

THE BLUE LETTER



333 James E. Bohanan Drive • Vandalia, OH 45377 • (937) 898-5891

March 7, 2025

Mayor Herbst & City Councilmembers:

1. Last Friday, the City hosted our annual Employee Service Awards luncheon at Cassel Hills Clubhouse. This is a special event where we recognize our great employees who have reached milestones in their years of service at the City. This year's honorees included Chad Baughman (DES) and Kristen Carnes (Finance) for 25 years of service; Chief Chad Follick (Fire) and Robert Brazel (Police) for 20 years of service; Tim Himsworth (Finance) and Philip Shafer (Police) for 15 years of service; Brittany Blackford (Police), Tonya Sparks (Public Works), and myself (Police/CMO) for 10 years of service; and Nina McPherson (Finance) for five years of service. Our employees play an integral role in providing top-tier service to the city and it is great to celebrate their accomplishments at these monumental milestones. Thanks to Councilmember Follick for his remarks and to all council members who were able to attend this special celebration.
2. Last week, I had the opportunity to attend the Ohio City Managers' Association annual conference in Columbus and listen to several great presentations on topics related to local government. Topics for this year's conference included a keynote address *For the Love of Cities* by Peter Kageyama, ICMA and OCMA update, Megatrends in government and Ohio, Building Stronger Communities through Citizen Engagement, Culture is an Inside Job, From Fixer to Influencer: Building Your Team Together, Revitalizing Riverside: Infrastructure That Inspires Growth, and Reimagining Downtown Spaces: Strategies for Economic Development. Thanks to Council for this opportunity to network with other city managers and local government leaders and learn through the workshops and presentations.
3. On February 26th, several staff members and I attended the Chamber's ribbon-cutting for the new Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley Counseling and Wellness Center at 732 West National Road. It was great to learn about their services, see the new facility, meet counselors, and enjoy light refreshments with the attendees. We welcome Goodwill Easter Seals and all their staff to Vandalia!



4. Public Works and Parks & Recreations staff continue working on the National Road tree removal and replacement project. Park maintenance staff grinded out the two remaining stumps that would not budge due to size. The “old” trees were causing damage to surrounding pavement and needed removed to prevent further damage. The Nursery contractor is scheduled to plant the new trees late March. We are excited to get these new trees planted that provide beautification along National Road and Dixie Drive.
5. On March 3-4, I attended the Ohio Law Enforcement Executive Summit at the Hocking Hills Lodge & Conference Center on behalf of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP). This annual summit includes the leadership from the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Buckeye State Sheriffs’ Association, OACP, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations, Ohio Peace Officers’ Training Academy, Ohio Department of Public Safety, and the Ohio Attorney General’s Office. Presentations and topics discussed included new law enforcement initiatives and programs, current program updates, legislative issues, and continuing collaboration on policing in Ohio.
6. Public Works crews were called in on Saturday, February 22nd to repair a water main break near 365 S Dixie Dr on a 6” main. This is our **18th repair for the winter season**, compared to eight total last winter. This increase in the repairs needed is mainly due to our aging infrastructure of 50-70+ year old water mains coupled with the large weather and temperature swings.
7. The Vandalia-Butler Chamber of Commerce will host their annual Business Meeting and Awards Celebration on Tuesday, March 11th at Christian Life Center. This year’s event will include Honor Awards Presentations, 20-year Member Presentations, Membership Update, Fiscal Report, Board Member Election Notice, and the City, Township, and Schools update. I look forward to sharing this year’s State of the City video with attendees to provide an overview of last year’s accomplishments and goals for 2025. Doors open at 7:30 am and the meeting runs from 8:00-9:30 am.
8. Congratulations to Aaron Messenger on recently receiving the Wright State University Outstanding MPA Student Award. He was selected by the university as the most outstanding MPA student in this year’s graduating class.

Please contact me directly with comments and questions.

