



Gregory P. Kurtz

Mayor

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TO: *Council Members*
City Directors

FROM: *Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz*

DATE: *February 21, 2020*

RE: *Administrative Update*

MY WEEK IN REVIEW:

Another beneficial week with a variety of meetings-- I had discussion with a few Chestnut Woods residents concerning safety issues pertaining to their subdivision. To address the issue of too many people exceeding the speed limit in that area, we have installed a speed limit sign on Hawthorne Trace. This sign will also provide our Police Department with important data such as identifying the busiest traffic times of the day. Residents will also see an increased police presence in this area.

As a result of that meeting, we are also gathering information to allow us to further support the safety of residents in this area. Specifically, we are working to define the parameters of installing mailboxes in the entire subdivision so residents can safely pick up their mail.

A meeting with our Economic Development Director provided me with updates on various economic development issues and activity that has taken place over the last several years. These updates provide valuable background information regarding the City's downtown as we look at possible development options for this area.

Another very informative meeting was held with Finance Director Blaze and the City's Financial Advisor to discuss the City's current overall debt and its composition. This discussion will be continued in the coming weeks to assure we examine all of our options to be prudent with managing the City's debt.

I also met with Community Services Director Senick and Recreation Director Walchanowicz to

discuss current programming for our youth and obtain statistics regarding participation in those programs in preparation for a meeting with young parents. The discussion involved ideas of programming that other communities are offering, what has worked and what has not, and what are other options for enhanced programming.

A meeting with a group of parents who have expressed an interest in the City enhancing our current children's programming took place last evening in my office. A number of ideas and suggestions that were discussed sparked my interest to provide a survey for more residents to have a voice. Our goal is to provide this survey on the City's new website: www.independenceohio.org beginning the first week of April. The more input we receive from our residents, the better!

FINANCE MEETING:

On Tuesday, February 18th, a Finance Committee Meeting was held at 4:30 pm in the Council Caucus Room at City Hall. A synopsis of Tuesday's meeting appears in this week's Finance Department Update, which accompanied the email to this week's link to the Admin Update.

DRUG FREE CLUBS OF AMERICA:



The second year of Drug Free Clubs of America (DFCA) at Independence High School is well underway. Testing began last fall, and random testing will continue throughout the school year for the 200 club members that voluntarily signed up to participate in the program. This means that over 61% of the student population at IHS has made the choice to remain drug free. DFCA gives them the opportunity to resist peer pressure while earning rewards that reinforce their commitment.

This program would not be possible without the Cleveland Clinic, testing partner and valued teammate of IHS. The Clinic has been on board since the program began in 2018, generously donating four medical professionals from the Independence location who provide drug test collection services on-site at the high school. Their generosity and sense of community is the reason why our teens have the power to say, "I can't, I might get tested."

The program relies on the community to help reach every student. Special perks reinforce the positive behaviors shown by DFCA members, so we invite every member of the community to participate! Incentives range from gift cards and free lunches to tickets to professional sporting events. Highly sought-after donations include monetary (to purchase items for raffles), gift certificates to restaurants and stores, free appetizer/dessert cards, food donations for DFCA events, discount tickets to events or shops/restaurants, tickets to sporting events and/or entertainment complexes, and mascot appearances. Students are also motivated by items donated by the school, including homecoming and prom tickets, IHS spirit wear, prime parking spaces, and more!

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Business Partners receive many public acknowledgements, including their name being included on district and DFCA IHS websites, Independence Quarterly publication, and district Facebook and Twitter accounts, logo placement on banners that will hang in the school, and much, much more, but most importantly, knowing that you are making a difference in the lives of students! DFCA depends upon strategic partnerships to make the program a success. For further partnership information, please visit <http://www.independence.k12.oh.us/drugfree.aspx>

And lastly, my *thanks* go out to Mary Dolejs and Eric Wells who have worked tirelessly to organize and promote this positive and empowering program! DFCA reinforces everything we are trying to teach and enables schools to focus on rewarding students who are making drug-free choices, ensuring they have a solid plan to stand up to peer pressure. We are thrilled with the results thus far and look forward to adding many more members in our effort to prevent students and families from experiencing the negative consequences of drug and alcohol experimentation and abuse.

