TO: Council Members
City Directors

FROM: Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz

DATE: February 7, 2020

RE: Administrative Update

MY WEEK IN REVIEW:

Another productive week…filled with three Council committee meetings, dealing with departmental issues, preparing legislation for the February Council Meeting, working on big picture proposals and doing the business of the City.

This week provided the opportunity to meet with Superintendent Ben Hegedish to further discuss a variety of options dealing with the future of our schools’ facilities. We plan to continue these meetings and explore opportunities to work together in the best interest of our school district and the City of Independence. I thank Superintendent Hegedish for the opportunity to provide input on behalf of the City on the future of our community and our school district.

Another very important discussion which took place this week relates to the downtown area of our community and a look at what the demand for housing options are in our community. We will continue to look at possible options with the goal of finding ways to keep OUR residents in Independence!

I also met with the president of the Historical Society to discuss possible improvements to Historic Hall as well as supporting initiatives to draw more interest to this community treasure.

UPCOMING LEGISLATION:

February’s Council Meeting contains legislation to purchase various supplies and materials for the City, in addition to a number of other ordinances including two that authorize the purchase of specific services to the City. One of those ordinances contracts for professional engineering services to evaluate the City’s existing facilities. I ask Council to strongly consider authorizing these services as this is an important step to take considering the age of our City buildings and
the need to properly maintain and upgrade these facilities for the long term.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING:**

Chairperson Dave Grendel along with Finance Director Vern Blaze conducted a Finance Meeting this past Tuesday, February 4\textsuperscript{th} at 4:00 pm prior to the February Planning Commission Meeting. Information on the City’s Investment Policy and Capital Purchasing Program was provided to committee members and Councilpersons who were in attendance. After a brief presentation the Finance Director requested that committee members continue to review the information as those two items will be on the Agenda for the upcoming February Council Meeting this coming Tuesday, February 11\textsuperscript{th}.

A follow-up Finance Meeting has been scheduled for **Tuesday, February 18\textsuperscript{th} at 4:30 pm** at City Hall.

**FEBRUARY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING:**

The February Planning Commission meeting held this past Tuesday at 5:30 pm had two items under New Business:

- A lot split of rear property at 4903 East Sprague Road (PPN 563-23-016) to consolidate to the rear portion of (PPN 563-23-016), 7660 Jonathan Cole Court was Tabled. Applicant will come back to the March Planning Commission meeting with additional information and a Mylar of the request.
- Redwood Corporate One, LLC’s, (7007 East Pleasant Valley Road, PPN 564-09-015) request for parking modification to reduce on-site parking by 30 spaces was Approved.

**STREETS AND SIDEWALKS COMMITTEE MEETING:**

A Streets and Sidewalks Committee Meeting was held this past Wednesday at 4:30 pm in the Council Caucus Room at City Hall. Chairman Dale Veverka put together a full agenda which included a report from Service Director Karas comparing the cost for in-house crack seal versus the City using an outside contractor. A decision to continue performing in-house crack seal of smaller jobs while addressing larger crack-seal projects through the 2020 Crack Seal Program was agreed upon.

Updates on a number of construction projects in the pipeline, as well as an update on the status of various ongoing projects were provided by City Engineer Don Ramm.
Additional items on the agenda included the San Fernando sidewalk easement, planned sidewalk improvements around the City, and the potential dedication of Cascade Creek and Meadowbook Drive were discussed.

**ROAD AND RIGHT-OF-WAY SURVEYING ACTIVITY:**

The City of Independence is initiating preliminary survey and design work for the Hillside Road Sidewalk and Drainage Improvements Project. The goal of the project is to design and construct a new sidewalk and storm sewers along the north side of Hillside Road from Hawthorn Trace to South Great Oaks.

The City has contracted with the firm Euthenics, Inc. to complete preliminary engineering for this project. It will be necessary for work crews from Euthenics to enter upon your property over the next week or two in order to collect data on or near your property.

The survey crews will not be able to give you any definite answers to your questions. They will simply be collecting data necessary for the survey and design. Their representatives will carry full personal identification and copies of this letter.

If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact our consultant, Euthenics, at 440.260.1555 ext. 105 or submit written comments to: Euthenics, Inc., 8235 Mohawk Drive, Strongsville, OH 44136.

**PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD CLOSURE:**

The County Department of Public Works notified the City that the bridge deck of the Pleasant Valley Road Bridge over Canal Road/Towpath is in immediate need of repair.

Effective immediately, the westbound lane of the Pleasant Valley Road Bridge spanning Independence and Valley View will be intermittently closed. Two-way traffic will be maintained in a single lane by portable traffic signals. Vehicles traveling in the area should expect delays and may want to consider alternate routes.

