

# Community Connection

ISSUE #23

FEBRUARY 2016

The Village of Ottawa \* 136 North Oak Street \* Ottawa  
Phone 419.523.5020 \* Fax 419.523.4246 \* [www.ottawaohio.us](http://www.ottawaohio.us)

## Special Points of Interest:

- **CORRECTION**—The new phone book has the wrong number for City Clerk! Correct phone for Clerk's Office is 419.523.5020. The number listed... 419.523.5050 is the swimming pool!
- Council meetings—8 pm the 2nd & 4th Monday of each month at Municipal Building
- Reminder: Quarterly tax payments for those who do not withhold Municipal Income Tax at their place of employment are due and payable to RITA.
- E-file your annual municipal income tax return online at [www.ritaohio.com](http://www.ritaohio.com)
- Watch for a mailer from Aspen Energy and also a public meeting about aggregation

“What the world needs now is love, sweet love. It's the only thing that there is just too little of.”

## MAYOR'S ANNUAL ADDRESS



2015 was a very good year in regards to investment in our community. Almost \$7 million dollars in building permits were filed in 2015 as compared to about \$3.5 million in 2014. True Value, Hirzel Canning, Verhoff Alfalfa, ACCU Properties, Industrial Millwright and OG Schools were among the top investors.

As far as the budget goes, the Village budgeted \$13,439,400 for 2015 of which 59% was spent. Part of this included \$429,000 in grants monies received for projects like the tree planting, a couple rounds of HMGP purchases, the West Ottawa Pump Station Project and a safety grant from BWC. Also included in this figure is \$474,300 in low and/or 0% interest loans which funded projects like the WWTP Screening Facility, a section of Putnam Parkway and Williamstown Road, the Lime Sludge Lagoon and the largest portion was for the West Ottawa Pump Station.

In regards to our infrastructure, we spent over \$960,000 on improvements to our streets, curbs and gutters and various concrete work within the Village. This figure includes Buckeye Street, Fair Avenue, various storm sewer repairs, Putnam Parkway Street lighting, and the initial payments on the street sweeper, sewer camera and loader.



It has been a busy year at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. In January, we received the camera, which was purchased to inspect the sewer lines. So far we've inspected and jetted about 6 miles of lines. Per the NPDES permit compliance schedule, we are already into 2017 requirements, so we are definitely working ahead on this project. We've also replaced the river siphons on Oak Street and St Rt. 224 with new lift stations. These new lift stations will allow for expansion to the south and the west in the future when necessary.

We're looking into the future and being proactive at the Water Treatment Plant as well. We are in discussions with the City of Lima to connect our water systems. This could be a huge

savings for the Village by having a secondary water supply and potentially eliminating the need for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reservoir per the EPA's requirement on redundancy. This is also a good deal for our current water partners and any new customers that we may pick up through regionalization efforts.

The grant from the US Division of Forestry that we received has resulted in the planting of 795 new trees in the Village. As I'm sure you've all noticed, a lot of these trees were planted in the parks or on properties that were purchased with monies from the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The planting was designed to bring the properties back to a more natural state and should help with erosion and water retention.

Speaking of water and flood properties, the money that the State earmarked for the Lower Blanchard Flood Mitigation is already paying dividends. The I-9 bridge approach was lowered to pre 1996 level and the rain this past week has tested the adjustment. The river flowed over Road I-9 at about 22.5 ft. and crested at 23.27 ft. which is well below the crest level which was predicted based on Findlay's crest. The Maumee Conservancy District is still working on the Diversion Channel. This project will also have a positive impact on the flood level and hopefully, will be completed by the end of 2016.

One of our HMGP properties, formerly known as Paul's Ace Hardware, has been on my mind a lot lately. I'd like the Community Development Committee and any of the area service groups that are interested in helping, to get together to brainstorm ideas on how to develop an allowed use for this property. With the location in the heart of our downtown, this area could surely have a unique use that would benefit Ottawa.

We are going to look into funding from the State to help with some street projects this year. We will probably be working with Jeff Loehrke and John Recker through ODOT's State Infra-

## Village of Ottawa Council

Dean Meyer—Mayor

Council Members

Tim Macke, President

Jo Deskins

Troy Yant

John Salsburey

Dave Michel

Jeff Ducey

## Planning Commission

Dean Meyer—Chair

Tim Macke

Bill Hanna

Denny Recker

Randy Verhoff

structure Banking program to help fund one of the larger projects.

In the Industrial Park, we are in the process of some new plating. We are proposing the creation of 10 new parcels to develop a small industrial and/or commercial business district.

In closing, I want to thank ALL of the employees of the Village for a very successful year serving our residents. I also want to thank Council for a job well done!

**Go Titans, Tribe and Brow.....!!!!!!**

—Dean Meyer, Mayor

PS. Happy Valentine's Day to All!  
Especially Charlotte!

