

City Manager's Weekly Report

Friday, April 22, 2016

Department:

Administration - City Manager

Notable Notes:

Mayor and Council -

Please find attached a cover letter and Organizational Assessment of the Downtown Newark Partnership (DNP) as presented to the DNP Board this week. The Board will discuss the report at its May meeting.

I attended the ICMA Northeast Regional Summit in Annapolis Thursday and Friday morning. Workshops and sessions of special interest included topics on Resilient Leadership; Organizational Health (developing cohesive teams; creating, communicating and reinforcing clarity); and staff meetings that create organizational engagement. This program provides some of the necessary CEU's required to maintain my credentialed manager status.

PW&WR Director Tom Coleman, Code Enforcement Manager Dave Culver and I attended at meeting at the request of our Lobbyist Rick Armitage and League President Carl Luft on HB200 which relates to accessible parking spaces. We were able to ask additional clarifying questions and share some additional information. Likewise we were made aware of some other entities concerns (UD, Christiana Hospital, other cities) and share our appreciation for the committee taking into consideration our earlier suggestions for clarification or concern.

Planning and Development Director Maureen Feeney Roser and I met with Newark Landlord Association (NLA) President Kevin Meyhew this week to discuss the Administration Warrant effort related to rental property inspections. We had shared the information and draft with him and our local legislators last week. No formal position of the NLA has been taken. Its our understanding a meeting of it members will meet and discuss this effort at its May meeting. A subsequent meeting was held with representatives of the NLA late Friday afternoon and led by Special Legal Counsel Walton and City Solicitor Heron. Lobbyist Rick Armitage was also in attendance, along with Planning and Development staff and me.

Activity or Project:

DEMEC

Description:

We have been informed that Fremont Turbine #2 has sustained an outage caused by high pressure path turbine blade damage. The incident is somewhat similar to our Unit #1 turbine outage of last year. The Fremont plant continues to operate in a 1X1 configuration (1 Combustion Turbine feeding the Steam Turbine). The service contract maintenance company, PSM, is on-site doing a root cause analysis of the failure and determining quickest route to repair and returning the unit to service. The cost of repair and the date of return is unknown at this time. AMP will purchase replacement power for participants during the outage. No significant operating expense is expected. The capital expense to repair Unit #2 is unknown at this time.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 4/20/2016

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Alderman's Court

Notable Notes:

We held three court sessions this past week.

Activity or Project:

Court Sessions

Description:

We processed a total of 57 arraignments, 20 trials, 20 capias returns and held one violation of probation hearing. We videoed five prisoners from the various prisons this past week. In addition, we received a total of 868 payments for Court fines and Parking Citations over this last week, 413 of those payments were made on Govolutions or through PayPal for Parking Citations.

Status: Completed

Expected Completion: 4/18/2016

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:

The last two weeks have been extraordinarily busy for the Communications team:

- Joined the Mayor, members of Council and the public in City Hall on election night to communicate the results via a press release and through social media.
- Attended a Planning Commission to tape several presentations to new commission members on their roles and responsibilities. This tape will be published and made available as a useful tool for current and new members to the commission.
- Staffed the April DNP board meeting, which was well attended and focused on the Organizational Assessment Preliminary Report and upcoming events including New Night and Food & Brew.
- Attended an information session on the application process for the Downtown Development District grants.
- Accompanied Mayor Sierer and Parks & Recreation Director Joe Spadafino to tape Newsmaker segments with Comcast. The segments featured the upcoming Mayor's Fun Ride, as well as the calendar of events for the spring and summer programs offered through the City.

In addition, the City of Newark has accepted and embraced the "Take a Bite out of Lyme Disease" Challenge, with several staff and council members participating, including the Mayor, members of Council, the City Manager, Director of Parks and Recreation, and Finance Director, among others.

The videos are posted on the City social media sites and have received overwhelmingly positive responses from across the country.

