

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

July 11, 2014

Finance

I returned to work on July 8, 2014 after two medical procedures. I am happy to be back in the office and contributing.

Customer Service

We are nearly to the finish line of the smart meter project implementation. One of the final components is the integration of "Customer Connect," which is the online portal that allows customers to view their utility usage and manage their accounts remotely. The launch was kicked off the first week of June, and the staged approach to the conversion is proving successful. Through July 10, 2014, more than 2,000 residents were enrolled in the new Customer Connect portal. We will continue to keep you posted with our progress.

The Customer Service group continues to work on the final implementation items related to the smart meter project. The smart meter working group held its last progress meeting on June 26, 2014, and the follow-up scheduled for July 11 was cancelled due to recent successes in some of the final open items. We expect Honeywell to request a formal "cutover" and transition the project management to the City of Newark team within two weeks.

Accounting

The accounting staff has finalized the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), which was published to the City's website on Monday, June 30, 2014. As always, the CAFR will be presented to Council by the City's independent auditors after it is published. The tentative presentation date is at the regularly scheduled meeting of Council on July 28, 2014.

The Department Directors are gearing up for the 2015 budget process. Budget hearings began on June 30, 2014 and are resuming next week. After the preliminary budget proposal takes shape through the summer, I will begin sharing a rolling budget calendar to report key meeting dates and deadlines as part of the weekly reports.

Alderman's Court

This past week we held 3 court sessions. We processed a total of 34 arraignments, 45 trials, 12 capias returns, and one prisoner was videoed from prison.

Police

On Thursday, July 10th, Chief Tiernan attended a dinner held by the Morning Rotary Club. At the dinner, awards were presented to Officers William Smith and Daniel Bystricky for their life saving action on March 1, 2014. A monetary award of \$125.00 was given in each officer's name to a charity of their choice.

On Thursday morning, new officers Nate Graber and Adam Heath were officially sworn in as Newark Police Officers by the City Secretary. On Friday afternoon, the two new officers graduated from the Delaware State Police Academy. Chief Tiernan presented the officers their badges at the ceremony. Present at the ceremony was Mayor Sierer, City Manager Carol Houck, and Deputy Manager Andrew Haines, as well as many Newark Police Officers.

On Sunday, July 6, 2014, at approximately 5:18 p.m., three 19 year old males were walking to their vehicle in the parking lot of 400 Wollaston Avenue when they were approached by three male suspects. Two of the suspects had their faces partially covered and the third suspect was in possession of an aluminum baseball bat. The three suspects demanded the victims' property and one of the suspects removed a bag from inside the victim's vehicle. As the confrontation ensued, one victim was struck by the baseball bat and punched in the face causing minor injuries. Medical attention was refused. The suspects then ran to a nearby vehicle and fled the area.

The victims began to follow the suspects in their vehicle while calling 911. Newark officers were able to locate the suspect vehicle on Elkton Road in the vicinity of Christina Parkway. Officers were eventually able to stop the vehicle on Elk Mills Road in Elkton, Maryland. Four defendants were located in the vehicle and arrested.

The defendants were taken to the Cecil County Sheriff's Office, where deputies charged them as fugitives. The Newark Police currently have active arrest warrants for all four defendants and are awaiting their extradition to Delaware.

City Manager's Office

Community Affairs

The social media community posting policy has been posted to the City, Parks and Recreation, and DNP Facebook pages for public view. This will let everyone know the expectations of sharing on our social media profiles and gives us something to refer to should we need to take action on a post that violates the policy. The policy was reviewed by the City Solicitor.

I spent some time preparing a memo to City Secretary regarding the option of developing webpages for Council Members on the City's website.

The City Manager's Office and the DNP purchased a set ribbon cutting scissors for use at grand openings and ribbon cutting events. It is something that we have been discussing for a while. It makes sense to purchase a set since we have borrowed and/or rented scissors in the past for photo ops.

I have spent some time on Food and Brew Fest preparations. We are happy that the soon-to-be open Del Pez Restaurant has scheduled their grand opening a few days before the event in order to be able to participate. It should be a good introduction for them to Main Street and a great new addition to the event. Thursday, Ricky Nietubicz and I are meeting with April Jones, Greene Turtle General Manager, to discuss how we can better engage and serve the South Main Street businesses for events such as Food and Brew. Poster delivery will take place this week to downtown businesses. The event press release has been reviewed by Out & About and will be released in the coming week.

I have begun the process for preparing the Fall 2014 Municipal Newsletter. I have asked for content ideas and updates to service related information from department directors.

