



Weekly Update to City Council from the City Manager November 8, 2010

Flu Shots

The Health Department continues to offer influenza vaccines to the public. The next flu clinic opportunities will be held at the Middletown Moose on South Main Monday November 15th from 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. and Wednesday November 17th from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Council members can direct residents to contact the Health Department at 513 425-1818 if they have any questions regarding the flu shot.

Better service for Birth Certificates

Currently the Middletown Health Department is a beta test site for the Ohio Department of Health centralized issuance program. Currently, we are issuing city of Middletown records from the Ohio Department of Health database. Once released in early 2011, the Middletown Health Department will be able to issue birth certificates from anywhere in the state of Ohio. This should be a very nice and time saving service for all of our residents and visitors that are in need of their birth records.

Bristol Tennessee Housing Authority to freeze Sec. 8 applications

BRISTOL, Tenn. – The Bristol Tennessee Housing and Redevelopment Authority will put a freeze on new applications for its Housing Choice Voucher-Section 8 program beginning Nov. 16, because it's already swamped with requests....

...The housing authority, which manages public housing and other subsidized living on the Tennessee side of the Twin City, now **oversees 200 residential units under the federal Housing Choice Voucher-Section 8 program.** The program allows an eligible low-income family or individual to live in a residential home or property for a fixed rental fee each month. It then pays the landlord the difference between the home's actual monthly rent and the fixed amount

paid by the family or individual.

In recent months, Scyphers said, the flood of applicants seeking the vouchers far exceeds his agency's ability to provide them. The housing authority usually has 10 of its 200 vouchers become available each month – and with the current waiting list already high, it would be 2012 before Section 8 housing would likely open up for new applicants....(Note: sadly, the economy is bad all over; more families are in need of assistance across the country. However, I thought it was interesting to point out that Bristol, TN, population 26,000, oversees 200 vouchers, while Middletown, with a population double of Bristol, oversees more than 8 times the number of vouchers.)

Pendleton Art Center proposes use of car hoods for exterior façade treatment

Mr. Verdin and his talented architect have come up with a very interesting idea for the exterior of the Pendleton Building. Car hoods used as shingles. The tie into our steel history, the dimensional effect on the building and the uniqueness of the idea should bring some attention in the art world. The plans will need to be approved by the appropriate city boards and commissions.

United Way Award

The City of Middletown received a WOW award from the United Way at their campaign Finale Breakfast last Friday, October 29, 2010. The City was acknowledged for running a great campaign beginning with the kickoff cookout in late August through the Chili contest and basket raffles in October. Thanks to the Public Works staff who worked hard to raise funds throughout the city organization resulting in a 24% increase over 2009 in campaign contributions to the United Way.

Fire Chief as Principal for a Day

Chief Steve Botts served as "Principal for a Day" at Amanda Elementary School. He experienced Amanda's school day from the principal's perspective, Dr. Candace McIntosh-Dillon. The day began by meeting two special children and assisting with the P.A. welcome, reading the cafeteria menu and pledge to the flag. This was followed by a tour of working classrooms where he observed and participated in the learning experience. Of course the day had to involve the monthly required fire drill. This was an opportunity for a public official to interact with one of our elementary schools; an opportunity to give as well as receive.

Brownfield Grant

We are taking steps to implement our plan of creating market-ready sites, increasing property values and revitalizing the downtown and surrounding areas of Middletown via the \$400,000

USEPA grant we receive earlier this year through the Brownfield program. The grant is expected to provide funding to assess 6-8 sites. Assessment is required as the first step in remediating a site. In addition to creating future economic impact, remediation will also create improvements to the public health and welfare.

United Dairy Farmers (UDF)

Great news! UDF called Monday to say that they finally closed on the Salvation Army site last Friday. Since it is so late in the season, they will start construction in March 2011 and should be open by the end of 2011. They were also very happy to hear about Cincinnati State and the Pendleton project.

Police Canine Training

The Division of Police recently received a grant in the amount of \$8,000 from the Ben Roethlisberger Foundation to make improvements at the police canine training area. Mr. Roethlisberger has been giving grants to police departments to assist with their canine programs since 2006, when he purchased a replacement dog for his hometown of Findlay, Ohio. The division of police applied for this grant several months ago and was notified on November 3rd that the City would be receiving the funds. The announcement will be made during the Monday Night Football game tonight between the Bengals and the Steelers.

City Employee Health Care Costs Managed

The Personnel Division of the Law Department is currently administering open enrollment for health care benefits from November 3rd – December 3rd. This is a busy open enrollment season as the City becomes compliant with national health care reform mandates. For the first time, the City is offering a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and employees will have a choice of health care plans, one of which is a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). These plans will not only give employees a choice of health care options, but will also help to control health care costs for both the City and its employees.