Very Respectfully,

Kurt E. Althouse
Interim City Manager



CC:

Board and Commission Members
All City Employees

Attachments:

1. Information Update - ACM Cron – March 7, 2025;
2. Information Update - Director Leiter – March 7, 2025;
3. Information Update - Chief Follick – March 7, 2025;
4. Information Update - HR Manager Hanf – March 7, 2025;
5. Information Update – Director Clark – March 7, 2025;
6. Information Update – Operations Captain Walker – March 7, 2025;
7. Information Update - Director Borton – March 7, 2025;





To: Kurt Althouse, Interim City Manager
From: Rob Cron, Assistant City Manager
Date: March 6, 2025
Re: Information Update for February 22 – March 7, 2025

Congratulations to Jeremy Games for being chosen for this month's Employee Spotlight.

Employee Spotlight
March, 2025

Jeremy Games is finishing up his first year as a Construction Supervisor for the City of Vandalia, and he's enjoyed every minute of it.

"I really love my job," he said. "I appreciate the people that I work with and as a Vandalia resident, I enjoy providing great service to our customers."

Games provides inspection services for many types of construction projects in town, including public capital improvement projects and private developments.

The job offers something different just about every day, but his approach to his work is always the same.

"I want to treat people the way I would want to be treated," he said. "It's really that simple... the Golden Rule."

Jeremy Games
Construction Inspector
Development and Engineering

Vandalia^{ohio}
small city. big opportunity.

Representatives from Dayton Development Coalition, Jobs Ohio and I met with representatives of Adare Pharmaceuticals. Adare is looking to expand their operations here in Vandalia. They are looking to hire an additional 20+ full-time employees at their site. They are considering either alterations or an addition to their current facility at 845 Center Drive.

Ben Borton and I met with Tom Brankamp and John Lyons of Stand Associates to discuss updating the City Storm Water Management Plan. Our current plan is due for its five-year renewal with EPA. Our current plan will expire in 2025. They could also assist us with our annual MS4 Permit renewal.

Bridgette Leiter, Ben Borton, you and I attended the NAWA Special Board meeting on Thursday, March 6th. The reason for the special meeting was to authorize a contract with CDM Smith for the design of the new outfall discharge from the water plant to the Miami River through Kyle Park in Tipp City. NAWA is following orders enforced by Ohio EPA to correct a long-standing issue.

I attended the monthly Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission meeting on March 6th.

Negotiations continued this week on Friday with Teamsters Union and the Public Works Department.

Ben Graham, Mike Hammes, you and I met to review one upcoming Board of Zoning Appeals meeting item. The Board of Zoning Appeals will meet on March 12th to consider the installation of a 6-foot privacy fence in Zone A at 326 Dellsing Drive.

Staff worked with the Law Director McDonald's office to secure permission through the courts to tow several vehicles on multiple properties on Miller Lane and Volkman Drive. Vehicles have been parked at various locations on the lots for an extended period of time and were unregistered.

We will be working with the Board of Zoning Appeals members to schedule some training with City Council and our Law Director on procedures of the board.

We will host a Code Enforcement Workshop on Thursday March 20 at 9:00-12:00 in the basement of the Municipal Building. Kip Millikin has been organizing these workshops for many years now and they are always very well attended by code enforcement officials from around the region. Thei workshop will focus on post-tornado damage with speakers from Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management and the National Weather Service in Wilmington.

The next taping of Focus Vandalia is scheduled for March 27. We are still working on the topics for the April editions.

The Spring/Summer issue of the MyVandalia magazine is at the printers and we expect delivery of the magazine to Vandalia mailboxes the week of March 24.

Rich Hopkins is in the planning stages of the next CommUnity newsletter with Butler Township and the Vandalia Butler Schools.

Rich is also in the final editing stage of the Sate of the City video that will be presented at next Tuesday's Annual Chamber of Commerce meeting.

Staff from several departments attended the Ribbon Cutting for the new Goodwill Easter Seals Vandalia location on February 26th.

Congratulations to all of the employees that were honored at our Employee Awards Luncheon last Friday.

Memo



To: Kurt Althouse, Interim City Manager

From: Bridgette Leiter, Director of Finance

Date: March 5, 2025

Re: Information Update – Period Ending March 7, 2025

1. Finance would like to congratulate all employees on receiving service awards, but more specifically three of our own, Nina McPherson, on her five years of service, Tim Himsworth, on his 15 years of service, and Kristen Carnes, on her 25 years of service!!
2. Finance continues to provide data to the compilation team and auditors from Plattenburg and Associates for the 2024 Annual Report and audit.
3. I attended a NAWA Special meeting.
4. I joined a few members of the Division of Fire in a Teams webinar with the new EMS billing vendor, Medicount. The main purpose of the webinar was to discuss new bank reconciliation procedures and billing processes.
5. The 2025 tax season is well underway and the deadline to file income tax returns, April 15th, will be here before we know it! There have been 450 efiled returns received in the first few weeks of the season and several returns are received each day.



