

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

October 4, 2013

Alderman's Court

This past week we held three Court sessions and one Case Review session. This resulted in 122 Arraignments, 46 Trials processed, 10 Case Reviews and 1 prisoner videoed from prison.

Police

A review of our crime statistics year-to-date looks very good. We have had 13 less actual robberies than this time last year. Simple assaults have decreased by 260 incidents, criminal mischief has been reduced by 72 incidents, burglary has decreased by 52 incidents, and thefts have decreased by 105 incidents. This reduction is a credit to the men and women of the Newark Police Department who have been aggressively patrolling our identified "hot spots". Our Criminal Investigation Division continues its high clearance rate of criminal investigations.

Copies of the "Resident Awareness & Emergency Preparedness Guide" were made available in the City Hall lobby last week. A large number of the guides have been taken by members of the public and the guides have been replenished. We are looking into the cost of publishing a guide more specific to Newark.

The Newark Police have arrested a 23-year-old resident of Newark for DUI and related charges after he struck an undercover Newark Police vehicle and fled the scene. The incident occurred at approximately 9:11 p.m. on September 26th when two plain clothes NPD officers, members of the Newark Police Department Street Crimes Unit, were stopped at a red light in an undercover vehicle on North Chapel Street at East Cleveland Avenue. While stopped, they were struck from behind by a vehicle operated by the suspect. Following the collision, the suspect reversed his vehicle and then proceeded the wrong way on the "dog leg" of East Cleveland Avenue. The officers followed the suspect as he continued westbound on East Cleveland Avenue and radioed the incident and the vehicles location to marked units who converged on the suspect's vehicle after he drove into the Oaklands neighborhood. Uniformed officers' initiated a traffic stop on the suspect who stopped his vehicle as soon as they activated their emergency equipment. Following a DUI investigation, the suspect was arrested for DUI and related charges. The suspect was not injured during the collision. He was released from custody following his arrest. The two NPD officers were transported to Newark Emergency Room where they were treated and released without serious injury.

City Manager's Office

Personnel

- Met with the PW&WR management staff to discuss 2014 operations, in connection with the 2014 budget preparations.
- IT Manager Josh Brechbuehl and I met with Diamond Technologies representatives to review current operations; assessing engagement after initial deployment period.
- As a member of the Rental Housing Needs Assessment RFP steering committee, hearing oral presentations of the top three (3) firms. The team was able to determine its recommendation for staff to proceed with a contract recommendation to Council.
- Attended the Council workshop regarding stormwater management.
- Held the second (2nd) negotiating meeting with AFSCME; next meeting scheduled in one week.

Community Affairs Officer

I spent some time updating the city's website after Mayor Funk's last day removing his contact information and bio, as well as updating the election web pages and Channel 22 with special election information. Additionally, I added the election date and deadlines to the city's online calendar of events.

I updated the DNP website, created graphics, and prepared and e-mailed the monthly events newsletter.

I continue to work on preparing the DNP annual meeting invitations and R.S.V.P. cards for mailing. I am awaiting some supplies to complete the project.

I attended the Taste of Newark event on Sunday.

I have been assisting GNEDP Manager Michael Smith with the preparations for the GNEDP Mixer at the Reservoir scheduled for October 10.

I attended the New Night in Downtown Newark Committee meeting.

Marta Pacheco and I attended the Blood Bank of Delmarva's Summer Blood Challenge Banquet in Dover. We did not win any big awards, but I was able to accept a participation award in person on the City's behalf.

Planning & Development

Planning

On Wednesday afternoon, I attended the Code Enforcement Division staff meeting. Property maintenance and CityView were among the topics discussed.

Subdivision Advisory Committee comment letters were sent to the developers of the 70 E. Main Street project and the Pike Park project this week.

This week the Department received two requests for administrative subdivision. One to adjust lot lines within the Suburban Plaza development in order to make the access road to the south of the Home Depot its own parcel. The parcel is unbuildable; and, to adjust the lot lines at the Newark Charter School to allow an accessory building to be on the same property as the high school.

Some time this week was spent reviewing the agreement for the East Village rezoning, major subdivision and site plan approval plan.

On Monday, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner, Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson and I joined other members of the Rental Housing Needs Assessment Selection Committee to hear oral presentations from three firms ranked the highest out of the nine that submitted proposals. The Selection Committee has made their decision and a recommendation will be forwarded to City Council at the next available meeting.

Some time was spent this week on new Unicity Bus Service maps.

On Tuesday, Mike attended the WILMAPCO Non-Motorized Transportation Committee for a discussion on the draft of the Newark Bicycle Plan.

Tuesday afternoon, Mike and I met with a developer to discuss opportunities for a hotel development.

At Tuesday's Planning Commission meeting the Commission took the following actions:

1. Recommended Council's approval of the 2014-2018 Capital Improvements Program.
2. Recommended Council's approval of a subdivision amendment regarding street and subdivision name changes.
3. Recommended Council's approval 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.

