

**2015 STATE OF THE CITY**



**Tim Theaker, Mayor**

I am pleased to present my 2015 State of the City address to you, the citizens of Mansfield, Mansfield City Council members, elected officials, and my administration and staff. Referenced within this report are significant highlights and achievements we were able to accomplish as a team working together to achieve the best results for ALL of us, and, for the future of Mansfield.

We are realizing the benefits from revenue generated by the P.R.I.D.E. tax our citizens graciously approved two years ago. Since the passage of this tax, we have hired additional police officers and firefighters to ensure the safety of our residents. Our parks have greatly improved with major renovations completed at Prospect Park along with numerous repairs at our other parks. Numerous properties have been demolished to bring back the beauty and pride of our city.

In our efforts to maximize the potential at Mansfield Lahm Airport, we have partnered with NASA who will use our airport as the hub to transport Orion, the next generation space craft. We were able to attain a \$6,200,000.00 grant from the United States Department of Transportation which allowed us to construct a taxiway, install runway distance-to-go signage, and rehabilitate runways. Renovations of the Terminal Building began in the fourth quarter and we are excited to showcase those improvements in the early part of 2016.

Your tax dollars provided us with the ability to resurface 80 streets and alleys. The Urban Paving Program allowed us to resurface Park Avenue, State Route 39, and portions of State Routes 13 and 545. Work will continue throughout 2016 to make improvements to Trimble Road with 90% of outside funding already secured.

A new emergency notification system was implemented during 2015 that has the capability of notifying those residents, who opt into the system, to receive alerts within minutes of an emergency, inclement weather, street closure, boil advisory, gas leak or a life threatening situation.

The Diamond Street entrance to the City Building received much needed improvements with the replacement of concrete and removal of the old overgrown landscape. We once again have a City Building we can all be proud of.

I thank and appreciate our residents for having the faith in me to serve as your mayor for another 4 year term, and look forward to continuing my work and collaborative efforts to make Mansfield a place we all take pride in calling home.

Following are departmental highlights achieved in 2015;

**AIRPORT:** The airport was fortunate to receive state and federal funding in the amount of \$4,928,149.50 for the rehabilitation of Runway 5/23, rehabilitation of Taxiway Delta, and the removal of Taxiway Charlie. This project was completed in December of 2015.

Thanks to an anonymous donor and city funding, the airport is currently undergoing renovations to the first floor of the Terminal Building, built in 1985, in an effort to lease the area to a Fixed Base Operator.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Airport Day open house held in July was the best attended event since its inception. The car, truck and bike show had over 200 entries, and the Mansfield Aviation Club's Pancake Breakfast had one of its best years serving approximately 500 people.

**CODES AND PERMITS:** 97 structures were demolished throughout the year with funding coming from the P.R.I.D.E. levy, Neighborhood Initiative Program, or from the property owner, as we continue efforts to rid our city of blighted properties.

A total of 1,595 violations, complaints or systematic inspections such as but not limited to litter, junk/trash, weeds, junk vehicles, repair orders, and condemnation orders were investigated with appropriate action taken. 244 individual lots and 19 right of ways were mowed with the help of city forces, seasonal employees, and community service workers. 38 board-ups, 96 trash removals on private property, and 27 trash removals in right of way areas were performed throughout the year.

New construction and alteration building permits were issued to 77 residential and 74 commercial clients during 2015 with commercial renovations totaling over \$3,000,000. The total estimated construction dollars of all permits issued throughout the year was over \$52,670,000. 1,768 building, mechanical and electrical inspections were also performed.

**CLEARFORK:** One of the most exciting improvements accomplished at Clearfork was the replacement of the old wooden wheelchair access ramp to one of our boat docks. A permanent concrete ramp was installed which will grant better access and safety to all who use this dock.

Clearfork purchased and began using the area's first robotic hillside mower replacing an old mower that was dangerous and more costly to replace. The robotic mower not only increases the safety of the person operating the machine but also increases productivity.

The marina's camera system was replaced increasing security for the buildings, the public boat ramps, and docks. Clearfork switched to the new MARCS radio system in conjunction with the Police Department which will greatly improve the safety of officers at Clearfork. Roofs on all of the restrooms in the picnic area were replaced. Wooden signs were replaced with aluminum reflective signs.

