

## **DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS**

**December 20, 2013**

### **City Manager's Office**

#### **Personnel**

- Was a part of the staff that met with the Exponential Group regarding Lot 1 land negotiations on December 12; this was a scheduled meeting proceeding the December 9 update to Council. Mark Dunkle continues to guide the team towards the goal of land assemblage.
- On Friday, December 13, I had my opportunity to sit down with Mayor Sierer to review my portion of the City operations, as well as other matters that the Deputy City Manager position addresses.
- Engaged the lead counsel for the AFSCME union on multiple occasions to address, in our opinion, remaining matters to have a tentative agreement in place for a successor agreement to the current contract.
- Convened another negotiation meeting with the FOP on Monday, December 16 – the protracted delay since the previous meeting was due to actuarial data analysis. It is the mutual intent to continue negotiations into 2014.
- With the assistance of the Finance Department, overhauled the Excel spreadsheets I utilize for managing health/benefits rosters. This process will result in more effective administration of benefits in 2014, however, highly cumbersome to initial recreate.
- Working on closing out Open Enrollment matters for 2014 benefits, as well as providing Citywide benefit deductions to Finance in time for 2014.
- Facilitated the CPR-First Aid training of the AFSCME employees. Training was broken into two sessions, which occurred over three different days. Additional non-AFSCME employees were able to join the training as well where spots were available.

#### **Community Affairs**

I have spent a considerable amount of time working on the Winter/Spring Municipal Newsletter. It is in the final stages of preparation, and I am just waiting for a couple more items to include.

I have spent a considerable amount of time on Restaurant Week this week. I have contacted restaurants that I have not yet received registrations. I have distributed participating location posters and check inserts to all restaurants whose registrations I have received. I have been working on the design and ordering of participating location flags for all participating restaurants; an entry way banner for the Municipal Building has been designed and will be in place by early next week; "post-it notes" advertising in the News Journal for the event has been arranged; the full page Out & About Ad has been placed in the January publication; an ad in Delaware Today's January publication was placed. Restaurants have been given e-graphics and artwork to add to their print ads for their own use in advertising the event and their business as participating. All of this has been done to the Restaurant Week Committee's specifications. I have begun to receive menus for the event and will work to build up the Restaurant Week webpage on the Downtown Newark website in the coming weeks.

I have added a graphic link to the homepage under Community Resources to make it easier to sign up for the city's e-newsletter. I will work to better design the graphic link when time is available, but for now it is there and working.

The holiday trash collection and Christmas tree collection schedule press release was sent out this week.

I am working on the monthly City E-news to go out by the end of this week.

The city employee holiday food drive for the Newark Area Welfare Committee's holiday food box program ended this week. We sent over a good amount of food this year.

| <b>City of Newark - Weekly Status Report</b>   |                          |  |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Total Tickets Currently Open - 84</b>   |                          |  |
| <b>Total Tickets Opened Last Week - 143</b>  |                          |  |
| <b>ArcGIS</b>  | <b>Awaiting Approval</b> | <b>Expected Completion Spring 2014</b> |
| Public Works and Planning Departments will be imputing paper kept data into digital form for greater control, efficiency and sharing   |                          |  |
| Latest Update: Tom Coleman has reached out to JMT for updated pricing so that we may compare apples to apples with another vendor.   |                          |  |
| Create, share, and manage geographic data, maps, and analytical models using desktop and server applications. Deploy GIS across your organization and on the web.  |                          |  |
| Use ArcGIS maps to compile geographic data, perform spatial analysis, and share your geographic information online.  |                          |  |
| ArcGIS is enterprise-ready technology that scales and integrates across your organization. Manage and share massive volumes of geographic data, imagery, and Lidar with any number of users. Integrate with other enterprise technology, control security and access, and grow your system on your local network or in a hosted cloud environment.   |                          |  |
| <b>Office 365, Microsoft EA and Desktop Standardization</b>  | <b>Approved</b>          | <b>Expected Completion Spring 2014</b> |
| Moving City Email to Cloud, Upgrading all PC's to Windows 7  |                          |  |
| Latest Update: PO Creation In Process  |                          |  |
| As many of you know, the City is lagging behind in terms of desktop computer hardware and software. Many of our PC's are 7-10 years and are running an Operating System (Windows XP) that will no longer be supported in April 2014. It is critical that all of our systems be upgraded to Windows 7 so that application support, network security and system performance is inline with the demands of the software we are currently running and expect to run in the near future. Through a new Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA) The City will be able to receive the best pricing and also receive extended support for new versions of Windows and Office as they become available. |                          |  |
| Our plan is to decommission outdated hardware with new computers, standardize all computers to Windows 7 and deploy Office 2013 (latest version of Microsoft Office) to all computers. This will allow The City to increase its IT support efficiency, as well as allow our users to use standardized platforms for daily function.  |                          |  |
| In addition to the desktop hardware and software refresh, we will be moving our Email Systems to the Microsoft Cloud. This will add a greater level of availability in terms of providing a secured, redundant and scalable solution to meet The City's email needs.   |                          |  |
| <b>Microsoft Lync Enterprise Voice (Phone System)</b>  | <b>Awaiting Approval</b> | <b>Expected Completion Summer 2014</b> |
| Moving the City away from standard Copper phone system to new Voice over IP (VOIP) Phone System  |                          |  |
| Latest Update: Preliminary review and discussions for required system upgrades and potential vendors to implement  |                          |  |
| City will see improved call control, conference call features, voice mail integration, collaboration and call clarity. This will also cut down or even eliminate long distance phone charges.  |                          |  |

