

City Manager's Weekly Report

Friday, May 8, 2015

Department:

Administration - City Manager

Notable Notes:

Mayor and Council -

Several staff members and I attended the Walkable Bikeable Delaware Summit yesterday in Dover. It was a wonderful event that provided insight into efforts being made statewide and challenges to goals for the promotion of more walkable and bikeable communities. Newark's efforts were recognized as was the DelDOT proposed Cycle Track concept for Delaware Avenue. A rendering is attached. Mayor Sierer represented our community in a panel discussion with representatives of other communities. I think we all came away with ideas for increasing both motorist and bicyclist education and a better understanding of the attractiveness of a bikeable/walkable community.

Please note that I have attached an electric rate comparison chart shared by DEMEC.

In response to a question posed at a recent Council meeting regarding credit card processing for the parking meters - IPS, the parking meter vendor, utilizes their own credit card processing system. This is not a separate feature, therefore, the review committee vetted all the parking meter vendors but not their separate arrangements for credit card processing. All were, however, PCI compliant.

Maureen reports Planning and Development is working on a memo to Council about the floodplain. Additionally, staff is not aware of Council direction to work on reducing the number of seats for restaurants that serve alcohol. Our regulations are currently at 50 seats. The state regulation was recently reduced to 12 seats from 35; however, recent Newark businesses (Mediterranean Grill and Wood Fired Pizza) went before the Board of Adjustment for a variance for a reduced number of seats and then came before Council for a Special Use Permit both of which were granted. As background, Maureen also advises that the reason for the number of seats requirement in Newark was to insure it was a real restaurant and not a bar or take out restaurant. Direction is requested if staff work on this is desired.

I share one last time the opportunity with Council to participate in the DEMEC offered Joint Community Briefing Session that will be held next Thursday from 4 to 7 p.m. in Dover. The flyer with full information is attached. Please advise by Monday morning if you can now attend. Currently I have Mayor Sierer and Councilpersons Hadden, Morehead and Gifford. If you are unable to attend, we will provide whatever detail/documentation as a followup.

As you may be aware, proposals for RFP 15-07 for Solid Waste, Recycling and Yard Waste Collection and Disposal are due next Tuesday. I have received a few individual Councilmember requests for information related to this service/RFP and staff have started to work on responses, however, with the receipt of proposals and their resulting evaluation so near we intend to include responses in any resulting recommendation for the disposition of the proposals. Likewise, it's worth noting that given the complexity of the proposals and the fact that an evaluation will not solely be based on price, we will not be in a position to immediately determine if they are favorable or not at time of receipt. We intend to commit time to do a full and extensive evaluation of each proposal in comparison to our current operations as well as to possibly bring firms in for meetings to ensure full understanding.

Activity or Project:

"UDon't Need It? 2015

Description:

Final plans are being completed in preparation for the 9th annual UDon't Need It? student move out event. This partnership between the City and the UD will begin this year on May 22nd and run through June 6th at the STAR Campus. A copy of the post card that will be mailed early next week is attached. As most of you are aware, the UDNI program has enable Newark to reduce overtime, tipping fees and drastically reduce reusable materials being taken to the landfill.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 6/6/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Rockmoss Update

Description:

I have been advised by Deputy Solicitor Bilodeau that the monitions action has been filed. Please find a copy of the Complaint.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 10/2/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Box Tops Project

Description:

Mayor Sierer and I continue to meet with Jared Wasilefsky on this Newark initiative. I hope to have more information to share in the near future as a followup meeting is planned.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 9/30/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Department:

Alderman's Court

Notable Notes:

We processed a total of 51 arraignments, 56 trials, 23 capias returns, 8 case reviews.

We transported 7 prisoners this past Friday to court and videoed another 5 on Monday for various violations.

We are also interviewing for a vacant part-time position.

Activity or Project:

Court Session

Description:

This past week we held three court sessions.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 5/8/2015

Execution Status: Completed

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Community Relations

Notable Notes:

May is Bike Month, and we are working to enhance Newark's reputation as the bike-friendly community that we are, including promotion of and participation in Bike to Work Day (5/15) at the University of Delaware and the Mayor's ride the following day (5/16), in addition to the Memorial Day Parade the day after (5/18). We are also working to bring attention to the Spring Concert Series (Thursdays in May and June), the K9 Koncert benefit event on 5/15, New Night Downtown (6/13) and the new "Newark's Got

Talent" youth open mic nights Wednesdays in June.