DIVISION OF FIRE INFORMATION UPDATE

TO: KURT ALTHOUSE, INTERIM CITY MANAGER
FROM: CHAD FOLLICK, FIRE CHIEF
DATE: 3/6/2025
SUBJECT: INFORMATION UPDATE – PERIOD ENDING MARCH 8, 2025

1. On February 21st crews assisted the Butler Township Fire Department with rescuing a dog from an icy pond at Art Van Atta Park. Our recent ice training proved to be valuable even for our K9 friends. We understand that after the rescue, the dog was taken to ARC where it was soon reunited with its owner.
2. Training this reporting period for crews has been VES (vent entered search) by use of our new Taylor'd training prop. Additionally, crews are taking their yearly swimming test. Thank you to the Rec Center for allowing us the use of the indoor pool to complete this necessary certification.
3. On February 26th I, along with members of our Prevention Bureau, attended the grand opening and ribbon cutting at the new Goodwill Easter Wellness Services Center. The Division of Fire is excited to have this group and resource in our city and look forward to a great partnership.
4. I, with Finance Director Leiter and Admin Assistant Jacobs, met with our account representative Jennifer Miller of Medicount. Ms. Miller did a six-month review of our EMS Billing since changing from Change Healthcare to Medicount for our EMS billing needs last summer. EMS billing is going as expected and currently back on track after significant down time from the Change Healthcare outage we experienced last spring.



DIVISION OF FIRE INFORMATION UPDATE

5. I would like to congratulate all employees on their years of top-tier dedicated service with the City of Vandalia. Lunch and the recognition on Friday, February 28th were very much appreciated.
6. On March 3rd, Battalion 3 and Ladder 3 crews again assisted Harrison Township Fire Department at the Meadows of Catalpa apartments on a structure fire.
7. Carrer Staff held a meeting on Monday, March 3rd. Items discussed were, but not limited to; budget, staffing, hiring, and goals review.
8. Currently there are multiple hiring processes going on within the Division of Fire. First, a group of part-time applicants are in the background/physical process and should be coming on board later this month for orientation. We are currently accepting applications for Full-Time Firefighter/Paramedic after a position was vacated late last month. Finally, the last round of interviews for the Full-Time Captain position will be completed this week. The Division of Fire is excited to fill and onboard all these positions as soon as possible to assist with ongoing staffing issues.

Memo



To: Kurt E. Althouse, Interim City Manager

From: Leann Hanf, Human Resources Manager

Date: March 4, 2025

Re: Information Update – Period Ending March 7, 2025

1. **Cold and Flu Season Has Officially Arrived!** As doctors' visits begin to ramp up, do not forget to review your Summary of Benefits for your medical plan to stay well informed on what is covered, and for what you may be responsible. All of our Summary of Benefits for every line of coverage we offer can be found on our [Xplore](#) site!
2. **March is National Colorectal Awareness!** Our Partners at UHC want their members to learn more about colorectal cancer including diagnosis process, common symptoms, risk factors, and how it is treated. Let us see what they have to say:

Our gut has been getting a lot of attention in recent years. It is a powerful, complicated system that can easily get out of balance. Nutrition, stress, and lifestyle habits all help play a significant role in our gut health. Speaking of important roles, our colon (large intestine) is a part of the digestive system that helps absorb water and minerals and eliminate waste. The colon is an essential part of our system. But, if cells grow abnormally in the colon or rectum, colon polyps may form. And, depending on the type of polyp, it might turn into colorectal cancer (colon cancer) over time (usually many years).

What are the types of colon cancer?

Most colon cancers are called adenocarcinomas. These tumors start in the cells that make mucus to lubricate the inside of the colon and rectum. Other types of colon cancer exist but are rare. They include:

- Carcinoid tumors
- Gastrointestinal stromal tumors
- Lymphomas
- Sarcomas

How is Colon Cancer Diagnosed?

