

Fairview Park - State of the City Report

March 11, 2015

Mayor Eileen Ann Patton

Good afternoon members and guests of our Fairview Park Chamber of Commerce, our city staff, and the residents and friends of the City of Fairview Park. I would like to acknowledge and welcome Councilman Angelo Russo, Mr. Joseph Benny from Congressman Jim Renaci's office, County Council Mr. Dave Greenspan, School Superintendent Bill Wagner, School Board President Joslyn Dalton and Board Member Joseph Shukofsky. It is with pride and optimism that I highlight our accomplishments and progress today. "The Annual State of the City is an opportunity for us to let residents and business leaders know what the city is doing to maintain our quality of life and build Fairview Park into the strong regional partner that we know a prosperous future requires." "This is an opportunity for us to evaluate where we've been and get the community involved in where we're going."

If I were going to summarize a theme for the State of Our City it would be

.....The future is looking better than ever for Fairview Park.

Anyone who knows me knows I love promoting Fairview Park. I'll talk your ear off if you let me about how wonderful the city is. I'll tell you why you want to locate your business here and raise your family here.

As an administration, we have the privilege of telling Fairview Park's story to people in the County and the State as we work to receive critical *grant dollars* to help bolster our city.

And boy have we delivered, with more than \$531,000.00 in grant funding received. Matt Hrubey, our Grant Administrator, worked with Ohio Department of Transportation in receiving funding for Safe Routes to School Program, the Cleveland Indians in park improvements, the Ohio EPA for stream bank and

erosion at the creek and city hall parking lot, Cleveland Foundation for an intern and Cuyahoga County for recycling awareness and shredding days.

Development remains on track in Fairview Park. This past year was an eventful year where Development Director Rob Berner worked closely with all owners and issues relating to economic development.

One of the biggest projects is the Garnett Health Campus renamed O'Neill Healthcare, Fairview Park. As the final touches were being made on the 65,000 square foot building including 118 skilled beds, therapy and rehabilitation center, hospice care and dialysis center, the community patiently awaited the ceremonial ribbon cutting in January. With an estimate of 100 employees when the business is up and running, we certainly welcome the O'Neill family back to Fairview Park, where it was once the place that they grew up. Today, I would like to introduce to you John O'Neill and David O'Neill, welcome.

In 2014 we also saw the beginning of the construction of RiverSouth Urban Lofts development at the former Mandley Vetrofsky Funeral Home. Two buildings are presently underroof with 10 sold. This new development in the city will one day be home to 35 new families. I would like to introduce Andrew Brickman from Brickhouse Partners.

The following businesses also opened in our community: UPS Store, James Games and More, Message Heights, Mattress Firm, Strive Therapy and Elite Fitness, Enso Rolls and Bowls Restaurant, Anchor Medical Staffing, Laumer Corrigan Funeral Home, Dulcelandious Cupcakes and More, Loving Cup Kids Academy of Fairview Park, CTown Crossfit, JJ's Pizza, Metro PCS, and Dr. Moussa, Cardiovascular Medicine of Cleveland moved into his newly purchased building at West 215 in Lorain, the former Murton's Day Care.

This year we will be working on the occupancy of Savers Resale in the former Big Lots on Center Ridge and the Redevelopment of the Center Ridge/West 210 commercial district that was re-zoned last year. The Coffinberry School Property was recently sold to a local developer. The sale of this area is in its infancy stages and we will be meeting with the new owner shortly. We continue our efforts

working with the owners of the former NASA buildings in redevelopment of this property.

Thank you to the Fairview Park Chamber of Commerce for hosting the “2015 Business Showcase”. This year it will be on Thursday, April 16, 2015 from 2-7 pm. This successful event is held right here at the Gemini Center.

Sewer projects continue to be an important part of our future. Last year sewer line grouting, sealing and dye testing took place at various areas of our city. A new approach to tackling flooding problems began last year in public meetings with our residents, Service Director Berner, city council and our city engineer’s office. The results of these meetings was the city’s decision to work and partner with an outside consultant, Black & Veatch Engineering to develop a comprehensive plan to address areas of flooding.

The plan involves the development of a skeletal model for the neighborhoods on the western border of the city. The company will coordinate the collection of information to create a computer model of the city’s sanitary sewer system. The model will indicate if the sewer system is adequate in size, and how badly it is affected by heavy rainstorms.

Seven (7) water flow meters will be installed at various locations to determine the sewer system’s capacity on dry days in comparison to days with heavy storms. The plan is to begin the flow meter measurements in this spring and finish by mid-to late summer. Based on the needs identified by the computer model, a master plan will be developed consisting of prioritized improvement projects that will be implemented over several years. In the meantime, we will explore potential funding sources for future projects.