The closure will remain in effect until County crews can finalize repairs. Repairs are anticipated to be completed by the end of March 2020, weather permitting. Signs notifying travelers will be installed on Pleasant Valley Road at the intersections of Brecksville Road and Hub Parkway.

**UPPER BROOKSIDE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS – PHASE 1 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE:**

Work planned for the coming weeks:
- Two (2) Crews will continue installing mainline storm sewers, manholes, curb inlet
basins and storm sewer crossovers, including yard drains.
  o Early this coming week, the contractor will dig test holes along the east edge of the roadway, between E. Sprague and Lake Charles Drive to locate the existing gas and water mains. This effort will aid in the completion of the Phase 2 project design.
• 1-lane, 1-way traffic will continue to travel southbound and westbound through the work zone.

Please call the Independence Engineering Department at 216.524.1374 (or contact us via email at engineering@independenceohio.org) if you have any questions or concerns.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS IS HIRING POLL WORKERS FOR THE MARCH 17, 2020 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION:

The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections is seeking civic-minded individuals to assist voters on Election Day. Poll Workers (Precinct Election Officials) earn up to $200 and have the satisfaction of being part of the democratic process.

Individuals may apply on the Board’s website: www.443vote.us, or call the Poll Worker Hotline at 216.443.3277.

INDEPENDENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL THIRD AND FOURTH-GRADE STUDENTS COLLABORATE ON CODING AND ROBOTICS:

In the third grade at Independence Primary School, under the direction of computer teacher Kerry Morosko, students are working in teams to create a maze with multiple turns and possibilities to get dash to the finish line. “The challenge is to be able to program dash successfully through one’s own original maze,” said Morosko. “This experience provides students with the opportunity to watch their virtual coding turn into tangible learning experiences.”

Students in fourth grade are assembling Lego Boost robots. Once completed they will be bringing their creation to life using the app’s intuitive activities designed to stimulate problem
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solving. “This Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) approach to learning encourages the fundamentals of critical thinking while developing imagination through various coding activities,” said Morosko.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:

- I will be holding Mayor’s Listening Night this coming Monday, February 10th from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm in my office at City Hall. Should you have an issue or a concern you would like to discuss I welcome your attendance.

- The February Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 11th at 7:00 pm in City Hall Council Chambers. Council Caucus will begin at 5:30 pm in the Council Caucus Room at City Hall.

- A Finance Meeting has been set for Tuesday, February 18th at 4:30 pm in the Council Caucus Room at City Hall.

- The Cuyahoga Valley Chamber has set the date for their 4th Annual Taste of the Valley for Thursday, February 27th from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Holiday Inn, Rockside.

Ticket prices are as follows:
  - Adults $25 in advance, $30 at the door
  - Children (under 13) $10
  - Seniors (60+) $15

Come sample some of the delicious food our local restaurants and caterers have to offer. Not only will this be a fun event for you and the family, it is a great opportunity for advertising and networking. This event is open to the public and all proceeds go to benefit the Chamber’s Annual Scholarship Fund.
DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Following are some highlights of recent activity, updates, events and/or statistics from various departments:

**The Police Department Reported**

(Week ending January 31)

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<tr>
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<th>Misdemeanor Arrests</th>
<th>Felony Arrests</th>
<th>Traffic Citations</th>
<th>OVI Arrests</th>
<th>Accident Reports</th>
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**The Fire Department Reported**

(Week ending January 31)

- EMS Incidents: Week 37, YTD 129
- Fire Incidents: Week 6, YTD 38
- Mutual Aid:
  - Engine Responses: Week 0, YTD 7
  - Squad Responses: Week 1, YTD 5

**The Clerk of Court Reported**

(Week ending January 31)

➢ Statistics for December 2019 versus December 2018

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**The Engineering Department Reported**

(Week ending January 31)

- Engineering facilitated a Security Summit for the Hemlock Creek/Towpath Trail with National Park Service Rangers, IPD, IFD and the regional CERT.
  - Coordination, Cooperation and Communications were major topics of discussion.
  - Security, enforcement investigation, emergency response, and shared concerns and experiences were also covered.
Engineering continues to work with the Service Department to televise the existing storm sewer system on Upper Brookside.

An inspection of the sanitary and storm sewer at 6882 Linden Lane, sublot 111, was compliant.

The topographic site plan was reviewed and approved for a new home at 6858 Linden Lane, sublot 113 of the Chestnut Woods Section 3 Phase 5 subdivision.

