

**MAYOR'S REPORT
REPORTING TO THE CITIZENS AND TO COUNCIL
DECEMBER 21, 2008**

2008 in Review ~ Part 2

I would like to once again express my gratitude to Council & all employees under my administration who have worked hard in obtaining the goals and accomplishments provided to you in both Part I & Part II of this yearend report. Without their support and working together as a team none of this would have been possible. I commend them for their hard work and for moving forward under a new administration.

Grants & Funding Received in 2008: Administration & Council working together brought forth the efforts put into the receipt of the following grant awards:

- Mahoning County Recycling Initiative & Competitive Funding Grants – Received \$2,964.00 to use towards awareness for the new Recycling Center in downtown Struthers. The City was also granted \$7,500.00 to prepare and enhance the Recycling Site.
- Mahoning County Green Team awarded the City \$1,800.00 for a Scrap Tire Drive and \$2,500.00 for an Appliance Drive – both were successful drives.
- ODNR Litter Clean Up Grant – Awarded \$2,500.00 for the purpose of holding a Litter Clean Up activity. The clean up was held in conjunction with Join Hands Day and was successful.
- Mahoning County Commissioners Reuse & Recycling Program - \$4,000.00 was awarded and used toward Leaf Collection and Composting. **The total amount awarded to the City in 2008 for various Litter & Recycling grants amount to \$21,264.00.**
- Received \$360,000.00 grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission that completes the funding package for the Lower Connector Bridge Project with no cost to the taxpayers. Will provide greater connectivity to other parts of the corridor for future economic purposes.
- Received \$261,000.00 grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission for the Southeast Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project. Project located in the southeast section of the City to rehabilitate sanitary sewers in the Parkcliff, Haywood, Oakland, Schenley, Clingan Road and Wetmore Avenue areas.
- Receive a 0% interest loan in the amount of \$112,000.00 for the Fifth Street Culvert Replacement Project. It will consist of the removal and replacement of the existing culvert and portion of the sanitary sewer system of Fifth Street.

New & Relocated Business Investments

- Family Dollar Store – New Store
- Artist At Work – Relocated & Expanded
- Habitat for Humanity Restore – New Store
- Attorney Dominic Leone – New Business

Park Improvements

- Nebo-Grimm Park – Constructed baseball diamond; Rudzik Excavating donated labor hours and material for a youth baseball diamond.
- Mickler Park - Secured bleachers during the new Stadium Project to be constructed in 2009.
- Mauthe Park:
Sealed and striped parking lot.
New carpet at the Multi-Purpose Building.
Constructed a new baseball diamond through private donations and local labor efforts.
Shrubbery and Trees planted throughout the entire park.

Downtown Façade

Applications were submitted for the downtown façade renovation program that is part of the City's FY 2008 CDBG Program. Four building owners applied which was essentially an expression of interest. Sketches were drawn up for the businessmen to view of possible development concepts and business representatives expressed interest in developing a theme for the downtown renovation. Council At Large, Mike Patrick will schedule the next meeting to be held in January to foster communication among the building owners.

Natural Gas Aggregation

The City partnered with Direct Energy, one of the largest retail energy providers in North America in an effort to help residents of the community manage their winter heating bills. Effective December 1, 2008 a fixed rate of \$9.766 per thousand cubic feet (Mcf) has been set for a two-year period. The rate has gone into effect this month and covers the January 2009 through November 2010 bill cycles. The program also includes an additional discount of \$0.10 per Mcf off the initial commodity price for senior citizens age 65 and older who are the primary owners of their residence.

I would like to thank Council for supporting and acting swiftly upon the legislation needed for this aggregation program.

Demolition & Liens (*More Pride in our Community*)

Five abandoned blighted homes were demolished in 2008. There are currently five more homes in the demolition process. Also the liens placed on over 70 homes in an attempt to collect reimbursement for grass cutting around vacant homes (the first known time liens were ever placed).

With the addition of the most recent legislation of *Mandatory Trash Pick Up* sponsored by Safety Director Ed Wildes, I feel it is quite an accomplishment our very first year. I would personally like to thank Ed Wildes for his hard work; he actively took on the many property maintenance issues in our community.

Giving Back to our Community

The administration utilized Sheriff Randall Wellington's "Day Reporting Program" on many occasions. The supervised minimum security inmates were bused into Struthers and shoveled downtown city sidewalks, city hall entranceways and parking lots. They also assisted the Stormwater Program in lifting tires and debris out of the culverts.

We also utilized and continue to make use of the services of Mahoning County Jobs & Family Services. This agency sends applicants at no cost to the city to expend their "Job Hours" in our Maintenance Department. This enabled the City to save on hiring an extra part-time person in 2008.

Working with Our Schools

- Safe Routes To School Grant – The application was submitted and we should know in the first few months of 2009 the status of that grant.
- International Walk to School Day – On October 8th the City and Middle School participated in International Walk to School Day. This day was intended to promote a healthier and safer lifestyle by encouraging our children to walk to school. It also created a sense of involvement within our city.
- Manor Avenue Storage – With the gracious help from Struthers School Superintendent Don Daley we have taken advantage of a room at Manor Avenue School. A room in the Police garage was cleared and records were moved to Manor. The Records Commission will review the records and shall provide rules for retention and disposal of records.

Active & Completed Projects

- WWTP Belt Press Replacement – Project cost \$735,000.00, equipment has been delivered and completion is scheduled by approximately March 2009.
- WWTP Secondary Digester Covers Replacement Project – Project cost \$400,000.00, project is completed. An OPWC Loan was acquired (\$365,000) and the duration is from 2008 to 2028.
- WWTP Bar Screen Replacement – Project cost is \$345,000.00 and City share is \$75,793.00. City was awarded a SCIP Grant and the City's share will be paid from the Sinking Fund. Downie Company was awarded the bid and project will commence in June 2009.
- 5th Street Culvert – *(See Grants & Funding)*
- Judith Lane/Spring Street Culvert Project – The total cost of this project is projected at \$275,000.00. Design has begun and the City to apply for an OWDA Loan or SCIP Grant/Loan for construction of the culvert in 2009.
- Lower Connector Bridge/Bob Cene Way – *(See Grants & Funding)*
- Southeast Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project – *(See Grants & Funding)*

New Equipment purchased in 2008:

- 2009 International 2 ½ Ton with Stainless Steel Bed, Salt Spreader & Plow
- American Road Machinery Leaf Vac – Purchased through Stormwater to reduce solid waste in the storm system.
- Bandit Chipper with a 6 inch blade – Purchased through Stormwater for storm clean-ups. Cleaned up Hurricane Ike within three days.
- Aresis Camera – Can be used separately or mobile in the 2005 Chevy Van; its purpose to investigate sources of inflow and infiltration in our sanitary sewer system.

I would also at this time like to wish employees, council and every citizen of this City a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry P. Stocker
Mayor

TPS/jlg
C:file