

## **MAYOR'S REPORT JANUARY 22, 2014**

### **PROPOSED FIRE STATION**

Over the last few weeks the proposed fire station has caught the attention of the media and citizens and I would like to clarify what was taken out of text in a vindicator news article very recently. The vindicator quoted me as saying; "It's always been a blessing to have two fire stations, but obviously, they have to be staffed, how are you going to pay for it? Do you still need two fire stations". This was not an opinion but a paraphrase of questions that were posed to me, my office and the safety service director from city residents and city officials regarding the proposed centralized fire station. First let me say; under my tenure the fire station on the north side will remain open and staffing levels will remain current. I will assure the safety of the downtown businesses, the residents and businesses on the north side of town will not be jeopardized.

Obviously, before any decisions can be made for a new fire station; we still have to identify and seek funding sources for either renovating our current station, or building a new one to meet the needs of the city to accommodate our equipment and operations.

### **ROAD RESURFACING**

On tonight's council agenda legislation addressing the city road infrastructure's future. If adopted by council tonight, it will afford the Struthers residents the opportunity to cast their ballots at the May 6<sup>th</sup> Primary Election; it will be the issue before the electors to decide a 3 mill, 5 year Road Maintenance & Repair Levy. Based on the city's engineering firm MS Consultants Road Analysis Study performed during the second quarter of 2012, all of the city roads were examined using nine different criteria's. The results of the study in each of the city's four wards received a road condition rating of good, fair or poor of the city's 142 streets. Of the 142 streets, 77 of the 142 streets according to the study will need repaired within four years. 42 of the 77 streets will need repaired within the next two years. The passage of a 3 mill levy will, according to the Mahoning County Auditor's Office, would generate approximately \$318,000 per year through property tax assessments. To determine what each residence would be assessed is based on 35% of the appraised value of the residents home/property and the county's current appraisal value would be used. For example, it is evaluated that it would cost the property owner approximately \$100 a year on a \$100,000 home. The costs to resurface roads have nearly tripled in the past eight to ten years. The cost to resurface one mile of asphalt ten years ago was approximately \$50,000 per mile and today's current cost is \$170,000 per mile. These figures were provided to us through our engineering consultant.

Street Forman Tim Daley informed council and the administration that the roads are bad and his department cannot keep up. Which at one time shoveling in pot holes to make repairs, have reverted to dumping truckloads of hot patch on the roads and back dragging with a front loader due to the size of the crumbling road surfaces.

Funds used by the city in previous years came from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and that has been in decline and can only be used in the LMI (low moderate income) targeted census areas. This leaves the areas to be funding by grants and the general fund. State & Local Grant Funds in

2006 was \$217,596 and has dwindled to \$118,651 in 2013 and expected for 2014 is \$100,026. These funds acted as matching funds for grants and the crack seal project.

I have secured over 1 million dollars in federal highway monies the past 3 years to pave Center Street, Lowellville Road, Fifth Street and State Streets. Also was rebuilt was Clingan Road and Runge Blvd., but resources to provide for matching funds when making applications have drastically declined for small local infrastructure projects through Eastgate OPWC District 6 for grant funding for road resurfacing.

No tax or levy's have been instituted by the City of Struthers since 1983. The future of our roads and the city pride will depend on this levy and its passing because maintained roads stabilize our property values. **If approved by the voters, this levy will be only for road repair and maintenance.**

#### **CHIP GRANT**

Our working partnership under the upcoming CHIP grant will involve up to 10 housing units where the Mahoning County Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Program provides the lead inspection/risk assessment, clearance examinations, lead monitoring of work, reviewing of lead specs, relocation expenses while the families are temporarily relocated and lead pollution liability insurance. We also anticipate that up to five of these housing units will have children under the age of 6 residing in these units. The in-kind costs for the lead hazard control work and other related costs for these units total \$46,000. A total amount of \$21,000 will be provided as in-kind funds as well as up to \$25,000 matching funds for lead hazard control work on up to 5 units that contain a child under the age of 6, the total matching funds is \$46,000 for this working partnership.

#### **HONING LOCAL BUSINESS**

Tonight's resolution honoring Rips Café on Youngstown Poland Road for **75 years** of service does not go without notice. This family operated local establishment has been passed from generation to generation providing excellent service to our community and beyond. The neat and orderly establishment has always been inviting to the public serving great food and an atmosphere that is family oriented. I congratulate them for continuing to make our city proud and honored to have their establishment in our town.

Respectfully,

Mayor Terry P. Stocker