Activity or Project:

CSX Bridge Mural Repainting

Description:

Due to traffic concerns, work to clean and repaint the bridge, originally hoped to begin this month, will be postponed until after UD Graduation. However, we are confident that as long as there are no unforeseen weather or similar issues, the work can be completed prior to New Night Downtown on 6/13.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 6/12/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

New Night Downtown

Description:

Registrations for "Art on the Lawn," the Newark Arts Alliance's art show and sale on the Academy Lawn during New Night, have been extremely strong, and we are identifying additional space along East Main Street and Academy Street for additional artists. We are very happy with the success that the Newark Arts Alliance is having gathering registrations. Business registrations from both within and outside of downtown are very strong.

Status: Started

Expected Completion: 6/13/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Electric Department

Notable Notes:

The line crews have been busy switching for various projects and maintenance issues. They replaced two lightning arrestors on a substation transformer, fixed control lights at another transformer, and switched for Delmarva to move a down guy at the Newark Shopping Center. The line crews have also been busy preparing East Main Substation for a new transformer coming in June.

The electricians installed stronger antennas at several substations that were having trouble communicating periodically. They also wired up the 34kV breakers on several transformers to allow the SCADA system to close them. Previously a local control handle was all that was necessary, but it was decided for safety, that closing at a distance was more prudent. The electricians also installed a radon fan at the McKees Solar Park.

Engineering has been busy with project management. Engineering met with contractors doing the site work at East Main Substation for the new transformer, met with electricians about the new service for a cell tower on Amtrak property off Marrows Road, and met with the developers about the underground primary loop locations at the Newark Shopping Center Campus Circle Project.

Activity or Project:

Newark Shopping Center

Description:

Distribution infrastructure consisting of underground primary cabling and pad mount transformers to Campus Circle and the shopping center.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 9/1/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Finance Department

Notable Notes:

Latrice Nichols, who has been serving customers in the Payments and Utility Billing group with excellence since 2010, has accepted a position with Parks & Recreation. Please join me in congratulating Latrice!

Payments and Utility Billing

The group handled 663 phone calls the week of 4/27/15 with an average call length of 3:13 and an average hold & queue time (average speed of answer) of 5:02. The group also processed a total of 3,071 utility payments and CityView transactions while the Welcome Center processed 488 visitors. 154 service calls were initiated by Payments and Utility Billing in response to the calls and visitors. The Finance Department's customary statistics, in addition to new data available with the VOIP technology, continue to be maintained on a weekly basis in 2015 to develop key performance indicators.

Accounting

The accounting team continues to work on the year-end financial statements and related work in connection with the annual audit; see additional information reported in the Independent Financial Audit project detail.

We have also begun preparing for the 2016 budget process. The first round of administrative budget meetings have been scheduled for the last two weeks in May and the first week of June. The departments will focus on the operating budget in the initial round of meetings. Items such as meeting summaries and preliminary budget drafts will be posted to 2016 Budget Central as they become available.

Activity or Project:

Independent Financial Audit - 2014

Description:

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report ("CAFR") Fund Statements for 2014 have been drafted and submitted to the City's independent auditors. Staff completed the outstanding field work items. The draft CAFR Government Wide Statements, Fund Financial Statements, and the tables supporting the Note Disclosures are all complete. This week, we completed the Note Disclosures, the vast majority of the Statistical Reports, and the Final Schedule of Federal Awards. Work on Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) began this week, and the production of the CAFR document itself will begin in the coming weeks.

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Billpay Efficiency Project

Description:

There is no change in the status of this project this week. Fiserv, the intermediary that executes the billpay feature on behalf of the majority of local banks servicing our residential utility customers, has assigned a project manager to assist the City with the implementation of an efficiency initiative to convert paper checks to electronic payments. We have scheduled the kick-off meeting for 5/12/15 with a follow-up meeting on 5/14/15; implementation meetings will follow.

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Parks and Recreation Department

Notable Notes:

Recreation Superintendent Spadafino and I participated in interviews to fill two Customer Service employee vacancies in the department.