All of you arrived here today by driving down one or more of the 117 streets that make up Fairview Park. The streets of our community require a lot of maintenance and repair to stay in good shape. Our *Service Department*, under the guidance of Service Director Rob Berner and Supervisor Kevin Bridegum oversee 23 full time employees. This hard working team used over 2,000 tons of asphalt, cold patch and salt and collected 1,229 tons of leaves utilizing 3 leaf vac machines and 5 city

trucks over 36 days. They also painted cross walks and lane markings, pruned 111 city trees, removed 31 old trees and planted 28 new ones. And if that is not enough, this team repaired 35 water main breaks, serviced traffic lights, cleaned 47,710 feet of sewers, rebuilt 30 catch basins, made 196 service calls to residents. Thanks for the great work our service department does!

In 2014, the city purchased a new Vemeer Brush Chipper for the tree technician and a Durapatcher brand spray injection machine for road repairs and maintenance.

Our service department outreach program assisted residents through the collection of 7 ½ tons of household hazardous waste, 5 ½ tons of computers and 6 tons of paper shredding.

As we try to maximize our recycling efforts, I am pleased to report that the co-mingling of recyclables, combining paper with many household recycling items, has resulted in a greater participation and tipping fee savings. I commend both the residents and our Fairview Park Green Team for this progress. Two successful shredding days/recycle days last year were welcomed by the residents. Special thanks to Bridget Hinkel, Matt Hrubey and the Green Team for their exceptional volunteerism on this important community outreach days.

It is Fairview Park's investment in our neighborhoods that strengthens the ties that bring us all together. This is how we build community. This is why people love to live here. As you can clearly see, Fairview Park is about neighborhoods; they really are our heartbeat.

The efforts of our ***building and code enforcement*** go beyond bricks and mortar to real quality of life issues. I am personally committed to fair but aggressive code enforcement. Our Code Enforcers have had a busy and productive year conducting more than 2,000 property maintenance inspections. These inspections and resulting corrective actions have undoubtedly resulted in accident and fire prevention as well as overall quality of life improvements.

1,408 permits were issued for various projects including – HVAC, plumbing, concrete, pools and demolition to name a few. All of this work is accomplished with only 5 people in our Building Department.

After 14 years in FP and 27 years overall in the building business, our Building Commissioner, Sel Kulscar, has announced his retirement this November. He has a bright future as well, as many grandchildren are awaiting his undivided attention. We appreciate Sel's talents and his attention for excellence. With 8 months remaining.... We will continue to work him to the bone! Congratulations, Sel.

Today, we are working hard to preserve our financial integrity. The city received the "***Financial Reporting Achievement Award***" from The Government Finance Association and State Auditor Award of Distinction. Thank you to Finance Director Lisa Rocco, the finance staff and the Directors and Chiefs who play a significant and active role in the operations of their departments budgets. We will continue this strong fiscal oversight and we will be conservative with our resources.

Income tax receipts were up by 3.4 % from 2013 to 2014 and property tax receipts were up 1 % from the same time period. There was a decrease in the general Fund Revenue from '13 – '14 as this loss was attributed to receiving less from the estate tax receipts. We ended last year in with a carry-over in the General Fund. Last Saturday, the city administration, directors and chiefs met with our city council to review our budget, revenue and expenditures for this year. With this continued fiscal oversight, we anticipate a carry-over of over 1 million dollars for next year.

We are grateful for the dedicated work of our ***Police Officers*** on the street as well as the detective bureau. Our Police Department handled almost 14,000 calls for service, over 2,000 investigative/accident reports, 640 prisoners were booked in our jail and 2,433 volunteer hours for our Auxiliary Unit.

Our department has 27 sworn officers, 2 clerks, 21 auxiliary officers and 16 school guards. In addressing public safety, I believe prevention is a vital part of our responsibility and that our police need the tools to accomplish these goals. Last year eight MARC'S radios were purchased and 15 portable walkie talkie Marc's

radios were received from a County grant. Five mobile data terminals were also purchased for our police cars. These are valuable tools to officers on the road. They allow instant record checks for driving records, warrants, stolen vehicles or criminal history.

In June, our part-time clerk was moved to full time to assist in processing more than 25,000 records generated yearly. In July, Patrol Officer Jeffrey King, the first of 2 for the year, was sworn in as our newest officer. In September, we received financial assistance from the County to begin a Narcan Program. This program outfits officers with Nalaxone which can reverse the effects of a heroin or opiate overdose and is ready for use in our police cars, greatly increasing the survival rate of those in the midst of an overdose. The department also received a new Laser Speed Detection Device for use in speeding enforcement. The end of the year brought one more new police officer to the department, Officer Zachary Sanford, who, upon completion of his field training this month, will begin protecting the citizens of our community.

