

DEPARTMENTAL WEEKLY REPORTS

June 28, 2013

Alderman's Court

This past week we held 3 Court sessions. This resulted in 78 Arraignments, 78 Trials processed, 2 Case Reviews, 6 prisoners videoed and 8 transported from prison.

Police

The Newark Police Department has been awarded \$23,000 in federal Byrne grant money. The majority of the funding will go toward special project overtime to aid in reducing crime and disorderly behavior. The department anticipates using \$3,200 to purchase four (4) lapel cameras to be used by the Parking Enforcement Officers. The cameras will record all contacts between the public and the PEO's. Other agencies that have used the cameras, have reported a dramatic reduction and positive resolution of citizen complaints against PEO's with the use of the cameras.

The Newark Police Department has been awarded approximately \$10,000 in grant funding from the Delaware Department of Highway Safety. This funding will be used to participate in state-wide programs such as "Summer Wave DUI Enforcement", seatbelt enforcement and education, pedestrian safety program, and aggressive driver enforcement. The Newark Police Department Traffic Bureau is consistently recognized as a high producing participant in the state's traffic safety programs.

On June 25th, Lt. Kevin Feeney and Sgt. Michael VanCampen met with members of the University of Delaware Police Department to continue planning for a fall education and enforcement program to reduce underage, excessive, and public drinking.

On June 25th, Chief Tiernan attended the police product exposition in New Jersey. The Chief met with the regional sales manager of Mobile-Vision who agreed to loan the department lapel cameras for our PEO's to test.

Chief Tiernan sent a letter to the University of Delaware Police Department, thanking them for the assistance provided by their SWAT team last week. As you recall, officers responded to a report of a double shooting at one of local motels. It took several hours for the Newark PD and UDPD SWAT teams to safely evacuate and search the hotel. During the search, officers had to endure extreme heat and heavy rain.

City Manager's Office

Personnel

- Met with labor counsel on personnel matters; pending contract negotiations.
- Completed first round interviews of IT Manager candidates; final interviews slated for July 10.

- Convened the Labor-Management Health Benefits Committee to review 2014 forecast, legal changes and possible initiatives.
- The ad-hoc Document Management subcommittee met to review final proposals and select best, feasible firm. One vendor and solution platform has been identified, but will need confirmation from reference checks.
- Attended a Social Media education seminar with Dana Johnston hosted by the University of Delaware.
- Carol and I met with Code Enforcement to review the City's internal check-balance for demolition permits in light of the incident in Philadelphia.
- Was a part of staff that met to discuss City parking lot leases, pending challenges.

IT

Met with the audio designer for the Council Chamber Tuesday. We are estimating the scheduling of this work for mid-July.

A training session was held Wednesday with PMI, IT and Customer Service on how to create bill schedules using the new system. We are working with Elster on the processing of the xml read files for the Harris system.

We continue to work on the setup and testing of the new anti-virus software. The roll out to clients is scheduled for the week of July 8th.

We completed the initial configuration for the new Guest wireless network. We plan to have this system installed by late July.

The new mobile software is now installed in all police vehicles. This corrected the issue where officers were seeing 3-month- old complaints.

All but one building cell camera is down. We are working with the vendor to install the new software for the server so we can connect the new video encoders.

Planning & Development

Planning

Considerable time was spent this week preparing for the upcoming Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 2nd. Agenda items include:

1. Review and consideration of a request for an extension for an approved major subdivision at 163, 171, 175 and 179 South Chapel Street (Pike Park), which was started but not completed within the required timeframes.
2. Review and consideration of a rezoning from BC (general business) to BB (central business district) and major subdivision of the .335 acre property located at 7 and 15 South Main Street to construct a four-story mixed use building containing 11,000 sq. ft. of office/retail space and 12 apartments.
3. A Comprehensive Development Plan update discussion.

On Tuesday, June 18th, Development Supervisor Mike Fortner staffed the Newark Bicycle Committee meeting. The Committee is planning a workshop with the Newark Bike Project today (June 26th, 7:00 p.m.) at 7 South Main to collect public input on the Newark Bicycle Plan update.

On Thursday evening, the Board of Adjustment granted a variance for a shed in a side yard at 18 Shenandoah Drive and denied variances for minimum lot size, maximum lot coverage and open space for the proposed Barksdale Greene rezoning and major subdivision plan on Barksdale Road. As a result, the development plan will have to be revised and resubmitted for subdivision review.