Did you know a polyp may take up to 15 years before it turns into cancer? Regular screenings may help spot polyps early and could even help prevent them from turning into cancer. So, even if you do not have symptoms, you may want to consider getting regular colon cancer screenings once you turn 50. (Some experts say 45.) If you have any risk factors (read on to learn about these), talk to your doctor about getting screened before you turn 50 years old.

What are common colon cancer screenings?

Here's a little bit about each type of colon cancer screening. Be sure to talk with your doctor about which one may be right for you:

- **Stool test:** There are three types of stool tests. The guaiac-based fecal occult blood test and fecal immunochemical test both check for blood in your stool (blood could be an indicator that there is a polyp or cancer). Both kinds of tests are done once a year. The stool DNA test checks for actual cancer cells in the stool and is done every 3 years.
- **Flexible sigmoidoscopy:** Your doctor inserts a little lighted tube into your rectum and lower part of the colon to check for polyps or cancer. This is done every 5 years (or every 10, along with that stool DNA test mentioned above).
- **Colonoscopy:** This is like the flexible sigmoidoscopy, but it checks the rectum and the whole colon. During a colonoscopy, the doctor may remove anything suspicious. This screening is done every 10 years for people at average risk. It can also be a follow-up test if something concerning is found in one of the screenings listed above.
- **Virtual colonoscopy:** This uses X-rays and computers to create images of your colon for the doctor to analyze. This one is done every 5 years.

The test you choose may depend on your health, risk factors and personal comfort level with getting screened. The important thing is to talk to your doctor who can help you pick one — and have it done regularly.

What are signs and symptoms of colon cancer?

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of colon cancer may be tricky because they may be caused by something unrelated. That is the nature of our delicate digestive system. It is important to pay attention to how your gut is functioning because it might be trying to tell you something. Here is a list of symptoms that colon cancer might cause:

- Diarrhea, constipation or change in bowel movements.
- Rectal bleeding or bloody stool
- Constant abdominal pain or cramps
- Feeling like your bowel does not empty all the way.
- Weakness or fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss
- Keep in mind, early stages of colon cancer may likely not cause any symptoms at all. But, if any of these sounds familiar, schedule a visit with your doctor right away.

Am I at risk for colon cancer?

Most people have about a 4% chance of being diagnosed with colon cancer in their lifetime (men 4.4% and women 4.1%). However, the rate of diagnosis continues to drop because more people are getting screened and making lifestyle changes that lower their risk. The list below shows which factors might increase your risk for colon cancer.

- **Poor health:** Diabetes, obesity, smoking, alcohol, inactivity and diet all may play a crucial role in your chances for getting colon cancer. The good news? These are all things you can change! Talk with your doctor about lifestyle habits to help lower your risk.

- **Older age:** The majority of cases happen in people 50 or older.
- **Race:** African Americans have a greater chance of getting colon cancer.
- **Personal and family history:** If you or a close family member has been diagnosed, you are more likely to develop it (or get it again).
- **Previous radiation treatment:** If you have had radiation therapy around the abdomen, your chances may go up.
- **Inflammatory intestinal conditions:** Conditions like ulcerative colitis and Chron's disease may increase your risk.
- **Inherited syndromes:** Certain gene mutations form syndromes that increase your risk. The most common are familial adenomatous polyposis and Lynch syndrome. Just a small number of cases are linked to these.

It is important to know all your risk factors, even the ones you may not be able to do anything about. This list started with the factors you can change for a reason — to motivate you in taking control of your health.

How is colon cancer treated?

There are a number of different treatment options. The cancer's stage and location may help determine which treatment (or combination of treatments) may be best for you.

- **Surgery:** This is the most common treatment for colon cancer. For early (and small) cancers, you might have the polyps removed during surgery or your colonoscopy. More advanced cancers that have spread might require part of your colon or surrounding lymph nodes to be removed.
- **Radiation:** This might be used to kill cancer cells or help shrink a big tumor before surgery (that makes it easier to remove).
- **Chemotherapy:** Chemo(therapy) drugs help kill cancer cells. Chemotherapy is often used after surgery that has been done to remove advanced tumors. It helps kill any remaining cancer cells and lowers the risk of your cancer coming back.
- **Immunotherapy:** This approach works a little like a vaccine — but for colon cancer. It may help your body recognize and fight off cancer cells.

