



VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND HILLS, OHIO

Community News & Views

(A collaborative publication from Administration and Council featuring news and information in our community.)

Winter 2013



Mayor's Report

Spring roared in like a lion this year and it reflects staff changes that have also occurred in our Administration.

We said goodbye to our Properties Director, Jer'me Franklin and the Assistant Director, Ken Troutman. We welcomed in their place Dale Carter as the Properties Director and Velma Ashford as the Assistant Director.

Monica Rushton, our Assistant Senior Director, has been on an extended leave of absence and we send our prayers in her healing and hope to welcome her back soon. Frankie Lisaula, our Senior Coordinator, has also resigned and we wish her well in her new endeavors.

Charla Brownlee and Joyce Foster have stepped in temporarily and are doing a yeoman's job (noble servant) of filling the gaps in our Senior Department.

In Mayor's Court, Marv Grossman retired after serving the Village as Bailiff and Deputy Clerk. Fortunately for us, Marv will be back after a two month leave.

Laurie Loveman retired from the Fire Department after over twenty years of dedicated service to the community.

We welcomed Dwayne Morris as the Assistant Finance Director and James Maciaszek in the Building Department.

I would like to publicly thank my staff, who have stepped up and done a wonderful job of filling in the gaps as we move through these transitions. Adjustments have been made so that we can continue to give you the best service possible.

As always our doors are open to you; our residents, neighbors and friends. Serving you is our top priority!

Mayor Robert L. Nash



14th Annual Local Government Officials Conference



For this issue of the newsletter I have switched focus by deciding to share a little about my most recent attendance April 2-4 at the 14th Annual Local Government Officials conference in Columbus, Ohio. Too often the community is aware of Council's attendance at conferences, but may have little or no idea about what we do at meetings paid for by the Village. So I thought I would give you a "birds eye" view of what was covered at this conference, which was sponsored by the Auditor of State, Dave Yost.

There were 10-15 minute breaks between each session, with the first session beginning at 8:00 a.m., and ending at 5:00 p.m. Lunch was a working session from noon to 1:00 p.m., in which part of lunch the Auditor of State, Dave Yost, spoke. Afternoon sessions began at 1:00 p.m. Some of the workshops I attended during the two days were:

- Ohio Employees Retirement System Updates: An Employers Look at the New Changes in the Law.
- Health Care Reform: What Employers Need to Know.
- Legal Update for Villages.
- Ohio Department of Transportation Funding Opportunities.
- Ohio Ethics Law: Can I Do That?
- Fiduciary Training for Boards and Commissions.
- Audit Update.
- The Need for Five Year Planning.

Many of these sessions provided attendees with an opportunity to ask specific questions relative to their Village or Township. There are many changes in the "law" which will impact the way we do business here in Highland Hills, such as the number of hours a part-time person can work without being offered health care.

Two of the workshops focused on specific changes in the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund. This is important because safety forces throughout Ohio will see their salaries decrease because of these new requirements.

Our Village is concerned with maintaining and attracting top quality policemen, how do we best help our safety forces. This is a big budget decision for us. Do we pick

up the difference, do we offer a straight hourly raise, or some other combination. These are some of the critical issues that we as a Village must face very soon.

Listening to how other communities are facing these issues, and having an opportunity to brainstorm ideas with each other, is an important part of conference attendance. Newsletter space does not permit me to include all of the sessions, but below I have attempted to share the content of one workshop, and its relevance and implications, for our Village.

The Audit Update Workshop session highlighted some of the different kinds of audits available, and what you have to do to qualify for each. Villages and Townships are now required to make employees aware that there is a "Fraud Hotline" that can be used to report any situation which might possibly involve fraud, and be protected against certain retaliatory or disciplinary action for making the report.

The Audit Update Workshop also discussed the recommendation by the Auditor of State for each community to have an Audit Committee. There were many questions surrounding what are the exact roles and responsibilities of the audit committee, as well as who should make up the membership of the audit committee, as this is so new. Our Council choose to take the first step and set up an audit committee.

Things such as, do we include someone outside of Council who has business/financial experience to be a part of our committee. Rather than wait to resolve some of these important issues, Council decided to initially use councilmembers, and hopefully when the committee membership for 2014 comes around, Council will have a better understanding and member(s) of the Community could possibly be considered. If you have an interest, please let any member of Council, or the Clerk of Council, know.