On Monday evening WILMAPCO, DeIDOT and the City sponsored a public workshop on the Newark Regional Transportation Center plan. A presentation was then made to City Council at their meeting following the workshop.

Also at Monday evening's meeting, Council denied a request for a Special Use Permit for a home occupation at 401 Apple Road.

On Tuesday, Mike met with representatives from the YWCA of Delaware to plan a Home Ownership Seminar/Cookout for the College Park Community along Madison Drive. The event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, August 17th at around 5 p.m.

Summer Intern Nicole Seymour presented a first draft of "Living Car Free in Newark" to the Newark Bicycle Committee for their review. The intent is to create a reader-friendly document that students and residents can use to understand Newark's public transportation system and learn about bicycle and pedestrian facilities provided. Nicole also spent time evaluating the Ucity Bus by riding it and talking to the riders about where they got on the bus and their destinations.

Summer Intern Tyler Berl is developing a draft of a form-based sign code and will present it to the Downtown Newark Partnership's Design Committee. He is also doing research on "Home Based Businesses" and how the City might update its Zoning Code to better accommodate them.

On Thursday, the Comprehensive Development Plan e-newsletter was distributed to over 200 recipients.

Economic Development

Planner/DNP Administrator Ricky Nietubicz continued gathering feedback from the merchant community on how we can better promote Downtown during the summer season. He met individually with the owners and managers of several downtown establishments to hear their feedback.

On Wednesday, June 19th, Ricky staffed a Merchants' Committee meeting. The Committee decided to try a new August sidewalk sale/block party concept to highlight Newark's retail community. The event will take place on Thursday, August 15th; participating retailers will dress 3-4 models each for a traveling fashion show through participating restaurants. The retail community is excited about the event, and restaurants are open to the idea.

Community Development

Ricky staffed the CDBG/RS public hearing/question and answer session on Thursday evening. Two interested applicants came out and asked a number of questions about the application process.

Parking

Considerable time was spent on organizing and providing information on parking initiatives in Lots #1 and #3.

This week the RFP for a smart meter parking pilot program on Main Street was issued.

This week Diamond Hill Construction Company is working on the entrance to Parking Lot #3 removing end caps in the lot to create more spaces. They will continue the work until it is complete.

The Parking Division continues its summer maintenance program in the municipal parking lots.

Code Enforcement

Four C/O's were issued for Newark Preserve this week.

Demolition procedures are being updated as per a meeting with City Manager Carol Houck and Deputy City Manager Andrew Haines.

Emergency standby generators in the police station need to have the fuel system repaired. Code Enforcement Supervisor Steve Wilson facilitated the construction necessary to remediate the problem by making sure a temporary fuel source is in place, and hiring the contractor to make these repairs.

Public Works & Water Resources

We have been spending a significant amount of time researching drainage issues around the City, funny how wet weather can do that. The reservoir is full and the creek has stayed sufficiently high. The wet weather has been a boon and a bust. Great for the creek flow, bad for getting our contract work started.

We are investigating some air stripper technology for the South Well Field Treatment Plant that will allow us to realize some of the changes to the plant that we had envisioned if the demonstration that we are planning works as expected. The equipment is reasonably priced, compact and would allow us to make some changes that we have been wrestling with for the last year or so. The air stripper is used to remove the volatile organic compounds that are present in some of our well water.

Steve Wilson and I have been working on the generator problems at the Police Station and City Hall. Steve has been able to determine that the supply line from the buried tank has failed. It should be fixed by the time that you read this report. Steve and I have been discussing how we can build some redundancy into the fuel system. Right now each generator is served by a single day tank. We hope to be able to plumb the system so that in an emergency each day tank could serve both generators should one day tank fail.

DelDOT has been repairing pavement on Barksdale, Casho Mill, and Chestnut Hill Road. I have been working with DelDOT and Chief Tiernan to provide advance notice of the work on Chestnut Hill Road. I was not aware of the work on Casho Mill or Barksdale Roads in time to provide the advance notice.

I met with a representative of a cell phone company who is interested in locating a mono pole cell tower on a City water site along the AMTRAK right of way. This will be a stand-alone facility not located on an existing water tank so the approval process will be different than the other installations. This picture is an example of the type of facility they are proposing.



Electric

The line crews are installing repeater devices on Delmarva poles outside the City that will bring back water meter signals to the smart meter system. They are also checking all the connections on the aerial primary circuits after two instances of a specific brand of connector overheated. One was found before an outage occurred.

