



# City of Portsmouth

Office of the City Manager

728 Second Street  
Portsmouth, Ohio 45662



**TO:** Portsmouth City Council  
**FROM:** City Manager Derek K. Allen, ICMA-CM DKA  
**DATE:** September 15, 2014  
**RE:** City Manager's Report September 22, 2014

## ADMINISTRATION

A letter was drafted for the City from our environmental attorney and sent to US EPA regarding the latest allegations involving the Lawson Run project. A copy of the response is attached.

I would like to reassure everyone that at no time did the city administration ever explore or suggest that the city sell Mound Park. I have received citizen dissatisfaction regarding the idea. The idea is in itself preposterous and secondly undermines the efforts that others have made to garner private sector support for refurbishing the park. In my experience if this was a topic worth exploring it would have first been discussed between the administration and the legislative body prior to me having to read about it on the front page of the newspaper.

In discussions with the Southern Ohio Port Authority we have worked very hard to begin to create a positive image for this community to aid in attracting investment into our community. It is unfortunate that the following comment was made and placed out on the internet; "Portsmouth should be in the running for the 'Trashiest City in America.' Wow. We could be number one." We need to continue to make Portsmouth a place where companies wish to invest.

We are currently working on different strategies to reduce our medical insurance premiums for fiscal year 2015. These involve structural changes as well as changes in employee deductibles. These will have to be negotiated with each collective bargaining unit.

CMI, our financial software provider will be in Portsmouth on Thursday, September 25, 2014 to load software and to conduct an overview of the new software and to allow for employees to explore and practice with the software before it goes to the next step.

Bids for the sale of the Babcock building were opened on September 10, 2014. One bid was received; the bid was from Dr. John DiTraglia for \$50,000. The City is conducting testing to confirm that there is no asbestos and is recommending to City Council that we award the bid and sell the property.

I will be speaking to the League of Women Voters on Tuesday, September 16, 2014.

## **ENGINEERING**

The City of Portsmouth's project on Oakland Boulevard road slip as well as Blue Rock road slip appear to have been bumped. According to discussions with Scioto County Engineer Craig Opperman the gas company does not have the natural gas main in their work schedule and the contractor on the job is going to do a bridge project for the County Engineer, thus bumping us back to later in the year.

## **FINANCIAL**

The Auditor of State has extended the deadline for submission of the five (5) year Financial Recovery Plan from Friday, September 19, 2014 to Friday, October 3, 2014 in order to provide time for a city council meeting to obtain City Council approval. The strategy contained in the plan is submitted for council approval. There still needs to be a five-year budget with a five year financial forecast prepared for submittal with the strategy.

The rates and amounts have been placed on the agenda. This legislation must be submitted to Scioto County by October 1, 2014.

The 2013 audit is being reviewed in order to resolve the audit citations and preparing a strategy in how we plan to resolve these issues. Some issues involve departments that are under the jurisdiction of elected officials or under the Board of Health and are outside my realm of authority to correct.

## **PERSONNEL**

Patrol Officer Tom Lancaster was promoted to Sargent and a swearing-in ceremony was conducted on the front steps of the municipal building on September 5, 2014.

A mediation hearing was held on September 4, 2014 regarding several AFSCME grievances. Three grievances were resolved and the rest were dropped by AFSCME. None of the grievances will move to arbitration.

Due to bidding on positions and having the contractual right to return to their previous positions within ninety (90) days there will be several changes in the AFSCME positions. Sandy Rawlings bid and received the position Fleet Manager has decided to return to the cemetery. Dave Easter is the next person on the bid list for Fleet Manager so the position will be offered to him. Charles Parker who had bid on the cemetery position will have to return to Sanitation.

Herb Dillow was awarded the Supervisor position in Flood Control but has decided to return to the Supervisor position in the Street Department.

Three (3) Police Department grievances are headed to arbitration which is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 2014. All three grievances involve the same employee.

Conditional offer letters were sent to the three (3) firefighter candidates that were selected through the Civil Service process. The three are Ashley Schwamberger, Aaron Rawlins, and Tyler Snow. Ashley Schwamberger represents the first woman firefighter in the history of the Portsmouth Fire Department.