Facebook

Likes of Page	Likes of Posts	Comments	Shares	Post Clicks
28	82	6	22	1,400

We had a high level of interest in the Curtis Mill Park Plaza construction photos followed by a post that included a photo of the Fourth of July fireworks. There seems to be a lot of excitement about Curtis Mill Park as we continue to share photos of the progress being made.

We continue to see weekly double digit increases in our followers. This week we are at 925 closing in on the 1,000 follower milestone.



Twitter

New Followers	Unique Interactions	Link Clicks
45	44	67

By contrast, we do not seem to get the same response about the progress on Curtis Mill Park on Twitter. Perhaps this is a time of day issue for posting or the difference in our audience on Twitter. There was a lot of interest in the Safety Town Instructor position posted and people were interested in the Fourth of July updates.

Planning & Development

Planning

Considerable time was spent this week preparing the Departmental submissions for 2015 Operating and 2015-2019 CIP Budgets, including Planning, Parking and Code Enforcement.

The Subdivision Advisory Committee letter containing departmental comments for the Lofts at Center Street development was prepared and sent to the developer's engineer this week.

Some time was spent researching Planning Commission activity for a Council resolution honoring Angela Dressel's many years of service to the Commission.

Some time was spent working on reports for the August Planning Commission. Tentatively scheduled for review are:

- A major subdivision at 305 Capitol Trail.
- An amendment to the Zoning Code regarding "no impact" home based businesses.

Development Supervisor Mike Fortner prepared and sent to the City Secretary's Office, the most recent update of the Newark Comprehensive Development Plan for presentation to Council at the July 14th meeting. Following the presentation, public workshop sessions after this meeting are recommended.

Mike is updating the City's website to include a webpage dedicated to the Rental Housing Needs Assessment Study. The site will contain general information, agendas, minutes, recordings of meetings, and all reports associated with the Study. The page can be accessed on the homepage of the City of Newark website, or by the link below.

<http://cityofnewarkde.us/index.aspx?NID=876>

Graduate Intern Evan Horgan is working on updating and revising the City's Fiscal Impact Model that analyzes the net financial impact of new developments. Evan is also working with IT on organizing files within the pl_common file.

Student Intern Anna Gill is working on a historic walking tour guide of Newark. The guide will be made available on the City's website, as well as printed versions available at the Newark Municipal Building and other locations. Anna is also working on a guide on how to use public transportation in Newark.

On Wednesday at noon, Planning and Development Secretary Elizabeth Dowell attended the Introduction to IT training.

The Department reviewed 9 building permits/COs this week for zoning compliance.

The Department also processed 2 Buyers Information Affidavits this week.

Economic Development

On Tuesday morning, DNP Administrator/Planner Ricky Nietubicz staffed the DNP Design Committee meeting. The Committee reviewed the design of the Lofts at Center Street development project at this meeting.

On Wednesday morning, Ricky staffed the Merchants' Committee meeting. Topics discussed were A New Night Downtown recap and plans for the upcoming Food & Brew Fest to be held on July 26th.

This evening, City Manager Carol Houck and I will attend and Ricky will staff the Downtown Newark Partnership Board meeting.

Community Development

Mike completed the final Financial Draw for the 39th Year (7/1/13-6/30/14) CDBG Program to New Castle County. He has updated and completed a report on all CDBG loans by the City and submitted it to New Castle County. He is currently working on the Grantee Performance Report for the year, and preparing to monitor sub-grantees that received CDBG funds, as well as preparing for New Castle County to monitor the City's CDBG program.

On Tuesday afternoon, Ricky met with representatives of the Newark Senior Center to determine if a potential home repair project would fall under the CDBG Home Repair Program or the Newark Senior Home Repair Program. It was determined that the project will be handled by Newark Senior Center Program.

Parking

The Parking Division is working on making all parking meters in the City of Newark ADA compliant and has completed 60% of the meters on Main Street.

Code Enforcement

Rupp Farm C/O's will be issued this week.

Dave Greenplate, the new Facilities Maintenance Superintendent for the Code Enforcement Division, started this week.

