



City of Hagerstown, Maryland Status & Information Report No. 22 for 2009

June 5, 2009

To Mayor Bruchey and Members of the City Council:

UPCOMING MEETINGS

❖❖ JUNE 2009 ❖❖						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 8pm Mayor & Council Oath of Office/Council Chamber	2 4pm Work Session	3	4 8 am Market In The Square 5 pm City Center Jazz Nights @ USMH Plaza	5	6 10 am Railroad Heritage Days @ Railroad Museum/City Park
7 1 pm Railroad Heritage Days @ Railroad Museum/City Park	8	9 4pm Work Session	10	11 5pm City Center Jazz Nights @ USMH Plaza	12	13 7 am Summer Yard Sale @ Fairgrounds Park Stables
14	15	16 4pm Work Session	17	18 8 am Market In The Square 5pm City Center Jazz Nights @ USMH Plaza	19	20 7 th Annual MIHI Fishin' Frenzy @ Pangborn Park
21	22	23 7 pm Regular Session	24	25 5pm City Center Jazz Nights @ USMH Plaza	26	27 8pm Miss MD Pageant @ MD Theatre
28 MML Conference in Ocean City	29 MML Conference in Ocean City	30 MML Conference in Ocean City				

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

1. **CITY CENTER JAZZ NIGHTS.** City Center Jazz Nights began this week with Carl Filipiak. Due to inclement weather, we moved the event to Bulls and Bears. The next City Center Jazz Nights will be Thursday, June 11 from 5 to 6:30 pm in the University Plaza featuring Brian Lenaire.
2. **MARKET IN THE SQUARE.** Market in the Square was cancelled this week due to inclement weather. The next Market in the Square will be June 18, 2009 from 8 am to 2 pm.
3. **BLUES FEST.** The Western Maryland Blues Fest was held May 28-31, 2009. It was a great event with record crowds for Thursday, Friday Saturday and Sunday. Cleanup from the Western Maryland Blues Fest continued this week.
4. **EVENTS.** Work is ongoing for Flag Day, MIHI Fishing Frenzy, and the Miss Maryland Pageant- all of which will take place this month.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. **Single Family Homeownership.** We have received a signed contract for the purchase of 333 South Mulberry Street. The buyer has been preapproved for financing and would like to settle before the end of June. The sales price is \$90,000. This is our first home sale in almost 2 years.
2. **Hagerstown Revolving Loan Fund.** On June 2, a loan of \$48,000 was made to a new business locating in downtown. Elevation Salon, LLC will be opening a up-scale hair salon at 35 North Potomac Street. Proceeds from our loan will be used for renovations to the space, equipment and operating capital.
3. **Community Development Block Grant-Recovery.** Part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus) provided additional CDBG funds to entitlement communities. Hagerstown's allocation is \$249,458. We have submitted the required paperwork and should receive approval of our plan by mid-to-late June. The City has selected four projects: Street Overlay (\$74,000); Ridge Avenue Traffic Island (\$65,000); Handicap Curb Ramps (\$60,000); and, Community Free Clinic (\$30,458). Additionally, the City will use \$20,000 for general administrative costs including computer purchases.
4. **NUSA Conference.** Cindy Blackstock attended the annual Neighborhoods USA Conference May 21-23 in Spokane, WA. Information was gained on best practices concentrating on revitalization, redevelopment and other community initiatives. This will be shared with our *Neighborhoods 1st* groups in order to assist them in creating neighborhood plans and achieving goals. An in depth conversation took place with Tom Everson, founder and Executive Director of *Keep Kids Alive Drive 25*, with direct focus on Hagerstown. It was a valuable way to save on consultation fees.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. **MEDA Conference.** Debbie Everhart attended the annual State MEDA Conference which was held in Cambridge, Maryland on 5/30/09 through 6/2/09.

ENGINEERING & CODE ADMINISTRATION

1. **Nuisance Violations Caseload Growing.** For the first five months of 2009, Code Administration inspectors have issued 491 Nuisance Notices of Violation, with over half of them in May. The vast majority of these notices are for high weeds and grass with the remainder mainly for trash being set out improperly or for excessive debris around a property. We have already had the City contractor mow 53 properties and those not in foreclosure were issued a fine in addition to being billed for the mowing. By comparison, we had ordered 34 properties mowed during the first five months of 2008.

