

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

September 20, 2013

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

I attended a Subdivision Advisory Committee meeting to discuss two proposed subdivisions.

I attend the monthly Conservation Advisory Commission meeting. Mike Fortner was a guest speaker. He reviewed and answered questions about the Comprehensive Plan process.

Last Thursday we conducted a ribbon cutting event for the Handloff Park Skate Spot. I want to thank Joe and Dana for their assistance.

I submitted two DTF grant proposals in recent months, one to amend the initial grant award for the Curtis Mill Park project (\$130,000) and one for the LeRoy Hill Park baseball field drainage project (\$78,500). I received word last Friday that both grants were awarded.

I'm continuing to spend time updating the department's profile for the 2014 Operating Budget.

The skate spot contractor is making very good progress with the Phillips Skate Spot. The skateboard facility could be open for use in two weeks.

We conducted a very successful Community Day last Sunday. The weather was fantastic and staff and volunteers did a great job!

Tom and I reviewed and commented on several landscape plans for proposed developments.

Tom met with a representative of Fountainview to discuss landscape installation around Building #4.

Tom participated in a conference call concerning the Delaware Recreation and Park Society's 2014 Conference.

Tom reviewed quotes received for a replacement play unit at Wilson Park and made a recommendation to award the work.

Tom continued monitoring progress at the Phillips Park skate spot and of the bamboo removal and installation of a bamboo barrier mat at Karpinski Park.

We completed the final grading and seeding of the former bamboo area along the Hall Trail and at the Public Works & Water Resources Department building near Lewis Park.

Tom conducted park inspections and developed work orders as needed.

Rich began researching propane powered mower for park use.

Rich and the parks crew worked to prepare a section of railroad rail taken from the Pomeroy Rail line to be installed as a skate feature at the Phillips Park skate spot.

Parks Maintenance

We continue to be very busy with mowing operations.

The crew committed considerable time placing wood carpet (safety surface) under park play units.

The crew prepared soccer fields for league play.

The crew completed several general park and building maintenance work orders. A couple of those included repairs to the cell block ceilings in the police annex, replacing ceiling tiles at the Wilson Center and cutting and removing trees from trails.

We committed a large amount of time loading materials, supplies and equipment and setting up for Community Day.

The Christina School District's Networks program participants assisted with applying woodcarpet under play units at Fairfield Crest Park.

Our contractor installed a bamboo barrier at the former location of a stand of bamboo at Karpinski. The barrier will help prevent any leftover root systems to spread.

Recreation Services

The Food Bank of Delaware started serving snacks at the After School Care programs at Downes and West Park Schools this week.

Paula continued to interview candidates for After Care counselor positions since the availability of current staff members has changed. She also checked in on both programs throughout the week.

Paula took supplies to the fields for the start of the youth soccer league games. She attended the first day of league play for the Elementary and Junior Leagues and the instructional programs which have over 50 kids enrolled. Great day for the season opener for all programs!

Paula attended the first day of the new skateboarding classes being offered at the Handloff skate spot. Nine children are enrolled for the class. See photo below.



The Downes School afterschool tennis program began last week with 15 children participating.

Sharon and Debbie prepared for and planned the 42nd annual Community Day. They met with personnel scheduled to work the day and reviewed their responsibilities, sent reminders to the vendors, and updated volunteer lists. With over 200 vendors and an estimated 8,000 visitors, the day was a great success. Special thanks to the University of Delaware, the Newark Electric Department, Public Works, Police, and Park Maintenance crew for helping to set the stage for a seamless event.

We visited Coleman's Tree Farm to look for a tree for the Academy Building Lawn. Several beautiful trees were found. The holiday tree is lit annually at Winterfest. This year's program will take place on Friday, December 6 (Rain date December 7).

Tyler conducted interviews for the CATCH Afterschool Homework Club scheduled to start September 30 at Downes.

Tyler sent out volunteer requests to sororities for the GWC Halloween Party scheduled for October 24.

Tyler sent out promotional emails for upcoming programs including the annual Fall Flea Market, Dance and Tennis classes.

Tyler removed and returned supplies to the storage room as ceiling tiles were installed to comply with fire safety requirements.

Joe and Charlie met with Andy Haines to discuss insurance coverage and liability for volunteers.

Joe presented a session on our social media and e-newsletter to the Central Delaware Recreation Commission in Dover.

Joe organized the skate spot ribbon cutting that was held on Thursday, nice event and a good turnout.

Joe and Sharon met several times during the week about Community Day logistics.

Finance

Deputy City Manager Andrew Haines, Marta Pacheco and I met with CWA leadership this week as part of the ongoing labor negotiations with the City's unions.