Due to the retirement of Officer Jim Joyce, Patrol Officer Mark Miller, a 26-year veteran, was appointed to the position of Detective of Police. I appreciate the many programs our police officers accomplish for community outreach. From Ready Notify, Helmet Smart, Police Ride Along's, Operation Medicine Cabinet, RUOK for Seniors, Touch a Truck, Vacation Watch, Speed Trailer, Motorcycle Unit, Block Party Visits, Shop with a Cop, to Officer Phil Safety Program, we are very lucky to have such an engaged police Department, under the direction of Police Chief Erich Upperman, in our community.

In January of this year, Cold Justice, a TNT network television program previewed their TV show when they came to our city last summer and assisted the department in the investigation of the 2007 murder/arson of a resident killed in her home. The suspect was recently arrested with the assistance of the FBI Fugitive Task Force and is being held on a million dollar bond. Special thanks to Lieutenant Paul Shepard and Detective Tom Harrington for their active role in the success of this arrest.

Congratulations also to Patrol Officer Daniel Levy for receiving the TOP COP award by Mothers against Drunk Driving for his efforts in DUI enforcement and education.

In describing our *Fairview Park Fire Department* three words sum up 2014: *Lots of Change*. We said goodbye to Chief Bud Williams after 31 years of service with our department and welcomed Tony Raffin as the new Chief, making him the 10th Chief in the history of the Fire Department. In May, we promoted a firefighter to lieutenant and a lieutenant to Captain and welcomed a new firefighter, Peter Barkowitz to the department totaling our numbers to 25.

Fire prevention and education are important functions that the department is involved with year round. 448 buildings were inspected with no major violations noted. 100 fire suppression systems were inspected and a total of 19 fire drills and 15 safety talks were completed. With the generous help of Energizer Batteries our firefighters distributed over 1,500 smoke alarm batteries to schools for distribution. 450 residents joined the department in Fairview Park's First Ever Community Outreach "Open House" in August. Guests were given a chance to use a fire hose, try on equipment, climb aboard our newest fire engine and read about our department's history. Free fire extinguishers and safety information were given out. Thanks to the many sponsors and to our Fairview Park Chief, Captain, Lieutenants and Firefighters for this amazing day, that was enjoyed by all.

The Fire Department deserves our hearty congratulations on the results of a recent Public Protection Classification survey conducted by ISO! The ISO (Insurance Service Organization) evaluates fire departments around the country. Our department showed outstanding improvement, moving from Class 04 to a Class 02! For those that are not familiar with the grading, a Class 01 is the best rating that can be given to a department and a class 10 is the poorest. Through all of their hard work in Fire Prevention, Public Education, and Firefighter Training programs, they have made Fairview Park Fire Department one of the highest graded departments in the country!

We were also the recipient of several grants totaling \$32,500.00. These dollars were used for emergency medical care and rescue operation equipment and 2 motorized stretchers that assist paramedics in lifting patients.

Capital purchases last year include the replacement of a 12 year old car with a new response vehicle

The department had its busiest year ever with 1,668 medic runs, 152 fire runs – including 3 structural fires and 205 other emergency runs. There was no loss of life or injury resulting from these structure fires. Our department members are certified Firefighters and Paramedics and are trained for rope rescue and hazardous materials operations and to the awareness level for swift water rescue.

Thank you to our firefighters and congratulations to Firefighter Karl Bort and his work with Camp Cheerful. Karl was recognized for his volunteer work with Camp Cheerful in raising over \$1,500 and working with the children who are burn victims. Thank you Karl. And thanks to our Santa Patrol Santa's John Roach and Rino Pinaro and our firefighter drivers. This strong tradition of over 45 years has children and adults eagerly awaiting their Christmas Eve arrival.

Our Parks and Recreation Mission Statement is to provide and promote participation through educational, park, recreational and leisure opportunities. Our new Recreation Director, Joe Brown, who joined us in October says, “The benefits are endless and we can prove it.” 2014 brought exciting initiatives, programs, and development to our community including

- Installation of new playground equipment at Morton Park,
- Reroofed restroom at Morton Park and Bain Park Pavilion,
- Installed steps entering Bain Park playground area,
- Fenced in field #4 at Bohlken,
- Added playground equipment to Grannis Park,
- Installed new carpet, fire alarm and lights at Bain Cabin,

- And developed an Ice Skating Rink at Bain Park. Please note the benches at the rink that were constructed by a young FP resident and Eagle Scout ~ Christopher Corrigan.

Our community outreach programs over the year were fun for everyone and successful. We hope many of you here attended our 2nd annual Winterfest Celebration, Touch a Truck, Big Wheel Races, Bunny Brunch, Food Truck Festival, Halloween Fall Festival, and the very popular 1st time event of our Bain Park Summer Outdoor Movie Nights.