Below is a list of properties that had high grass and weeds abated this past week with costs billed to the owner. Those not in foreclosure were also issued a citation.

- 42 Wakefield Road, owned by Sarah Beets, in foreclosure
 - 735-737 Virginia Avenue, owned by Aurora Loan Services following a foreclosure
 - 369 Fair Meadows Boulevard, owned by Wendy Barbee, Arlene Hancock, fined \$200
 - 1018 Oak Hill Avenue, owned by Hajar Moustafa, in foreclosure
 - 708 Marathon Drive, owned by Teresa Roy, fined \$200
 - 361 East Ridge Drive, owned by Diana Romano, Michael Long, fined \$200
 - 708 Summit Avenue, owned Patricia Boone, fined \$200
 - 324 W Howard Street, owned by Nathan Carter, fined \$500
 - 121 S Prospect Street, owned by Audrey Griffith, fined \$200
 - 433 S Burhans Boulevard, owned by Frederick Winters, fined \$200
 - 709 Summit Avenue, owned by William Shifflet, in foreclosure
 - 1328 Outer Drive, owned by Princess Ogbon, in foreclosure
 - 1098 Bramly Drive, owned by Lorenza Hernandez, in foreclosure
2. **Hager's Crossing High Weeds** Recently at the request of the Homeowners Association, code inspectors completed a comprehensive inspection of nuisance concerns at Hager's Crossing, those primarily being high grasses/weeds or trash. Of the 393 single family houses and town homes in that development, 85, or 22%, were found to be in violation of the City's Nuisance Ordinance and each was given a Notice of Violation to cut their weeds!

Of the 85 receiving notices, 33% are in foreclosure. The remaining 67% non-foreclosed properties are evenly divided between owner-occupied and rentals.

3. **Code Meeting with Williamsport Mayor and Council** John Lestitian met with the Town of Williamsport's Mayor and Council on Monday, June 1st to discuss the development and dynamics of code enforcement and licensing programs. The discussion was well received and many members of the Town Council took notes. Mayor McLeaf asked that the City assist them further with insight and technical knowledge in the coming months. Members of their Council expressed interest in participating in a ride-along so that they can learn more about the City's inspection and licensing programs. This is the second time that John has presented to the Williamsport Mayor and Council. Additionally, Gary Lambert and John Lestitian presented similar information to the Mayor and Alderman in the City of Frederick several months ago.

4. **Engineering Projects**

Construction Projects:

- Jonathan Street Utility Reconstruction
- Alley reconstruction (at alley east of North Locust Street and Randolph Avenue)
- Salem Avenue Sidewalks
- Maryland Avenue Sidewalks
- Cramer Alley Widening
- Signal replacement at Mulberry Street and East Avenue will begin about August 1 (poles on order)
- Reconstruction at Alleys 2-21, 2-29 & 2-32 will begin in next few weeks.

Design Projects:

Currently being advertised for bids include:

- Pavement Preservation and two handicap ramp contracts

We are designing these projects:

- Ridge Avenue Island Beautification
- Drainage improvements at Forest Drive, Laurel Street, and North Prospect Street
- Traffic Calming chicanes on South Prospect Street
- Brick sidewalks upgrades South Prospect Street
- Alley #5-10 reconstruction

PARKS DEPARTMENT

1. **City Park Play Equipment** – Approved for State funding (Community Parks & Playgrounds), installation of play equipment at the West Pavilion at City Park has begun and should be completed in two weeks.
2. **City Park Band Shell** – Requested by the Hagerstown Municipal Band, we installed shelving in the rear of the City Park Band Shell. We also set out music stands and chairs for their first concert of the summer scheduled for June 7. The Wednesday night gospel singers began their summer concerts on June 3. Both of these groups have performed annually at City Park for many years. Recently added a couple of years ago are the Saturday night concerts, scheduled to run six weeks in July and August. Other concerts have already begun and continue to be scheduled throughout the year.
3. **University Plaza** – We set up the stage and tents at University Plaza to prepare for the weekly jazz fests, held on Thursdays, June 4 through July 2.
4. **Fairgrounds Park** – Due to vandalism, we are replacing broken glass in several windows of the entrance building at Fairgrounds Park. We continue to scrape and paint the exterior of the Grandstand.
5. **Grounds Maintenance** – Since the rain has stopped, we've been kept busy spreading topsoil and re-seeding bare areas in Fairgrounds Park and City Park. Each of these two parks consists of more than 60 acres. We are also landscaping several of our parks and playgrounds with numerous flowers.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

