

VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT
AUGUST 12, 2013 COUNCIL MEETING

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

Developments

The Planning Commission/ZBA met on July 1 and took the following action:

- Approved a variance for the construction of a shed with the principal access facing the street at 3205 North Whitetree Circle.
- Approved a fence exceeding 4.5 feet to remain in the rear yard at 8695 Arborcrest Drive.
- Approved a fence in the front yard to enclose an area of the yard to contain dogs at 2930 Belkay Lane.
- Approved construction of interior modifications, a covered entry to the rear of the house and a 23'6" x 26' detached garage in the rear yard with the principal access facing the street at 7400 Sagamore.

Discussion occurred regarding modifications to the panhandle lot regulations. No applications were received for the August 5 ZBA meeting. The next ZBA meeting will be on September 3 (due to the Labor Day holiday). The filing deadline for the September meeting is August 12.

There were 11 zoning certificates issued in July that included the construction of interior remodeling, fences, patio addition, driveway and sidewalk improvements, shed, HVAC unit, and a lot split.

The Village issued zoning approval for Losantiville School showing the first floor as being reopened for use. The plan showed the southern half of the first floor for use by the Cincinnati Hebrew Day School and the northern half, the gym and auditorium as a possible alternate use by the Girl's High School.

In June 2012, the Amberley Village Board of Zoning Appeals granted a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the construction of a synagogue on approximately 6.5 acres located at 2400 Section Road to the Sha'arei Torah Congregation. The Village approved plans on July 15, 2013 for the improvements of the access drive to the subject property. These plans included widening of the drive, fortifying the bridge abutments, crosswalk and sidewalk improvements at Section Road and installation of domestic and firefighting water supplies. Currently the Village is reviewing plans for the synagogue building and parking lot for compliance with Amberley Village Zoning and the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) issued by the Amberley Village Board of Zoning Appeals. The CUP associated with this project has 42 conditions that were imposed by the Board. After zoning approval is granted, the plans will be subject to the Hamilton County Building Department review process which includes a review by the fire safety officials in Amberley Village Fire Department.

There were 9 property maintenance letters mailed for the month of July relating to high weeds and grass, dead tree, and exterior structural conditions. Each certified letter costs the Village over \$6 just in postage. There are 5 ongoing property maintenance issues.

Staff will request from Council, at its August 12 meeting, authorization to place liens on 6 properties for a total of \$8,112.10 for nuisance abatement activities relating to property maintenance violations which property owners failed to bring into compliance with the Village Code.

Aggregation

Year-to-Date Savings: Electric: \$64,050 Gas: \$30,101

In June, the Village reported that it had locked into a gas rate of \$0.550 which was more advantageous for residents over the variable rate. This rate was an estimate and our energy consultant was able to negotiate a lower locked-in rate of \$0.543 through March 2014. Eagle Energy advised that after reviewing Duke's recently filed cost data for the next three months, the Village's rate will be lower than the Duke price for this period.

Maintenance Department Activities

Hauling of the wood chips and leaf mulch

While keeping in compliance with the OEPA and Hamilton County Board of Health's Composting Regulations requiring composting facilities to manage stock piles and remove 25% of the composting material from their site each year, the Maintenance Department continues to work with a local tree contractor to haul/recycle the wood chips and leaf compost free of charge to the Village. The agreement began in 2011 with the contractor hauling leaf compost in 15 and 20 yard roll-off dumpsters loaded by Maintenance personnel only and in July of 2012 has evolved into the contractor hauling both leaf compost and wood chips. This arrangement saves the village \$4000 to \$5000 annually in hauling fees and prevents the material from being put into landfills.

