutenant Feeney will begin coordinating with officers to implement our annual Fall Crime Suppression patrols. Crime statistics and calls for service have been examined in an effort to assign patrol officers to potential problem areas. In addition, the Street Crime Unit and Special Operations Units will be aggressively patrolling “hot spots”.

Corporal Spadola has been researching best practices on “policing and assisting the homeless” in other cities across the country. We will be meeting next week to discuss how we can best bring community organizations and services together to assist our growing homeless population.

Our new test “lapel” shirt camera has arrived and has been activated. One Parking Enforcement Officer each day will wear the camera. Every encounter with a parking violator will be recorded and available for review by a supervisor.

City Manager’s Office

IT

- The server patching is 95% complete. Additional patching is scheduled for this evening.
- The anti-virus updates for all servers is complete.
- A conference call was held this week with the City’s Parking Division and camera vendor to discuss the installation of cameras in City parking lots. More information was needed on system requirements and capabilities.
- I am working on the transition document for the new I.T. Manager beginning August 12th.
- A conference call was held with the CityView vendor project manager to discuss the application upgrade details now that the schedule has been revised. The new go live date is October 7th. The updated project schedule and plan will be provided to the project team this week.
- Worked with the new Help Desk software vendor on software configurations. A go live date has not been set.

Planning & Development

Planning

Development Supervisor Mike Fortner has spent time preparing materials for the upcoming Planning Commission Workshop on Visioning and Aspirations for the update to the Comprehensive Development Plan. The Workshop will be held on **August 13, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber**.

Mike also spent time collecting documentation for DEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Application.

Summer Interns Nicole Seymour and Tyler Berl are researching the Home Based Business ordinance, and continuing to work on the Newark Land Use Survey for the Comp Plan update.

Considerable time was spent reviewing an application for a major subdivision to add 14 new apartment units at the Mill at White Clay. The plan was submitted for Planning Commission consideration in October.

Some time was spent preparing for the September Planning Commission meeting. Tentatively scheduled for review are:

1. Rezoning, major subdivision and site plan approval – East Village at S. Chapel Street.
2. A subdivision amendment regarding street and subdivision name changes.
3. A Comprehensive Development Plan update discussion.

This week the department reviewed materials for the August 15, 2013 Board of Adjustment meeting. On the agenda is one request for a variance for an electronic bulletin board sign for the Newark Emergency Room and another for eight variances to RM zoning area requirements for 28-30 N. Chapel Street.

Economic Development

This morning Planner/DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz staffed the Merchants Committee meeting. The committee discussed the recent Food and Brew Fest, and came up with a number of possible suggestions for future years, including adding a homebrew and cooking contest, and adding a more robust entertainment schedule that would help to carry the crowd later into the evening. The committee also discussed several smaller summer events, such as the Fashion Soiree (8/15 5-8 p.m.), Main Street Mile Battle of the Bars (8/16 5-8 p.m.), Top of Newark Triathlon (8/18 8 a.m.) and expressed a general preference to have numerous small-scale events throughout the year to augment the calendar of major events and remind the public that there is "always something going on in downtown Newark." The Committee also briefly discussed the Holiday Ad Campaign as well as the Gift Card Giveaway Program.

On Tuesday morning, Ricky staffed the Design Committee meeting. He updated the Committee on progress on the CSX property on South Main Street, and the group discussed developing it into an "art walk" should the property be acquired. The committee also discussed ideas for more attractive bump-outs on Main Street, changes to the Sign Code, and an idea for a "Using the Sign Code" brochure that explains the Code in simple laymen's' terms.

Community Development

This week Mike has also been compiling information to complete the New Castle County Grantee Performance Report for the 38th Year Community Development Block Grant Program.

This week Ricky finalized the contract to replace a roof under the Home Improvement Program. He also received bids for grading work to improve drainage and reduce water intrusion at a home, also under the Home Improvement Program.

Ricky received applications from 13 organizations for the upcoming CDBG/Revenue Sharing program year (CDBG – 7/14-6/30/15 and RS 1/1/14-12/31/14). Several organizations are applying for multiple programs to receive funding.

Parking

The Parking Division is continuing with their summer parking lot maintenance program.

Code Enforcement

A conditional C/O will be issued for the East Campus Housing project. A full C/O should be issued in a few weeks.

The tenant fit out for Einstein's Bagels in the ISEB Building has been completed and the C/O was issued.

The Division investigated a house fire at 3 Georgian Circle and determined it was caused by the contractor doing repairs on the home. Damage was moderate. The house is condemned at this time and the owner has been relocated. There were no injuries.

Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson met with Amakor today on security measures for the Alderman's Court and the first floor corridor. Construction will begin shortly.

Also today, Steve has a meeting with the Fire Protection Engineer on the Cottages at Suburban Plaza to go over the fire protection plan.

Public Works & Water Resources

We have begun to make progress on the construction projects this year. In the paving program we have 12 streets that we will be working on. As of August 5th we have completed the curb work on 4 of those streets and started the curb on one street. We have yet to pave a street. Unfortunately, the rain I said we needed so badly as the year started is hampering our efforts to complete projects.