On Tuesday evening, Mike presented a progress report to the Newark Planning Commission on the Comprehensive Development Plan update. The Planning Commission has scheduled three meetings to review draft chapters of the Plan:

Tuesday, October 15 at 7 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room
Tuesday, October 29th at 7 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room
Tuesday, November 19th at 7 p.m. in the City Manager's Conference Room

Some work was done preparing for the next Planning Commission meeting. Tentatively scheduled for review are the following development projects:

- The Mill at White Clay
- Pike Park
- Continental Court
- 58 E. Main Street

This week Mike, Planner/DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz and Planning/Survey Technician Brian Laws have been attending sessions on the CityView training.

Economic Development

On Wednesday, I attended the New Night Downtown organizational meeting. Ricky is heading up this effort for this new and exciting event.

Some time was spent this week preparing for the Taste of Newark which was held on Sunday, September 29th and a tremendous event. Thanks to Mayor Funk for all his efforts to bring this event to our community and to continue to benefit the Downtown Newark Partnership.

Some time was spent this week working on the Downtown Newark Partnership's 15th Anniversary Celebration to be held on Thursday, November 14, 2013 from 5-7 p.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott-UD.

DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz staffed a subcommittee meeting on Wednesday (September 25th) to discuss New Night Downtown. The committee began the process of designating locations for various features; an art display on the Academy Lawn set up similarly to the November 9th Harvest Arts Festival, and a children's' games area on East Main Street, run by the Parks & Recreation Department, west of Grotto Pizza. Smaller subcommittees will arrange merchant and restaurant participation moving forward; a push for participation will begin after Homecoming.

On Tuesday morning, Ricky staffed the Design Committee. The Committee developed the 2014 Work Plan; the Committee wants to focus on streetscape improvements, inclusion of public art downtown, and increased public bulletin board/informational kiosk spaces.

This morning, Ricky staffed the Merchants' Committee meeting. The Committee worked through details of advertising for this year's Small Business Saturday promotion, as well as the Storefront Decorating Contest. Many members of the Committee raised the question of why we can't sell gift cards remotely during downtown events and special days, like Small Business Saturday.

This week the Merchants' E-News You Can Use newsletter was sent out to downtown merchants. The newsletter contained information for the merchants including how to enjoy Homecoming (October 12th) being aware that there will be many more patrons to downtown Newark than usual and reminded the merchants of City of Newark's codes and regulations to prepare for increased enforcement over the weekend.

Community Development

Ricky gathered additional information about CDBG applicants as requested in advance of tonight's CDBG Committee meeting and shared information with the Committee as responses came in.

Parking

Tuesday afternoon, Parking Administrator Marvin Howard and I participated in a Lot #1 parking garage conference call with members of staff and attorney Mark Dunkle. Some pre-work and follow-up work for this call was conducted.

Work is progressing on installing the pilot smart parking meters. Duncan meter poles are being prepared with sensors and the meters themselves should be installed early next week. The IPS meters are behind schedule and will be installed as soon as possible.

The trees in Lot #1 are in the process of being removed. The removal is necessary for security purposes as they have grown to a point where they are blocking the view of the parking lot, which is necessary to ensure safety and proper operations.

Code Enforcement

Tim Poole is attending the ICC Conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey this week.

The Cottages at Suburban Plaza have applied for their building permits for all buildings.

Newark Senior Center has applied for the kitchen addition to their building on Marrows Road.

CityView training is going on this week. We will be going live with the new system on Monday, October 7th. Please keep in mind this is a new system and will take some time to get used to before work will start moving more freely.

Public Works & Water Resources

We have been evaluating additional streets that we might include in this year's paving program as we have had to remove Old Oak due to scheduling difficulties with the water main restoration project. We have also been working on next year's road selection as the various state elected officials have been working on their street repair funding priorities.

We have fixed three water main breaks this week after a long hiatus. Word from other water agencies indicates that they are also experiencing their first breaks. Hopefully this will be a slow season for breaks.

We are mailing out the first round of notices for the meter project. We are about 63% complete and will be mailing about 1,200 notices. We are also reaching out to the owners of rental units to enlist their support to contact their tenants and have them call to schedule an appointment.

Electric

The line crews continue to prepare the aerial circuits in the center part of the City for a voltage upgrade included in the capital budget and are continuing work in the area including setting poles, pulling conductors, and changing transformers.

Replacement 35000 volt metering transformers were installed at Kershaw Substation, and we are awaiting approval from DPL to energize them.

Crews have started installation of a short aerial line extension and pad mount transformer in the rear parking lot for the new service to Kate's Place.

The second infrared scan of the City's substations and aerial circuits by a contractor continued with the escort of one of our electricians.