1. **Zoning Certificates Issued For New Businesses:**
 - 215 West Washington Street - Hagerstown Driving School.
 - 417 North Prospect Street - An MVP Agency - insurance office.
2. **New Development Cases:**
 - 1101 South Potomac Street - South Hagerstown High School - staff-approved site plan for two modular classroom buildings and one toilet building.
 - 770 Frederick Street - Washington County Amvets Post 10 - staff-approved site plan for a smoking shelter.

3. **Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission will review the following matters on Wednesday, June 10:
 - 1018 Noland Drive - Boys & Girls Club of Washington County - site plan for new facility.
 - Comprehensive Rezoning, Phase 2 (Areas 2 and 23) - discussion and recommendation to Mayor and Council.
 - Commercial Districts Amendments - discussion and recommendation to Mayor and Council.
4. **Historic District Commission:** The HDC will review the following cases on Wednesday, June 11:
 - 707-707 Oak Hill Avenue - John Rohrer and John Lestitian - rear porch modification.
 - 66 Broadway - Jeff Eckhardt - replacement of front porch columns and decking.
5. **Excise Tax Amendment:** On June 2nd, the County Commissioners discussed our zoning changes which affect the revitalization exemption in the County excise tax ordinance. They expressed willingness to amend the ordinance to reflect change from C3 to Downtown Mixed-use District and expansion of boundaries for this area. They plan to schedule a public hearing in the near future.
6. **County Wind and Solar Ordinance:** On June 2nd, the County Commissioners discussed the draft ordinance to allow for small scale wind energy and solar collections systems in the County. A whole host of changes were discussed and so the matter will be brought back for action on June 16th. Timing is of the essence since the County has received a number of requests for permits for wind and solar systems. The City Planning Commission has already discussed this issue twice and reviewed a staff research paper on the subject. Since the County has prepared a draft ordinance, we've decided to wait and see how their public review and adoption process goes before putting together a draft for the City.
7. **Mixed-use Development Research:** The new Neighborhood Mixed-Use zoning district (adopted in May) and commercial zoning amendments under consideration by the Planning Commission are meant to encourage more urban scale commercial and mixed use developments in certain areas of the City. Staff made a road trip to Montgomery County on June 3rd to experience an acclaimed mixed-use redevelopment project in Bethesda called Bethesda Row. This project has multi-story buildings out to the sidewalk with upper floor residential, ground floor retail and restaurants, and an interior parking deck. Sidewalk dining was prevalent. (The parking deck had meters with two hour limits and 75 cents per hour.) This illustration should be helpful for the Planning Commission as they wrap up their recommendations for the commercial zoning district amendments.
8. **Planning Conference:** The Planning Director will travel to Denver next week for the annual Congress for New Urbanism conference (June 11-12). Last year's conference in Austin, TX was extremely relevant and well done. This organization's conference is strongly focused on practical examples of new development practices and strategies and attracts approximately a 75/25% split between developers-and-architects and planners.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

1. **Blues Fest:** Staff helped with the logistics, setup and cleanup of the program. This year's Blues was a huge success with large crowds on Saturday, downtown and Sunday, in City Park. Thanks go to the departments of Parks, Water, Wastewater, City Light, Engineering, Fire, Police and Community Affairs for their work on this event. It truly is a group effort to put on a 4-day event like Blues Fest. The parking decks benefitted from the large crowds with both decks being sold out several times throughout the day. Over \$5,300 in revenue was generated from this one event.
2. **June Purchases:** Public Works will be bringing several purchases to the Mayor and Council for approval in June. They include a pickup truck, a 4-post vehicle lift, a traffic signal cabinet box and a security camera system for the North Potomac Street Deck. Details of these purchases are described on the consent agenda forms. To summarize, the truck is a replacement of a supervisor's truck, the vehicle lift is an addition to the Central Maintenance Garage, the signal cabinet is to update an existing traffic signal controller and the security cameras are a new feature to the deck.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

