



Olmsted Falls City News

March 2015

Where history lives and grows...

The City of Olmsted Falls Official Newsletter

Message from Mayor Ann Marie Donegan:

Dear Olmsted Falls Residents and Business Partners:

What a year!!! I remain honored and humbled to be the Mayor of this incredible and unique city and I look forward to working with all of you in 2015 to make Olmsted Falls the best city it can be!

I am pleased to report the state of the city is strong, and getting stronger. We have made some tremendous strides in solidifying our team and creating more continuity in the services we provide to you. As we enter the first quarter of 2015, Olmsted Falls is poised to live up to its full potential as a great city. And while we have much work to do—it's important to recognize what we've already accomplished.

In the last quarter of 2014 we located and corrected a financial oversight that had existed from 2012. There was an uncollected outstanding invoice from CSX Railroads for half million dollars as a result of the Columbia Road underpass which has been collected.

We have trimmed our budget by approximately \$300,000.00 and increased revenue through grants and other offerings to the tune of \$1.7 million.

Today, Olmsted Falls is in a stronger position, having balanced our revenues and expenditures and instituted effective reforms. Thanks to hard work and tough choices, we are in a position to meet the challenges of the future.

Olmsted Excellence continues to be my mission and my administration's pledge in all aspects of city functions, services and governance. Olmsted Excellence provides:

- Transparency in Government
- Financial Responsibility
- Community Engagement
- Sound Business Management
- Community and Economic Development
- Recreation for the Entire Community
- Infrastructure, Roads and Storm Water Solutions

As you may recall, the **Blue Ribbon Committees** were formed to assist me in developing best practices in all aspects of city services as we reviewed our processes and the delivery of services we provide to you. Most of the



work of the committees has been completed and realized. Some departments have experienced a streamlining of processes by outsourcing where prudent, while other departments have been redesigned to meet your needs.

Currently we are in the process of continuing to review staffing levels in the Police Department. Recently the **Blue Ribbon Police Committee** has begun helping review of our police department. Chief Gilles and I are very proud of the members who are volunteering their time. This group has over 150 years of law enforcement expertise.

Their recommendations will be presented to the administration and we look to implement reasonable, workable and appropriate recommendations later this year.

Human Resources Update: All employees have received an evaluation and are well poised for 2015. We are finalizing long overdue job descriptions and our first ever human resource operations manual.

Economic Development and Marketing Update: As you may have heard, the city has engaged **Cresco Real Estate** to assist in marketing our available land and real estate for development. Cresco is an international commercial real estate company who will help market our commercial and downtown district. We have begun our Master planning process which will create a blueprint for our future development. Our city planners, George Smerigan and Melissa Schneider, bring combined over 50 years experience in city planning. Their scope of services will not only be to help breathe new life into our downtown area but to create a 22nd century vision of our community as a whole. Our goal is to see positive trends in development. Visualize a vibrant downtown, surrounded by new residential affordable housing and the creation of a holistic municipal campus.

Rounding out the team will be the person in the position we created in 2014: Manager of Business and Community Services filled by Rosann Jones. Ms. Jones works with our existing businesses as an ombudsman while she also dedicates her time and talents to enhancing Community Services through grant applications and establishing community events such as **First Thursdays**.

I am also pleased to share the news that **redevelopment will also be taking place at the South end of town.**

The Old South Hall has been purchased by a dynamic couple who will be restoring the old South Hall in hopes of creating a firefighters memorabilia studio and art studio. This is just the redevelopment this area deserves to enhance the commitment already made by Aces, Animal Behavioral Clinical and

Message from Mayor Ann Marie Donegan, continued from Page 1:

Wagner Insurance. Stay tuned for details.

In 2015, Olmsted Falls will be an “on location” site offered for filmmakers thanks to the Greater Cleveland Film Commission.

I know this City has the expertise and the capacity to innovate and strengthen our economy. I am committed to spearheading this team to work immediately to help Olmsted Falls achieve our full economic potential.

While we have had successes in 2014, we must do more. Olmsted Falls must develop new opportunities moving forward. And for our entire city to prosper, downtown must succeed. The jobs and tax base created by a vibrant downtown are essential in providing funds for citywide infrastructure and services.

