



Mayor - City of Cortland

400 North High Street, Cortland, Ohio 44410

Annual Report of the Mayor to Cortland City Council February 17, 2009

Introduction

The primary purpose of this report is to document activities during FY 2008 and the condition of the City of Cortland at the conclusion of FY 2008. I want to thank my staff for their support throughout the year and everyone else that contributed to making this year a successful one for the city.

The city completed the year with continued financial solvency. During 2008 major rehabilitation and paving projects on State Route 46 and Main Street were completed. Also plans for major improvements to the City's water system were completed during 2008.

Finance

The city completed 2008 with a total unencumbered fund balance of \$2,487,000 which is an increase of \$58,000 or 2% from the carryover 2007 balance. Total expenditures for FY 2008 were \$5,385,800, an increase of \$261,000 over 2007 expenditures. Receipts for FY2008 were \$5,444,500 a decrease of \$451,800 or 8% from 2007.

The most significant balance increases were \$138,400 in the General fund, \$41,000 in the Fire Levy fund, and \$74,800 in the Fire Improvement fund. The most significant balance decreases were \$124,400 in the Police Levy fund, \$40,400 in the M & R fund, and \$69,900 in the Water fund. All other funds remained approximately the same as 2007 year end levels.

The Finance department continued to work on implementation of the new Payroll and Budgetary programs to be most efficient in supporting the City's needs. A new server was installed which helped speed up processing and network access.

Service department

The focus throughout this year has been to continue to stabilize city services through improved problem resolution and tracking, adherence to procedures, and documentation of procedures and processes. Our objective continues to be to maintain long range capital plans for all city infrastructures. This will allow the city to plan for financial needs well into the future and continue to maintain or improve current levels of city services.

Water

The unencumbered water fund balance increased from \$216,500 to \$146,500 with expenditures of \$650,500 to support the water department which included a \$100,000 repayment of the loan from the Sewer Fund. Total revenues from water billings were \$574,700 a decrease of 15 percent from 2007 as a result of reduced water tap fees and a 5% reduction in water usage. Expenditures for the water system not including the loan repayment are still below revenues, but with the capital investments planned for the next few years, we will require additional rate increases

Water pressure problems in higher elevation areas of the city should be solved with the construction of the new water tower. The projects identified to improve the water system and address the problems with low pressure are now underway. During 2008 we completed the plans for a new elevated storage tank at Willow Park which will significantly increase water pressure throughout the system. The Storage tank construction and the addition of pressure reducing valves to create a lower pressure zone west of High Street and south of City Hall are planned for 2009. In addition we will begin the north well field development and complete installation of a 12 inch water line on High Street from the City Hall well field to Main Street along High Street.

Sanitary Sewers

The unencumbered Sanitary Sewer fund balances increased by 2% to \$707,500 with total expenditures of \$983,600 in 2008. Revenues from sewer billings including the repayment from the water fund were \$995,100 which without the water repayment were 13% below revenues in 2007. This reduction was due to both the reduction in sewer rates and the 5% reduction in water usage.

Planning activities for 2009 include the upgrade of the Southdale and Old Oak lift stations.

Storm sewers

Phase III of the Rosewae/Charles storm sewer project was completed in 2008. This project included new storm sewers, reconstruction of the road surface, new catch basins, curbing and some sanitary sewer repairs. Funds for the completion of Phase III of this project included a grant of \$100,000 obtained during 2007.

A request has been submitted to Eastgate for funding of an upgrade to the storm sewers in the Stahl Avenue development. This project would correct problems with the construction that limits our ability to flush the system and correctly size sewers for current requirements.

Streets and Roads

We continue to utilize the 10 year resurfacing cycle to determine paving plans for each year. This year the annual resurfacing project was reduced in scope due resurfacing projects for Main Street and Mecca Street funded by State and Federal funds. The City project included over 169,000 square feet of resurfacing. Streets included were Erie, Frostwood, Pearl, Richards, Fairway and Wall.

The City administered the Main Street project paid for by Federal Highway funding that included 194,000 Square feet of resurfacing and berm stabilization, widening and drainage improvements within the ends of the project. ODOT as part of a larger project completed resurfacing of 217,000 Square feet of Mecca Street. In addition as part of the project to reconstruct the storm sewers on Charles Avenue, 40,000 square feet of Charles Avenue was also resurfaced.

With all of these projects a total of 620,000 square feet of City streets were resurfaced in 2008 at a total cost to the city of \$230,000. This is nearly double our normal annual pavement resurfacing at less than half the cost.

Police Department

The unencumbered Police Levy fund balance decreased by 32% to \$254,600 with total expenditures of \$1,028,200 to support the Police department. Police levy expenses now exceed receipts and will result in future fund deficits as expenses continue to increase. Expenses were higher due to expenses related to the new contract signed during 2008 and the resulting retroactive payments.

Two additional ICOP cruiser video/audio recording systems were purchased to bring the total to 7 systems. One of the systems was paid for with a grant obtained from the Office of Criminal Justice Services. These systems now in all of our cruisers have greatly enhanced evidence collection as well as providing pre-event recoding for

cruiser incidents. Two new 2008 Chevrolet Impala vehicles were purchased in 2008 replacing our oldest cruisers.

A grant of \$18,000 was also awarded by the Department of Homeland Security for an Advanced Thermal Imager and training in the use of the equipment. This equipment can be very helpful in searches and pursuits by identifying temperature variations in the environment that indicate the presence of a subject.

Lakeview schools agreed to provide \$10,000 toward continuing the School Resource Officer at their facilities for the 2008/9 school year.

Fire Department

The unencumbered Fire Levy fund balance increased by 13% to \$345,300 with total expenditures of \$1,162,100 to support the Fire department. We continue to add to the Fire Improvement Fund which had a year end balance of \$96,000. Receipts for the fire department decreased to \$1,203,200 primarily due to a reduction in ambulance billings of about \$30,000 and \$80,000 was added to the Fire Improvement fund.

There was a 12% increase in alarms during 2008 to a total of 1519. A state EMS grant for \$4,000 was awarded that was used for training and equipment for Fire Department personnel.

Strategic Plan Initiatives

Progress was made in several areas of the Strategic plan during 2008 including:

Appearance and Aesthetics of the City

The Cortland Beautification Association selected four residential properties and one business for the Cortland Pride Award. First Place Bank continued as the 2008 sponsor for the award. Four residential awards and a business award are planned for 2009.

Attracting People to the Community - A welcome letter and useful business and city information in plastic Welcome to Cortland bags are being given to all new water customers and other identified new residents. Over 740 packets have been distributed through the end of 2008.

Parks and Recreation Facilities -The first phase of equipment for a skateboard park at Willow Park was purchased and installed in 2008. Additional funds for equipment were raised through the Cortland Community Foundation with the efforts of many volunteers and a generous donation from the Cortland Bazetta FOP. With over \$8,000 from these activities and a matching grant of \$8,000 from Trumbull 100, additional

equipment was purchased in December that will be installed in 2009. The city also received a Nature Works grant of \$23,500 for new playground equipment and play surface materials for Willow Park. The equipment purchased from Gametime was installed in 2008 at a total cost of about \$35,000.

Respectfully Submitted,

Curt Moll