Hope you have found, from this short re-cap, how important it is for Council and Administration personnel to improve their knowledge in many areas, so they are better able to make prudent decisions and set goals/plans for our Village.

Patricia W. DeBerry
Councilwoman Patricia DeBerry

RULES AND TOOLS



DEAR RESIDENTS:

I was very honored to be in attendance at the 2013 National League of Cities Congressional City Conference. The conference was held March 9th–13th at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C.

Our Council President, Danita Love, also traveled with me and attended the conference. It was great to have her with me because she helped to educate me on the various conference activities, as well as the many training classes that were offered.

Since I am Chairwoman of the Rules Committee, I decided to take a class on rules and tools. The title of the class was “The Ethical Leader: Rules and Tools.” The Instructor was Scott C. Paine, PhD., who is an Associate Professor of Communication and Government at the University of Tampa, and a member of the Florida League of Cities.

The purpose of the class was to provide public leaders, and especially local elected leaders, with a clear understanding of the nature of ethics in public service and tools that are necessary to assist them in making ethical decisions.

The goal of the class was to empower local elected leaders not to be more ethical in their leadership role, but to be more clearly and overtly ethical, so that those observing their actions will have a greater confidence in the integrity of their local government,

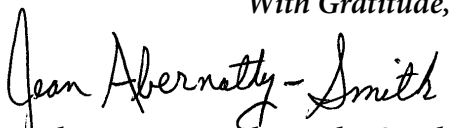
Dr. Paine helped us understand the importance of being an ethical elected official by sharing some of the following tips:

- ✓ Consider values unique to your role: explain your actions so that others can at least understand.
- ✓ As a public servant, our acts must be legitimate—remember that your actions bring with it unique ethical obligations, and a higher degree of visibility and public interest in your activities.
- ✓ Use the powers you have to change the way others see government politics.
- ✓ Always conduct yourself with real honor and integrity.

During the half day seminar, it became very evident to me that being an ethical leader is more than simply following the law. I learned that you must have the abilities to access ethical and difficult situations and be able to make ethical and wise choices.

This was a very informative class and an excellent conference as a whole. All of the training I received proved to be a great learning experience and definitely prepared me to be a better Councilwoman to represent our wonderful Village.

With Gratitude,


Councilwoman Jean Abernathy-Smith
(216) 921-6658

Introducing “Township Parkway” and the “Updated Website”



STREET NAME CHANGE

June 3, 2013 will mark a historical date within our community. “Selfridge Parkway” (located in the town-house area between Harvard Road and Randolph Parkway), will be renamed “Township Parkway”.

With this street name change, the Fire Department, Police Department and the Mutual Aid Responders will be able to respond directly to “Township Parkway” when necessary. We would like to thank all residents who were involved in the process to bring about this important decision in the best interest of our entire community.

WEBSITE UPDATE



As previously reported, our website is up and running, so click on “Village of Highland Hills” website to see the ongoing changes and additions being made. Most recently, we added to our “Community” page the following links:

- ✓ The Achievement Center for Children
- ✓ Virtual Rain Garden Simulator
- ✓ What is Storm Water?
- ✓ Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District “Video”
- ✓ So if you’ve ever wondered? Greater Cleveland Water Cycle
- ✓ Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District “You Tube Channel”

I encourage you to check out the above links on our website which offers much more information.

“The Achievement Center for Children” link informs you of the programs that are provided for children with autism and related communication disorders. The Achievement Center is a private, non-profit organization right in our community on Northfield Road.

“So if you ever wonder? Greater Cleveland Water Cycle” has a video that explains how water gets from Lake Erie to you, and back again. It also explains the filtration process.

I wanted to highlight just a couple of the new Community links, however, all of the links listed offer a great deal of information.

To gain more knowledge about our community is now just a click away. Also for your information, the Warrensville Library has over fifty computers available to serve the public.

Warrensville Library Hours of Operation:

Monday – Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Friday & Saturday

9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Sunday

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.


Councilman David Scott

Flu Season Arrived This Year Fast and Furious



This year flu epidemic got off to an early start and the experts warned it shaped up to be a fierce one. I know, because I had the fierce one. 😊

This is the earliest regular flu season we've had in nearly a decade," according to Thomas Frieden, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "While the flu is always unpredictable, the early nature of the cases, plus the strain, has caused a very bad year." Some have reported being affected up to two and three weeks. The best protection is to get vaccinated!

