

Service Director Update

July 2023 Update

The water plant is out to bid! Our schedule is as follows: July 17th, Pre-bid meeting at 10 AM; August 10th, Bid opening at 11 AM; September 11th, Bid award at council meeting.

Andrew Moretto was released for regular duty on June 26th.

Nature Preserve Project final contract from the State has been signed and the availability of the monies has been extended one year. Now in the design phase. **Bid packages are out. Held a pre-bid meeting August 1st. Bids will be opened August 21st at 3 PM.**

I contacted Next Era Energy to see if they would participate in the Preserve project by paying for the chip and sealing of the driveway to the solar field to aid in the wheelchair accessibility. They agreed to pay the entire \$11,000 to do that and will donate a sign stating their participation if we would install it. Yes, we will.

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.

We also spruced up the town hall mulch and mulched and reset the Curly Carpenter stone at the park as it was leaning badly and partially covered.

Fence toppers on both fields have been installed. They look nice and hopefully won't attract as many bird nests and bees.

Most Paving is continuing with the original estimate of patching, sealing, and lining the park parking lot.

Utility software has been installed. **It appears things are working pretty well. We are getting more credit card payments.**

New Welcome signs are installed. They look nice. We were able to modify the signs to fit on existing sign posts. We trimmed a few trees to allow them to be seen. Signs were funded by memorial donations in memory of John Tucker to the Marshallville Community Improvement Corp.

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.**

Everyone has heard AEP's electric rates are going up approximately 50% this summer. We buy our electric from Orrville and get 11% from our solar field. Our electric rates are to remain fairly stable, even though Orrville buys electric from AEP as needed. Orrville has an attractive, long term, purchase agreement that has locked the rates in for a couple of years. The large AEP increase should have minimal effect on our rates.

Remember, we welcome any and all council members to come down to the utility department to get a glimpse of a typical day.

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: we lost a hydrant at the south pavilion, so the guys used this one to replace it. Ordered two more to replace one at the WWTP and Memory Park.**

We will have our biennial fire inspection August 18th.

We had an underground line feeding power to our WWTP short out (possibly due to a lightning strike). Orrville Power replaced it the next day. Our back-up generator provided the needed power to it until repairs were made. It was a big repair job.

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: one of our inordinate number of keyboard warriors in the Village apparently called the building department to report the contractor doing the work on the log cabin for not having a zoning permit from the Village. He called me to ask if he needs one. A zoning permit is not needed for this project as it is not changing the footprint of the building or its zoning designation. He may need a building permit, but that goes through the county. Some residents love to complain, but can't help with a solution.**

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.

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.

On another positive note, I'm with the utility guys a couple of hours a day. It's definitely not said enough, but if you have ever had the opportunity to spend a typical day with the utility department, Kris, Andrew, Gail, Tom, and Mark you would see how well they do their jobs, and from the time they arrive to the time they clock out they are busy. I'm proud of the way they go about their daily jobs. If you see them let them know. I certainly know they deal with a lot on a daily basis. Running a water, sewer, and electric utility is a big job without adding all the other daily items the town requires.