There is no single right treatment approach for colon cancer. Each person's journey is different. Be sure to have a conversation with your doctor and care team about the pros and cons of each option and do your own research so you are comfortable with the plan you pick.

Who should I see if I am concerned about colon cancer?

If you think you might have symptoms of colon cancer, or you are concerned about your risk level, schedule a visit with your primary care provider (the doctor or provider you might see for your yearly physical). Bring a list of your symptoms, family history and any questions you want answered. If your doctor thinks you may have signs of colon cancer, he or she may order one or more of those tests we mentioned above. Or, you might be referred a gastroenterologist. (Your body could be telling you that your gut just needs a little extra care.) If your test results show signs of cancer, you will likely be referred to an oncologist to discuss further tests and treatment options.

[Find a Doctor!](#)



To: Kurt E. Althouse, Interim City Manager
From: Steve Clark, Director of Parks & Recreation
Date: 3/6/2025
Re: Information Update – Period ending March 6, 2025

RECREATION CENTER

- Congratulations to Aaron Messenger on recently receiving the Wright State University Outstanding MPA Student Award. He was selected by the university as the most outstanding MPA student in this year's graduating class.
- Cassel Hills Pool Private Pool Party Rental - WebTrac: Alicia McCracken and Aaron Messenger have finished implementing and putting the private pool party rental on WebTrac. People will be able to book their parties online beginning April 1.
- Flight Fest Meeting – Aaron met with CenterPoint Energy and Chamber of Commerce on Friday, February 28 to discuss more details about putting the Flight Fest together.
- The ArtBox is now open for the season at the Art Park. There will be three free crafts in the box for people to enjoy each month. The ArtBox is similar in concept to our Little Free Library's.
- CTC Presentation: Sara Moyer, Maecie Burkhardt, and Aaron Messenger met with the Miami Valley CTC students on Tuesday, March 4 to discuss the projects they will be working on for the parks and recreation department. They will be doing a pickleball special event project and a health and wellness week initiative project.
- Homeschool Takeover: On Friday, February 28, from 11:30 am-2:00 pm, the VRC hosted a Homeschool Takeover. Homeschool groups and families were invited to come out and enjoy everything the VRC has to offer; swimming, climbing wall, gym activities, and Luther's Jungle. 64 families attended the February Homeschool Takeover!

RECREATION / ATHLETICS DIVISION / SPECIAL EVENTS

- Recreation Superintendent Alicia McCracken recently participated in a webinar entitled "Harnessing Urban Forests for Natural Disaster Resilience." Alicia indicated the webinar was very informative, especially the idea of having a tree inventory and then prioritizing if a natural disaster happens.
- Alicia McCracken (aka Ricky the Rabbit) and Maecie Burkhardt participated in the Helke Early Learning Center's Read Across America Week on March 4. Ricky Rabbit and Maecie read a book to the Kindergarten class at Helke. (pictures at end of update)
- Cassel Hills Swimming Pool season passes will go on sale April 1st. The pool will open for the season on Saturday, May 24 (Memorial Day Weekend).

- Baseball/Softball Registration was set to close on March 2nd, but we extended the deadline until Friday March 7th. A late surge in registrations this week has created a positive outcome for our final numbers for the program.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE DIVISION