|   |                          |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Wide Area Network and Internal WiFi Projects</b>   | <b>On Track</b>          | <b>Expected Completion Winter 2014</b> |
| This is separate from the City Mesh for the Honeywell Project   |                          |  |
| Latest Update: All DSL Lines have been upgraded to max speed. City Firewall upgraded to latest firmware. Waiting for funding for additional devices. Internal WiFi has been completed.  |                          |  |
| We will be linking our buildings via a Wide Area Network (WAN) to allow all facilities to share network resources and allow for computer management. Also included is the City's new internal Wireless connectivity project to allow laptop users the ability to travel throughout the building while maintaining a network connection. |                          |  |
| <b>Honeywell Smart Meter Project</b>  | <b>On Track</b>          | <b>Expected Completion Spring 2014</b> |
| Creating Citywide wireless network mesh to allow Electric Meter and Water Meter communication to Municipal Building Data Center   |                          |  |
| Latest Update: Metersense training now in process   |                          |  |
| Replaces need for Meter Readers and offers the ability for some remote disconnects and reconnects.  |                          |  |
| <b>Data Center Virtualization Project</b>   | <b>Awaiting Approval</b> | <b>Expected Completion Winter 2014</b> |
| Due to antiquated server hardware and inefficient use of resources a new shared storage and virtualization environment will be implemented  |                          |  |
| Working to P2V (Physical to Virtual Migration) with existing hardware. Awaiting funding for execution of project.   |                          |  |
| Using Microsoft Hyper-V Server Solutions, we will be converting from a physical server environment, to a highly available and redundant virtual server environment. This will allow the City to manage its IT resources much more efficiently and provide needed failover capabilities.   |                          |  |
| <b>Harris iNOVA Module Integration</b>  | <b>Awaiting Approval</b> | <b>Expected Completion Summer 2014</b> |
| Module Integration Software will link together CityView, Cashiering, MUNIS and provide cross platform search capabilities   |                          |  |
| Latest Update: Not yet started  |                          |  |
| Users will be able to search and pull reports from all systems as if they were one central database. This allows the users to effectively check for customers in good standing.   |                          |  |
| <b>PC Refresh</b>   | <b>Approved</b>          | <b>Expected Completion Summer 2014</b> |
| Upgrade or Replace existing PC's to align with computing standards of current software.   |                          |  |
| Latest Update: In Planning  |                          |  |
| Physical hardware upgrade or refresh will affect every user within the city to improve computer performance and software compatibility.   |                          |  |

## Planning & Development

### Planning

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the January 7<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting. Tentatively on the agenda are:

1. The annexation and minor subdivision at 428 Paper Mill Road. The minor subdivision of the property is being sought to create a new buildable lot off Lasalle Way at the rear of the property.
2. A rezoning, special use permits and major subdivision of the 6.77 acre site on Terrace Drive just off of Cleveland Avenue to raze the existing buildings on the site and construct 13 new three-story buildings with a total of 56 affordable housing apartment units. Special use permits are also requested for an after school care/daycare use in a residential zone and for commercial parking in a residential zone. The proposal also calls for the vacation of Terrace Drive.