Fitch Ratings conducted a "surveillance" review of the City of Newark's outstanding general obligation debt and published an update to the City's rating on the afternoon of 9/18/13. I am pleased to report that the agency affirmed the City's AA+ rating with a stable outlook.

Customer Service

The welcome center officially opened for business on Tuesday, August 27, 2013. The identification software and badging equipment were successfully implemented this week. The next steps to bring the welcome center to full operation include the addition of a second station, integration with door locks, and other items.

Accounting

The "third round" of budget hearings were held with all departments this week in an effort to create a final draft of the operating and capital budgets. The CIP proposal will be presented to the Planning Committee on October 1, 2013.

Alderman's Court

This past week we held three Court sessions and one Case Review session. This resulted in 45 Arraignments, 47 Trials processed, 15 Case Reviews, 8 Pleas or other events, and 3 postponed to a later date. No prisoners were transported.

Police

On September 6th, at 12:00 p.m., the kickoff for the Newark Police Department Trading Card program was held at the Newark Charter Middle School. Students in grades 4-6th attended a presentation in the gymnasium of the school. The event was moderated by Lt. Mark Farrall, and attended by Mayor Vance Funk, City Manager Carol Houck, and Police Chief Paul Tiernan. After the trading card contest rules were explained, the students were treated to a presentation by our two K9 officers. Since the start of the program, many children and their parents have arrived during police shift changes to meet the officers and request their trading card. This popular program was made possible by the hard work of Cpl. Greg Micolucci, Cpl. Adam Mease, and PFC William Smith.

Chief Tiernan sent letters of thanks to the Colonels of the Delaware State Police and New Castle County Police Departments for the assistance provided by their officers during the large disturbance on September 9th. This incident was recorded by many individuals and shown on national news as well as social media. The video shows that every officer conducted themselves professionally and with restraint during this chaotic event.

NPD have arrested 21-year-old Xavier White of New Castle for discharging a firearm during an early morning incident on September 14th in the parking lot of 54 East Delaware Avenue. During this incident, NPD and UDPD Officers responded to the area of 45 East Main Street, The Galleria, for a report of a man with a gun. It was reported that the subject fled the area in a red vehicle. A UDPD officer observed a vehicle matching the description fail to stop at a red light on East Main Street at South College Avenue. The vehicle continued southbound on South College Avenue and then eastbound on East Delaware Avenue. The UDPD officer attempted to conduct a traffic stop; however, the vehicle failed to stop and continued eastbound on East Delaware Avenue. The UDPD officer was joined by an NPD officer and after a short distance, the vehicle stopped in the vicinity of Scholar Drive. Officers immediately placed the driver, later identified as Xavier White, into custody. A semi-automatic handgun was recovered from the vehicle.

It was determined that White was involved in an earlier altercation at 45 East Main Street and that, following that altercation, he retrieved a handgun from his vehicle on East Main Street. White then walked through the interior corridor of 45 East Main Street to the rear parking lot, located at 54 East Delaware Avenue. Once in the parking lot, White raised the gun and fired two rounds in a southeasterly direction, striking an unoccupied parked car in the rear parking lot of the Newark United Methodist Church. White then returned to his vehicle and fled. No one was injured during this incident which was captured, in its entirety, on City of Newark surveillance video. Video is not available for release.

Following his detention at the traffic stop, White was transported back to NPD Headquarters.

City Manager's Office

Personnel

- Attended the announcement event for the Police Department Trading Card program.
- Attend the ribbon cutting (first skate) of the Handloff Park Skate Spot.
- Met with Newark Development Trust (NDT) as a member of the City team.
- Was a part of the review panel of all Capital Budget submissions.
- Convened the 3rd Negotiation meeting with CWA.

Community Affairs Officer

I attended the Police Department's trading card program kick off at Newark Charter School. Pictured below is the gym filled with students excited to hear about the program.



We had a successful ribbon cutting at the Handloff Park skate spot and had several media outlets present. I spent some time preparing for this: writing the media alert and press release and assisting with the set up.



I attended Community Day and took photographs. Newark National Little League was very pleased with the recognition event at Community Day. Several State legislators were present. We were honored that Governor Markell attended and spoke as well. I spent some time preparing for this event. Thank you to Joe Spadafino and Sharon Bruen for their help with this event. The team signed a commemorative baseball bat to be housed with the Newark Historical Society who was present at the event and accepted the bat.



The police recruitment brochure has been finalized and is being used currently in the current recruitment for a police officer position. Police distributed printed copies at Community Day and an electronic version is included in the police application packet in the online job posting.

I have begun planning and preparations for the Greater Newark Economic Development Mixer scheduled for October 11 at the Reservoir.

I have begun designing the DNP annual meeting invitations and response cards as well as the annual report cover.