1. **Railroad Museum at City Park.** The Hagerstown Railroad Museum at City Park: Much time was spent this week preparing for this weekend's Railroad Heritage Days presented in conjunction with the Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum. Staff looks forward to a well attended event. Staff is also pleased to report an attendance of 1083 an increase of over 400 visitors more than the 667 reported in May 2008! Work also continued in the planning for events to take place over the next few months.

2. **Hager House Programs and Events:**

- Tours: Tours recently included a group from the Red Hat society and Smithsburg Elementary. Staff is pleased by the rate of visitation that continues at both our historic sites as we move into a traditionally lower attendance period with the last day of school. The totals for May were up at both facilities over that reported last season.
- Hager House Programs and Events: Staff is busy preparing this week for the variety of upcoming events we have planned for the coming months. The final touches are now in place for this Friday' Freaky Friday and Saturday's Middle Ages Festival Event and preparations and publicity are underway for the upcoming June programs the "Herbs of Hager's Thyme" and the July 2nd Civil War documentary locational filming , July 3 Freaky Friday and the July 16 "Mother Goose Unplugged" Nursery Rhyme events. Additionally staff has been creating a computerized donation file of all the cataloged collection plus working on aspects of other document preservation projects. We are pleased that we have a student joining us from the Western Maryland Consortium program and his assistance in mulching the gardens and grounds and data entry has been a big help.
- Autumn Arts Festival: Last week a cooperative meeting was held among the participating sites and more logistical preparations were made for this year's show.

3. **Fairgrounds Park**

- Community Yard Sale Saturday, June 13th from 7 am to 2 pm.
- Washington County League of Foster Care "Walk Me Home" Saturday, June 13th from 8 am to 4 pm.

UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

ELECTRIC DIVISION

1. **Problem Areas.** Recent call outs included:

- Sat. 5/30 - 1030 Main Avenue. Total outage; replaced (2) fuses, 10T and 25T found squirrel to be cause of outage. Time Out: 6.5-7.5
- Sun. 5/31 - 129 Broadway (rear). Check damage to meter; found meter destroyed by vandals. Replaced meter, checked existing equipment and voltage, no problem found. An event report was filed by HPD officer on scene. Time Out: 21.6-22.9
- Mon. 6/1 - Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 17.4-18.0
- Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 18.2-18.5
- Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 19.6-19.9
- Tue. 6/2 - Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 17.4-18.4
- Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 19.7-19.9
- Wed. 6/3 - 858 Willow Circle. Partial outage; customer reported 480 volt service outage. Checked all connections at transformer, no problem found. Informed customer, an electrician would have to make repairs internally. Time Out: 24.7-1.1
- Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 17.5-18.3
- Various. Reconnect for non-payment. Time Out: 18.3-19.0

2. **Distribution.** Recent activity included:

- The Line Department assisted Commercial Billing with disconnects and reconnects this week.
- The installation of poles, transformers, underground primaries, etc., continues in the Cramer's Alley area.
- South Cannon Avenue pole replacement project was completed 6/3/09.
- Inspection and repair of Feeders #1 and #2 at Fairground Substation continues.
- Metering Department received no high bill complaints this week.
- Line maintenance work continues in various areas.
- Line crews continue trimming trees in various residential locations.

3. **Engineering** (Staff worked on the following projects):

- The Electrical Engineer traveled to Abilene, TX, for the week to attend training for the Milsoft WinimilMap GIS facilities mapping software.
- The Staff Engineer prepared reports for the Maryland Public Service Commission's annual maintenance review.