Recreation Update: Olmsted Recreation is a reality and hard at work stepping up activities and programming as offered and enjoyed by other communities. Olmsted Recreation has been partnering with the library to develop an exciting curriculum for older adults such as iPad 101 and essentials on gardening. Classes for all ages are posted on www.olmstedrecreation.com and we have included a separate insert for your convenience.

Major Capital Improvements: Many projects are slated for 2015 and beyond. We acknowledge maneuvering around the infrastructure improvements can be cumbersome. Our city engineer and service director have created a brochure which describes the scope of each project, projected start and completion dates as well as offering detours to navigate around the projects. Please call for your copy or pick up your copy at city hall or the library.

So, how do we meet our challenges and continue our progress? We will do this by continuing to focus on three critical areas:

- One: we will drive economic growth and development through innovation.
- Two: we will expand municipal campus, and
- Three: we will create a 22nd century city through sustainability, technology, and civic commitment.

We have a committed, forward-thinking city management, and most of all, an optimistic and diverse population, ready for positive change.

Mayor Ann Marie Donegan

“Excellence is the result of caring more than others think is wise, risking more than others think is safe, dreaming more than others think is practical, and expecting more than others think is possible.” ~Ronnie Oldham~

Volunteer Corner:

Volunteers and Interns – As we are always trying to do more with less, we welcome volunteers and interns.

We have pledged to double the number of internships available to students and we are happy to report we are well on our way to achieving this goal. In 2014 Olmsted Falls had 4 high school students from Youth Opportunities intern for general filing and receptions duties. In 2015 we have recently submitted a request for interns with Cleveland State University, Youth Opportunities and Summer on the Cuyahoga. Olmsted Falls anticipates receiving 8-10 interns in 2015, most interns will be available at little to no cost. We are always looking for the best and brightest individuals to intern with us while being fiscally responsible with your tax dollars.

Keep in mind that we are always accepting resumes and interests from residents for positions on the city’s various boards and commissions. Please submit those to the Mayor for consideration.

Volunteer of the Hour:

We want to thank **Colleen Winer**, from Lindberg Blvd., who is our first official “onsite” working citizen volunteer. She is working closely with Laura Radigan, our Records Manager, getting all city records inventoried. Our records retention policies and procedures, which has been minimal for over a decade, is now in full swing thanks to Laura Radigan.

Business Spotlight:

Shout out to **Westview Concrete!!!** Westview Concrete Corp. is a family run business owned by Sam B. Walls and his son Brock P. Walls and daughter Linda M. Walls. The original concrete plant located at 26000 Sprague Road in Olmsted Falls, Ohio was built in the mid 1950’s to supply concrete for the construction of the Ohio Turnpike. After the Turnpike was completed, the plant and property was purchased by the Westview Lumber and Supply Co. who established Westview Concrete Corp. as an independent entity and incorporated the same in 1957. Westview recently won the bid to provide concrete for our road projects for 2015. A local business supplying material for local projects!!!!



Ms. Rosann Jones, Manager of Business and Community Services, recently developed a quarterly publication which is sent to all local businesses. She is doing great at keeping all of our stakeholders informed. If you are a business who did not receive this publication please contact her so that we may place your business on the list.

Crooked River Leather will be opening at 8061 Columbia Road. Crooked River is a custom made leather and sporting goods consignment shop.

Matteo’s Casual Italian Restaurant will be opening at 8072 Columbia Road. Matteo’s will offer a wide variety of traditional Italian dishes and will have a full-service bar. Remember to **“Shop the Falls, not the Malls”**.



Employee Highlights:



Gerry Peters has worked for the City Service

Department for over 12 years and was promoted to the position of Service Manager two years ago. In his leadership

role, Gerry remains an asset to the department. He is a hometown bred Bulldog having graduated from OFHS in 1988. He currently resides in Columbia Station with his family and is a volunteer firefighter/paramedic. Gerry represents the City on the Rural Lorain Water Authority Board.

He is a current member of the International Society of Arboriculturalist (ISA). In order to maintain your confidence with our tree trimming and pruning program, Gerry will be sitting for the arborist exam this year to become a certified arborist. Congratulations Gerry!