## **PUBLIC SERVICE**

The salt barn is full and ready for winter. The salt bid for replenishing salt as we use the material is out to bid and the bid opening is Tuesday, September 30, 2014.

## **WASTEWATER**

Monday, September 1, 2014: Holiday.

Tuesday, September 2, 2014: 2223 Sunrise Ave. Additional street restoration following sewer repair.

Wednesday, September 3, 2014: 2223 Sunrise Ave. Poured concrete in preparation for paving by Street Division. 3rd and Madison. Poured concrete in preparation for paving by Street Division. Cut grass and weeds around maintenance garage.

Thursday, September 4, 2014: 411 Second St. Repaired manhole.

Friday, September 5, 2014: 411 Second St. Raised manhole lid.

Monday, September 8, 2014 -17th St. Pump Station / cleaning wet well

Tuesday, September 9, 2014 -17th St. Pump Station / cleaning wet well

Wednesday, September 10, 2014 -1824 Coles Blvd. / repairing a sanitary sewer, 7118th St. A-1 Glass / repaired 2 manholes

Thursday, September 11, 2014-1648 7th St. / repairing a sanitary sewer line

Friday, September 12, 2014-cleaned shop, performed maintenance on equipment

## **WATER**

The Water Department will be flushing hydrants starting.

September 2, 2014: Replaced hydrant at N.W. corner of McConnell and Vinton Streets.

September 3, 2014: replaced hydrant at 6yth and Washington Street.

September 4, 2014: Removed hydrant on Route 52 East in Sciotoville. (Overtime was used due to complications with piping.)

September 9, 2014: 6" main 600 block of Brown Street.

September 10, 2014: 2" main on Egbert Street, Wheelersburg; 12" main on Hammerstein, Wheelersburg; 4" main at 301 Hastings Hill Wheelersburg; 4" main at 22 Hastings Hill, Wheelersburg.

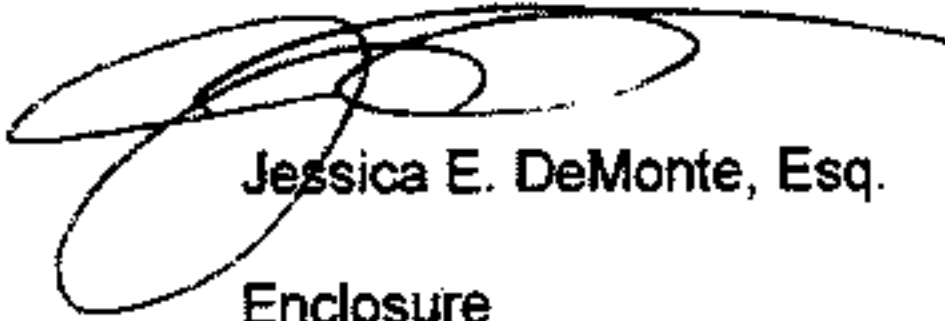
residents and to accommodate them in any way possible, such as driveway access, curbside sanitation access, etc., and refer any questions to Strand or the City.

As you can see from the photo attachment to Ms. Murray's email, the City has begun installation of the storm sewer pipe on Grandview Avenue. In the current phase, the City is adding capacity with the new storm sewer on Grandview without restricting existing sewers; and relining an existing sanitary sewer which should eliminate excessive flows into the sewer. Accordingly, there is no increased risk of sewer backup as the result of construction activities. Indeed, none of the contractor's work will reduce capacity. It will only add to it. The large diameter stormwater storage units that are required to complete the project are a long lead-time item which will be delivered in December.

We are dismayed that instead of seeking information from the City, Ms. Murray and Mr. Essman insist on contacting Mr. Desai with inaccurate statements in an attempt to create issues between the City and US EPA where there are none. Nevertheless, the City has promptly responded in an effort to address whatever concerns that US EPA may have. However, given this dynamic, I appreciate your commitment to communicating with the City through counsel (either myself or Mr. Haas).

Thank you again for your attention to this matter. Please let me know if US EPA has any additional questions.

Kind Regards,



Jessica E. DeMonte, Esq.

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Derek Allen (via email)  
Mr. John Haas (via email)  
Mr. Richard Duncan (via email)  
Mr. Kris Ruggles (via email)