Clearfork personnel worked with the United States Geological Society on the installation of a real time water level gauge at the spillway which will monitor water height in real time, and serve as a warning system for Lexington, Bellville and Butler.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** 61 low to moderate income homeowners received HUD assistant through our Emergency Rehab Program and/or Full Rehabilitation Program.

Fair housing complaints were resolved in-house with none of them proceeding to the HUD level. Collaborative efforts will continue with Catholic Charities, Mansfield Metropolitan Housing, and the Richland County Commissioners to reduce tenant/landlord and fair housing issues.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** A total of 6 projects were completed in 2015. Companies invested \$8,038,200.00 in new construction, renovations, and machinery and equipment, and project the creation of 104 full time jobs and 10 part-time jobs over the next two to three years. The projected payroll increase is \$3,548,500.00 annually which will have a positive impact on our income tax base. In addition, we are working very closely with a number of local businesses who have plans in various stages for expansion in 2016.

OhioHealth Mansfield broke ground on an expansion project in 2014 that was completed in the fall of 2015. The project included construction of a 160,000 square foot addition to the Glessner Avenue facility, renovation of 34,000 square foot within the existing facility, and the addition of a two story parking garage. The projected investment in the project is \$80,000,000.00. In addition to the current project, OhioHealth Mansfield announced that an additional \$60,000,000.00 will be invested in their Mansfield and Shelby facilities over the next three years.

Ohio Valley Manufacturing, Inc. completed construction of 10,000 square foot office addition. The new addition will provide much needed space for existing office workers and anticipated future growth. This company is continuing to grow due to added production capacity. Investment in the project was approximately \$1,000,000.00.

The first phase of construction for the Ashland Railway rail yard is nearly complete. The site has multiple rail sidings and the capacity to store 200 cars at a time. Phase two construction is nearing completion on 15 acres which will be the new home of McFarland Cascade. The move to the rail yard was due to increased demand for their products, and provides a more efficient area to trans load their utility poles from rail to truck for storage and distribution. Site work has started for phase three of the project which will become the home of a steel pipe distribution operation that will sit on approximately 10 acres. All three phases are scheduled to be complete by the fourth quarter of 2016. Two additional companies are considering future projects at the site. Investment to date is approximately \$3,500,000.00.

**ENGINEERING:** The department administered the design of the 2016 Capital Improvement Project for the Wastewater Treatment Plant in accordance with the OEPAs issued Directors Final Findings and Orders with construction to begin 04/2016. They also designed and implemented a Safety Improvement Project along Lexington Avenue between Straub Road and Betner Drive, and administered the Bowman Street Bridge Design securing 80% of state funding for the complete replacement of the structure.

A GIS utility mapping program for the Water Distribution System, the Sanitary Collection System, and the Storm Sewer System was implemented.

The City, through Engineering, entered into Phase 2 of the Floodplain Mitigation Study for Touby's Run. Said study has identified permanent infrastructure solutions as well as evaluated acquisition and open space alternatives.

Other miscellaneous projects included assisting in successfully negotiating the new Mansfield/Ontario Sewer Contract, developed the bid package for the purchase of Multi-Function Devices, printers and paper for the City, and developed a 10 year capital improvement plan just to name a few.

**FIRE:** The Fire Department responded to 1886 fire calls and 8032 emergency medical calls for a total of 9918 calls for service in 2015. The department transitioned to a new EMS billing company and we were able to realize \$1,536,413 in cost recovery for the year.

6 firefighters were hired throughout the year in order to maintain a staffing level of 92. The Mansfield Civil Service Commission approved language requiring all new hires to have their firefighter and paramedic training prior to their appointment which will significantly reduce training costs.

The Fire Prevention Bureau's primary focus for the year was to complete inspections at all locations that have extremely hazardous substances on site which is near completion. They were also busy with daycare inspections.

A fueling system including tanks and pumps was placed into service at both station #1 and #4 at the beginning of September with no major issues to date. Fuel is currently delivered every three weeks. The department has pumped over 10,000 gallons of fuel since the fueling system was installed.