Graphic Design

- Updated Planning's Comp Plan on Website
- New Night Sponsorship Form Added to DNP Letterhead/Website, event page banner designed
- PWWR Applications for Standard Plan Approval Uploaded and Form Page Updated
- UDNI – Webpage Updated; Site Layout Map Developed; Postcard and website banner designed
- Budget Central – Updated Webpage for 2017
- Developed Newark's Youth's Got Talent Logo
- Wine and Dine Photos Added to DNP Website
- Everbridge Notices for Public Meetings and Water System Maintenance
- Election Results Page Updated
- Admin Day Celebration Invitation Designed
- Environmental Efforts Converted to PDF and Archived
- Updated Brandywine Graphics with New City Color and Font
- Meeting Notices posted
- Finalized Style Guide for distribution
- Updated Information on TV22, slowed the scrolling text down
- Updated DNP Website/contact information
- Created Memorial Day Poster and Memorial Day Facebook Event Page Graphic
- Created Newark Pawloosa Poster
- Developed DNP Report Cover
- Cleveland Ave. Sub-Committee Archive Section Added to Website

Press Releases/Media Inquiries

- Mayor Polly Sierer Joins Sandy Hook Riders to Honor Gun Violence Victims, Seek Change (4/10/2016): <http://bit.ly/1qF4Sfn>
- City of Newark Announces New Finance Director (4/14/2016): <http://bit.ly/1MKyv9z>
- City of Newark Election Results (4/12/2016): <http://bit.ly/1Sy2dRg>
- City of Newark Recognized, Rewarded for Environmental Efforts (4/13/2016): <http://bit.ly/1r1Z1kE>
- Registration Open for 2nd Annual Mayor's Fun Ride (4/19/2016): <http://bit.ly/1VmWcYb>
- Lex Wilson, The News Journal, inquired about the status of the Newark Country Club with regard to its utility payments to the City.
 - Response: The NCC is current with all of its utility payments.
 - Resulting story: <http://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/2016/04/15/saving-last-newarks-open-space/83052698/>
- Karie Simmons, Newark Post, inquired about the number of voters in District 3 and 5 and the turnout for the April 12 election.
 - Response: District 3: total registered voters – 4,060; total voters in District 3 election – 341; turnout percentage – 8.4%. District 5: total registered voters – 2,135; total voters in District 5 election – 493; turnout percentage – 23.1%.
 - Resulting story: http://www.newarkpostonline.com/news/article_1d605e96-080a-5898-9b48-125b2ef09eaf.html

Activity or Project:

Staff/Council Portraits

Description:

It has been several years, with some staff and council changes, since professional portraits were taken. The City has hired Eric Crossan to conduct a portrait session with the Mayor and members of Council, as well as senior level City staff in order to have updated professional photos.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 5/9/2016

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Website Redesign

Description:

Will be working with CivicPlus to update the City website. We are reviewing best practices in municipal web design and will be soliciting citizen input.

Status: Started

Expected Completion: 9/6/2016

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Electric Department

Notable Notes:

The line crews continued working at the West Main Substation in preparation for the new transformer that is now expected to arrive late August or early September. They also fixed two hot spots requiring immediate attention as found by the infrared scan.

The line crews and electricians worked together to switch circuits so they could top off all the 34kV breakers with oil.

The Downes and West Park Elementary Schools are going to participate in the load reduction program this summer being run by PJM and DEMEC. In order to participate the meters at both schools need remote metering capabilities. Engineering has been managing the project which is to be implemented this week with cooperation from a contractor installing cellular communications and the City's meter technician installing special meters and isolation equipment. Engineering is also coordinating the return of a 50,000 lb. transformer that had failed and was sent out for repair in November. The transformer will be shipped back next week.

Activity or Project:

West Main Substation Reconfiguration

Description:

Installing a new circuit and poles and reconfiguring other circuits and poles at the West Main Substation in preparation for a new substation transformer currently being built and to be delivered later this year.

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Finance Department

Notable Notes:

The budget process has kicked off with the development of a central portal for all Finance Department employees and Department Directors to access a centralized, shared file system, the launch of Budget Central 2017 (<http://cityofnewarkde.us/index.aspx?NID=940>), and the development of a preliminary budget schedule (see attached graphic, which is also featured on Budget Central 2017). Please review the tentative timeline for the budget review and approval process.

We conducted interviews for the Application Support/Backup Billing position in the Payments and Utility Billing (PUB) group, and we are hopeful that we'll fill the position soon.

Payments and Utility Billing

The group handled 497 phone calls the week of 4/11/16 with an average call length of 3:52 and an average hold & queue time (average speed of answer) of 1:33. Our Welcome Center staff greeted 256 visitors, while service calls initiated by Payments and Utility Billing in response to calls and visitors totaled 208 last week. The group also processed 2,955 utility payments and CityView transactions, 359 of which were imported automatically with our new electronic processes and 1,701 of which were imported via web, lockbox or preauthorized payment (PAP).

Accounting

Accounting staff have kicked off the rigorous year-end accounting close and financial reporting process, which includes the independent financial audit and the development of the 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Additional notes related to the audit process are reported in the projects below.