Park Superintendent Zaleski conducted park inspections and prepared related maintenance work orders. He also spent time gathering cost estimates for plantings to eventually be placed under the South College Avenue bridge near the Old Train Station.

We committed significant time at Fairfield Park excavating and preparing for the installation of two handicap parking spaces near adjacent to the Community Garden site. We also constructed additional Garden Boxes for the registered gardeners.

We are working with the Purchasing Office to prepare a recommendation to purchase two trucks for the Parks Division. These vehicles were approved in the 2015 CIP.

The crew is very busy with mowing operations.

We recently began a new process for pesticide applications for certain trees. The Arbor Jet injection system places pesticide materials directly into the cambium of a tree. The xylem and phloem take up the pesticide

and distributes it throughout the tree. This will significantly reduce the amount of spraying we do. We will use this same system to inject Ash Trees when the Emerald Ash Borer shows itself in the area.

Recreation staff is nearly finished interviewing and selecting counselor and recreation leaders for our summer programs.

Our Children's Dance program concluded last week with a year-end recital for parents and friends.

The Wilson Center was a very busy place this week. Multiple sororities held rehearsals for the annual lip-synching concert which closes out Greek Week at the U of D. DelDOT rented the facility on Monday and Tuesday to conduct safety training. Weekend rentals are filling quickly with limited opening remaining through September.

Recreation Supervisor Bruen prepared for and conducted our first NewBark Pawlooza event at Handloff Park. Thirty vendors and more than 300 people and approximately 150 dogs participated. The vent was very well received and we'll likely follow up with Pawlooza II next year!!

Our Spring Concert Series kicks off this Thursday night, 7-8 p.m. at the Academy Building lawn on Main Street.

Department staff are assisting with plans for the Mayor's Bike Ride planned for May 16.

Activity or Project:

CIP Project K13-01: Tennis Court Renovations

Description:

A recommendation to award the contract was submitted to City Council for it's May 11 meeting.

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:**Description:**

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Planning and Development Department

Notable Notes:

Building Maintenance

- This week monitors were removed from dispatch and rehung in the Roll Call Room in the Police Department.
- Lettering was installed above the Customer Service windows this week.
- The new toilet in the City Secretary's Office was defective and was replaced again.
- Painting of the City Secretary's bathroom began this week.
- Exit signs were hung in the stairways this week.

Code Enforcement

- A Certificate of Occupancy was issued for 2000 Fountainview Circle, unit 303 this week.
- Also this week, the final Certificate of Occupancy for Newark Natural Foods at 230 E Main Street, unit 209.

Parking

- This week meters were blocked for fire hydrant repair at Alumni Hall and sidewalk work for the new trash and recycling compactors.
- This week lockers/uniforms were purchased for Parking Enforcement Officers so that the Division will be ready when the PEOs are transferred to the Parking Division.
- Maintenance for the municipal lots was performed this week which includes basic parking lot curb sweeping and painting (yellow), and the first lawn mowing of the year.
- The IPS Smart meters were checked this week to ensure they are functioning as intended before 8 a.m. (prepay function).

Planning

- On Thursday afternoon, Planning and Development Director Maureen Feeney Roser met with City Solicitor Bruce Herron and representatives of the owners of 147 East Main Street to discuss moving forward with a development tabled by the Planning Commission in 2011.
- Considerable time was spent this week preparing comments from reviews of potential developments at Astra Plaza and Pike Park.
- This week the Department received revised plans for 70 E. Main Street. The Board of Adjustment approved a variance for a 120% expansion of a non-conforming building at their

last meeting, which allows the applicant to move forward for Planning Commission consideration at a future meeting.

- Some time was spent assisting the new owners of the business at 270 East Main Street (formerly Mojo's) with information regarding the process to get approvals to open as a restaurant selling alcoholic beverages at the site.
- Work continues on preparations for the upcoming Council Workshop on Comprehensive Development Plan V.
- Work continued this week on a Council memorandum concerning the floodplain ordinances to answer questions posed and make recommendations for minor edits.