WATER DIVISION

Plant Flows - System Demand (MGD)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Willson</u>	<u>Breichner</u>	<u>Total</u>
05/28/09	10.83		10.83
05/29/09	11.16		11.16
05/30/09	10.97		10.97
05/31/09	11.15		11.15
06/01/09	11.45		11.45
06/02/09	11.26		11.26
06/03/09	11.73		11.73
Average			11.22

Water Production at RC Willson

- Willson continues to operate well; water temperature is currently 75 degrees.
- The instrumentation crew continues working on renovation of the enunciation panel at Willson; this is a large project that will be ongoing for the next few weeks. They are also working on the installation of new valve actuators on the low service pumps.
- The maintenance crew has been completing routine maintenance. They have been involved in investigating a blockage on our septic drain field. They are also working on a leak on the check valve on the east transmission main.

Water Production at Breichner

- The Edgemont Reservoir is currently at -6.0', the bypass is open 1 turn and the hydrant is shut. The Breichner Plant was not operated last week.

Water Distribution

- Crews are continuing to perform customer service related duties throughout the system which includes meter settings, meter reading and meter exchanges. The Jonathan St. main replacement is going well. The Water Dept. has installed water main past the intersection of North and Jonathan St. We also repaired a water main on East Antietam Street.

Laboratory

- New line installations on Prestwick Way, Dumbarton Drive, and Varsity Lane were tested and cleared for use.
- Results for quarterly THM/HAA samples, SOC samples, and VOC samples were received and found to be typical for our potable water, all results were below EPA's maximum contaminate levels. The results were sent to MDE.

Engineering

Reviews:

Building Permits 6

- Staff attended a County Development Advisory Committee workshop meeting.
- Staff attended the final progress meeting for the West End Tanks Phase I.
- Staff met with representatives of the Corp of Engineers, Maryland Department of the Environment and consultant on the R. C. Willson Transmission Mains project regarding permitting, impacts, etc.
- Staff attended management certification training at Hagerstown Community College.

WASTEWATER DIVISION

Wastewater Treatment Plant at Frederick Street

Date	Flow (mgd)	Rainfall (inches)
Wednesday, May 27, 2009	7.01	0.00
Thursday, May 28, 2009	7.00	0.10
Friday, May 29, 2009	6.94	0.19
Saturday, May 30, 2009	6.54	0.00
Sunday, May 31, 2009	6.44	0.02
Monday, June 1, 2009	6.49	0.00
Tuesday, June 2, 2009	6.38	0.13
Weekly Average/Total	6.69	0.44
Monthly Average/Total	8.70	4.93
Yearly Average/Total	6.55	11.55

- The Wastewater Treatment Plant continues to operate efficiently; all parameters are within MDE compliance specifications. Maintenance crews completed 34 preventive and 68 corrective work orders during the month of May.

Wastewater Collection

Activity	Districts	Linear Feet of Main	Feet of Lateral	# of Lateral Inspections
Flushing	5, 21	7,014		
Point Repairs		# of Repairs	Reason	LF of Repairs
Joints	36	1	Damaged Pipe	1.5
Main & Lateral	5	1	Roots	25
Main Line Only	3	1	Broken Pipe	10

Customer Service Calls & Maintenance Repairs

- 11421 Eastwood Circle – replaced Grinder Pump and valve handle
- 1531 Kensington Drive – electrician is wiring canister at site – wiring is still not complete
- CCTV 800 feet of pipe for Washington County Department of Water Quality.

Wastewater Laboratory:

- The lab is continuing performance sample testing for the annual DMRQA. We will continue testing the various parameters required over the next couple weeks.
- The lab acquired a new sampler control head to replace an older failed piece of equipment. The controller will be placed on the raw intake sampler and the present raw controller will be used as a backup.
- The lab collected samples from The Herald Mail as part of the City/County industrial discharge monitoring program.

Administration

- MDE has given us approval to bid the Salem Avenue Project, we will be meeting with Karen Luther of Washington County purchasing to set up the bid dates and times as soon as she returns from vacation.
- Staff attended a County Development Advisory Committee workshop addressing improved plans review process.
- Staff met to discuss City-wide sanitary sewer rehabilitation project schedule and details.
- Staff attended management certification training at Hagerstown Community College.

**City of Hagerstown Strategic Plan -
Focus on the Quality of Life in Hagerstown**

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce J. Zimmerman
City Administrator