Activity or Project:

Independent Financial Audit

Description:

Work on the fund financial statements, CAFR footnotes and tables continues. The City received the 2015 OPEB valuation on April 12 from our actuarial consultants at Milliman, resulting in adjusting entries that were made in support of the GASB 68 pronouncement requiring that the unfunded portion of any pension and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) liabilities be reported on the City's balance sheet, which negatively impacts fund balance. Only a handful of open audit items remain.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 6/30/2016

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Parks and Recreation Department

Notable Notes:

Director: Met with possible intern for Recreation and to assist with Preston's Playground events, completed a segment of Comcast newsmakers that will air online, working on organization of the 2017 City budget and Capital budget, met with the Recreation Superintendent about staff assignments and alignment of activities, met with Parks Superintendent on upcoming projects and work orders.

George Wilson Center Coordinator: Attended the Recreation Supervisors' staff meeting; started preparing for the transition in job responsibilities and moving to the main office; attended the Mayor's bike ride meeting; continues planning for Camp GWC; continues preparations for the end of year dance recital including a visit to Newark Charter School but it appears Glasgow will work out for us to use; received pool chemical bids and is tabulating and finalizing purchase orders; the afterschool tennis program started at Downes Elementary on Monday with 15 children participating.

Recreation Supervisor of Athletics sent out the summer volleyball schedules to the 31 teams and officials coordinator, continued to interview potential camp counselors, assumed her new position as Recreation Superintendent and met with Devan and Joe regarding background checks of summer staff and volunteers, met with Megan and Joe regarding Channel 22 and New Night and conducted staff meeting with the Recreation Supervisors.

Coordinator of Volunteers: Sent thank you emails to 126 volunteers of the Spring Community Clean Up; posted Spring Community Clean Up Photos on Facebook; sent photos and write up to the Newark Post for an article featured on April 15, 2016; coordinated volunteers for upcoming events; conducted phone interviews for summer volunteers; met with an environmental stewardship volunteer to discuss areas of concern near the James F. Hall Trail; received a report from Adopt-a-Trail volunteers for 3 hours of trail maintenance and litter removal on Sunday, April 17; attended a Mayor's Fun Ride meeting; attended a Recreation Supervisors' staff meeting; received orientation from HR Manager; delivered club supplies to After Care Programs; Bricks4Kidz program started at West Park Elementary school with 13 children participating; coordinated with Knit the Trail Artists to extend display until April 24th to include an Artist Walk & Talk Event on Earth Day Friday, April 22; attended the 7th Annual GreenFest at Newark Center for Creative Learning with 200 attendees. Total Volunteer Hours for the week of 4/11-4/16: 5.

Recreation Supervisor of Community Events: Preparing for multiple upcoming events, including Newark's Youth's Got Talent, Spring Concert Series, NewBark PawLooza, and the Newark Memorial Day Parade, as well as the C.E.R.T. training program this weekend. Acquisition of food donation for the training, prepared for and attended Memorial Day Parade Committee meeting.

Parks Superintendent: Conducted horticulture area inspections and wrote up work orders as needed, attended workshop on Restoration Landscape Ecology at Morris Arboretum, reviewed several proposed landscape plans and commented as needed, met with two homeowners concerning tree issues; one bordering Rittenhouse Park and the other at Fairfield Crest Park, conducted seasonal interviews along with Parks Supervisor, compiled tallies from Christina River Clean Up from here in Newark including from White Clay Creek State Park, completed contract for new shelter/concrete pad installation with an ADA accessible walkway at Folk Park for first review, contacted Master Garden Coordinator with University of Delaware concerning advertising for 13 week seasonal Horticulture assistant position, attended meeting with Volunteer Coordinator concerning trail projects along the Mason-Dixon Trail thru the Christina Valley Stream Area, and met with Code Enforcement Department concerning plant substitutions at Newark Shopping Center apartment site.

Parks Supervisor: Assigned field staff work orders and assisted as needed, coordinated pick up of old broken parking blocks that were removed/replaced throughout park system, and attended/assisted with interviews for seasonal openings.

Parks and Horticulture staff: Continued on mowing operations, dragged/scarified all ball fields, drained and pressure washed down both pools for pool rehab project starting next week, continued on bed maintenance, did interior bed maintenance at City Hall, placed pots of spring blooming bulbs at City Hall and Train Station, sprayed dormant oil on Dogwoods at Reservoir for Bark Scale infestation, did tree pruning as assigned, applied fertilizer/crabgrass control to several horticulture sites, continued prepping area in front of City Hall for additional landscape planting installation, did equipment maintenance on all mowing units, and did trash pick up throughout park system.