### 3. A Comprehensive Development Plan update discussion.

Some time was spent this week preparing development projects for Council review. In the pipeline are Continental Court, Pike Park and 58 East Main Street.

On Monday morning, Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson and Inspector Brian Daring, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner and I met with Mr. Patel, owner of 70 East Main Street and his architect to discuss the current construction and the redevelopment application for the parcel.

Some time was spent on the response to the Data Centers' latest submittal.

On Tuesday afternoon, I participated in an interview with Preservation Magazine to discuss the architectural inventory project conducted by Dr. Ames' graduate school class from the UD Center of Historical and Architectural Design (CHAD).

On Monday afternoon I met with Mayor Sierer to discuss departmental activities and responsibilities.

This week Planner/DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz assisted Purchasing Administrator Cenise Wright with a grant application for solar powered trash/recycling compactor receptacles for Main Street.

#### Economic Development

Ricky presented Holiday Storefront Decorating Contest awards after judging was completed by a group of volunteer merchants. First place was EC Shades, second place was Fusion Fitness Center, and third place was Caffe Gelato. Thanks to Minster's Jewelers for providing the engraving service for our traveling trophy and thanks to Barnes & Noble UD Bookstore for donating a Santa to present the awards.

#### Parking

Considerable time was spent this week on the Lot #1 garage concept and land assemblage.

On Thursday, Parking Administer Marvin Howard and I joined City Manager Carol Houck, Deputy City Manager Andy Haines, Finance Director Lou Vitola, City Solicitor Bruce Herron and Special Counsel Mark Dunkle in a meeting with the Exponential Development Group regarding Lot #1.

On Monday, Marvin and I joined Deputy City Manager Andy Haines, Finance Director Lou Vitola, and City Solicitor Bruce Herron in a meeting with the Newark Development Trust to discuss Lot# 1.

#### Code Enforcement

Jimmy Johns Restaurant at 133 E. Main Street received it's C/O this week.

Air National Guard at 250 S. Main Street unit #108 received their C/O this week.

U/D Perkins Building received their C/O this week for interior renovations.

Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson will be off from Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> until January 6<sup>th</sup>. Jim Kiesel will be acting supervisor during this time.

### **Public Works & Water Resources**

Water crews responded to four main breaks and one service leak from Friday morning to Sunday evening of this past weekend. The breaks were located on Minquil Drive, Old Cooches Bridge Road, East Main Street and Courtney Street. The water service leak was located on Mary Ella Drive.

Street Division crews responded to two snow events beginning this past Saturday. Fortunately, Tuesday morning and afternoon's snowfall was minimal. We are also starting leaf collection back up now that the snow has begun to melt. Officially leaf collection is over but we will make at least one pass through each route to pick up leaves that were buried by the early snowfall.

We have been working with DelDOT to revise signal timing at the Elkton Road intersection with Thorn Lane. We are currently testing a new phasing configuration that we will analyze and compare to the previous split phasing setup. DelDOT will make a recommendation for phasing and timing based on this analysis of overall delay, queuing and safety considerations shortly.

The Sewer Division has selected a contractor who will abandon the underground diesel fuel tank at the Silverbrook sewer pump station and install a new above ground tank. The contractor has submitted plans to the Code Enforcement Department and will proceed with construction shortly.

We held the pre-bid meeting for the Newark Water Treatment Plant filter repair project this Monday. The pre-bid was well attended, and we have responded to the questions raised at the meeting. Bids are due Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>. This is a priority project for operational reasons, and we expect to bring a recommendation to Council on January 13<sup>th</sup> along with the White Clay Creek water main crossing project recommendation.

We had our above ground vehicle lift repaired this week. This lift is the only lift in the garage that is capable of lifting our tandem axle trucks and is no longer manufactured making replacement parts very difficult to get. The lift does not go down often, but when it does, it is down for an extended period of time. We were without tandem axle vehicle lift capability for three weeks waiting on parts to make this repair. We have a capital project in the approved CIP budget to replace the lift with a modern model in early 2015.