- Rudy Wells, Alicia McCracken and I met with Geograph Industries to look at way-finding signage options for the Sports Complex. The current signs are over 30 years old, so we need a fresh look. Geograph manufactured and installed the new park signs, and we are looking to replicate the park sign design for our way-finding signage.
- Maintenance staff replaced seating benches outside the VRC along the main entrance walkway as well as at the Joe Wright Memorial area and at Jeffers Park. A total of seven benches have been replaced.
- Staff replaced the concrete trash cans at the Sports Complex concession, Helke shelters and Robinette shelter with concrete trash receptacles. Benches and trash cans were 25 to 30+ years old and had been maintained in functional order until deemed unsafe for use – structural failure.
- Maintenance staff modified and improved existing storage shelving for recreation staff use at the garage and baseball concession storage wings.
- Staff continue assisting Public Works in the National Road tree removal and replacement project. Park maintenance staff grinded out the two remaining stumps that would not budge due to size. The Nursery contractor is scheduled to plant the new trees late March.
- Two of the southernmost medians on Dixie Drive were struck by vehicles, two trees were destroyed and several shrubs damaged. We have completed the clean-up. Spring clean-up of landscape beds continues along with dormant grass seeding of bare and thin turf areas.
- Building Maintenance staff are completing improvements to the Tax Lobby area. Wallpaper was removed, wall blemishes corrected, new paint and lower wall surface improvements and corner guards were installed to improve the long-term look and reduce future maintenance needs associated with the use of this space.
- Our newest service van has a transmission recall and has been out of service for about 15 working days. The parts are at the dealer awaiting installation and should be completed this week.

CASSEL HILLS GOLF COURSE

- Cassel Hills Golf Course Clubhouse hosted the Annual City of Vandalia Service Awards on February 28.
- Golf Superintendent Marty Szturm has been edging bunkers and mowing the greens for the first time this year.
- Pro Pump and Controls has started the pump and controls system installation as part of the irrigation project. Their portion of the overall irrigation project should be completed by the end of March.

SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

- January and February have seen the highest number of new members at the Senior Center in the last three years.
- One-way rides for the Van Tran program in February were the highest in the past five years. There was a total of 170 one-way rides for the month.

Read Across America at Helke Early Learning Center – Kindergarten Class



Information Update



To: Kurt E. Althouse
Interim City Manager

From: Captain Ben Walker
Operations Captain

Date: March 6, 2025

Subject: Information Update Ending March 7, 2025

1. During the past two weeks, VPD officers made four traffic stops on commercial motor vehicles for traffic violations during regular patrol. These stops resulted in four written warnings.
2. Our newest officer, Kelsie Burmeister, was sworn in on February 24. She completed her orientation and is working through our field training program. Kelsie is a 2021 graduate from Botkins High School and is currently enrolled at the University of Toledo, where she will graduate in May with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice. As part of her program at University of Toledo, she graduated from the Owens State Community College police academy in December of 2024. She also completed a cold case internship program with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office in Michigan. Kelsie currently lives with her family in Botkins, and her father is a retired police officer with Sidney Police Department. She will be introduced to Council at the March 17th Council Meeting.



3. Captain Sucher, Sergeant Lawson, Officer Sommer, and a Vandalia resident hosted first round police officer interviews for eight candidates. Six of the eight moved on to second round interviews which will be held this week.
4. On February 25, Captain Sucher met with representatives with the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services regarding a federal grant submission to fund our joint Mobile Crisis Responder. Our proposal will be submitted to fund the position through the 3rd quarter of 2026.

5. Captains Walker and Sucher attended the Motorola Tech Show held at the Motorola facility in Westerville on February 26. They were able to evaluate the public safety technology Motorola offers for future consideration.
6. On February 27, VPD held a quarterly meeting with local hotel management to discuss trends and crimes occurring at these establishments. The Division holds these meetings with our hotels to foster cooperation, reduce crime, and provide resources needed to combat crime and nuisance issues. Captain Walker, Captain Sucher, Sergeant Garry Lawson, CPO Rich Sommer, Task Force Officer Tim Christian, VFD representatives, and DES covered various topics including criminal trespassing. After the business meeting portion was over, we hosted a web demonstration from Flock Safety on technology they can offer private businesses, such as our hotels.
7. On February 28, Captain Sucher and Officer Sommer participated in a Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment for the Justice Center. This analysis is being completed by city staff to update protocols for emergency situations, threats to infrastructure, and streamline responses to events.
8. On February 28, Chief Althouse, Captain Walker, Captain Sucher, SSM Wright, and Officer Shafer attended the City of Vandalia Service Awards luncheon. This event celebrates service milestones with the City of Vandalia. Congratulations to the Police Division employees who received recognition for their years of service, including Sergeant Robert Brazel (20 years), Officer Philip Shafer (15 years), Chief Kurt Althouse (10 years), and Officer Brittany Blackford (10 years). We also congratulate all the service award recipients for their dedicated service and milestone celebration.
9. Our employee wellness committee held their first meeting of 2025 on February 27. Captain Walker reviewed the committee's goals and accomplishments from 2024 and, with input from the committee, set goals for 2025. Spencer Deffner, one of our Kettering Health Network physical trainers, also attended the meeting. This committee is made up of representatives from every rank and position and provides input to guide and steer our employee wellness initiatives.
10. On March 2, Crime Prevention Officer Rich Sommer gave a tour of the police department to a local girl scout troop.
11. On March 3-4, Chief Althouse attended the Ohio Law Enforcement Executive Summit at the Hocking Hills Lodge & Conference Center on behalf of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP). This annual summit includes the leadership from the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, OACP, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations, Ohio Peace Officers' Training Academy, Ohio Department of Public Safety, and the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Presentations and topics discussed included new law enforcement initiatives and programs, current program updates, legislative issues, and continuing collaboration on policing in Ohio.
12. On March 4, Captain Sucher and SSM Wright attended a planning meeting with IT Manager Davey on the new citywide phone upgrade project.