Engineering attended a Progress Meeting for the Bookside/Bramley Road Improvements Project, which was conducted by the Construction Project Manager from the GPD Group.

Engineering met with the Construction Project manager from the QCI Group to discuss project issues and schedule for the Rockside Woods Boulevard North Extension and Brecksville Road Improvements Project.

The Recreation Department Reported—(Week ending January 31)

Highlights:

- Cub Scout Pack 297 held their Pinewood Derby event at the Elmwood Recreation Center on Saturday the 25th of January. Tucker Neale CLE Community Basketball League was held at the Fieldhouse on January 26th and brought in $1080 in rental fees.
- Empower Sports/ICAN Basketball Nights ended their season at the Fieldhouse this week.
- The Civic Center whirlpool was drained and cleaned as part of the State Health Code Requirements.
- Preparations are underway to get summer job postings online by mid-February.
- Preparations are also being made for our youth basketball playoffs.
- Staff began the project of sanding and repainting the edging of all the Civic Center banquet room tables.
- All of the aluminum spectator bleachers at the Fieldhouse were thoroughly cleaned.
- Recreation Admin met with Falham Equipment Company to review adjustments and items needed to make repairs to our Civic Center spectator bleachers.

UPCOMING RECREATION EVENTS:

The Kiwanis Pickle Ball Tournament is scheduled for the weekend of February 14th through February 16th.

The Native Sons/Native Daughters Late Nighter is this Saturday, February 8th at the Civic Center from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm. Recreation Staff will be working late as they will be setting up and operating some of the City’s inflatables.
Weekly Highlights – Youth

- **Kangaroo Kidz** was an action-packed program filled with Jumbo Jam, an obstacle course that started with a slide and ended at the build and balance. They also listened to music, had fun with hamster wheels and ended with parachute games.

- At **Time for Us** the children and parents were engaged with 6 science stations pertaining to the earth's Polar Regions. The children made 6 sided snowflakes, learned about magnets, made lava lamps, instant snow, played at a pretend Polar science station and made polar bear tooth paste.

- **New Program** – 2 – 4 year olds **“Little Yogis”** Toddlers have fun gaining all the benefits of yoga…various yoga poses through different games, and crafts.

Current Afterschool enrollment:

- 92 Children (K through 8th grade)
- Servicing 72 families

New:

- Teen/ Tween Camp will be renamed “Adventure Camp”
- Adventure Camp will have 3 field trips per week, changed from 2 trips
- Tween Camp will also have a Leadership Component
- Teen Camp will have a new Leadership Program
- Parent informational Brochures are being revamped to be more user friendly and concise
- Developing NEW Summer Preschool Playground program for four year
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Weekly Highlights – Adult

• 1/22 - Trip: Jersey Boys at the Connor Palace 46 people
• 1/23 - Cooking Class/Wok This Way 11 people
• 1/24 - 55+ Lunch Celebrating Chinese New Year – 81 seniors enjoyed celebrating Chinese New Year with Trivia games, word searches, cross word puzzles, scramble the letter activities. Prizes were awarded.
• 1/26 - Trip: Celebrate Chinese New Year at Li Wah Restaurant – residents enjoyed good food and entertainment - the Lion Dance

Other

• Finalized Irish Fest entertainment/food
• Developing new programs/activities for all ages
• Three CS staff members (Rita, Marcia, Claudia) attended an OPRA one day conference in Sandusky to network with other individuals throughout Ohio and exchange ideas for summer camps. There were also keynote speakers offering valuable information.

Information Technology Reported: (Week ending January 31)

• Completed the restoration of our three member email service which provides the City with redundant servers to increase the resiliency and reliability of email services.
• The IT Department worked with Verizon to replace malfunctioning smartphones for our user base. We were able to take advantage of no cost upgrades by selecting new devices without paying the extra cost for the absolute latest model offerings. This allows our staff to stay connected and reachable without extra costs to the City.
• Cyber Security Training is ongoing throughout the City’s user base, as a new training campaign is underway. “Becoming a Human Firewall” is a series which teaches our users what to watch out for and how to be
proactive in preventing security breaches of all types.

**The Technical Services Department Reported** - **Ka(Week ending January 31)**

- Tech Services has been busy with completing repairs in City Campus Buildings.
- Tech also completed the installation of a new Lochinvar boiler in Historic Hall. The new unit will compliment an existing boiler along with the replacement of one that has reached its life expectancy. The new unit will keep the pottery and art classes held in the garage nice and warm.

\[\text{Remember your loved ones on Valentine’s Day}\]

\[\text{Friday, February 14th!}\]