

## Weekly Report – 2/18-2/25

### General

1. Code Enforcement Manager Petersen submitted her two weeks' notice this week. We are working to get the job advertised as soon as possible due to the critical nature of the role and the impending construction season. This position will be posted both internally and externally.
2. We are working on a spring management development day for April or May of this year.
3. We have begun development of an updated City policy with regard to smoking and tobacco use. Currently, only smoking is prohibited within City buildings and vehicles. Based on staff complaints, we look to expand this to include all tobacco products including smokeless tobacco and vaping. We will likely transition to a smoke free campus for City facilities at this time also. We will provide council with an update on the policy prior to implementation to allow for feedback.

### Public Works

1. A pump recently failed at the Silverbrook sanitary sewer pump station, so we will need to order a new backup pump. Silverbrook pump station is our largest sewer pump station. The cost is anticipated to be in the \$30-\$35k range.
2. Several field and engineering employees from water and sewer went to the Delaware Rural Water Conference in Harrington this week as part of continuing training and education.
3. Our application for State Revolving Loan (SRL) funding for the South Well Field (SWF) PFAS removal project will be heard by the Water Infrastructure Advisory Council (WIAC) water subcommittee on March 1<sup>st</sup> then the full WIAC meeting in mid-March.
4. Conover Apartments demolition is nearing completion. UD has indicated that they plan to restore it as a flat grass field, and they have no development plans for the site for now.
5. A sinkhole has developed in southbound South College Avenue in front of Kirkbride Hall. PWWR is working with DeIDOT on the repair which will require a lane closure. Expect more information on this soon.
6. The Traffic Committee has recommended removal of the signal at Apple Road and West Park Place because it has been determined that the signal is unnecessary. Removal of the signal will result in cost savings because significant maintenance will be required to the signal if it is to remain due to its age. This will come to Council for review and discussion and will require an ordinance change to switch this from a signal to a 4-way or 2-way stop. DeIDOT is assisting the City with this effort.

### Communications

1. The Spring Concert Series will be kicking off again this year and will once again be accompanied by the Academy Street beer garden. The Spring Concert Series is held Thursday nights between 7 and 8 PM for six weeks beginning May 4<sup>th</sup> and runs for 6 weeks through June 8<sup>th</sup>. The beer garden will run from 5:30 to 9 with the hope that this will incentivize some attendees to have dinner on Main Street ahead of the concerts.

### Planning

1. The nuisance property abatement plan draft is nearly finished, so we are on schedule for the next council presentation in March.
2. Affordable Housing:
  - a. Staff is working to schedule an affordable housing discussion for an upcoming Council meeting where we will provide the same presentation that was recently provided to the Planning Commission.
  - b. Planning staff and the city manager met with Newark Housing Authority (NHA) this week to discuss their upcoming redevelopment project. Assuming they are successful in their application for tax credits that will finance the project, their schedule will be very aggressive due to time limits on that funding. We have a handful of action items coming out of the meeting including a few code amendments we will propose to Council that will help facilitate a better project and speed up their progress through our process.
3. We held two Newark Connect Public Meetings this week, one at Main Towers and one at the Newark Senior Center. Attendance was high at the Main Towers meeting but low at the Senior Center. Feedback has been generally very positive.
4. We are seeing a lot of demand for the home improvement funding program and will likely bring a budget amendment request to Council in the next few months to appropriate more CDBG funding for this initiative.

### **Parking**

1. We have issued 7 tickets for violations of the 2-hour time limit for parking on Forest Lane next to Hillside Park. We were notified that people have been using this street for extended periods because the parking is free. We anticipate we will see more of this in our parks parking areas now with the increase in parking rates in our pay parking lots. We will work with the parking team to monitor this situation going forward.

### **Parks and Recreation**

1. Working with Iron Hill on dates for Parks on Draft events this summer and preparing for Memorial Day and 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
2. We were notified this week that we received a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for the Olan Thomas Park trail improvements that are included in the capital budget with a total project cost of \$197,000. Director Spadafino has requested a meeting with the TAP coordinator, and we should have more information on this in the coming weeks.

### **Facilities**

1. The floor is being resurfaced in the Atrium this week and should be finished by the end of the weekend.
2. Renovations to the City Secretary's Office associated with the sinking floor are underway. Much of this work is focused on relocating the heavy filing system out of this area and redistributing the files more broadly across the floor throughout the office and the basement.
3. Facilities is working with police and dispatch to schedule carpet replacement in the police department. This is planned to begin March 6<sup>th</sup> and run for approximately three weeks.
4. Facilities is working with the NPD on the fence project at the police department. Construction cost estimates are coming in higher than originally anticipated so we are reviewing ways to

reduce costs. Otherwise, we will likely need to phase the project and potentially source some additional funding.

#### **Finance/Information Technology**

1. We have received wired microphones to replace the wireless microphones in Council Chamber but are waiting on the vendor to come rebalance the microphones prior to being able to use them. The Council Chamber AV request for proposals is currently advertised and we have several vendors have expressed interest.

#### **Police**

1. We are still waiting on the build dates for our police vehicles we ordered back in August of 2022. These are the same vehicles that were already delayed by Ford once already, which is very disappointing. We are investigating options to cancel this order and use a different vendor, potentially changing over to Dodge.