The Planning and Development Department completed:

- 4 Deed Transfer Affidavits
- 3 Building Permit Reviews

Activity or Project:

Council Approval of Planning Related Items

Description:

At the Council meeting Monday night, Council acted on the following Planning and Development items: o Approved two special use permits – one for a home occupation on Beagle Club Way and another for a restaurant with alcohol at NSC; o Approved the software purchase for the unified parking system; and requested more information and a separate contract for hardware. o Heard a presentation from the Chesapeake Crescent Initiative regarding Safe and Smart Cities.

Status: Completed

Expected Completion: 4/27/2015

Execution Status: Completed

Activity or Project:

Planning Commission Meeting

Description:

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the upcoming Planning Commission meeting. On the agenda are: o A staff presentation on the City's interest in purchasing Rodney Dorm property. O Review and consideration of a request for an extension for an approved major subdivision at 1119 South College Avenue (Candlewood Suites), which was started but not completed within the required timeframes. o Review and consideration of revised plans for the Lofts at Center Street Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning, major subdivision and special use permit for the property at 21-49 Center Street (west side of Center Street).

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 5/5/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Bike Racks Installed on Unicity Buses

Description:

This week bike racks were installed on the free Unicity buses. We have had several residents who have expressed an interest in bike racks for the Unicity buses.

Status: Completed

Expected Completion: 4/30/2015

Execution Status: Completed

Department:

Planning and Development Department

Notable Notes:

Building Maintenance

- This week the door closer in the basement of the Police Department was repaired.
- DelMar Door was contacted for entry door problems. They adjusted and lubricated the doors, which are now functioning properly.
- Painting and cleaning were completed for a new Newark Police Department office.

Code Enforcement

- The Certificate of Occupancy was issued for Del-One Credit Union – 141 E. Main Street this week.
- This week a building permit was issued for the SevOne tenant fit-out – 550 S. College Avenue, Suite 107 (STAR Campus).
- Acting Code Enforcement Supervisor Jimmy Kiesel attended a meeting with representatives of Anaconda Fire at the Olan Thomas building to inquire about the installation of a new fire and burglar alarm.
- Considerable time was spent this week on interim staffing strategies to cover the retirements of Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson and Fire Marshal Bill Street. Friday was Steve and Bill's last day of service with the City; and we wish them both much health and happiness and thank them for their years of dedicated service to this community.

Economic Development

- Some time was spent reviewing a copy for the Newark supplement in the June edition of Delaware Today magazine.
- Some time was spent assisting businesses in registering for participation in New Night, scheduled for Saturday, June 13th.

Parking

- This week the Parking Division staff cleaned up graffiti in Lots #1 and #6; and completed lot curb sweeping/painting.
- The End-of-Month reports for Finance were completed this week.
- This week lockers were ordered in preparation for the Parking Enforcement Officers' transfer to the Parking Division.

- Maintenance was performed on Lot #3 and #4 machinery.
- This week meetings and tours are being scheduled with vendors concerning the Surface Lot hardware RFP.
- This week Administrator Marvin Howard is recuperating from rotator cuff surgery. We are happy to report that Marvin's surgery was a success, and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Planning

- Considerable time was spent this week preparing for and staffing the Planning Commission meeting held Tuesday evening, during which the Commission:
 - Heard a presentation on the Rodney Dormitory site as it relates to the City's interest in it;
 - Approved the request for a 30 month extension for completion of construction for an approved major subdivision and special use permit at 1119 South College Avenue (Candlewood Suites);
 - Did not recommend approval of the revised Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning, major subdivision and special use permit plans for the Lofts at Center Street (21-49 Center Street, west side of street).
- Work continued reviewing development plans for readiness for Planning Commission and/or Council review in anticipation of upcoming agendas.
- Planning and Development Department Secretary Elizabeth Dowell spent some time this week with City Secretary/Director of Legislative Services Renee Bensley to learn how to link reports and related items to the web agendas for future Planning Commission meetings and discussing how Council packets are handled. Previously, the Department had only put the proposed development plans on the web, but our goal is to link all related items to the agendas and post them beginning with the June Planning Commission meeting. No change to the packet process is recommended.
- Some time was spent this week preparing for the upcoming Board of Adjustment meeting during which the Board will hear the appeal of Howard Krinsky of 3 Prospect Avenue for the variances for minimum lot area, maximum lot coverage and occupancy limitations to accommodate redevelopment of the RD zoned property.
- Work continued this week on finalizing revisions to the Comprehensive Development Plan. The next Council Workshop is on Monday, May 18th to review Chapter 11: Annexation and Chapter 12: Implementation.
- The Planning and Development Department completed:
 - 9 Deed Transfer Affidavit
 - 1 Building Permit Review
 - 2 Certificate of Occupancies