7,208 members enjoy the many activities hosted here at our beautiful Gemini Center, now 8 years old. Offerings include swim lessons, youth sports programs, youth leisure programs, adult programs. If you are looking to host a party, call to reserve one now as 133 wave room rentals hosted many birthday swim parties. Improvements this year will include a “fresh new focus” on Tri-City Park. This park is owned by the cities of Fairview Park, Rocky River and Westlake. In Director Brown’s tour of the park, he felt Tri-City was underutilized and immediately began a collaborative effort between the three cities in programming the park with sports activities seven days a week. We are very excited about this project as it creates more playing fields for the youth of our city. For our remaining parks and facilities, the list of goals and objectives are long and aggressive. To name a few:

- Batting cages and soft toss hitting stations for Bohlken,
- New basketball hoops, picnic benches, tables and playground mulch for Grannis,
- Power wash pavilion, wood chips throughout the trails, and playground mulch at Bain Park,
- Installation of shade structures over picnic tables and pop up shades in the splash pad at Morton and re-surfacing of tennis courts at Morton Park,
- Replacement of football field turf and upgraded electrical at Football Stadium,
- Repair the building sound system to operational level in the Gemini Center.

The goal of the Administration is to complete a needs assessment aimed at improving our community's quality of life. Please click onto our web site and take the survey now, your input is important to us.

With the capital upgrades that will take place this year, the Gemini Center/Parks and Recreation Budget is expected to have a carryover balance at the end of 2015 totaling \$1,193,981.81.

Thanks to Director Brown, his outstanding staff, volunteer coaches and our dedicated sponsors for making our Recreation and Gemini Programs successful.

Another year of fun and excitement has gone by for the members of the Fairview Park *Senior Center*. Director Regina Sillasen and her staff continue to create new ideas to keep the senior active, healthy and busy. In addition to the grants I mentioned earlier, \$18,931.00 was awarded to our Senior Center to continue our popular hot lunch program, serving over 9,177 hot lunches last year. From doctors' appointments, to grocery shopping and drug store visits, our excellent van drivers clocked in over 10,000 one way rides last year. Two favorite programs that I like to attend is the day of recognition to our folks who are 90 years and older. We honored and celebrated with 38 residents who reached that 90+ milestone. In May, we host our senior prom and the center is packed full of fun and laughter. Over 120 seniors and 50 high school seniors celebrated with dancing, prizes and the crowning of the king and queen.

Eleanor Roosevelt, in her wisdom, described a senior center years before there were any by saying: "Friends, you and me...you brought another friend.. and then there were 3...we started our group, our circle of friends.. and like that circle.. there is no beginning or end. We invite all seniors of our community to stop in and bring a friend.

Twenty-eight years ago, my husband and I, came to FP to make our home and build a better life for our four children. We are proud of our children and their successes-and we give credit to our community which taught and nurtured them. Today, I want to spotlight the *children and our Fairview Park schools*. As Mayor, I appreciate the City's partnership with the schools, both public and private.

Reading to the young students, participating in Veterans Day programs and Messiah Lutheran's Empty Bowls-Feeding Souls program, watching the 3rd grade students of Gilles-Sweet and St. Angela explore all the departments that make up city hall, the high school's Youth in Government Day, along with welcoming our high school students for our Senior Center Prom and for Seniors helping Seniors day, all build a relationship of trust and confidence to help our students know that their city government is always here for them.

I would also like to welcome School Superintendent Bill Wagner, and congratulate you on your appointment. I would like to thank you for supporting members of our Police Department who were assisted by FHS Assistant Principal Chris Vicha in the training for all the school districts staff in a program called ALICE. Alert, Lockdown, Identify, Counter, Evacuate. This training is billed as the first active shooter response program in the United States. This collaboration between the schools and the Police Department will serve to increase the safety of all students and to minimize casualties in the case of a school shooting. Our Police and Fire Department has also joined the school safety committee spearheaded by Mr. Vicha to address a wide variety of issues including security, school shooting protocols, procedures in the case of natural disaster and other safety issues. In Fairview Park we understand that it is our direct connection with the people we serve that is the key ingredient to our success.

I've learned great government can be successful by investing in what our citizens want and need—

Like paving roads,

Providing excellent education,

Making sure our neighborhoods stay beautiful,

Our streets stay safe,

Our parks stay active and

Our businesses thrive.

I've learned government is great when it lives within its means.

As we close today, let me officially report, that the State of the City is good. I truly believe our future is looking brighter than ever!

And we **MUST** continue on this positive path in the days and years ahead. As my belief is the best is yet to come.

May God continue to bless you abundantly with health and wealth, watch over and protect those who keep us safe and continue to bless this place we call home—
Fairview Park.