**HUMAN RESOURCES:** Operations of the department were level and consistent with years past. Staffing levels remained the same with a director and a personnel coordinator; however, with the hiring of an administrative assistant to the Safety-Service Director, they have been fortunate to have her help and assistance in answering the telephones and handling inquiries and intake.

Employment levels rose in 2014 with a number of new hires in all segments of the city.

Because of higher medical claims, our insurance coverage plan and offering underwent an extensive evaluation. Employee costs were raised, a new optional coverage was offered, and a Fixed Spending Account option was added. A wellness screening was conducted in February with great success. Insurance coverage plans and offerings will be bid out in 2016.

Workers compensation claims remained steady in 2015 with most involving safety personnel, however, the good news is lost time related injuries were down significantly.

Negotiations were concluded with AFSCME which resulted in a new three year contract. Negotiations for a new contract with the IAFF started at years end and is still ongoing.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:** Upgraded and completed overhaul of the telephone system with a new VoIP ShoreTel system, and implemented the public safety NG9-1-1 system. Completed implementation of the Everbridge emergency mass notification system.

All servers at the City Building were virtualized. Implemented VMware file level backups and application aware backups which compliments the offsite replications services. Implemented several security procedures to harden our overall security from external sources and upgraded vulnerable website that was previously insecure.

Presence has increased for Facebook and we are at max allowed friends. Presence has also increased for Twitter by 26% over last year.

IT responded to 2,306 SysAid requests from various departments which was a 7% decrease from 2014. Ticket retention rate increased from 2014. Survey responses received an average rating of 4.98/5.00 which was an increase over last year.

**MAINTENANCE:** Completed 1209 electronic service requests and numerous verbal requests. Completed preventive maintenance on HVAC and other building equipment and systems, assisted with structural repairs at multiple facilities, and assisted with department moves/changes throughout the year.

Our agreement with ENERNOC to utilize our emergency generator for utility demand reduction provided \$15.4K in 2015 to date which does not include the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2015 which we are waiting on.

New concrete was poured in the courtyard which was badly needed. New conduit and wiring to the courtyard security lights was installed, and the exterior clock was repaired. Landscaping upgrades were completed with grading and seeding to provide green space and improve curb appearance.

**PARKS:** The pavilion at Prospect Park was completely remodeled. The North Lake Park Pavilion floor was painted and repaired. Tennis courts at Maple Lake Park and Liberty Park were resealed and new nets were installed. Two baseball fields were added in 2015, one at Maple Lake Park and one at Prospect Park. The walking trail at Fox Glenn Park was patched and resurfaced. South Park and Betzstone Park have new playground equipment. Construction began on the new pavilion at South Park.

Two pools were opened for 6 weeks this past summer with attendance recorded at 2,328. The pools were repainted and repairs were made to the linings. We once again contracted with the Mansfield Area Y to provide lifeguards.

The Friends of the Mansfield Parks hosted clean-ups in several parks along with cleaning and planting of flower beds at various locations. Friends of North Lake Park formed this year with their main focus concentrating on activities and cleanups at North Lake Park. Crossroads Church and Mansfield Baptist Temple sponsored work days at our parks and provided numerous volunteers who assisted with picnic tables being built, trash picked up, painting, cleaning of the creek bed, and trimming back tree limbs.

**POLICE:** The Police Department handled 36,282 calls for service during 2015. Officers arrested 4,773 persons. Part 1 crime decreased by 15% overall compared to 2014. Arson offenses were drastically decreased by 34.4% and auto thefts by 43.2%. Personal injury crashes decreased by 1.6% and property damage crashes increased by 4.7%. There was one fatality and three homicides throughout the year. The division as a whole, with collaboration from the community, was able to reduce overall crime by 15%. This includes reductions in robberies, burglaries, and larcenies. The Detective Bureau Domestic Violence Officer was assigned 713 cases and assisted in arresting 251 suspects on felony and misdemeanor charges. The detective assigned to assist Children's Services and the Sex Crimes Unit was assigned 79 cases. The Patrol Bureau worked hard during the year while stepping up to cover vacancies in personnel.

