



**WARD 7 NEWSLETTER**  
**January, 2021**  
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I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. The year 2020 is now behind us and vaccines are becoming available for COVID-19. The hope is that will help get us back to normal. The question being, what is the new normal?

We have all been dealing with a great deal of stress, consciously and subconsciously. Some have felt this more than others depending on COVID-19's impact on us or our family members.

Hopefully, we can all get back on track soon so that we can enjoy being with friends and family and do things outside the confines of our homes.

#### **Finances**

The pandemic has put a hole in the City's finances. The initial projection was for a \$7 million shortfall. This was prior to the CARES ACT that provided incentives for employers to keep their workers employed. The City did make all the easy decisions to reduce expenses. A hiring freeze was implemented (budgeted positions have been budgeted for years but never filled) and part-time staff was laid off. The Bicentennial events and Home Days events were cancelled. We were fortunate to end the year with a shortfall of about \$3 million versus the \$7 million that was anticipated. We did not reduce full-time staff of their hours even with the stay-at-home orders.

This is the first time in my thirteen years on Council that an unbalanced budget was passed by Council. We did ask the Administration to reduce the budget initially submitted to Council. Thanks to the leadership of Finance Committee Chair, Jeremy Zelwin, the Directors, the Chiefs and approval from Mayor Kraus, they were able

to reduce expenses by almost \$600,000 without affecting City services. Despite these reductions, we will still end up with an unbalanced budget of approximately \$280,000. Any further cuts would have affected City services. We are not at that point where that is necessary. The hope is that we will be able to grow our way out of this situation. As Chairman of the Enterprise Zone Committee, I will be focused on doing what we can to retain and attract businesses to Solon. We finished the year strong with four new job creation grants and will look to build on that in 2021.

#### **Senior Services**

In the meantime, the Department of Senior Services remains busy despite being closed for indoor congregant programming. They continue to offer a wide array of activities virtually; including live video classes, telephone-in and home delivered activities, as well as drive-through events. From fitness to arts and learning, there is much to choose from. If you or someone you know would like to participate in video programming but does not have access or is in need of education, give the Senior Center a call at (440) 349-6363. They have programs and resources to assist. Plans are in place to reopen for indoor activities when safe.

During these difficult times, the City of Solon and the Department of Senior Services, through the support of the Rotary Club of Solon and community volunteers, are providing nutrition support to those in need. Programs include the monthly Solon Mobile Pantry distribution on the third Tuesday of each month for people of all ages at The Church of the Resurrection, a monthly senior produce distribution, weekly

home-delivered meals and grocery shopping services for seniors unable to shop.

Seasonal snow plowing applications for seniors were distributed last year. Income guidelines apply. Winter and snow also add a challenge for rubbish collection and because of this, the City has a Senior Rubbish Collection Program to assist. If you would like more information, visit the Active Adults and Senior Services page on the City of Solon website or call the Senior Center.

### **Recreation**

Beginning January 2, 2021, the Community Center will be open on Mondays. The Community Center hours of operation will be Monday-Friday, 6:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M. and Saturday/Sunday, 8:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M. We continue to look for ways to reopen while keeping patrons' safety our number one priority. Air purifiers have been placed throughout the building and the City has plans to install UV light filters on the HVAC units.

Once the snow flies, cross country skiing will be available at Grantwood Golf Course. Call (440) 248-4646 for more information.

Even though the golf season may be over, Grantwood Golf Course driving range is open year-round and features heated stalls. The course will reopen when the weather breaks in March or April.

### **Solon Center for the Arts**

Solon Center for the Arts classes, lessons and programs continue to be offered with modifications due to COVID-19. The majority of SCA's classes have moved to a hybrid option, allowing parents the opportunity to choose, if they feel comfortable, to allow their children to participate in the class. A small number of classes will remain in-person only, including pottery and some theater performances. The SCA facilities are still closed to the public, allowing only those registered for activities to enter. This has allowed SCA to minimize the amount of germs entering the facilities each day and helps to keep both the participants and staff

safe. Registration is currently open for all disciplines; art, music, theater and dance. Online registration is available for all programs at [solonarts.maxgalaxy.net](http://solonarts.maxgalaxy.net).

