

Community Connection

ISSUE #35

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The Village of Ottawa * 136 North Oak Street * Ottawa
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Special Points of Interest:

- Council meetings—8 pm the 2nd & 4th Monday of each month at Municipal Building
- Shade Tree Commission - 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm
- Planning Commission - 3rd Friday of each month at 8:30 am
- Park Board meets on the 4th Monday of each month at 7 pm
- E-file your annual municipal income tax return online at www.ritaohio.com



MAYOR'S ANNUAL ADDRESS



2017 was an interesting year for the Village. We had over \$5,600,000 invested in various areas of our municipality. Hirzel Canning was the biggest investor with over \$3.7 million dollars to expand their facility and build an additional warehouse. Casey's is building a General Store in town that will serve pizza and convenience foods as well as sell gasoline, Tractor Supply opened their doors for business and the wind turbine that will provide power to Whirlpool is completed.

Some good news on the flood mitigation efforts: The Appellate Court has sided with the Maumee Conservancy District for the acquisition of the property for the diversion channel. Hopefully that project will move along quickly and be able to be bid out early this year. This project will definitely have a positive impact on flooding in Ottawa and the entire area has a lot of recreational and environmental possibilities.

The Village is always working to maintain and update Village properties. We are working with the engineering firm of Poggemeyer Design Group on a comprehensive study for the Water Treatment Plant which will include numerous EPA mandated improvements. Initially we were looking at approximately \$7,000,000 for these improvements. We've since reduced that to less than \$4,500,000 with suggestions from our staff.

At the Wastewater Treatment Plant we are also involved in some improvements. Initially this project was estimated at \$3,000,000 and Village staff has worked to reduce that number to around \$2,000,000.

The Village spent \$350,000 improving our streets, curbs, gutters and storm sewers and as well as over \$200,000 improving water and sewer lines this year. Although we are working our way down 2nd Street, we need to replace some underground infrastructure in order to finish all the way down to Agner St.

The Open Space Committee is working to develop uses for the properties which were purchased with Hazard Mitigation Grant monies. Meetings were held to determine a list of priorities and it all comes down to: a Stage/Pavilion area for the Paul's lot, a canoe ramp and a walking path in the Arrowhead park area, and a couple of soccer fields off of Fourth and Maple Streets. We're working with the State and area Civic organizations to help with some of the funding for these projects.

Memorial Park has seen some improvements in 2017. The Village spent \$219,000 to add new lighting, improve the ball diamonds and add fencing. Another big project that has been in the works for awhile is the lighting for Memorial Field. The Rotary Club was able to secure a bridge loan and through the help of many very generous donations along with the village, we have raised enough money to replace the lighting for the ball diamond at Memorial Park. I would like to give a very big thank you to all donors as well as all the groups and individuals who were involved in the process.

Along those same lines; on Arbor Day this year we planted trees at SPPS and Ottawa Elementary. Wouldn't you know, the students named the trees and when SPPS named their tree Barbie, (Barb Schroeder's class was out planting the tree), OE found that out and named their tree Ken. That gave us quite a chuckle. I look forward to seeing Barbie & Ken grow to their full potential.

Just a reminder to our residents, the Village has a CRA (Community Reinvestment Program) in place. This allows a property tax abatement of up to ten years if you build a new home or remodel your existing home. If you're considering a new home or a remodel, please stop up to the Municipal Building and ask about this program.

It's been a pleasure working with Curt Croy and the CIC these past few years and we'll miss him but I look forward to working with the new director Amy Sealts. I definitely hope to continue a great working relationship with the CIC.

While I'm thanking people, I'd like to thank Council for doing all that we need to do and giving the time and effort with long meeting nights and special meetings to do what is needed to keep this Village prosperous. And I would like to give a huge Thank You to our employees for working together to overcome labor shortages in several areas of our village this past year. I know it's been trying at times and I really appreciate the extra effort that you've given. Thank you for a job well done!!

Now... go Titans, go Tribe, go Cavs, and how about those Browns? They had a better season than the Bengals and Cowboys and a few others, at least we get the number 1 pick in the draft.

- J. Dean Meyer, Mayor



Village of Ottawa Council

Dean Meyer—Mayor

Dave Michel, President

Jo Deskins

Troy Yant

Jeff Ducey

Tim Maag

Tom "Duffer" Rosenbauer

Planning Commission

Dean Meyer—Chair

Tim Maag

Bill Hanna

Denny Recker

Randy Verhoff



A Few Words... on Trees



Based upon a hazardous tree assessment completed by volunteers and members of Ottawa's Shade Tree Commission, Village trees considered first priority hazards have been taken down by the Village's contracted provider, Tawa Tree Service. The wood from those tree removals has been taken to the Municipal Garage, located at 1323 N. Defiance Street, and is available to the public free of charge. Prior to removing cut wood from the garage site, residents must obtain and sign an annual Hold Harmless Agreement which is available between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the Municipal Building, 136 N. Oak Street, phone: 419-523-5020. Upon execution of the Hold Harmless Agreement, members of the public can remove the wood any day of the week between dawn and dusk.

On another note, the STC is proud to announce the designation of the Village of Ottawa, as a Tree City USA and Tree City Growth Award recipient for 2017. Tree City USA is a nationwide movement that provides the framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their public trees. To qualify as a Tree City community, applicants must meet four standards established by the Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters. Included in these standards are a.) a Tree Board or Department, which in the case of our Village, is the Shade Tree Commission, b.) a tree care ordinance, c.) an annual tree budget of \$2 per capita minimum, and d.) an annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation. The Tree City Growth Award highlights innovative programs and projects as well as increased commitment of resources for urban forestry. The Hazardous Tree Assessment, and an upgraded Arbor Day Celebration, were just a few programs, qualifying the Village of Ottawa for such designation.

- Jo A. Deskins, Council Member and Liaison to STC

CONTACT INFO

Email addresses for Council members

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Village website—www.ottawaohio.us

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Village of Ottawa residents welcome two new Council members.

Tim Maag and Tom "Duffer" Rosenbauer were each elected to serve a four year term. Dave Michel, who was the only incumbent on the ballot was also reelected to serve another four years. Joe Schroeder, the Village Law Director, administered the Oath of Office at the Reorganization Meeting on January 2, 2018, so the new members have already participated in several Council and Committee meetings .

Council members have an email address for residents to contact them with any Village related questions or concerns. The addresses of all the members are listed below on this page.



COMPENSATION STUDY

Recently, there have been some articles in the local newspapers concerning compensation and the study that was done for the full time employees of the Village of Ottawa. This short article will let everyone know what is going on and hopefully where we are going with this.

In early 2017, Village Council entered into a contract with The Archer Company from Columbus, Ohio to complete a compensation study . The purpose of this study was for many reasons. Like every employer, the Village needs to be competitive in the job market to be able to retain and attract employees which are the Village's greatest asset. We want to be fair to our employees to ensure they are reasonably compensated. We also need to be fair to the residents of the Village as taxpayers and also as well as users of the services our Village provides.

The study we received was very well done and placed employees in job grades with minimum and maximum pay. The information in this study was created by doing comparisons of pay from many Northwest Ohio cities and villages of similar size and skill level to Ottawa. We received the study in mid December and have a lot of work ahead trying to understand and implement this in 2018.

What was not in the study or the article in the newspaper was the benefit package that the Village offers to the employees. We consider pay just a part (albeit a large part) of our total compensation package that includes insurance benefits as well as retirement. We owe it to our employees as well as our residents to offer a competitive pay and benefit package. This study gives us a great start to that. - Dave Michel, Council President

"Do small things with great love." -Mother Teresa