13. Captain Walker attended the Ohio First Responder Wellness Coordinators' virtual meeting on March 4. This group is a network of first responder representatives, as well as mental health professionals, that collaborate and share information on first responder wellness initiatives. The group is coordinated through the Ohio Department of Public Safety.
14. Crime Prevention Officer Rich Sommer attended the monthly Miami Valley Crime Prevention Association Meeting on March 5.
15. On March 7, Captain Sucher and Officer Sommer participated in another Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment for VFD Station 1.
16. Captain Walker and Chief Althouse attended the Vandalia Butler Chamber of Commerce's First Friday Coffee at the Vandalia Public Library today. Captain Walker shared a crime prevention tip and information about upcoming special events.
17. A police captain posting was made today for internal candidates to submit applications to fill an upcoming vacancy with the promotion of Captain Sucher to police chief. The police captain selection process will take place over the next several months.



Public Service Information Update

To: Kurt E Althouse, Interim City Manager
From: Ben Borton, Director of Public Service
Date: March 6, 2025
Subject: **Information Update for February 22 – March 7, 2025**

Development & Engineering Services (DES)

Dog Leg Water and Sanitary Extension Phase 2 project: Outdoor Enterprise has installed the lift station backup generator and electric meter pedestal. Final electrical hookup and lift station commissioning are now waiting on availability of their electrical subcontractor.

Bikeway Connector project: Brumbaugh Construction has begun placing the foundations and constructing mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) wall #2 (next to the Taylorsville Dam).

Johnson Station Rd Bridge Replacement project: This project to replace the bridge over the Poplar Creek at the north end of the roadway is in the design phase. This \$1.6 million project is **94%** funded by the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) municipal bridge program grant (federal funds) and an ODOT design task order. Construction is planned for 2027.

Precision Concrete Sawcutting continues sidewalk grinding of trip hazards on specific streets in the City.

2025 Curb/Sidewalk project: Coate Construction plans to start sawcutting on Friday (3/7) or next week with concrete removal/replacement to start the week of March 17th. Work plans to start on Stoney Springs Rd and Cornish Dr. Notices were sent out to residents informing them of the upcoming project in front of their property and the zero-cost to them for any curb or sidewalk designated by the City for replacement, as part of the **Safe and Stable levy**.

Upcoming Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs):

Anticipated Start	Project	Contractor
April	Kenneth Avenue Watermain Replacement & Resurfacing	Sturm Construction
May	Tionda, Mossview, Ranchview Watermain Replacement & Resurfacing	M&T Excavating
Summer/Autumn	2025 Street Resurfacing	<i>out for bid soon</i>
Autumn	Damian, Soter, Romanus, Desales (N) Watermain & Resurfacing	<i>out for bid May/June</i>

Following a court order, DES staff towed nine vehicles due to property maintenance violations from 6208 Miller Ln, 6201 Miller Ln, and 6070 Volkman Dr on February 24th and 28th thanks to help & support from the Police division.

DES staff have been performing inspections of the old Rite Aid building at 10 W National Rd for the due diligence period of the property sale.