We would like to welcome **John Cheatham** as the city's new Chief Building and Zoning official. Cheatham brings over 18 years of various municipal building code and enforcement experience. We are working very hard to implement a friendlier approach to building and zoning enforcement.

George Smerigan and **Melissa Schneider** joined Olmsted Falls team as our City Planners. We are delighted that they have joined our team as they collectively bring with them a diverse planning background with about 50 years of city planning experience. George and Melissa offer an "outside the box" thinking capacity. In order to provide greater service to you, our City planners are available to meet with you regarding any project you may be thinking about, please call City Hall to schedule a meeting.



John Karl was hired in 1988 and is our longest serving member of the Fire Department. Shortly after being hired, he attained his Basic EMT certification; he progressed to gain his Paramedic certification, as well as completing

fire school and eventually his Fire Instructor certification, as well as State Fire Inspector certification. John was the City's Fire Inspector for many years and still helps out with inspections when the need arises. John has been an extremely valuable member of the Fire Department during his time here. As a fireman in a small community, John has helped repair and maintain the Engines, Trucks, and Rescue Squads keeping them in good working order.



John has been an Officer in Charge for over a decade in which he has overseen numerous house fires, and has taken the lead role on many serious rescue calls. John has been an avid racer for the last 25 years and was recently inducted into the Sandusky Speedway Hall of Fame.

Capital Improvement Project Updates:

Great news for the Tyndall Falls and Lindberg Turnpike area, the City will be applying for another Turnpike Mitigation sound barrier project.

ROAD CLOSURE - Turnpike Bridge on Columbia Road will be entirely replaced this year. We realize the enormous inconveniences but Olmsted Falls had no choice in the matter. The Road will be closed to thru traffic from June 3rd to August 12th, 2015. We apologize for the inconvenience. Detour signs will be posted.



Bagley Road Bridge originally scheduled for a complete rebuild has been pushed back to 2016.

As you may have read, the City was not been able to secure a grant for Phase V Sewers for this year. We continue to work with the various funding opportunities and plan to go back out for a grant for the entire project by September of this year. Details of this will be sent to the affected parties by later this Spring.

Main Street Parking lots enhancements will be made thanks to the EPA - "319 Grant." New lighting, reinforcement of the bank adjacent to the covered bridge, porous pavements and establishment of rain gardens for storm runoff purposes will be made this year.

Ground breaking ceremony for the **new senior center** located on the Municipal complex will take place at the Open house; see one of the inserts for details.

Events to Attend / "First Thursdays": this event will take place the First Thursday of each month starting in July in the downtown district area; we hope to garner the expertise of Northcoast Promotions, Inc. to help us plan and make these events successful. Stay tuned for details.



Railroad Updates - The administration continues to meet with the railroads concerning blocked crossings. We encourage anyone who experiences an inconvenience to call City Hall or Dispatch at 235-3145 to report a blockage so that we can continue to log in all complaints while we attempt to work with Norfolk Southern and CSX to assist in the mitigation of the inconveniences.



Heritage Home Loan Program will be again offered this year to those residents whose home is over 50 years. This program provides technical assistance and opportunities for low interest qualifies, look for a mailer from the Cleveland Restoration Society.

Finance Updates:

Our experienced Finance Department personnel continue to work on creating additional efficiencies throughout the city departments by improving processes and procedures. State audit noncompliance issues have appeared in previous audit reports and we are working on eliminating those issues. An example of a non-material non-compliance mark was the City did not have a disaster recovery plan. Through the efforts of Assistant Finance Director Mike Desan, Council adopted a Disaster Recovery plan at its meeting on February 24, 2015.

2014 will be the first time that we will be completing annual audits which is the norm for municipal entities. The

City of Olmsted Falls has traditionally done bi-annual audits. However they are of little value when the respective report is for a time period as far as 2 years back. By going to annual audits the information is much more relevant and timely.

We are continuing to work on the **Allied Waste Invoicing Audit. We want to ensure that every dollar owed for refuse collection is collected** and are hopeful that this audit will be completed and the results will be relayed to you by the end of Summer.