The department successfully obtained its national re-accreditation certification in 2015 while also receiving 99 citizen compliments for outstanding work in the community, an increase of 25.3% from last year.

The Mansfield Police Department is also very proud of their involvement in community programs such as the Juvenile Mentoring Program, Golden Agers Program, After School Program, A.C.E. Program, Leadership Club, PAL Sports, Safety Town, the Explorers and various neighborhood watch groups.

**REGIONAL COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT:** A restructuring of staff occurred early in the year and the focus of that facility will change to providing a safe, clean facility that offers family friendly events, rental of the facilities, and community partnership.

The Summer Enrichment Program was successfully administered at three park locations and was led by college graduates with teaching degrees.

Many events brought old and new friends together at Ocie Hill such as the Minority Health Fair, the Light our City Carnival, Trunk or Treat, Harvest Party, Family Open Gym, and the Williams Christmas Giveaway.

Attention inside and outside of the building was ongoing throughout the year. General upkeep and maintenance of the grounds/landscaping continues. Lights have been replaced, walls have been painted, and rooms have been reconfigured and re-assigned in an effort to use the space available in the most effective manner.

**SERVICE COMPLEX:** The Street Department purchased 7 new plows in 2015 that will be put into service in 2016. 2723 documented potholes were repaired with 1850 of them being reported to us by our citizens, and 873 located by our employees being proactive and filling potholes before complaints were received. 407 signals and signs damaged from the weather or vehicle accidents were repaired. 127 trees were maintained or removed during 2015 which was up from last year. 173 dead animals were pickup and disposed of that were in the city's right-of ways.

The Water Repair Department repaired 132 main breaks which increased 22% from last year. 130 fire hydrants were repaired due to collisions or regular maintenance which is an increase of 23% from last year. A "Plug Hug" was purchased in 2015 with plans to add employees in 2016 for a hydrant painting program. 12 new taps were installed which is a decrease of 34% from last year, 410 water leaks were checked, and service was turned on/off at 391 locations.

Sewer Repair recorded and responded to 284 backup calls. They flushed 555 lines totaling 133,056 feet of pipe to maintain our sanitary mains. 287 catch basins were cleaned of debris to avoid flooding before predicted storm events. A new portable camera will be purchased in 2016 to improve our video capabilities.

966 repair work orders were handled by the Repair Garage which was a 21% decrease from last year. This decrease is due to the Police Department adding a new mechanic who took over their repairs during the last quarter of the year.

**UTILITY COLLECTIONS:** Proactively contacted customers with large water/sewer bills via phone calls and tags left on the door in an effort to notify residents of a potential problem. Validation machines were added to allow more efficient customer service. Curb box locks were added to prevent curb box tampering.

All employees were retrained on processing work orders, billing, new applications, meter scheduling, and completing final readings. A supervisor position was added this year along with four new account clerks. Employees were cross trained and can work any and all job functions.

**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT:** 10.30 million gallons of wastewater was treated daily for a total of 3.76 billion gallons for the year. 5,984 tons of bio solids through the land application program, and 745 wet tons from our lagoon sludge were disposed of.

Daily reporting software was upgraded on the Scada system to optimize operations.

Three pumps at the Nelson Street Lift Station were rebuilt which will greatly improve efficiency and longevity of the lift station's performance. Six radiators were rebuilt at the plant, two were for the standby generators, and the other four were for the stationary engines that supply air for our aeration tanks and heat the building.

**WATER TREATMENT PLANT:** 3.755 billion gallons of water were purified and pumped with no EPA chemical or bacteriological violations. The plant laboratory performed 14,741 chemical

and turbidity tests and 2,452 bacteriological tests. Drinking water samples were collected and sent to EPA approved labs for organic contaminants, metals and radiological contaminants with all tests coming back within allowable limits.

The 2014 Annual Consumer Confidence Report was completed and sent out to our 20,000 customers in their water bills. This information was also posted on the City's website.

Routine grounds maintenance, mechanical maintenance, and daily security inspections were done at the plant facility, lake facility, 10 wells, Straub Road Elevated Tank, Shaker Elevated Tank, Shaker Pump Station, and Woodland Storage Reservoir.