Street and Right of Way

- Monthly totals for brush collection: 305.5 cubic yards of chips, logs and other debris, 14 dead animals (1 of which were deer), and 274 man hours.
- Picked up trash in the right of way along Ridge Road, Galbraith Road and Section Road totaling 6-30 gallon trash bags and several larger items (by the brush crew and mowing crew).
- Trimmed view obstructions, low hanging limbs and bushes in the right of way throughout the Village utilizing the rental tractor and boom arm mower, smaller powered hand saws and trimmers.
- Cleaned up four downed trees and limbs from the roadway due to a wind storm.
- Removed six dead trees from the right of way along Section Road and contracted several other dead or dangerous trees throughout the Village.
- Met with Dave Stang and inspected a tree on Galbraith Road.
- Pulled contractor signs from the right of way on the Cross County Highway Bridge and from the Ridge Road and Galbraith Road intersection.
- Cleaned up broken glass from the roadway on Elbrook Avenue and gravel from the roadway on Ridge road after the heavy rain.
- Delineated areas of pavement to be repaired along Section Road with CDS in preparation of the 2013 Road Program.

Sign Programs

- In an effort to improve the neighborhood's appearance and safety, the AVMD replaced 26 faded or damaged no parking signs (with new high intensity reflective signs) and posts, combined the street name signs and the stop sign in the Elbrook Avenue (south of Section Road), Meadow Ridge Lane and Bluegrass Lane neighborhoods. The Department removed redundant no parking signs and combined signs onto the same post, removing five sign posts from the area.
- Replaced one faded no parking sign and rusted post and removed another no parking sign on Esther drive.
- Installed a new stop sign and post due to an auto accident on Kincaid Road at North Farmcrest Drive.

Stormwater Infrastructure

- Dye tested 4 sink holes on West Farm Acres Drive, Longmeadow Lane (reported to MSD), Arborcrest Court (investigated storm pipe further), Ridge Road (repaired stormwater manhole) and made the repairs to the stormwater structure and back filled the sink holes.
- Cleaned debris from the creek headwalls and catch basin inlets before and after heavy rain events.
- Removed a couch from the headwall at Fair Oaks Drive and Fair Oaks Lane.
- Picked up a manhole casting and pre-cast manhole chamber from the Stormwater Project contractor on Elbrook Avenue.
- Set up the Confined Space Entry Equipment and inspected the stormwater pipe on Lamarque Drive for damage or debris (due to a report from a resident about water backing up during the heavy rains).

Facilities Maintenance and Repairs

- Cleaned and performed minor maintenance to Village Municipal Building, set up for and cleaned up after 7 events in the Community Room and Council Chambers.
- Performed the Monthly Play Ground and Exercise Equipment inspection.
- Performed the Monthly Facilities Inspection and made repairs to the Maintenance facilities and Village Municipal Building.
- Minor maintenance of the Amberley Green property and buildings (main building and pool house), continued to monitor and maintain the low level of water behind the dam, emptied the trash cans, filled the doggie bag dispensers, and removed debris from the walking paths, and investigated the roof for leaks.
- Trimmed edges and cleaned up the area, removed a tree and a large fallen limb from the rain garden.
- Sprayed the weeds in the landscaping around the walking track, tennis courts and ball fields and dragged the ball fields.
- Blew pine needles from the playing surface of the tennis courts.

Composting Site

- Maintained the daily records and inspections for the Class IV Composting Site per the Hamilton County Health Department and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.
- Performed maintenance on the Class IV Composting Site.
- Monitored the tree contractors' operations (the grinding, hauling, and recycling of the leaf and wood chip compost free of charge) and tracked the number of yards of compost material removed from the site (150 cubic yards of wood chips and 200 cubic yards of leaf compost in July).

Equipment Maintenance

- Installed new chipper blades, adjusted the anvil and greased the 250 Bandit chipper.
- Performed the weekly vehicle inspection.

Fire Training and Equipment Maintenance

- Performed the monthly inspection and repairs to the fire apparatus/equipment.
- Repaired the cord on the wet-vac, trash pump and the floating trash pump after responding to flooding calls.
- Attended the four-hour fire training session.
- Responded to Burning Tree Lane for a stove fire.
- Went to the City of Norwood and picked up their old squad and inspected for mechanical issues (possible purchase for the AVFD).

Residential Services

- Delivered 36 cubic yards of wood chips generated by the Village brush collection program to Village residents.

Property Maintenance

- Responded to complaints of high grass and weeds, measured the height, took pictures and monitored properties on Sorrento drive, two in the Rollman Estates Drive and several in the Elbrook Avenue areas.