# AGGREGATION? Some Questions and Answers

In the last issue of the *Community Connection*, we discussed how Village Council passed legislation that will put electric and gas aggregation on the ballot in March. This will present a chance for residents to see a nice decrease in their bills. There is a public meeting planned as well as an informational mailer as election day nears. Here are some common questions and answers regarding aggregation:

- Q. *What is aggregation?*  
 A. Aggregation is a process by which communities combine their residents into a large buying group. These buying groups result in increased "buying power" and stable prices for members.
- Q. *Will I notice a difference in service?*  
 A. No, the only difference is the energy you receive from your selected supplier is in more stable prices. Your local utility continues to deliver energy to homes and businesses, and the electricity will flow without interruption.
- Q. *Where does the natural gas or electricity come from?*  
 A. Using forecasting and hedging methods, your selected electric and/or gas supplier procures much of the energy supplied on the open market to find the best price for your aggregation group.
- Q. *Why is the opt-out aggregation better than opt-in aggregation?*  
 A. Opt-out is the easiest way for citizens to shop since residents need to do nothing to participate in the program. Opt-out aggregation programs usually provide better prices than opt-in due to a larger aggregation group and corresponding higher energy demand.
- Q. *What is an opt-out period? What does it mean?*  
 A. When a community has decided to take part in an opt-out aggregation program, they must provide all residents the option of choosing to NOT participate in the program, or "opt-out". Before the aggregation program begins, all residents will receive an opt-out notice in the mail. Residents

- are given a date by which they must return the opt-out notice or call a toll-free number to request to be opted-out of the program.
- Q. *How does aggregation benefit a resident?*  
 A. Aggregation combines the retail electric and/or gas loads of customers in a community. By combining the loads of its residents, the Village can be more effective in negotiating rates than an individual may be. This combined buying power typically provides lower, more stable rates and improved service from suppliers.
- Q. *Why is this important to a Village?*  
 A. State legislators made the decision to put the power in the hands of local government to help residents with their energy costs by forming aggregation groups. A Village can now provide another choice to their residents to buy their electricity and/or natural gas in bulk. Energy can be purchased at ideal times (spring through summer) to provide a better rate in the fall and winter.
- Q. *How does an opt-out aggregation program work?*  
 A. In order for a community to create an aggregation program, a majority of the residents have to pass a ballot issue authorizing the community to negotiate rates on their behalf. All eligible residents are automatically included in the program unless they choose to opt-out.
- Q. *Who is eligible?*  
 A. Electric customers residing with the Village receiving energy from AEP are eligible. Residents that are served by another supplier, PIPP customers, customers in arrearage or are both a distribution service and mercantile customer are not eligible. Most gas customers in the Village are eligible.
- Q. *What if I do not want to participate?*  
 A. Every resident will receive an opt-out notice and 21 days to opt-out of the program. The notice will provide rates for the new program. If you do nothing, you will automatically receive the new rate.
- Q. *What if I already have a supplier?*  
 A. By law, only residents who are not under contract with a supplier and are current on their local utility energy bills may be sent an opt-out card. Residents who have already made a choice will not be sent an opt-out card. They may contact the supplier separately to sign into the program if they like the rates. Those residents should review their current suppliers contract to avoid any early termination penalties.
- Q. *Will I keep my budget billing?*  
 A. Budget billing remains. Your electric/gas rate may be lower so you may request your budget amount to be recalculated to reflect a lower cost.
- Q. *Who do I pay?*  
 A. You will receive a single consolidated bill from your local utility. You will continue to pay your local utility which will then remit payments to the supplier.

*Council Member—Dave Michel*

## Waste Not, Want Not



In December of 2015, the Village of Ottawa renewed its contract with Republic Services of Carey, Ohio, designating Republic as its weekly trash and recycling hauler. It was also in the month of December that Republic experienced a loss of drivers and the need to train new drivers and acquaint them with their routes. Due to this change, there were some residences whose garbage and/or recycling tubs were not picked up on designated days. Residents should be advised that a representative from Republic met with Council on January 11<sup>th</sup> to resolve these issues and the Village has been assured that moving on, there will be no gaps in delivery of services to any of the Village's residents. Anyone with pickup concerns should either contact the Municipal Building at 419.523.5020 or Republic at 800.491.1115.

The rates that were part of the previous contract with Republic will be extended for three months until March 31, 2016. From April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2018, the monthly rate for unlimited weekly trash collection with one "bulk item" will be \$15.17 per household. For those 65 years and older, the rate will be \$13.80 a month, for the same services.

Republic Services will also continue to provide recycling pickup to all subscribers who continue to use the blue, 16 gallon tubs secured from Republic. These tubs can be used to recycle aluminum cans, metals, paper, cardboard, glass and plastics. For an additional \$2.75/month, Republic will provide a 65- gallon recycling toter, like the one pictured at the right. Interested residents can increase their recycling efforts and order the larger recycling containers by calling Republic directly, at 800-491-1115. *Jo Deskins—Council Member*



## CONTACT INFO

### Email addresses for Council members

tmacke@ottawaohio.us    jducey@ottawaohio.us  
 jdeskins@ottawaohio.us    tyant@ottawaohio.us  
 dmichel@ottawaohio.us    jsalsburey@ottawaohio.us

## SMOKE ALARMS

**Save Lives!**

Call 1-844-207-4509  
 for free home safety visit &  
 smoke alarm installation



Sponsored by:  
 American Red Cross  
 Ottawa Volunteer Fire Department  
 Knights of Columbus