Work is again underway at Iron Glen grinding and removing yard waste from the site. We hope to have the majority of legacy yard waste from the site processed and composting by the end of the month. Additionally, all yard waste from 2013 will be processed and ground into more easily compostable material. We have developed a plan for 2014 that we expect to more effectively handle yard waste in a sustainable manner.

## **Electric**

The Saturday morning outage for a voltage upgrade in the center City area was postponed until this Saturday because of customer notification concerns. During the pre-execution planning it was discovered that some customers on Indian and Sunset were not notified of the outage. The warmer weather forecasted this weekend for the 5:00 a.m. outage for two hours should make it less of an inconvenience.

The line crews worked at The Cottages at the Plaza and also installed a new transformer at Dow Chemical on Bellevue Road.

Electricians have been installing meter boxes on several substation transformers that do not have them in preparation for a smart meter that will enable easy remote access to circuit data.

Engineering has been programming 36 substation smart meters and the meter technician has started installing them. Also engineering and the line crews have been evaluating the citywide network. All the dead spot locations are being tested to see if a radio at the nearest utility pole will extend to the missing coverage. If so, a radio is permanently installed.

## **Parks & Recreation**

### **Administration & Planning**

The December CAC meeting was cancelled due to snow.

I prepared for submittal (to the Army CORPS) the required Work Commencement Form for the Curtis Mill Park development project. A pre-construction meeting has been set for January 15.

I committed significant time completing grant reimbursement documentation for the Skate Spot project.

Tennis and basketball court lights were deactivated for the winter months except for these locations: Handloff, Phillips, Wilson and Dickey Parks.

Last Friday I met with Mayor Polly Sierer to give an overview of department operations.

We coordinated with the Electric Department to order replacement lights for our lighted courts in City parks. This is a 2014 CIP project.

In 2014 we will combine Water Division and Parks Department contracted mowing operations onto one contract for the first time. Tom has been working with Water personnel to gather the appropriate information for their sites to include in the contract document. This contract is for mowing the slopes of the Reservoir, storm water basins, the Old Paper Mill Road open space site and approximately 18 other areas that are cut 4 to 6 times each year.

Tom completed an update of our Urban Tree Canopy 2013.

Tom attended a Christina River Clean Up Committee meeting to continue planning for the 2014 event.

Tom met with a local Boy Scout to discuss ideas for his Eagle Scout project at one of our parks.

Tom and Joe started gathering pricing and developing options for installing utility poles and netting at the Hill Park baseball field. When installed the netting will reduce the number of foul balls hit into the parking lot.

### Parks Maintenance

The crew committed considerable time with snow and ice control efforts.

We stored away materials and supplies used for Winterfest, Snack with Santa and Santa's Secret Shop.

The crew completed several general park and building maintenance work orders.

### Recreation Services

Youth basketball league games started after a two day snow delay. Games went well and the season is underway!

Paula completed the her 2013 year-end report, prepared PSA's and flyers and submitted information for Channel 22 on winter/spring programs.

Paula started processing paperwork on new recreation leaders for the Before and After Care program at Downes and West Park Schools.

Sharon has been wrapping up items associated with fall events and is working on spring programs. She is creating flyers, working on reports, and reviewing the winter/spring activity guide.

Sharon has been working with the US Air Force Heritage of America Concert Band and several departments at the University of Delaware to coordinate a concert to be held on April 21. Last year we held a similar concert at Newark High School. We are not able to hold it there because of spring break. We're in discussions with the U of D to schedule the free concert at one of their facilities.

Sharon and representatives of the Newark Police Department presented checks (donations) to organizations from proceeds from the Bill Nefosky Walk and Run.

Tyler worked on finalizing winter/spring programs and proofing the newsletter

Our dance program classes held a Winter Dance Show at the George Wilson Center on December 15. Eighty family members and friends attended.

Joe is organizing the winter/spring e-newsletter which will be delivered via email to over 5,000 individuals in early January.

Joe is preparing a request for quotations for recreation equipment and supplies for 2014.