The CDC recommends that most people get the flu shot. The only persons who should not are babies under six months ,and people with severe egg allergies. (Eggs are used to make the vaccine.)

The shot is especially important for children under 5, pregnant women, individuals 65 and older, and anyone with a chronic medical condition (asthma, diabetes and heart and lung disease). It is also important for people with immune systems weakened by disease or medicine. It takes about two weeks for the protection to kick in after vaccination. The vaccine doesn't guarantee you won't get the flu, but it significantly cuts your risk and reduces severity and complications if you do get it.

Flu season runs from fall through spring. It usually peaks in February, but can last as late as May. Please consider being vaccinated!

No Hand-Held Cell Phones!!!

Sure you've heard about the new Ohio's statewide ban on texting while driving, but there's more to it than that. The new law isn't just aimed at busy thumbs behind the wheel; the rules have many other components that differ greatly based on the age of the driver. For those 18 and older, the new law bans the use of handheld electronic wireless communications devices to write, send or read text while driving.

Doing so is considered a secondary offense, which means law enforcement can't stop drivers without another reason. Violations for adult drivers are considered a misdemeanor with a possible fine up to \$150. Although banned from texting, drivers 18 and older are still permitted to read, select and enter a name or phone number while driving to make or receive a call.

But for drivers under the age of 18, the rules are much tighter. Ranked as primary offenses, law enforcement can now stop minor drivers for any of the following actions committed behind the wheel—even while stopped at a light:

- ✍ Talking on a phone, including via bluetooth, bluetooth speakers, On-Star or any similar device (unless making an emergency call to police, hospital, fire department, etc.).
- ✍ Writing, sending or reading text messages.
- ✍ Playing video games.
- ✍ Using a GPS (unless it's voice-operated or hands free).
- ✍ Using a computer, laptop or tablet.

A first-time violation for minors carries a \$150 fine and a 60-day license suspension. Additional offenses carry a \$300 fine and a possible one-year license suspension. According to the law, an electronic wireless communications device includes any of the following:

- ✍ A wireless telephone.
- ✍ A text-messaging device.
- ✍ A personal digital assistant.
- ✍ A computer, including a laptop, and tablet.
- ✍ Any other substantially similar wireless device that is designed or used to communicate or text.

So, please remember to drive carefully and safely!


Councilwoman Lillian R. Moore



HIGHLAND HILLS SENIOR DEPARTMENT

Wanda Simpson, Director • Monica Rushton, Assistant Director • 3700 Northfield Road • Highland Hills, OH 44122 • 216.283.3000, ext. 234 & 235

SPRING HEALTH TIPS FOR SENIORS

(STEADYHEALTH.COM)

Most people, especially the elderly, tend to slow down during winter, so spring, when nature is waking up again, is the perfect time to get moving again. However, most experts agree that being active all year round is the key to good health.

Two crucial factors for health in seniors are having a good diet and getting some exercise.

Exercise

People who are over 50 years of age, have a chronic health condition, or have never exercised before, should consult their doctor before starting any workout program.

There are a number of activities that older people may participate in if they want to stay in shape. A simple walk is sometimes all it takes. Malls are a very good place for that.

Taking the stairs is an exercise that will engage the muscles needed for keeping balance, especially when you are rising from a chair.

Here at the Village, we offer “Senior Balance,” a low impact exercise class twice a week! Many community centers have programs for seniors, like senior aerobics, yoga or swimming.

The cardiovascular system will benefit from aerobics, yoga will provide the necessary flexibility, and swimming is almost a perfect workout, involving many different muscle groups and improving stamina.

As we get older, every little bit counts. This means that parking the car further away from the store or church and walking the distance, or finding a dance partner for ballroom dancing, or square dancing certainly makes a difference. Stay Healthy!

FAREWELLS and GOODBYES!



FROM THE PEN OF COUNCILWOAMAN BARBARA SPEARMAN



HAPPY SPRING! Spring is here.
Let's give some cheer! Flowers bloom,
trees grow, water falls, winds blow!
Bees buzz, kids play, say hooray!
Spring is today!

Join with us to welcome Dale Carter, Properties Director, and Velma Ashford, Assistant Properties Director. Our Director's office is located in the Administrative building. Director Carter is responsible for handling all matters dealing with Village properties and buildings. Stop by at your convenience and meet them.