The electricians and engineering tested the latest relay upgraded on a distribution transformer and are now working on the last relay to be replaced at the Phillips Avenue Substation before the whole station can be included on the SCADA system.

The meter technician has been called out several times to assist in the smart meter change outs. The contractor's standard operating procedure is to turn over problem change outs to the City. Over 2,000 electric meters have been changed and so far 10 have needed extra assistance.

Parks & Recreation

Administration & Planning

Tom attended a meeting at New Castle Conservation Center to present a grant request for bamboo removal at Karpinski Park.

Tom conducted park inspections and prepared related maintenance work orders. He also met with the Landscape Architect for the Barksdale Green project concerning the proposed landscape plan.

Joe and Tom attended a Project Management Workshop in Philadelphia.

Tom committed time organizing for the start of this year's Youth Beautification Corps (YBC) crew which started working this Monday. The program is a CDBG funded program and has been in place for more than 20 years. The youth work with a supervisor to complete park maintenance tasks while learning the responsibilities of being employed as part of a team, the proper and safe use of hand tools, techniques for performing minor maintenance tasks in City parks, and assisting our full-time crew with projects.

Rich did daily scheduling of the crews and overseeing their work and continued monitoring rain water issues at City Hall during the recent heavy storms.

Tom followed up with contractor who was awarded the contract for Main Street tree pits. The work will begin at the end of this month.

Parks Maintenance

Our crew member who prepares our athletic fields attended a sports field lining/painting class.

We set up stages for the last spring concert on Main Street, continued preparing ball fields for play, did tree work at several park areas, removed extra trash cans and recycling cans from Handloff Park used for the Special Olympics events, and placed paper at all copy machines in City Hall.

We continued mowing operations and checked/cleaned storm water inlet pipes in park and at horticulture areas.

The crew continued on landscape bed maintenance as well as interior planting bed maintenance at City Hall.

We conducted the monthly inspection of all fire extinguishers in City owned buildings.

Recreation Services

The recreation staff was very busy last week with the start of our summer camps and program season.

Paula checked on Rittenhouse and Hobbit Camps several times during the first week of both programs.

Paula completed the indoor facility requests for fall programs and continued to finalize date with instructors for fall programs.

Paula worked on scheduling trips for oldest groups for sessions 2, 3, and 4 of Rittenhouse Camp and confirmed trip for session one.

The first week of camps got underway and campers had a great time at Camp Kids Caboodle and Art Camp. At Camp Kids Caboodle, campers enjoyed "Beach Week" with beach themed activities and a walk to Handloff Park. Art Camp focused on a different artist each day and brought out the creative side of campers.

The final Spring Concert was held on Thursday with approximately 200 people in attendance to enjoy the First State Symphonic Band.

Sharon and Debbie are working on several upcoming events and programs. Of primary focus:

- Liberty Day and the 4th of July Fireworks is quickly approaching. Vendor information packets were sent out, and we currently have approximately 24 vendors registered for the event.
- Safety Town: developing the schedule and potential volunteers are being interviewed for positions at the camp.

Camps started this week at the Wilson Center. Camps held at the center included Rittenhouse Before and After camp care, Art Camp and Camp GWC. Camp GWC had a great start with record high numbers of participants.

Tyler prepared supplies and for specialty camps scheduled the week of June 24, including Tennis Camp and Broadway Musical Theater Camp.

Joe attended the superintendents' meeting with Charlie.

Joe worked on and set up a Newark Parks and Recreation history display that is featured in the Newark Library now through August.

The first week of camps went great with high registration numbers and the unpredictable weather being the only issue.

Joe attended several skate spot meetings to discuss issues at the Handloff Park skate spot due to the significant amount of rain fall we have had over the past two weeks.

Finance

Andrew, Renee, Cenise, Sue and I sat in on the final two demonstrations of document management software providers. We are in the process of checking references and we will be prepared to issue a PO for the City Secretary's Office licenses, which are in the 2013 budget. Additional licensing for other departments will be included in the 2014 budget.

Representatives of the Newark Development Trust (NDT) and I have been sharing calculations related to the economics of a parking garage on the City's parking lot #1.

Accounting

The audit team at Clifton Larson Allen replied with feedback, comments and edits to the 2012 CAFR. Staff is working on the draft's final changes and formatting in an effort to produce the final document by the end of the month.

CSH/mp