Public Works & Water Resources

Management

- We had an audit by the EPA this week on our Sediment and Stormwater Delegated Agency functions. Overall the audit appears to have gone well and our recently retired engineering assistant and inspectors should be commended on a job well done in both their normal duties and preparation for the audit. The auditors were very complimentary of the obvious professionalism and attention to detail shown through their inspection reporting records. The draft report should be available for comment by the fall. Some areas of improvement were identified, mostly related to recordkeeping and the need for more advanced digital documentation. This is something we have been moving toward since the merger, with all inspections after 2012 now being stored digitally. The EPA is proposing a rule that would dramatically expand what we need to have stored in a digital database that will be reported to the EPA via DNREC. We are currently reviewing the draft rule to see what effect this will have on our operations so we can begin planning. One thing that is certain is that we will need to implement a fairly advanced database for recordkeeping and we should not expect financial help from the federal government to do it. The EPA has done significant financial analysis that indicates the operational cost savings will more than cover the initial implementation cost, however.
- Over the holiday weekend we had a fairly extensive brown water incident in the area around Old Oak Road that required a significant response from Water Division personnel. We were unable to identify the reason or the disturbance that stirred up pipe sediment but it is clear that we are working in the right area for main replacement this year. We have flushed this area repeatedly when dealing with the multiple main breaks yet unexplained brown water incidents continue to happen at a higher rate than the rest of the City. The contractor for the water main replacement project is now scheduled to start on Ray Street at North College Avenue on Monday, July 14th. The start date was pushed back from this week to ensure proper coordination with UD.
- Had a meeting with our engineering consultant who is creating our stormwater GIS database. We are creating the database structure and determining what features we wish to collect in the database while performing routine maintenance in-house. Surveying has commenced in the Hunt at Louviers. The database will be used for asset management, modeling, and capital project optimization. We received a surface water planning grant which covers 50% of the cost of this project.
- Attended a presentation by Tyler Technologies on a digital work order and asset management system that will integrate with current City financial software, which is also Tyler. The software looked very promising and should really improve our ability to track work and the costs associated with that work.
- Visited with an elderly resident to investigate potential leaks that may be the cause of high water bills.
- Interns started on Monday and are familiarizing themselves with the City's Roadside Sign Inventory. They have received safety training and software training prior to the commencing sign data collection in the field to develop the City's roadside sign database and comply with FHWA Retroreflectivity mandate. Sign data collection in the field is anticipated to begin next week under the Guidance of the University of Delaware T2 Center.

- A meeting with GS Products was conducted by management and garage staff to address questions related to an alternative trash truck that was demonstrated for the city in the past few months. Several questions were answered to help the city in its decision process for the purchase of two (2) additional trash collection vehicles.

Streets

- The Street Division supported the Parks Department with the delivery of traffic control devices and the clean-up following the Liberty Day fireworks.
- Asphalt and catch basin repairs have been completed at Hidden Valley Drive.
- The asphalt top coat on the driveway of the resident at 918 Quail Lane has been replaced due to previous damage as a result a back yard storm drain repairs completed by the City.
- Final top soiling, seeding, and asphalt patches have been completed at several rebuilt catch basins and a new section of sidewalk has been poured on Elm Street.

Refuse

- The refuse group had a heavy Green Wednesday due to last week's July 4th holiday.

Water and Wastewater

- The Water Division and the street sweeper supported the Parks Department with the clean-up following the Liberty Day fireworks.
- Installed an air release valve and dog house manhole access on North College Avenue near Ray Street prior to the completion of the White Clay Creek Crossing project. The air release valve will clear air from the lines when the new creek crossing is brought back online. This was installed in-house to reduce overall project costs.
- Vegetation has been removed from the NWTP raceway and debris has been cleared from the screens at the pump house.
- The reservoir road access gate arm has been replaced. It was broken by vandals.
- Curb stops at East Cleveland Avenue and Elm Street have been excavated and replaced.

Garage

- The Garage supported the Parks Department with the clean-up following the Liberty Day fireworks.
- The new computer system at the yard is up and running and training has been provided to the Garage staff by IT and management.
- The Garage responded to remove a fallen tree with the backhoe during last week's wind storm.

Stormwater

- Researched a policy interpretation question regarding what qualifies as an outfall under the Clean Water Act. This question was asked by the University of Delaware when they located a pipe that wasn't identified on their storm drainage maps.
- Completed 11 dry weather outfall inspections and the associated paperwork.

- Working with PW&WR management and the University of Delaware to coordinate a date/time for our required annual stormwater training at the maintenance yard. This training is required for our NPDES industrial stormwater permit for the site.
- Working with engineering consultant and PW&WR management to further define the parameters for intern field collection of data under the Surface Water Planning Grant.
- Arranged for a tour the ISEB and ECUP building green roofs.