### **Road Project – Ward 7**

The low bid for the Aerial Sewer Project was Kenmore which began in 2020 and continues in 2021. The Engineering Department has had a pre-award meeting giving the expectations to the contractor. Engineering brought this project to the December 2020 Public Works meeting for bid approval. There is about a 30 to 60 day lead time for the pipe material.

This year, the Brookland reconstruction, replacement of sanitary sewers, storm sewers and catch basins will take place. The finished road will look like Arbordale Avenue and Copley Avenue when it is completed, with concrete curbs and gutters with an asphalt road. The issues with the utilities that were discovered during the Arbordale project were addressed in 2020. We do not anticipate those issues arising again.

On Duneden Avenue, the City is going to work with the utility companies to relocate the utilities out of the right-of-way in hopes of getting the road redone in possibly 2022.

At the writing of this newsletter, a final list of roads being considered for concrete repair is still under consideration.

Before any road project will commence, residents affected by any work will receive a mailing with information concerning when construction will start and contact information for any issues or questions that may arise. A meeting will be held only if we are able to meet at City Hall.

### **Emergency Alert**

The fall storms and first major snowfall has increased the necessity of making use of the City's emergency alert system. Residents can sign up by going to the City's website and using the "HOW DO I" tab. On the upper right side is a link for signing up for Emergency Alerts. I have asked the administration to use this system that

is already in place. We cannot assume that everyone is on Facebook. More people have email addresses or cell phones that can readily receive these emergency notices.

### **Planning**

The Hawthorne Golf Estates rezoning was approved in November. The next step is for the developer to submit plans and start the approval process. A timelines is not yet available.

The Planning Commission is working with an outside attorney to draft new language for political signs within our zoning code. Existing language regarding political signs is not enforceable. Rather than keep unenforceable ordinances on the books, by a narrow margin, Council requested that the section be updated.

### **Speeding**

The Traffic Logix Speed Radar units are being deployed in areas where we have received complaints about speeding. These units do seem to make a difference in average speeds registered of all vehicles. They also provide enough information as to whether or not speeding is sporadic or consistent. It registers speeds of all vehicles. We are able to see the highest and lowest speeds and times of days to determine if there are any trends that need to be addressed. This information will enable the Police to allocate their traffic resources accordingly.

### **Economic Development**

2020 was a tough year for business and we thank our residents for continuing to support our business community. Twenty-one new businesses opened in 2020. Two of the most recent include; Heritage



Coffee, 33445 Station Street and Paint Nail Bar, 6134B Kruse Drive.



Please stay safe but continue to support our businesses by taking advantage of curbside

pickup, deliveries, purchasing gift cards or giving great reviews on social media applications such as Yelp.

Here is a list of the businesses that opened in 2020: Lumina Imaging and Diagnostics, HV Supply, Fresenius Kidney Care Solon, Marketplace Insights, Hibachi Japan, Humble Design, Lumber Liquidators, Pinnacle Treatment Center, VIO Med Spa, Thrive Behavioral Health Center, Wendy's, Kings of Tint Detailing Auto Spa, Elite Cars Ohio, Mobil Gas Station, Mostar International, Game Speed Performance Academy, Heritage Coffee, Paint Nail Bar, TPM Foodservice, Cleveland Hormone Health and Verity Loans.

Going into 2021, it will be more important than ever to continue to attract and retain businesses. Doing so will provide the tax revenue necessary to maintain the high level of service that Solon residents expect and deserve.

Based on the two Enterprise Zone meetings that were held in December, Solon will have three more businesses coming soon.

### **In Closing**

We are fortunate to have a number of non-profit entities in Solon that give back to the community and help those in need. The three that come to mind are the Solon Rotary, Solon Benevolent Fund and Solon Italian Club. Our Safety Services also take it upon themselves to reach out to help those less fortunate. I am sure there are others that I am not aware of.

We have all endured a lot this past year. Some of us have suffered more than others. Hopefully, the worst is behind us and we are closer to getting back to normal.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. I wish you and your families a healthy, prosperous 2021.