



Weekly Update to City Council from the City Manager March 7, 2010

Carillon Bell Tower

I am pleased to report that the Bell Tower is in the process of being repaired and will soon be entertaining us. The inner workings of the carillon were damaged by a power surge last fall during a storm. The structure was a gift to the city in 1998 by the Casper family in memory of local attorney Jack Casper. The Casper Family wanted to encourage residents to congregate downtown and enjoy the music.

The Middletown Community Foundation generously awarded a grant in the amount of \$21,450 to accomplish the necessary repairs. The Verdin Company of Cincinnati will be providing the equipment to make the Carillon Bell Tower operable.

Swap Shop – Second Hand Store Enforcement

We are beginning to enforce the new ordinance. Each store will be visited personally by our police division who will work with the owners to review our requirements and ensure compliance. Aside from the requirements of the merchandising, we are also reminding the owners of the operating hours and sign restrictions. Attached to this update is a letter that will be given to each owner. They will also be given a letter from the Chief of Police outlining the requirements.

Pittsburgh Task Force To Focus On Redevelopment Of Blighted Properties.

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (3/6, Smydo) reported, "Members of a new city task force will spend the next few months working on a plan to systematically flip blighted properties for redevelopment or green space."

Pittsburgh is "one of 15 cities nationwide selected to receive land-reclamation support from a coalition of groups." In "its inaugural meeting Thursday, the 25 members of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's Land Recycling Task Force heard from Dan Kildee, chairman of the Genesee County Land Bank in Flint, Mich." The land bank "uses a streamlined foreclosure law for buying and returning tax-delinquent properties to productive use."

Ravenstahl and "Kim Graziani, director of neighborhood initiatives, envision a similar program here." Graziani said "delinquent, vacant properties are a burden to neighbors who pay taxes and maintain their properties."

Graziani said the task force will study ways to acquire properties so they can be used for green space or sites for housing or businesses."

Auto & Gas Tax Fund

There was a question about the Auto & Gas tax fund revenues at our last Council meeting. The revenue in this fund is derived from state gasoline tax and vehicle license fees along with money from the general fund. Total revenues in 2010 are about \$2.9M, expenditures are about \$3.2M. This fund is used for routine street maintenance and for traffic control along with snow plowing and grounds maintenance (mowing, landscaping, etc). There are 3 work divisions setup under this fund. Street Maintenance (\$1.9M), Grounds Maintenance (\$700K), and Electronics Maintenance (\$616K). Most of the work accomplished by these divisions use the revenue from the state. The money transferred to the Auto & Gas Tax Fund from the general fund (\$514K) is used to cover costs that would normally be paid out of the general fund, but for organizational and accounting efficiency are paid from the Auto & Gas Tax Fund. This information can be found on page 4-15 and 4-16 of your budget. The Auto & Gas tax fund is managed by the Department of Public Works and Utilities with Dave Duritsch as the department head.

Revenue Enhancer

As per City Council's request, staff will raise the issue of private companies "adopting" city parks and ROW for mowing in exchange for naming rights at the next Park Board meeting. The Park Board's next meeting is Monday, April 5th.

Atrium ER runs

Our Fire Division tracks squad runs by general category and we cannot, without some analysis, determine which runs could be diverted from the ER. The Fire Chief confirmed that more access to health care in underserved areas will reduce the runs to the ER both by having access more available so that conditions do not become acute and by having a facility nearby that residents can access without calling the squad.

Extended Income Tax Division Hours

The Middletown Tax Office will have extended hours to aid our citizens in getting their taxes filed on time. As an added service, the Tax Department also assists residents with preparing their local tax returns. Residents who desire assistance should bring the appropriate paperwork, i.e., W-2s, 1099s, Federal returns, etc. This service is free of charge, on a first-come, first-served basis. The extended hours are as follows:

Tuesday, April 13th 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 14th 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 15th 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

In addition, our Community Center will have tax prep assistance on March 9, 13, 16, 23 and 27.

Upcoming Events

March 9 Board of Health meeting – Conference Room 2C City Building 7:30 a.m.

March 10 Planning Commission – Council Chambers (Lower Level) 6:30 p.m.

March 11 Free Blood Screening – Robert "Sonny" Hill, Jr. Community Center 800 LaFayette Avenue
12:00- 1:00 p.m.

- March 11 Chamber Business Expo 12:00 - 2:00 pm - Taste of Middletown, Monroe and Trenton
12:00 - 4:00 pm - Exhibits Open 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Business After Hours Miami University Middletown - 4200 N. University Blvd.
- March 12 Housing SubCommittee meeting – Conference Room 2C in City Building 2nd Floor 2:00 p.m.
- March 15 Middletown Friends of the Library – 125 S. Broad Street 11:00 a.m.
- March 15 Middletown Board of Education – 1515 Girard Avenue 6:30 p.m.
- March 16 Middletown Public Housing Agency meeting Council Chambers (LL) City Building 5:30 p.m.
- March 16 City Council meeting Council Chambers (LL) City Building 6:30 p.m.
- March 17 Tree Commission meeting - Levey Hall, Miami University, Middletown @ Noon
- March 18 Blood Drive on the Plaza 1:15 – 3:15 p.m. Contact Health Dept. 425-1818 for appt.
- March 18 State of the City Address by Mayor Mulligan - Council Chambers (LL) City Building 6:00 p.m.
- March 20 Town Hall meeting w/ Vice Mayor Anita Scott Jones - Chamber Office on Central Avenue
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- April 13 Town Hall meeting w/ Councilman Josh Laubach Middletown - Area Senior Citizens on
Central Avenue

Links for additional information:

City Manager's Weekly Update: www.cityofmiddletown.org

Middletown Community Calendar: <http://www.calendarwiz.com/middletowncalendar> (copy and paste in
your web browser)

Pothole Patrol: www.cityofmiddletown.org or call 727-3691 (Option 2)

Have a great week! Judy