ILLUMINATING COMPANY SPRING ROUTINE PATROLS:

Please be advised that in approximately one week on **February 25th, 2020**, Chesapeake Bay Helicopters will be mobilizing to the region and will be performing Routine patrols on all Illuminating Company transmission lines, 138kV-345kV. Patrols are anticipated to take two to three weeks to complete but as always, inclement weather or any non-routine/post-storm patrols could prolong completion.

The helicopter to be used for these patrols is a black and silver, Hughes MD500 with tail registration number ***N774CB*** – ***photo attached.***



A routine patrol is a general overall look at the conductors, hardware, and structures of the transmission line(s). The helicopter will be flying at speeds of 25-30 knots (25-35mph) where the onboard observer will be looking for any outstanding conditions on the lines and also may be seen hovering to get a closer look at any conditions that may be found.

It should be noted that the contractor has been authorized to patrol the transmission circuits in their entirety (i.e. "breaker-to-breaker"), so patrols on certain lines may therefore extend into the neighboring regions. The flight crew provides information on their daily location to both Transmission Lines Maintenance and the FCC, and the pilot will be in communication with any local airports when in their airspace. Please advise local Safety Forces and other public entities or sensitive customers as needed.

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS:

Independence High School students Heather Patacca and Thorin Chappel have been named National Merit Scholarship Finalists. Over 15,000 of the 16,000 Semifinalists named in September 2019 have met all requirements to advance to Finalist standing in the competition. All Finalists will be considered for National Merit Scholarships to be offered in 2020.



Congratulations Heather and Thorin on your outstanding achievement!

BOARD OF ZONING:

The February Board of Zoning Appeals met this past Thursday evening with one item on the agenda:

- 6001 Rockside Road, Holiday Inn requested the following variances to 1151.08(d)(1): a variance to permit an additional sign on the building (not permitted), a variance of 77.83 sq. ft. to allow an additional sign to have a total sign area of 152.83 sq. ft. (75 ft. permitted, 152.83 sq. ft. requested); and a variance of 3 ft. 1 inch to allow an additional sign to have a total height of 6 ft. 1 in. (3 ft. height permitted, 6 ft. 1 in. in height requested) was **Approved (3-1, Moreal No)**.

BONEFISH GRILL CELEBRATES 14TH ANNIVERSARY:

On February 20th Bonefish Grill celebrated their 14th Anniversary with a cocktail party at 6150 Rockside Place off of Rockside Road. Vice Mayor Dave Grendel, his wife Carrie, Councilman Dale Veverka and wife, Beverly pose with Bonefish managers (at right) after being treated to a delicious meal in honor of the restaurant's 14th Anniversary. On behalf of the City of Independence I was honored to stop in and offer my *congratulations* to Bonefish Grill on their 14th anniversary. *Many wishes* coming your way for your continued success and a long bright future in our City!



BROOKSIDE – BRAMLEY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS:

The following work has been completed since the first of the New Year:

- all storm sewer work in the Bramley Subdivision
- all storm sewers and catch basin installation on Brookside Road
- coordination with CEI has taken place
 - this entailed temporary supporting of utility poles during sewer installation
 - this entailed relocation of 5 to 10 utility poles (necessary to facilitate the proposed road and sidewalk improvements)
 - This pole relocation work is nearing completion, but the process of transferring aerial lines (from the old poles to the new poles) will still take some time. The old poles will be removed once completed.
- A **“Bramley Drive Resident Meeting”** is scheduled for **Monday, February 24th at 6:30 pm at City Hall** to review and discuss in detail how the road removal and replacement operations will be conducted within the limits of the subdivision.



BRAMLEY DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION – NOTICE OF LANE RESTRICTION:

- Please be advised that beginning this coming Tuesday, February 25th, and continuing for the next 4 months, weather permitting, **Bramley Drive will be restricted to one-lane, two-way traffic** in order to facilitate the road reconstruction operations soon to commence there, which will be performed half the road at a time.
- Gravel pull-off areas have been (and will be) installed with each phase of work to allow for opposing traffic to get by each other.
- A sign will be erected that warns motorists to yield the right-of-way to Police, Fire, School Busses, and City Vehicles like trash and recycling.
- Significant vertical drop-offs will be created adjacent to the open travel lane, as a result of the work, and motorists should travel slow and with caution.