On February 26th, Chief Building Official (CBO) Mastrino, Zoning and Planning Coordinator Graham, and I attended the Goodwill grand opening & ribbon cutting with other City staff to celebrate the opening their counseling and wellness center at 732 W National Rd.

On February 27th, Assistant City Manager Cron and I met with Strand Associates to discuss our current stormwater management plan. Electrical/Building Inspector Martin attended the quarterly hotel/motel meeting with other staff members and hotel managers.

On February 28th, CBO Mastrino and I participated in the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) with other City staff for the Justice Center. CBO Mastrino also participated in the THIRA for the Fire Houses on March 7th. We also held our monthly DES staff meeting.

On March 5th, Public Works Superintendent Hayslett and I attended the monthly NAWA Kyle Park Outfall Channel project meeting for the plant's new outfall to the Miami River and NAWA technical committee meeting. On March 6th, Assistant City Manager Cron, Finance Director Leiter, yourself, and myself attended the NAWA special board meeting.

I also attended the Clean Sweep of the Great Miami River meeting on March 6th to discuss/plan this year's regional river cleanup.

Congratulations to Engineering/GIS Technician **Chad Baughman** for his **25 years of service** to the City and Public Works Office Manager **Tonya Sparks** for her **10 years of service** to the City! Both were recognized for reaching these achievements during 2024 at the annual Service Awards Luncheon on February 28th.

Public Works (PW)

New Public Works Facility (810 Northwoods Blvd): CBO Mastrino and I met with Elevated Ground Solutions to discuss the progress of tree clearing at site.

Streets:

Crews continued hydro-excavating, removing, and grinding tree stumps with the Parks & Recreation (P&R) department on National Rd (from Perry St to Ranchview Dr) and S Perry St.

Water:

Crews were called in on Saturday, February 22nd to repair a water main break near 365 S Dixie Dr on a 6" main. This is our **18th repair for the winter season**, compared to eight total last winter. This increase in the repairs needed is mainly due to our aging infrastructure of 50-70+ year old water mains coupled with the large weather and temperature swings.

Crews installed the pit, automatic flusher, and pop-up drain at the west end of Poplar Creek Rd to keep chlorine levels up to OEPA minimum limits. This automatic flusher will ensure fresh water is drawn into this dead end main without needing manpower to flow the fire hydrant. This small project exemplifies the Citywide policy goal of **Sharpen the Saw** and we are hoping will be the first of many

to ensure all of our residents & businesses receive the same top-tier quality, no matter where they are on the City's public water system (PWS).

Crews worked with the Golf division of P&R to pothole depths of the water main through the golf course to insure it does not get hit/damaged during the installation of the new irrigation water lines.

Crews continued installing new water meters inside residences/businesses and outside in meter pits, where some have needed new angle valves which are located on the City side of the meter.

Crews continued turning (closing/opening) watermain valves to confirm operational status throughout the City. This is an EPA requirement to perform turning on 20% of all valves each year.

Sanitary Sewer:

Crews finished walking sanitary sewer lines in remote areas throughout the City inspecting manholes (MHs) to assure flow is moving and resumed inspecting sanitary sewer main using the SL-RAT tool via sound waves.

Crews also completed inspecting grease traps throughout town. These inspections are important to prevent large build ups in the sanitary sewer which results in blockages in the mains and backups into residences/businesses.

Crews performed monthly sanitary sewer lift station maintenance. This involves removing grease buildup on pump float balls, checking amps on motors, and documenting motor run hours.

Storm Sewer:

In preparation for the 2025 Street Resurfacing project, crews began inspecting catch basins and noting issues/repairs needed on the streets to be resurfaced this year.

Other Services:

Crews performed 78 utility locates this period for Ohio 811.

Crews performed two burials at Poplar Hill cemetery during this period.

Vehicle Maintenance:

The mechanics replaced tires on the sign/lift truck #34, battery on the loader, repaired a tire on PW pickup truck #10, serviced the old concrete mixer, and requested quotes for the CIP-appropriated new concrete mixer.

The mechanics also serviced the Fire division's Medic 1 and repaired the door latches on Medic 3.

Negotiations continue with Teamsters local union 957 for the 4/2025 – 4/2028 PW employees' contract. The existing contract is set to expire at the end of the month.