

Mayor and Council,

Below is the weekly report for the week ending today, June 2nd, 2023. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Have a great weekend!

City Manager's Highlights

1. The City of Newark was awarded the Bicycle Friendly Community Silver designation by the League of American Bicyclists. This is an upgrade from the City's previous Bronze designation. Thanks to Senior Planner Mike Fortner and Planners Josh Solge and Jacob Higgins for their extensive work coordinating and creating this application submission.
2. UD graduation was this past weekend and staff have been busy handling refuse and property maintenance complaints. The condition of the City has improved each year lately but unfortunately, there are still some tenants who leave their properties in a poor state, which must be dealt with. I would like to commend the refuse and property maintenance staff members for their hard work keeping the City clean. Similarly, our Payments and Utility Billing team have been hard at work processing all account changes that come along with 2000+ properties changing tenants over a two-to-three-week period. It is a tremendous amount of work every year. Lastly, I would like to thank the police department for making sure the inevitable graduation parties remained under control and were respectful of their neighbors.
3. Chief Human Resources Officer Hardin is officially on maternity leave starting last Thursday. Marta Pacheco, our HR administrator, will be taking on many of Devan's responsibilities while she is out on leave.
4. The Parking Division made an offer to four part-time parking ambassador applicants who were interviewed last week. Three have accepted and one is pending. These new hires will fill vacancies and bring our enforcement team back to full strength.

Public Works

1. Street Paving Contract: Curb work at Beagle Club Way was completed on 5/31. That crew will be cleaning up and moving out on or about 6.2.23. Curb work at College Park (Madison Drive, Quincy Drive & Madison Drive Extension) and Rolling Green (Del Grove Avenue & Pennwood Street) is anticipated to be completed in approximately 2 weeks. Street resurfacing in all areas is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2-3 weeks and a sequence will be determined as we move closer to the mobilization. East Park Place rehabilitation work between Manuel Street and South

Chapel is anticipated to begin on June 12th or shortly thereafter and will take approximately 6 weeks to complete.

2. UDon't Need It? <https://newarkde.gov/836/UDont-Need-It-Student-Move-Out-Program>
The student move out program ends on June 3. The program has been successful so far this year with the tent filling and emptying several times with resale days being busier than the last several years. The final sale will be held on Saturday June 3 at 9am and the tents will close at 6pm.
3. A pre-bid meeting was held at the South Well Field Water Treatment Plant for the emerging contaminants project to install carbon and ion Exchange treatment to the existing facility. We expect bids returned in late June and project completion by the end of 2023. This project will be funded through the Delaware State Revolving Fund.
4. Several staff members participated in a tour of the Delaware Solid Waste Authority's Materials Recovery Facility. This is the state's only recycling facility where single stream recycling is brought to be sorted and packaged for sale or reuse. It is an impressive facility and helps us better understand some of the recycling rules that we pass along to the residents regarding their services.
5. Field staff participated in a safety talk about the dangers of working in the heat and how to identify heat stress in themselves and their coworkers. These meetings are held monthly and focus on timely subjects that may be relevant to current work environments.
6. PWWR has a contractor (Environmental Quality Resources) scheduled to begin algae removal at Hillside Park beginning Thursday, June 8th. EQR will be using boats and floating rakes to remove the algae bloom from the pond and forebay to minimize impact to the new population of largemouth bass and bluegill in the pond. We anticipate this work will take 2-3 business days to complete.

Police

1. This past weekend, NPD officers provided support for UD Graduation weekend. There were no major incidents related to the events.
2. Officer Christopher Galle has submitted his letter of resignation as he has accepted an offer of employment with the Southern Chester County Regional Police Department and his last day was June 1st. Corporal Marty LaRue will be retiring at the end of this week after 20 years of service to the Newark community. NPD will hold a walkout ceremony for Cpl. LaRue on Thursday, June 8th at 3pm. A conditional offer of employment was extended to one police applicant. Following successful completion of additional testing he will begin employment in Late June and will attend the police academy in the fall.

Parks and Recreation

1. The Recreation Staff is working on the organization of Counselor Orientation and Training that will be held on June 7.
2. Summer Camps begin the week of June 12 with Camp G.W.C. with Rittenhouse Camp beginning June 19.
3. Parks Staff Continues to work on getting the pools ready to open on Friday, June 16 and getting maintenance completed at Rittenhouse Park in preparation for Rittenhouse Camp.

Planning and Development

1. Land Use Division
 - a. The June 6 Planning Commission agenda and packet were completed and posted. Items on this agenda include the minor subdivision for 65 North Chapel Street and zoning code amendments related to state-licensed massage therapists and veterinary hospitals.
 - b. 65 South Chapel Street – staff worked to finalize Council packet items for this project which is scheduled for first reading on June 12 and second reading on July 10.
 - c. 1115 South College Avenue – the Subdivision Advisory Committee comment letter for their first submission was sent to the applicant on June 2.
2. Code Enforcement Division
 - a. The first nuisance abatement plan has been submitted for Council review and consideration. As per the approved process, it will be scheduled for a Council agenda at least 90 days after the submission was received in order to ensure the plan put in place is working. A total of 17 properties have accrued five or more points and have been issued warning letters under the nuisance property ordinance with information about the option of filing for a nuisance abatement plan.
 - b. Student move in/move out is ongoing. There was extensive illegal dumping on Choate Street, which Police, Public Works and Code Enforcement worked together to address. However, the remainder of move in/move out across the City has gone fairly smoothly.
3. Parking Division
 - a. Staff is working to plan the kickoff meeting for the Parking Advisory Committee. Based on member availability, it is anticipated that the first meeting will be scheduled in late June/early July.
 - b. Outreach continues to City businesses for an exclusive period to obtain parking permits for the July 1 to December 31 period. A total of 51 permits have been sold to City businesses.

Finance

1. Staff has been working with the departments' 2024 budget requests. Deadline for personnel changes was due on May 31st. The Finance Director and City Manager will be scheduling meetings to review these requests and justifications. Staff will also be bringing to Council a tentative 2024 budget schedule with some options.

2. Accounting team is still working on the 2022 audit.
3. IT Infrastructure will be working with Del Tech to have a summer intern at no cost to the City.
4. Payments and Utility Billing have been working diligently with all the move-ins/outs of our student population.

Electric

1. As part of the DelDOT 896 and 95 project, we've successfully installed three poles in front of the Roadway In.
2. We've inspected our aerial electric lines and pad-mounted transformers using infrared technology. We're analyzing the report and creating a plan to address potential hotspot concerns.
3. The engineering team is gathering load data for each 12kV distribution circuit as part of the EV Penetration Study.