UPPER BROOKSIDE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS – PHASE 1:

Work completed in the last several weeks:

- Significant progress has taken place on this project, as the contractor has had two crews on site, one installing mainline storm sewers and manholes, the other installing curb inlet basins and storm sewer cross-overs.
 - Yard drains have also been installed.
 - Individual house storm sewer laterals have also been tied into the new storm

sewer system.

- Temporary concrete pavement has been installed to repair the storm sewer trench across the limits of the open travel lane of the roadway and where the trench crosses residential driveways.
- The temporary “gang mailbox unit” was relocated from Lake Charles Drive to the Eastview Drive-end of the project, where it will remain for the duration of the Phase 1 project work.

Work planned for the coming week:

- The Contractor will continue installing mainline storm sewers, manholes, curb inlet basins and storm sewer crossovers, including yard drains, in the section of Brookside Road north of the Lake Charles Drive intersection.
 - Motorists can expect some congestion and minor delays this week in and around the intersection of Brookside Road and Lake Charles Drive as a result of the proposed storm sewer improvements to be installed in this vicinity.
 - 1-lane, 1-way traffic will continue to travel southbound and westbound through the work zone.

Please call the Independence Engineering Department at 216.524.1374 (or contact us via email at engineering@independenceohio.org) if there are any questions or concerns.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS IS HIRING POLL WORKERS FOR THE MARCH 17, 2020 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION:

The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections is seeking civic-minded individuals to assist voters on Election Day. Poll Workers (Precinct Election Officials) earn up to \$200 and have the satisfaction of being part of the democratic process.



Individuals may apply on the Board’s website: www.443vote.us, or call the Poll Worker Hotline at 216.443.3277.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:

- A **Finance Meeting** has been set for **Tuesday, February 25th at 5:00 pm in the Council Caucus Room** at City Hall.
- The Cuyahoga Valley Chamber 4th Annual **Taste of the Valley** is quickly approaching-- **Thursday, February 27th from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Holiday Inn, Rockside.**

Ticket prices are as follows:

- Adults \$25 in advance,
\$30 at the door
- Children (under 13) \$10
- Seniors (60+) \$15



Come sample some of the delicious food our local restaurants and caterers have to offer. Not only will this be a fun event for you and the family, it is a great opportunity for advertising and networking. This event is open to the public and all proceeds go to benefit the Chamber's Annual Scholarship Fund.

- A *free* Job Fair will be held on **Thursday, March 5th** at the **Cuyahoga Valley Career Center** (CVCC Commons) from **3:00 to 6:00 pm**. All job-seekers age 15 and older are welcome to attend.
- The next **Community Services Meeting** will take place on **Monday March 9th** at **4:30 pm in the Council Caucus Room at City Hall**.
- A **Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast** is planned for **Sunday, March 15th** from **9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Civic Center**. Tickets for Adults are \$7.00; Children 12 & Under are \$4.00.
- Independence Local Schools to sponsor **Indy Family First Night** on **Thursday, March 19th**. On this day there will be no homework assigned, no studying for tests, no athletic practices or activities hosted. Students and staff are encouraged to only focus on connecting with their families. Activities and discounts will be offered at the following establishments that evening: Independence Public Library, Yours Truly Restaurant in Valley View, Tom +Chee Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup in Broadview Heights, and Melt Restaurant in Independence.
- The annual **St. Michael Gala Benefit Fundraiser** is being planned for **Saturday, March 28th** from **6:00-11:00 pm at the Embassy Suites Hotel**.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Following are some highlights of recent activity, updates, events and/or statistics from various departments:

The Police Department Reported-

(Week ending February 14)

Misdemeanor Arrests	Felony Arrests	Traffic Citations	OVI Arrests	Accident Reports	Calls for Service
7	1	45	0	8	333

The Fire Department Reported:

(Week ending February 14)

	Week	YTD
• EMS Incidents	43	199
• Fire Incidents	10	58
• Mutual Aid:		
○ Engine Responses	0	10
○ Squad Responses	0	7

The Clerk of Courts Reported-

(January Stats 2020 vs. 2019)

	Jan. 2019	Jan. 2020
Tickets Written	269	132
Traffic Cases	276	112
Criminal Cases	5	0
OVI Cases	1	2
Felony Cases	0	0
Parking Cases	0	2
Fine & Costs Collected	\$39,188.00	\$23,070.50
Check to City	\$28,589.00	\$17,524.00