Police Activity

During the month of July, the police department handled 1,110 calls for services/complaints and 1,642 administrative/911 calls. There were 39 citations issued for Mayor's Court, 5 for Municipal Court and 2 for Juvenile Court. Vehicle accidents totaled 6 (1 with injuries reported) during the month. Officers made 27 arrests, 13 of which were for other departments, 10 were for Amberley. There were 3 minor misdemeanor citations issued—1 property maintenance and 2 for drug abuse.

Fire Activity

During the month of July, there were 44 reports taken by the Fire Department. Many related to flooding issues from the heavy rain storms during the month, including a report of a utility pole on fire, oven fire, and 2 gas lines struck.

Meetings

The municipal managers of Silverton, Deer Park and Amberley met with the Service Department supervisors and toured each other's facilities to generate ideas on government collaboration.

The municipal managers of Silverton, Deer Park and Amberley met to discuss collaboration.

I met with the Employee Committee to hear from the employees in regards to their presentation to the Compensation and Benefits Committee.

The Joint Economic Development Zone Board met on July 18 to enter into a contract with the Village for income tax collections.

I met with a sales person regarding offering life insurance to employees.

I toured the expansion of Topicz. Their expansion has been given a final certificate of occupancy and the warehouse expansion is being stocked.

I met with Kevin Frank regarding a variety of issues.

I met with Council member Warren regarding the upcoming Compensation and Benefits Committee.

I met with Vice Mayor Wolf regarding a fall event being discussed for Amberley Green.

I attended the Compensation and Benefits Committee on July 30 where employee compensation was discussed and employees made a presentation to the Committee.

The Finance Committee met on August 7 to review June financials, consider creation of an unclaimed funds fund and review the estimated cost of increasing employee compensation.

I attended the Streets Committee meeting on August 7 to review salt bids.

Staff met with Council member Doering to discuss storm water issues and the AG dam.

I met with Tom Peterson to wrap up Financial Sustainability Plan discussions.

I met with a consultant for building department services.

I met with a contractor to discuss billing issues.

Officer Fritsch and I met with Amy Rubenstein to finalize plans for the Ice Cream Social being held on Sunday, August 18 from 6:00 till 8:00 p.m.

One staff meeting was held since the last council meeting with Lt. Blum, Nicole Browder, Steve Rasfeld, Wes Brown, Patty Meiers and Kathleen Harcourt. Topics included upcoming council agenda items, e-news articles for August and the September print newsletter.

Individual meetings were held with each of the senior staff to discuss Village business.

Miscellaneous

I have communicated with residents regarding chairs at AG, Canada geese, compliance with the property maintenance code, trees and shrubs, 2400 Section Road, intersection complaint, noise ordinance, street repairs, dead rabbit and utility aggregation.

Rumpke has finalized the waste and recycling tonnage reports for the first half of 2013 and the recycling cart deliveries in March have improved our rates. In comparing the 2nd quarter of 2012 to 2nd quarter of 2013, the curbside recycling tonnage is up from 94.38 tons to 118.26 tons which is a 24.5% increase. If you figure the recycling diversion rate, it is up from 20.1% in 2012 to 24.5% for 2nd quarter 2013. Rumpke reports the 24.5% increase in tonnage is very consistent with other cities and villages who have elected to get a larger cart to every household.

Articles were prepared and reviewed for the August e-news and print copy of the newsletter scheduled to be delivered to residents the week of September 2nd. Potential articles will include:

- Amberley Green Development Update
- Brush Pick-Up Ending
- Community Calendar
- Financial Sustainability Report
- Construction Update
- Leaf Collection Starts
- Police Re-Accreditation
- Voter Information
- Recycle Carts Increase Recycle Rate
- Staying Safe on the Roadways
- Extended Tax Return Deadline Approaching

Open enrollment packets were distributed to each department and returned by July 26. Open enrollment for employee health care occurred before the new plan year began on August 1.

A luncheon was held for employees to celebrate National Vanilla Ice Cream Day.

If you would like additional information or have questions, feel free to contact me.

Scot F. Lahrmer
Village Manager