Delinquent property taxes and Section 8 Landlords

The Section 8 program has many rules imposed by the federal regulations governing the program. The Housing Agency has other areas where it has discretion to act in the City's best interests. One of those discretionary areas involves Section 8 landlords who are delinquent on their real estate taxes. As part of the updates to our program and the adoption of the new Administrative Plan for Section 8, Consoc suggested and the City incorporated the HUD regulation that prohibits the issuance of new or renewal Section 8 contracts to property owners who are delinquent on their property taxes. The effect of this change is that the delinquent owner can continue to receive Section 8 rents for any unit under contract, but under our

policies, the owner cannot renew the existing unit at the end of the annual contract or add additional Section 8 units until the property taxes are current on all Section 8 properties.

The Section 8 program guarantees rent payments, generally providing the owner with hundreds of dollars per property each month. There is an obligation to keep the taxes paid and the property maintained as part of the acceptance of that payment. The City has notified property owners of 51 delinquent parcels being utilized in the Section 8 program, that they will be unable to renew or add new Section 8 units until their property taxes are current. These 51 parcels combined owe over \$186,000 in delinquent real estate taxes. As the Middletown City School District receives the largest portion of collected property taxes, this represents over \$100,000 that has not been paid in support of our local schools.

Transit Funds Reapportioned

As most are aware, the Transit Department received an ARRA grant for \$365,000 to build a bus wash system. After bidding was completed, the project proved to be too expensive to build and too costly to maintain to be viable. Staff submitted a request to FTA to change the use of the grant to vehicle maintenance for the Transit fleet. We are happy to report that FTA has approved our request and an additional \$365,000 in ARRA funding has been added to our vehicle maintenance grants. This should allow us to cover 100% of Transit Department vehicle maintenance with federal funding for almost two years. Creative thinking at work. Great job!!!

Local Government Funds at risk

In these tough economic times we know the difficulty of balancing a budget. Here is an article on local government funds published by the Ohio Municipal League. As you know, the LGF provides a revenue stream of about \$1.7 Million to Middletown's general fund. The State of Ohio continues to look for ways to balance their budget; one of the considered sources would be to reduce the amount of LGF to cities. The results would be very tough on our general fund budget. We sent the resolution to our State Legislators, but please remind them every chance you get, as to how important these funds are to Middletown and other Ohio cities.



Local government
article.PDF

Ohio Public Employment Risk Reduction Program (PERRP)

On Sept. 2, 2010 PERRP, a division of the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation's (BWC) Division of Safety and Hygiene, began an investigation of the fatal incident involving city employee Jabin Lakes.

All Executive and Incident Summary Reports, Notice of Violation, Applicable Citations and an Abatement Verification form for our completion and return have been emailed to Council and also copied for your Council packets.

We are required to inform our employees of any and all actions taken. This knowledge will not only assist them in doing their part to maintain a safe and healthful workplace, it will emphasize the city's concern, as well as the priority it places on employee protection and well-being.

Attached is the letter from me to all employees.



CM Letter to Staff re5-7-10.pdf

2010 Home for the Holidays Santa Parade

The 2010 Home for the Holidays Santa Parade will be held Saturday, November 27th at 4:00 p.m. The parade route will start at the south end of Broad Street and continue to escort Santa and Mrs. Clause into Governors Square. The Downtown sections of Central and Broad Street will be blocked for the parade and Festive Holiday Market from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m..

The parade will also be the official arrival of Santa to Downtown Middletown. Children of all ages will be filled with anticipation as they watch our hometown parade lead the way for Santa and his sleigh. Santa and the Mrs. will remain at Governors Square following the parade until 7:00 p.m. for children who wish to visit with Santa.

Upcoming Events

- Nov 9 Board of Health City Bldg. Conf. Room 2C 7:30 a.m.
- Nov 10 Planning Commission meeting Council Chambers (LL) 6:30 p.m.
- Nov 11 Civil Service Commission City Building Conference Room 2B 8:00 a.m.
- Nov 11 VETERAN'S DAY
- Nov 15 Board of Education Girard Street 6:30 p.m.
- Nov 16 MPHA Council Chambers (LL) 5:30 p.m.
- Nov 16 City Council meeting Council Chambers (LL) 6:30 p.m.
- Nov 17 3rd Ward Town Hall meeting w/ Josh Laubach and Vice Mayor Anita Scott Jones
Location TBD 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- Nov 17 Tree Commission meeting Rathman Building, Smith Park. 5:30p.m.
- Nov 19 Chamber Ribbon Cutting / Open House - Hospice Care of Middletown - 1001
Grove Street, Suite 800 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Ribbon cutting at 12:15 p.m.

- Nov 21 Holiday Affair on the Square- Kick off to Got Art! Music, Dancers, Actors and the Ceremonial Tree Lighting Governor's Square 5:00 p.m.
- Nov 25 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
- Nov 26 City Building Closed in Observance of Holiday
- Nov 26 Light Up Middletown 500 Tytus Avenue Smith Park 6:00- 10:00 p.m.
- Nov 27 Home for the Holidays Santa Parade Middletown Public Library to Governor's Sq. 5:00 p.m.

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