Electric

A large explosion occurred when a lineman closed a fuse on a capacitor bank. The lineman was not seriously injured, but had some sunburn around his eyelids. The energy of the explosion was about four times the City's peak load and the substation that was tripped off line, was quickly restored. Equipment failure was the cause of the fault, but exactly how the failure occurred is still under investigation.

The line crews have been working on hot spots found by the recent infrared scan of the aerial lines, and worked at The Retreat. The crews also started setting poles for the development of the Newark Shopping Center bowling alley project and are setting poles for the new substation transformer slated to arrive in the fall.

The electricians have been working at the City's main substation on wiring relays for failure alarms. They are also getting the conduits from each of the main transformers ready for fiber optic cable to be run to tap changer controllers. These functions will be integrated onto the SCADA system and make remote switching between the City's feeder transformers possible.

Engineering has been working with the SCADA developers and with substation equipment engineers on getting the SCADA system communications 100% reliable. Some equipment has lost communications periodically and may need firmware upgrades to correct.

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

I continue to prepare materials for the 2015 Operating Budget and 2015-2019 Capital Budget.

We met with a representative of the Newark American Little League to discuss plans for renovations to the LeRoy Hill Park Baseball field. We have contracted with Reybold Construction to remove the clay surface soil, install a field drain system, apply top soil and re-seed the outfield area. Work should commence in late August and be completed in late September.

We had a great Liberty Day and fireworks display last Friday. Sharon, Debbie and Joe did a terrific job. Many thanks to the Police Department and Public Works, and Code Enforcement (Fire Marshal) for their assistance.

Curtis Mill Park Update:

- Continued to apply top soil to the site.
- Began preparing the site along Paper Mill Road for the installation of curbing and relocation of catch basins.
- Watering newly seed areas.
- Installed brick pavers and signs in plaza area.



T



Tom met with a representative with Brickman (Home Depot's landscape contractor) and their new sub-contractor doing the landscape maintenance in the median on Elkton Road adjacent to Suburban Plaza.

Tom conducted park inspections in nine parks and wrote up work orders as needed. While doing the park inspections, Tom also did IPM inspections. Some issues were found and taken care of by the Horticulture Crew.

Tom met with Deputy Director of Public Works & Water Resources concerning the gas line ROW at Twin Lakes and landscape plantings that will be impacted.

Parks Maintenance

Continued mowing operations.

Committed a lot of time loading and unloading materials and supplies for Liberty Day.

Sprayed for scale problems on plantings at several park sites.

Performed tree and shrub pruning at various sites. Recent storms caused a few issues.

Recent dry weather has caused us to water newly planted landscape materials.

Corrected a plumbing problem in block building at Rittenhouse Park.

Prepared ball fields for league play.

Completed several building maintenance tasks at the Police Station.

Re-painted 1/10 mile distance markings on the Hall and Reservoir Trails.

Recreation Services

Paula sent out letters to previous year soccer coaches inquiring about the upcoming season and if they will be returning. She also sent an email blast to previous participants about signing up.

Paula sent out 1st day letters to Session II participants for Rittenhouse and Hobbit Camps and also a 1st day letter to the Golf Camp participants which started on Monday, July 7.

Paula worked with the Golf Camp and Soccer Camp instructors for the upcoming week of their camps.

Debbie has been working on items for Safety Town; interviewing potential volunteers, listing the program on several websites, working on the schedule, and reviewing materials.

The events staff prepared for and held the 4th of July Fireworks and Liberty Day Celebration. Sharon emailed vendor reminders, confirmed equipment rentals, prepared supplies, met with the crews from Public Works and Parks that were working the event and clean up. Parking lots at UD were filled for the event. UDPD, NPD, and DeIDOT did a great job getting vehicles out of the lots and clearing the roadways at the end of the night. Sharon posted on Facebook and Twitter throughout the day.

Tyler is working to secure lifeguard subs for the week of July 7-11.

The recreation staff worked on planning fall programs.

Camps held at the George Wilson Center this week included: Camp GWC, Before and After Camp Care for Rittenhouse Day Camp and Eco Kids Camp.

Tyler, Paula and Liz met with Debbie Keeley to go over the new timesheet procedure.

Tyler ordered a new salt chlorinator for the George Wilson Center pool. The old one was no longer producing chlorine and continued to malfunction after Electric Department staff serviced it twice. It was installed in 2007 and reached its typical life span

Joe worked on a Community Development Block Grant application.

Joe and Sharon met several times about Liberty Day and fireworks logistics and contingency plans in case of inclement weather. Hurricane Arthur gave us a bit of a scare!

CSH/mp