IT

The following items have either been completed or are currently in progress:

- We have spent the past week putting out fires related to the Network Reconfiguration Project.
- We have started work on getting the Municipal Wi-Fi deployed. We will be engaging Electric to get Cat5e cable run to locations where the Wireless Access Points will be mounted.
- We are preparing to roll-out the client management application and ticketing system called LabTech.
- Our team has now physically consolidated and moved to a single area within the building.
- We have engaged Microsoft to work on an Enterprise Agreement for licensing and Office 365.

Planning & Development

Planning

This week a revised submission for Trader's Alley was received and distributed to staff for review.

This week Subdivision Advisory Committee comments were sent to the developers of the proposed Continental Court addition and 58 East Main Street mixed use building.

Friday was the deadline for the steering committee to review and rank the proposals submitted by nine firms for the Rental Housing Needs Assessment Study. Three firms have been selected to make oral presentations to the committee the last week in September. A recommendation to Council regarding the successful firm should follow shortly thereafter.

On Monday and Tuesday of this week I participated in 2014 Operating Budget and 2014-2018 Capital Improvement Budget hearings.

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the October 1, 2013 Planning Commission meeting. Agenda items are:

1. Election of Officers and 2014 Calendar.
2. Review and consideration of the 2014 – 2018 Capital Improvements Program.
3. Review and consideration of a subdivision amendment regarding street and subdivision name changes [Tabled at the September 3, 2013 meeting].
4. Review and consideration of a minor subdivision at 392 Stafford Avenue which will insert a lot line creating two lots instead of one at the RS zoned property.
5. Review and consideration of a major resubdivision and site plan approval for 4.5 acres located off of Paper Mill Road near Margaret and Annabelle Streets known as the Mill at White Clay. The proposed project will renovate the existing pump house building into four apartment units and construct ten three story townhouse style apartment units.
6. A Comprehensive Development Plan update discussion.

Some time was spent this week responding to another FOIA request for information about the Data Centers.

This morning I will meet with Mayor Funk to discuss logistics for the Taste of Newark event scheduled for Sunday, September 29, 2013 from 12-3 p.m.

Economic Development

DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz began planning for logistics for New Night Downtown this upcoming June.

On Wednesday evening I attended and Ricky staffed the DNP Board meeting. The 15th Anniversary Annual Meeting and New Night Downtown were among the agenda items discussed.

Ricky staffed the DNP booth at Community Day on Sunday, September 15th from 11-4. Many individuals who visited the booth were happy to learn about the event dates for the upcoming year so that they could mark their calendars and plan accordingly. Comprehensive Development Plan update comments were also solicited, and Taste of Newark tickets were sold at the booth.

On Friday morning Ricky and I met with the President of the Board for Delaware Dance Company to discuss the silent auction and entertainment for the DNP Annual Meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 2013. Some follow up work was performed.

Community Development

Time was spent this week prepared for the initial meeting of the CDBG/RS Advisory Committee to be held tonight, 9/18 at 6:00 p.m. At this meeting, Ricky will explain how the committee process has been conducted in past years to new members of the committee. Tonight's meeting will focus on the substance of each application and needs for additional information from applicants.

Parking

On Friday, Parking Administrator Marvin Howard and I attended a meeting with other City staff and representatives of the Newark Development Trust to discuss the Lot #1 Parking Garage project.

On Monday, Marvin and IT Systems Administrator Dave Hopkins met with a representative from T2 Systems to discuss upgrading the City's Cardinal ticketing online payment system.

Code Enforcement

A temporary C/O with conditions will be issued this week for 132 East Delaware Avenue.

Bloom has been issued a permit for interior renovations.

Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson attended the Delaware Building Officials Association (DBOA) meeting in Dover on Tuesday, September 1, 2013.

Public Works & Water Resources

We will be terminating our "for fee" commercial collection on September 30. We have not received any questions in some time so this transition seems to be going along well.

We continue to make progress on the paving and curb ramp projects. We ran into a little problem on Fairfield Drive with Verizon conduit being placed too close to the curb. That issue has been resolved.

Several staff members attended DNREC sponsored training on the new storm water regulations.

Electric

The line crews and engineering performed switching to get primary circuits off so a cellular antenna could be changed. The antenna sits inside a substation on top of a pole with several circuits around it. The space is rented to the cellular company and an upgraded antenna is needed for extended coverage.

The line crews have continued the voltage upgrade to the center part of the City. They completed a voltage changeover to the houses between Orchard and Beverly Roads and are changing equipment near the University Garden Apartments to upgrade that section.

The electricians have been busy at the Municipal Building moving and installing electric, phone, and computer circuits for office furniture rearrangements. They are also painting several pad mount transformers.

Engineering has been working on the budget, ordering the correct style smart meters for special locations, evaluating future tap changer controllers for SCADA integration, and working with the SCADA developers on a punch list of items.

CSH/mp