## Finance

I held discussions with Paul Murray of Morgan Stanley to reinvest a total of \$1.6 million in matured and/or called investments in the cash reserve portfolio.

Daina Montgomery will transition into the IT Department beginning on January 1, 2014 in a role that will lead to dedicated support of the three critical software packages utilized in the Finance Department: Harris Northstar (Utility Billing), CityView (Permits and Licensing), and Munis (Financial Accounting). Finance Assistant Deb Kupper, our Accounts Payable backup, will transition to Accounts Payable lead. A recruitment for a part-time Finance Assistant position will follow.

The DEMEC Board approved its 2014 budget this week, which includes the wholesale billing rate for all member municipalities. The wholesale rate impacts the RSA calculation, which will be presented at the January 27, 2014 meeting of Council.

## Customer Service

Harris “eDocs” software was implemented to allow the customer service group to append the City’s electronic billing records with scanned documents, such as leases, customer correspondence, payment arrangements, et cetera.

## Accounting

Wilma and I met with Mike Stephens, our lead independent auditor at Clifton Larson Allen, to plan for the year-end preliminary audit and the 2013 financial statement audit. The most noteworthy changes in Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) pronouncements include the following:

- **Effective year-end 2013: GASB 65**, which requires government entities to record debt issuance costs as period expenses (as opposed to assets that amortize over the life of the underlying bond issue). The impact on the City will be marginal – roughly \$183,000 of unamortized bond issuance costs will move from the assets section of the balance sheet to a reduction in the 2013 opening net position.
- **Effective year-end 2015: GASB 68**, which requires government entities to record the present value of the unfunded pension liability on the face of the financial statements rather than in the footnotes to the financial statements. This will cause roughly \$24 million (as of 1/1/13 – the recorded amount will change by the time disclosure is required) in the City’s unfunded pension liabilities to show up in the liabilities section of the balance sheet and negatively impact the 2015 ending net position by an equal amount. While some professionals contend that the instant “erosion” of municipal fund

balances will negatively impact ratings and creditworthiness, others argue that the footnote disclosures of unfunded liabilities are widely known and have long contained information sufficient for ratings agencies and creditors to incorporate the funding levels into their analyses and credit scoring decisions.

- **Please note that the changes related to GASB 65 and 68 represent non-cash transactions, and “net position” (formerly known as “fund balance”) is the government equivalent of “equity” in private accounting. Changes in “net position” are non-cash changes that do not affect the City’s cash reserve balance.**

Thank you for approving the budget on December 9, 2013. The schedule below outlines future budget-related actions:

Monday, January 13, 2014      ► Second reading on the following ordinances

- Credit Card fee
- Court Security fee

Monday, January 27, 2014      ► Budget revision proposals

- Impact of tax increase reduction
- Impact of changes, if any, to credit card fee
- Impact of changes, if any, to court security fee
- Implementation of RSA

### **Alderman’s Court**

This past week we held three Court sessions. This resulted in 77 Arraignments, 55 Trials, 8 Case Reviews, and 3 prisoners transported from prison for other events such as capias or warrant returns.

### **Police**

On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013, NPD conducted their annual Toys for Tots distribution with the help of Lt. Mark Farrall, Sgt. Curtis Davis, M/Cpl. Tom Maiura, Cpl. Greg D’Elia, Cpl. James Spadola, PO Paul Lawrence and Nathaniel Graber.

Many families at the Newark Housing Authority and White Chapel neighborhood received the holiday spirit thanks to the supporters of the program: Aetna, Hose, Hook & Ladder, The Little Caboose Daycare, Holy Angels Middle School, Millstone Properties as well as gifts donated by the community.

City businesses have recently been targeted through a variety of phone scams. Scammers have been claiming that the merchants are behind on their utility payments, or tinkering with the businesses credit card system. In efforts to prevent future victims, Cpl. Spadola has been aggressively using social media in an attempt to increase awareness of the scams.

Over the past weekend, two businesses in separate locations (Old Cooches Bridge Road and Hansen Court) had vehicle batteries stolen from work vehicles. A newer model 4 door white Jeep Wrangler is the suspect vehicle for the Old Cooches Bridge Road incident.

CSH/mp