SPRING IS HERE!

A major goal in the Village is to be a well manicured community. What does it take to accomplish this? It takes all household residents and landlords to do his/her part to get this job done!

Spring cleaning is a tradition that allows us to get a head start in the hectic seasons of spring and summer. The term "spring cleaning" is synonymous with any kind of heavy duty cleaning or organizing. For all of us it means—get our affairs in order. Spring is a time of growth and rebirth for us mortal folks. It's time to throw open the proverbial drapes and get busy cleaning inside and outside.



This past winter has been hard and long but now we look forward to spring flowers, warm temperatures, green lawns and trees. It's time to get rid of the old and unused articles. Administration and Council are working on a plan to have a "CLEAN UP DAY" soon. On this day we can dispose of things we no longer need or want; such as old furniture, appliances, clothes, and many other items; including those old/unused things in the garage. Administration plans to cut/trim trees and replant trees where needed. Later there are plans to beautify areas in front of the administration building and the fire department area, if it can fit in the budget.

Council is also giving serious consideration to again have a "COMMUNITY POT LUCK EVENT". The community gave good remarks on this event last summer. We are working to have this event again and will be in touch with the community when everything has been put on paper and finances are available. Stay tuned.

HAPPY SPRING!

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

A watershed is the area of land that drains into a common body of water, such as a stream or Lake Erie. Rainwater and melted snow flows downhill through the watershed to streams, rivers, and the lake, carrying any pollutants (motor oil, animal waste, fertilizers) and debris it picks up along the way. Healthy watersheds provide us with drinking water, as well as water for irrigation, industry, and recreation. They also provide wetlands and open spaces that can store stormwater, providing natural flooding and erosion control. Our wildlife depends on healthy watersheds for food and shelter. Everything that is done in our watershed affects the entire ecosystem.

The Village of Highland Hills is part of two watersheds, the Tinkers Creek Watershed and the Mill Creek Watershed. Both Tinkers Creek and Mill Creek are tributaries to the Cuyahoga River. For more information and maps of your watersheds, please see <http://www.tinkerscreekwatershed.org/> and/or <http://www.cuyahogariverrap.org/millcreek.html> and www.vhhohio.org/community.



Notice of Council Actions

The Finance Committee, which I have the pleasure of serving as the Chair again this year, has been very busy working to ensure that our community stays solvent, relevant, vibrant, well-maintained, safe and secure. After many discussions and several meetings to that end, the following ordinances and resolutions have been approved:

Resolution No. 2012-66: A Resolution to rename Selfridge Parkway in the townhouse area (located off Harvard Road) to Township Parkway.

Resolution No. 2012-68: A Resolution to designate vacant property with Permanent Parcel Number 751-04-010, and street address 20384 Randolph Parkway, in the Village of Highland Hills as a public park, and to name such park "Highland Hills Community Park".

Resolution No. 2013-01: A Resolution providing for the re-appointment of Susan Hamilton as the Engineer for the Village of Highland Hills.

Ordinance No. 2013-02: An Ordinance to approve the annual appropriations of funds for current expenses of the Village of Highland Hills.

Resolution No. 2013-03: A Resolution confirming the Mayor's re-appointment of Robert Cottingham to the Tax Review Board.

Resolution No. 2013-04: A Resolution confirming the Mayor's appointment of Jesse Smiley to the Records Commission.

Resolution No. 2013-05: A Resolution confirming the Mayor's appointment of Robert Cottingham to the Personnel Review Board.

Resolution No. 2013-06: A Resolution confirming the Mayor's appointment of William Strong to the Personnel Review Board.

Resolution No. 2013-07: A Resolution approving the Mayor's appointment of several residents to the Senior Advisory Board.

Ordinance No. 2013-08: An Ordinance creating Section 154.03, Assistant Finance Director of the Codified Ordinances of the Village of Highland Hills, Chapter 154 entitled Department of Finance.

Ordinance No. 2013-10: An Ordinance to approve amendments to the employee complement of the Village.

Resolution No. 2013-11: A Resolution strongly opposing passage of HB 5 by the Ohio General Assembly which proposes uniformity measures for municipal income tax in the form of unfunded mandates and a substantial loss of revenue.

Respectfully submitted,

Council President Danita Love

www.DanitaLove.com