The electricians are installing conduit and SCADA wiring at the Fremont Road Substation, working at the Municipal Building on running network cables for the IT Department and have started replacing HVAC filters in the Municipal Building and Police Station.

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

I conducted park inspections and forwarded maintenance needs to Tom.

I continue to work with the Delaware Trail Spinners to complete a MOU for the completion of the Redd Park trails project.

I had further discussions with DeIDOT and DP&L about the trail connection to Possum Park Road from the north end of Redd Park.

The Curtis Mill Park Construction Contract drawings and contract document are now completed. The contract was advertised this week. A pre-bid meeting is scheduled for October 17 and the bid opening will occur on November 12. Thanks so much to my staff, Public Works and Water Resources and the Purchasing Office for assisting.

Tom and I reviewed several subdivision plans and submitted comments relating to each projects landscape plans.

Along with Code Enforcement personnel, we conducted an inspection of the two skate spots and prepared a punch list for the contractor.

Tom, Joe and Sharon met to discuss ideas for a 2014 National Trails Day event.

Parks Maintenance

Mowing operations continued.

We committed time on landscape bed maintenance.

The crew continued to apply wood carpet (safety surface) under play units throughout park system.

We spent time pruning trees and shrubs at various locations.

The crew performed several building maintenance tasks during the week.

Recreation Services

Paula reports that the Office of Child Care Licensing completed the annual inspection for the West Park Before and After Care programs. The programs license was renewed for another year.

Paula completed orientations for three new staff members joining the Before and After Care staff.

Paula conducted coaches meetings for our youth basketball leagues.

Tyler held staff training and organized supplies for the CATCH Afterschool Homework Club scheduled to start September 30 at Downes Elementary.

Tyler completed the GWC attendants schedule for October.

The latest session of the Curtains Up Theater program began on Friday at the Wilson Center.

Tyler distributed promotional flyers for the Fall Flea Market scheduled for October 5 at the George Wilson Park.

Sharon prepared an outline for the next several months for Debbie and then met with her to review it. It details the days that she will be working and the tasks that need to be completed each of those days. September 30 is her last regularly scheduled day for the season. She will be in intermittently for fall events until the week of December 9.

Sharon and Tom looked for a suitable adopt-a-stream area for a Girl Scout troop.

Sharon attended a Delaware Recreation and Parks Society Conference Committee meeting.

Sharon worked with Dana to put together a press release for the Community Clean Up, which is scheduled for Saturday, October 5.

Sharon and Joe attended a New Night Downtown meeting in order to prepare the children's game area for the event.

Debbie has been working on volunteer recruitment for the Community Clean Up.

Joe completed the activity measurements for the 2014 budget.

Joe is organizing the winter/spring e-newsletter that will be delivered electronically on January 6, 2014.

Joe is gathering information for the creation of Information Signs that we manufactured for display at the Curtis Paper Mill Park plaza.

Finance

Carol Houck, Roy Simonson, Tom Coleman, Tim Filasky, and Brian Miller of Pennoni conducted a review of the City's storm water infrastructure on Monday, September 30, 2013 with recommendations for improvements. Efforts to identify alternative funding sources and a review of the debt provisions in the City's Charter are currently underway.

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

Customer Service

The CityView data conversion started Thursday midday and continues through Friday, October 4, 2013. I indicated in last week's report that we would be unable to take tax, business license, and permit payments, but staff developed a plan to take manual payments and issue manual receipts outside the system in an effort to maintain our service level.

The CityView end user training is currently underway in Council Chamber. Friday, October 4, 2013 concludes the first week of training; the training continues for the entire week of October 7, 2013 post go-live.

Accounting

The CIP draft was presented to the Planning Committee on October 1, 2013. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that Council approve the spending plan with no substantive changes. The CIP proposal outlines gross capital improvements of \$11.1 million, offset by \$6.3 million of reserve funding and grant funding to yield net capital improvements of \$4.9 million.

The Financial Workshop is scheduled for October 7, 2013. A draft of the workshop agenda follows:

- 2013 Financial Forecast
- 2013 Events that Impact the 2014 Budget
- 2014 Budget Highlights
 - Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Overview
 - Operating Budget Overview
 - "Fixed" items that offer little or no opportunity for change
 - Suggested changes to be implemented in the 2014 budget
 - Conceptual changes to be researched in 2014 and possibly implemented in 2015
- Special Topics

Please note the agenda is subject to change.

The existing rough draft of the budget remains subject to moving parts. We expect the complete budget draft to be available by October 28, 2013, which will provide Council with a full two weeks ahead of the public budget presentation to review the draft. The schedule below outlines the upcoming budget meetings:

- Monday, October 7, 2013 Financial Workshop
- Monday, October 28, 2013 Draft Budget Document distributed to Council
- Monday, November 11, 2013 Budget Presentation to Council at Regular Meeting
- Monday, December 9, 2013 Council Vote on Budget at Regular Meeting

CSH/mp