

Service Director Update

August 2023 Update

The water plant bids are all way over budget. We'll have to see what can be done and how to get more financing.

Nature Preserve Project final contract from the State has been signed and the availability of the monies has been extended one year. **One bid received and it's \$200k over budget. We are rebidding it and will open new bids on September 29th. Changes have been made to reduce the cost.**

We are currently installing the fall zones and replacing the railroad ties around the newer playground. The fall zone under the infant swings is completed and hopefully the others will be completed by your council meeting. **Fall zones are complete and the swings have been raised to the proper height. We've taken an old teeter totter to Gerber Lumber to cut out three new blanks to replace the old ones. Should be done in a couple of weeks.**

The Community Improvement Corporation will be receiving \$25,147.26 from the Klusch Foundation to purchase some new playground equipment and complete the shelter with the Lions Club at the Heartland Trail.

We have started our electric rate study with Courtney & Assoc. Our rates haven't been examined or raised since 2004, and we need to be sure we are covering costs. This study does not indicate a rate increase is in the offing. It only looks to see if we are meeting our fiscal responsibilities. **The requested data has been sent to them for analysis. We are continuing to provide the necessary information as requested. I've spoken to John Courtney a couple of times. They're just about complete.**

The utility guys are working hard to intercept rags and flushable wipes (which really aren't flushable) before they clog our sludge pipes, which is happening about weekly due to the increased use of these items. They've been testing some grating and rag interceptors. MCW is building a cage for us to try to catch as many rags as possible before they enter the aeration tanks. This will be completed in about six weeks. Stay tuned. Automatic bar screens are available for about \$250,000. If this solution works it will be about \$2600.00 **Update: the boxes the guys designed are working really well. Once the residual rags in the system are taken out our problem should be greatly reduced. Still working well, and the residual rags are slowly being removed.**

The Woodford water hydrant at Memory Park has reached the end of its life. We've purchased a new one, and, as time permits, it will be installed this month. It has to be hand dug. **Update: the Woodford hydrant beside the bathroom building by the basketball court appears to have been vandalized and is broken. It was leaking water, so the water has been turned off to it.**

We will have our biennial fire inspection August 18th. **We had some minor violation: a new lighted Exit sign in the PD garage, a fire extinguisher in the storage garage at the park as well as Exit signs above the two man doors, Fire Extinguisher arrows above each fire extinguisher. All violation have been rectified and re-inspection is September 18th.**

Our security cameras at the utility department are picking up an increased number of people, usually teens, walking down the driveway to the woods. We have "Authorized Personnel Only" signs posted and may have to start questioning these people.

We take a lot of questions about what "we" are going to do with the Historical Society's buildings. "We" aren't doing anything about them, but those who keep asking could become part of "them" by attending their meetings on the first Saturday of each month at 8 AM at the Legion and work on a solution plus it's breakfast day at the Legion: win/win! **Update: the porch on the cabin has been finished except for the shingles.**

Applied to Toro for their Ventrac grant for 501c3's within 40 miles of one of their production facilities. Waiting to see how we fared on this grant application. I applied under the Marshallville Community Improvement Corp. as it is a registered 501c3. **Checked on the Ventrac/Toro grant the Community Improvement Corp applied for to get a new Ventrac tractor. The application is still being reviewed.**

Reminder to let citizens know when they complain about paying utility bills. They are received on the 1st of the month, due the 15th of the month, a late charge is added the 16th of the month, and shut off is the 26th of the month. We are amazed at how many people we deal with monthly (usually the same people) who are surprised when bills are due. Also, payments can be dropped off at the night deposit at the bank or at the town hall AND they are credited on the last business day. If the 15th falls on a weekend, they can be paid on the following Monday. We have chronic late payers that, when averaged out with late fees, pay the equivalent of approximately 15 utility bills a year with all the added fees. If they were just paid on time, they would only pay 12 like most of our customers.