The city continues to aggressively evaluate and seek out funding opportunities! We are currently working on many opportunities. Over the past year, we have received the following Grants totaling over \$1.7 million:

GRANT	AWARDED	FOR
ODOT Turnpike Mitigation Program	\$1 million	Turnpike mitigation and education
Senior & Adult Services	\$10,000	Program services
History Fund	\$10,000	Streets signs, Directional brochure for historical district
OEPA 319 grant	\$230,000	Downtown municipal parking lot improvements
County Road projects	\$50,000	Road maintenance
County Road improvements	\$250,000	Road resurfacing
Cuyahoga County Planning Commission	\$75,000	Master plan grant
Community Development Block Grant	\$150,000	Senior center build out in City Hall
Lean Six Sigma education	\$10,000	Government streamlining processes education
Recycling grant	\$3,000	Postcard notification of shredding events
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,788,000.	

Levy Update:

As you know a general fund levy renewal was voted down in 2013 which reduced our funding by approximately \$180,000 per year. We continue to look at ways of reducing operational costs and seek outside funding. **This May the City has three RENEWAL LEVIES on the ballot.**

These 3 levies WILL NOT INCREASE TAXES.

Street renewal levy is for 1.3 mils used for general construction, reconstruction, resurfacing and repair of streets, roads and bridges – **the cost to the homeowner of a \$100,000 home is \$10.83 per month.**

Police renewal levy is for 1.3 mils used directly for maintaining motor vehicles, communications and other equipment and personnel – **the cost to the homeowner of a**



\$100,000 home is \$10.83 per month.

Fire renewal levy is for 0.65 mils used to purchase and maintain fire apparatus – **the cost to the homeowner of a \$100,000 is \$5.42 per month.**

The combined cost to the homeowner of a \$100,000 home for all three renewal levies is \$27.08 per month.

Service Message:

Did you know that our Service Department takes care of the maintenance, construction, and most improvements of the City such as the streets, roads, buildings, grounds, parks, and any other public places of the Municipality?

We also provide brush pickup and tree trimming within the right of way along with leaf pickup. Storm and sanitary main maintenance is another service provided. The Dept. takes great pride in its work and tries to do its best all the time. If there is any need to contact us please feel free to do so at 235-1345. Often times we are out in the field so feel free to contact us through City Hall at 440-235-5550.

It has been a tough season for **Snow Removal**. Needless to say, we have tried to do a good job. Our priorities have always been to clear the primary streets first such as Columbia and Bagley Roads; next on the list are the secondary streets; streets such as Fernwood and Brentwood; then follows side streets which are generally streets off developments such as Holden, Sussex, Taylor or Sugarbush; and last on the list are the cul-de-sacs and municipal parking lots.

Did you know that our current service department garage located on Brookside was once our fire department? In an effort to make "it" work over the years we have added to the buildings and yet we are still not able to house our city equipment. As we continue to wrestle with this issue as well as put our energy, time and money to developing and enhancing the commercial district, it makes sense to move the service garage to our second municipal complex area which is behind the Fire Station on Columbia Road. While interest rates are low and we are positioning to pay off the fire station loan within the next year, we are looking for methods to financing a **New Service Garage**.

Widening of Lewis Road at the RR tracks is still a project that is being discussed and we are working towards a plan. Please use caution in this area due to the narrowness of the road with the addition of the quiet zone supplemental safety measures by the tracks.

Flooding issue remedies are continuing to be developed; your areas will be contacted as plans are developed.

News You Can Use:

Communication remains essential to good government: The Mayor is pleased to offer a new program to the residents: "Evening Conversations with the Mayor". In order to meet the demands of your busy schedules and afford you access to the Administration, the Mayor will be in her office at City Hall from **6- 7pm on March 26, May 28, June 25 and August 27**. If you have any issues you would like to discuss with her, please come to City Hall at that time. Drop-ins are always welcome. Evening Conversation with the Mayor will be on a first come basis. However, to minimize any wait time please feel free to call 440-235-5550 and book a slot.

Pardon our construction while we rebuild: As you may be aware, the city's website was hacked and we have been taken off line. There is a temporary site as we work on re-designing the website to make it more user friendly.