Activity or Project:

Plastering of City Pools

Description:

We have contracted to have the Dickey Park and George Wilson Center polls re-plastered. This process is required every 10 years.

Status: Started

Expected Completion: 5/6/2016

Execution Status: On Track

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 Facilities Maintenance performed the following:
 - Installed carpet for furniture installation in Digital Records room and continued finishing customer service counter and making countertops;
 - Continued painting at Rittenhouse Park;
 - Discovered phone line is out for alarm system at Train Station;
 - Performed fire extinguisher inspection with Hoopes Fire Prevention Inc.;
 - Finalized work with Summit Mechanical to switch Municipal Building HVAC system to cooling.

Code Enforcement

- On Thursday afternoon Code Enforcement Department Manager Dave Culver hosted a staff meeting, which Planning and Development Director Maureen Feeney Roser and Planner Tom Fruehstorfer attended along with other departments, to discuss the City-wide permitting process and to explore efficiencies and to prepare for CityView replacement.
- Certificates of Occupancy were issued for units 109 and 110 at 2000 Fountainview Circle.
- Code staff met with representatives from Bainbridge about fire systems and final development issues.
- Code went on a site visit with Newark Police Department to a property with rental issues and loud parties.
- On Tuesday afternoon Maureen met with City Manager Carol Houck and Kevin Mayhew, President of the Newark Landlord Association, to discuss the administrative warrants issue.
- The footer/foundation installation work for the University of Delaware's South Academy Street dormitory continued this week.
- The foundation and framing work is ongoing at 60 North College Avenue.
- The framing work is ongoing at 52 North Chapel Street.
- Certificate of Completion was issued for SevOne server room renovations.
- Work is continuing at the Washington House Condominiums located at 113 East Main

Street. The scaffolding and sidewalk shed are being removed and some potential additional façade issues are being investigated.

- The steel structure has been erected at the Astra Plaza addition.

Economic Development

- On Thursday evening Maureen attended the Downtown Newark Partnership Board meeting.
- On Monday morning Maureen hosted a meeting of Planning and Development and Communications Division staff to discuss the City's Delaware Downtown Development District grant application. The Department will host an information session regarding the grant application on Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber to gather public input on the grant application which will be reviewed by City Council and the subject of a Council resolution at the May 23, 2016 meeting. A draft of the required District Plan will also be discussed by the Planning Commission at the May 3, 2016 meeting. The application is due to the Office of State Planning Coordination on June 1, 2016.

Parking

- Time was spent this week finalizing the May schedules for the Parking Attendants.
- This week the Parking Division hired a booth attendant and is working to get additional positions listed on the City website.
- Some time was spent reviewing priorities for the upcoming 2017-2021 Capital Budget Process.

Planning

- On Wednesday evening the Planning Commission participated in an IPA-sponsored training session on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Planning Commission. The training session, which is part of the Commission's 2016 Work Plan, was well received and helpful to the Commission as they go about the business of reviewing land use proposals and Code amendments for recommendation to Council.
- This week the Subdivision Advisory Committee letter for the proposed rezoning and minor subdivision with site plan approval for 40 East Cleveland Avenue was prepared and submitted to the developer's engineer for plan revisions.
- This week Subdivision Advisory Committee (SAC) comments were organized for the proposed Comprehensive Development Plan amendment, rezoning and major subdivision with site plan approval plan for 1101 and 1107 Barksdale Road. A SAC comment letter will be prepared and submitted to the developer's engineer for plan revisions later this week.
- Some time was spent this week preparing the packet of materials for the 400 Ogletown Road hotel and restaurant project for City Council review. Council consideration is tentatively scheduled for Monday, May 9, 2016.
- On Thursday Maureen attended the staff meeting.
- On Friday Maureen, Tom and Development Manager Mike Fortner met with Landmark Engineering and representatives of the Studio Green complexes to talk about zoning and land use opportunities for their sites.
- Bike to Work day is on Friday, May 20, 2016 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The event will be held at Mentor's Circle on the University of Delaware campus.