Did I mention the rain we have been having? The reservoir is full and the creek continues to run in quantities that are in excess of our needs. The solar powered mixer at the reservoir seems to be doing a good job maintain the water clarity at a high level and conversely the algae growth at a low level. If this trend continues, we will save on the cost of chemicals and the labor to apply them as we have done in the past.

The vehicle GPS is providing data that is significantly useful. We are already using the data as a learning opportunity as we share observations with the equipment operators. As we are able to fully integrate the data into our daily operations the results will be impressive. Data on fuel mileage and idle time will allow us to realize significant savings

as we get these elements under control. We will be developing a usage based vehicle maintenance schedule versus the strictly time driven system we currently use.

We took delivery of the first small van (Transit Connect). I know the operators of that equipment will be anxious to get moved in.

We are making progress moving the remainder of the water resources function at City Hall to the other side of the hallway into the public works spaces.

The University has made progress on the repaving of the portion of Academy Street adjacent to the new ISEB facility. They should be finished as soon as they get a large enough break in the weather to get the new paving in place.

We have learned yet again that we have one of the most highly thought of NPDES programs in the state. To that end the state will be conducting an on-site review of our operations as they begin their effort to review operations throughout the state. They want to get an idea of how a system can be run so that they can transfer that information to others around the state. This State visit will also be a good review for the Federal inspection of our operation that we know is coming.

Electric

Tri-M, the contractor reconductoring East Main Street, has completed a major portion of the job by pulling the new wires in from Chapel Street to South Main Street. The old conductors will need to be removed and work near the substation complete before the next phase of the contract, reconductoring along South College, can commence.

The line crews and electricians finished making a substation transformer weather proof. A rubber membrane was glued to the surface of the bus bar raceway and a heater circuit was fixed which keeps the insides dry. The transformer was switched to pick up extra load to fix a small leak in another nearby transformer.

The line crews have been fixing hot spots found on the infrared scan. The lower severity issues are all that is left. The crews also supported the contractor boring underground primary cables along Sunset Road for a system reinforcement project.

The electricians have started wiring alarm panels to allow for remote viewing at two substations, while engineering compiled the monthly University loads for billing purposes and worked on designing the STAR Campus distribution.

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

We're continuing to review the final plans for the Curtis Mill Park project.

Main Street Tree Pit Project: all of the pits on the south side of the street have been constructed. The contractor is continuing to construct those on the north side. The up lights will be installed later this month and the trees will be planted in September when conditions are more suitable.

The Handloff Park Skate Spot is nearly completed. The contractor still has a few minor construction items to finish, remove construction materials and complete the grading and seeding around the facility.

We completed a review of the Phillips Park Skate Spot drawings and submitted comments back to Grindline.

I provided information to the DTF grants coordinator as it relates to the Iron Glen Park entrance and parking lot adjacent to the Dunkin Donuts on Elkton Road.

We completed trees from the McKees Park site in preparation for the solar panel installation.

Tom conducted park inspections and prepared related maintenance work orders.

Tom attended a Controlling Invasive Plant Species Conference last week.

We inspected and released LOC's for two project sites this week.

Parks Maintenance

The crews conducted mowing operations.

We continue to do landscape bed maintenance. The crew also placed wood carpet (fall safety surface) under play equipment at various park sites.

We cut back plant growth along the Hall Trail near the Delaware Technology Park.

The crew completed several general park and building maintenance work orders continued, prepared ball fields for play, raked out horseshoe pits and blew off all tennis courts.

YBC crew committed time painting play equipment, did daily trash sweeps at City Hall and Dickey Park, and applied water sealer to various wood structures.

Recreation Services

Paula checked on the Volleyball Camp, Rittenhouse Day and Hobbit Camps throughout the week.

Paula interviewed candidates for the Before and After School Programs. Four counselors graduated and 3 more are not available for the fall due to student teaching. Additional counselors will be needed to support the program at both sites. She is organizing materials and supplies for the program and preparing for the State inspections which will occur in September.

Paula submitted maintenance work orders to prepare for the start of soccer season and the set up of the schools for the Before and After School programs.

Paula continued to promote registration for the Youth Soccer League and send out soccer skills information to those who have already registered. She will finalize the teams after the soccer skills session and continue to add players as they register.

Sharon and Debbie have been managing the Safety Town Program at the George Wilson Center this week. This year's two week program will conclude this Friday with the traditional graduation.

These camps were held at the Wilson Center this week: Rittenhouse Before and After Camp Care, Camp GWC and Safety Town.

The recreation staff worked on fall program planning, committed time proofing the newsletter and prepared PSA's for August programs.

Joe attended the pre-bid meeting for the Leroy Hill baseball field drainage project.

Joe and Sharon attended a Newark Day organizational meeting with Planning personnel and Carol Houck.

Joe and Charlie met with the Grindline construction crew concerning the Handloff Skate Spot.

ASH/mp