Olmsted Falls will expand in to the social media network realm. Look for us soon and Facebook and Twitter.

Establishing an Olmsted Falls logo is essential to

help create our identity. Once completed, the logo and branding concept will be blended into the overall economic development plan.

Town Hall meetings will be held **April 21 - 11am and 7 pm** to discuss levy renewals and project updates and also **September 29 - 11am and 7pm**.

Rural Lorain Water Authority is working on a reverse 911 system in order to notify customers of issues or projected water stoppages. If you are a **Rural Lorain Water-customer please make sure you contact them and provide them with your phone number or email address for these notifications**.

Unfortunate news regarding WOW Cable; while we worked very long and hard on bringing you another company to offer cable services, we are sad to report that **WOW Cable** has decided to focus their business expansion in Avon Lake as opposed to Olmsted Falls for years 2015 and 2016. It appears that Avon Lake will be able to provide WOW with a larger return on their investment. We will continue to evaluate what opportunities may be available to you.

If you are experiencing a problem with a feral cat population in your neighborhood or would like to volunteer to help in a **feral cat population trap, neuter and release program**, please call City Hall at 440-235-5550.

Building Message:

The department has been working on establishing a new approach regarding exterior maintenance. Our new approach will be a friendlier, consumer-driven approach to maintaining your property. As you can appreciate, there is fine balance between achieving that goal and the infringement on property rights.

If you would like to **advertise an event on the Village Green sign**, please contact the building department at 440-235-1150 to complete an application. Once the web site is up and running you will be able to download an application.

Fire and Police Message:

Olmsted Falls is **ReadyCertified** – Congratulations to Fire Chief Munteanu and his team for this award. This certification provides an objective validation of our ongoing commitment to effective emergency management. The core standards achieved are Emergency Management Hazard Identification and Mitigation, planning, incident and resource management, communications, facilities, training and public education.

If you have not signed up for **ReadyNotify**, we encourage you to do so. Ready Notify is our free City mass notification system in which we have been utilizing as we issue emergency notification messages to you. Please feel free to sign up by calling City Hall at 440-235-5550 or by registering at www.ReadyNotify.CuyahogaCounty.us.

Currently we have approximately 2000 phone numbers. We thankfully experienced a smooth transition to our new dispatch center and hopefully your experience has been equally as good. As you know, Olmsted Falls is now a member of the **Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center** and ...



Calling for EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE is as EASY AS 1,2,3 ...

1. CALLING FROM YOUR LANDLINE TELEPHONE – DIAL 911

Dialing 911 from your landline telephone directly connects you to an emergency dispatcher at the Southwest Emergency Communications Center. If you are experiencing or witnessing any fire, medical or police emergency, your 911 call will be answered by a live emergency dispatcher (now trained to provide emergency medical support over the telephone when necessary) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



2. CALLING FROM YOUR CELL/MOBILE - DIAL 911

When dialing 911 from a cellular/mobile phone, regardless of your location within Cuyahoga County, the call will be answered by Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System (CECOMS) operators. Your cell/mobile calls will then be forwarded to the appropriate dispatch center. Even if your cell/mobile call is placed from Olmsted Falls, this call still requires a transfer to the Southwest Emergency Communications Center. Once you are connected with this dispatch center, you will be asked again the nature of the call.

3. FOR NON-EMERGENCY CALLS FROM LANDLINE OR CELL/MOBILE

Non-emergency calls are defined as administrative in nature: e.g. Police or Fire reports and to reach a particular officer.

Olmsted Falls Police Department Administrative Line (440) 235-3145
Olmsted Falls Fire Department Administrative Line (440) 235-3238

Please program your phones with the new numbers. Time matters in an emergency so please educate everyone in your family on the new improved emergency system and contact information! **If in doubt always call 911!** Thanks again for your cooperation in making our community a safe place to live.

CITY OF OLMSTED FALLS

www.olmstedfalls.org

26100 Bagley Road, Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138

City Hall: 440.235.5550

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Linda Garrity	Council-At-Large	440.427.0445	lgarrity@olmstedfalls.org
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	16th District		