- At their Thursday, April 21, 2016 meeting the Board of Adjustment will consider a variance request from Grain on Main to increase the size of the front patio/deck. Section 32-56.4(d) (1) restricts patios for facilities selling alcoholic beverages for consumption on premises and restaurant patios to 1,000 square feet. Grain on Main currently has a 986 square foot deck, and has applied to increase the size by 652.5 feet, requiring a variance of 638.5 square feet.
- On Wednesday Mike attended ICMA training on Team Building, Communication, and Leading Change.
- Also on Wednesday, Mike attended the GIS Working Group meeting.
- On Thursday Mike attended State of Delaware training on HUD's new Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) process as part of Newark's participation in the Regional Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) which is required for the CDBG program and for Housing Authorities.
- This week Tom spent considerable time revising the Planning and Development Department report for an amendment to the Zoning Code to clarify height of buildings and building setback lines based on comments from the April 5, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. The revised report is scheduled to be reviewed at the May 3, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.
- The following was also completed this week:
 - 8 Deed Transfer Affidavits
 - 26 Building Permit Reviews

Activity or Project:

Main Street Movies 5

Description:

This week the Department reviewed a revised plan submitted on 4/12 by Atlantic Realty Company for the Main Street Movies 5 proposal and determined that, as proposed, the revised plan substantially conforms to the approved subdivision plan and CIP. The revisions affect only the entrance to the existing theater lobby, which bumps out a few feet, and the rear of the existing theater by extending approximately 10' to the north to accommodate a corridor, exit, stairwell and rest rooms. This extension will also cause the relocation of nine parking spaces, which can be accommodated elsewhere on the site. The preliminary site design shows no net loss of parking spaces and the movie theater renovation will result in fewer seats, which will recline, than the existing theater. Therefore, the revised plan substantially conforms to the approved subdivision plan and Main Street Movies 5 may apply for a building permit. The exact parking space count and Code compliant size and location of spaces will be verified through the building permit process.

Status: In-Progress

Expected Completion: 4/30/2016

Execution Status: On Track

Activity or Project:

Planning Commission Meeting

Description:

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the May 3, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. Tentatively on the agenda are the following: 1) review of an amendment to the Zoning

Code to clarify exceptions for height and setback; 2) review and consideration of an annexation, rezoning and minor subdivision for 0 Darien Road; 3) discussion of draft parameters and methodology for Code mandated parking requirements and parking waiver program study; and 4) discussion of draft Delaware Downtown Development District Plan.

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Department:

Notable Notes:

As mentioned in last week's report, the police department has been very busy this year. After seeing a substantial increase in the number of service calls in 2015; a total of 45,572, we continue to see an increase in calls to date in 2016. We have also seen an increase in burglaries, thefts, simple assaults, alcohol violations, drug violations, disorderly premise, and disorderly conduct. Officers are also being pulled from normal patrol to work on citizen complaints such as bicycle riding on the sidewalk on Main Street, large daytime parties, patrolling park trails, as well as many traffic complaints across the city.

The Traffic Bureau has been short manpower with a recent retirement and an officer on long-term off-duty injury as he is in recovery. The remaining traffic officers were able to spend 73 hours last week dedicated to high vehicle accident locations. A total of 168 summonses were issued by the traffic officers at these locations.

Sergeant Aniunas and the Newark Police Special Operations Unit have been working with other departments regarding party complaints on West Main Street. This week, Sgt. Aniunas, a City of Newark Code Enforcement Officer, and an officer from UDPD met with a tenant on West Main Street to review order maintenance laws, UD sanctions, and information on being a responsible neighbor. Officers will continue to monitor these locations.

The police department continues to receive positive feedback about our members and operations. Below is a positive comment about Donna Vickers, our Animal Control Officer, and a comment regarding the management of the police department's 9-1-1- funds.

"Gene Niland called to compliment Donna on her demeanor and professionalism. Donna was just there

and helped them with a stray that had showed up at their door. Donna quickly responded, tracked down the owner and made sure that the dog was taken care of. He could not say enough nice things about Donna."

"At the March 23, 2016 meeting of the 9-1-1 Executive Board Meeting, there was a discussion regarding how 9-1-1 funds are dispersed. The 9-1-1 Administrator Eric Wagner spoke specifically about Newark's management of the funds and used us as an example to the other attending agencies. He championed the Newark Police Department for keeping a running total of items purchased. Mr. Wagner spoke very highly of our efforts, commending the professionalism of our Agency with the disbursement of these funds. He said, simply put: Newark does it right! The members of the committee seemed impressed and suggested that other centers should follow Newark or could possibly face the loss of 9-1-1 funding in the future."

Activity or Project:

N/A

Description:

N/A

Status: Completed

Expected Completion: 4/21/2016

Execution Status: Completed

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

Activity or Project:

Description:

Status:

Expected Completion:

Execution Status:

4/17/2016

to 4/23/2016