The Engineering Department Reported-

(Week ending February 14)

- Coordinated with the Service Department to address some pavement deficiencies on Brecksville Road near the road project by AAA.
- Continued to coordinate with the Service Department for televising and/or dye testing of storm sewers on the Upper Brookside Road Improvements Project.
- An inspection of a storm repair at 5751 East Ash was found compliant.
- Clark and Joe attended the Northern Ohio Service Directors Meeting.
- A meeting was conducted with CT Consultants to review project costs and schedule relative to the status of the Lafayette Subdivision Improvements Project.
 - This project is presently on a winter shut-down, but construction activity will resume in the near future.

- The Brecksville Road Improvements & Streetscape Project (from Rockside Road to the Cloverleaf) plans are at the initial stage of the design and were reviewed with comments sent back to design engineering consultant E. L. Robinson Engineering.
- Survey crews were on site at two separate locations of Hillside Road this week to gather field data for the design of future sidewalk and drainage improvements.

The Information Technology Department Reported- (Week ending February 14)

- The IT Department along with our Mayor's Court staff performed a site visit at Shaker Heights Court to evaluate their processes and programs first hand. The visit included a full demonstration of their document imaging software and included a tour of the facilities and technology implementations. The visit opened up ideas for expanding our own offerings for the court as well as avenues of collaboration with other municipal representatives and support staff.
- The IT Department along with Police Department staff attended the annual Sundance Users Group meeting. The event brought together technology and safety services representatives from surrounding communities.
- Repairs continue at the Civic Center as the presentation connections at the Red Oak Room have been restored and the White Oak Room is now undergoing repair.
- ID Badges were printed and distributed to the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals which identify our board members as representatives of the City when visiting and working with our residents and stakeholders.

*****Cyber Security tip--**Cyber threat actors are capitalizing on the recent coronavirus outbreaks to conduct financial fraud and disseminate malware.

The Recreation Department Reported- (Week ending February 14)

Highlights:

- Tucker Neale Basketball Championship Tournament took place in the Fieldhouse Saturday the 8th and Sunday the 9th and brought in a total of \$3,960.00 in rental fees.
- Our "Jr. Cavs" Youth Basketball League started playoff games on Monday and continued through the week.
- The IHS Boys' Basketball Coach was contacted for a



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'Youth Night' for the boys' recreation teams, talked to high school coaches to arrange schedules for baseball & fast pitch, and scheduled games for travel coaches.

- New safety helmets for the inflatable wrecking ball unit were purchased.
- A new pickle ball divider net and supplies were ordered in advance of the upcoming weekends' Kiwanis Pickle ball Tournament. Staff assisted the Kiwanis as needed throughout the week to help make this tournament a success.

- OP Aquatics brought 2 pieces of water workout equipment for the indoor pool (a bicycle and elliptical) to 'demo' through the month until February 28th. Information was posted on the Rec Facebook page.



- Temporary repair work was performed on the Fieldhouse P.A. / Sound System prior to Pickle ball Tournament this weekend. A new system is ordered with upgraded features and will be installed in the next few weeks. This temporary system will get us by until then.



- The park staff was busy all day Thursday with snow removal around City campus parking lots and sidewalks.
- Met with a representative from Cincinnati Floor Company to get updated work proposals for refinishing the Civic Center gym, racket ball court, and aerobic room hardwood floors. Also, revisited the Elmwood Rec. gym floor for an updated quote on the installation of a rubber style floor installation similar to the Fieldhouse floor.

- 2 large LED clocks were ordered today. One will be installed at the Fieldhouse south end wall and the other will replace a broken clock at the outdoor pool.
- Met with 2 pond care companies to get proposals for a new pond fountain with LED accent lighting capabilities.
- Our survey for the youth basketball league program was sent out on Friday and all parents are encouraged to fill one out and send them in so we can gather input from all participants.

The Technical Services Department Reported- (Week ending February 14)

- The Technical Services Department is working at Historic Hall repairing plaster, replacing fixtures, painting and carpeting two second floor display rooms. The work will be completed prior to a March Open House.
- Repaired the Service Department's emergency generator and it is now in excellent operating condition.
- Technical Services is in the process of repairing a circulating pump at the Fire Department.



Have a great weekend!