Activity or Project:

Rental Housing Needs Assessment

Description:

1. Some time was spent on preparing for Monday's Council workshop with Urban Partners to discuss the findings of the Rental Housing Needs Assessment Study (RHNAS) Phase I and supplying information to facilitate a path forward to Phase II. At the meeting, Council approved moving forward with Phase II of the study and gave direction on Steering Committee Membership. In addition, the City Solicitor has opined that Planning Commissioners serving on the Phase II RHNAS Steering Committee will not result in a conflict of interest should zoning or subdivision changes be recommended by Phase II; and the Commission will elect two members to serve on the

committee at the June Commission meeting.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 8/31/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Bike to Work Day

Description:

2. Bike to Work Day is on May 15th. The event will be held from 7:30–9 a.m. at Mentors Circle on the UD Campus at the corner of S. College Avenue and Kent Way. Bike to Work Day is organized by the Newark Bicycle Committee, in partnership with the City of Newark and the University of Delaware, and is intended to highlight National Bike Week (May 11-15) in the Newark community and will provide light breakfast food for participants to enjoy before completing their commutes to work. The Newark Bicycle Committee will also be presenting the award to the City of Newark for being designated by the League of American Cyclists as a “Bicycle Friendly Employer” and the bronze level recognition. Also, a local community member will be given an award as the “Bicycle Friendly Community Leader”. Bicycle commuters are encouraged to ride with others to the event to take advantage of one of six captain-led “bike trains” which will depart from the following locations (one in each Council District) promptly at 7:20 a.m. • John R. Downes Elementary School on Casho Mill Road (District 1) • Wyoming Road at the Delaware Technology Park near the James F. Hall Trail trailhead. (District 2) • University of Delaware Field House (District 3) • Chrysler Avenue just off the Elkton Road intersection (District 4) • New London Road at the Fairfield Shopping Center (District 5) • Newark Reservoir parking lot (District 6)

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 5/15/2015

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Floodplain Ordinance

Description:

3. Considerable time was spent reviewing the newly adopted floodplain ordinance and the audio and minutes from the City Council meeting during which it was approved, in order to produce a memorandum to City Council regarding questions and suggestions for improvements received from Council and the public. The draft memo’s recommendations will be reviewed with all appropriate operating departments and required agencies to ensure that the proposed changes will not affect the required compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulations and then be distributed to Council for discussion and direction. We anticipate this discussion to happen within the next several weeks.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 7/31/2015

Execution Status:

Department:

Police Department

Notable Notes:

It has been an interesting few days at the Washington House on Main Street. Earlier in the week, a male climbed up scaffolding on the west side of the Washington House Condos then entered an apartment through a window. After making entry into a bedroom, the male laid down on the bed nude, until the resident walked in. The male ultimately fled through the front door of the apartment where approximately ten (10) residents of the building surrounded him until police arrived. He was charged with burglary, indecent exposure (x2), criminal mischief, and trespassing. He was committed to HRYCI on \$10,400 bond.

A few nights later, two suspects were observed on the balcony of several apartments. They stated that they thought the building was under construction and were just looking around. The reporting person observed the suspects jumping from balcony to balcony. They were released on their own recognizance and issued a no-contact order with the Washington House Condominiums. A security guard has been hired by the building association.

The final interviews have been completed from the current police applicant list. We expect to have four recruits ready for the police academy next month. The next police entrance exam will be administered this Saturday.

Lt. Fed Nelson and Animal Control Officer Donna Vickers met with representatives from "Forgotten Cats" and the State of Delaware Office of Animal Welfare. The agencies are looking to partner with Newark in regard to a grant they have received to trap/neuter/return stray cats. This is expected to reduce the wild/feral cat population in the city.

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

5/4/2015 to 5/9/2015