

City Administrator's Report
February 2, 2010

A meeting was held on Friday, January 29 with DNR staff in regard to the DOJ stipulation and consent orders from 2006 concerning wastewater treatment and collection. City administrators and the City Attorney attended the meeting on behalf of the City. Both parties reviewed the 2006 Order and city officials presented information and documents clearly showing conformance to certain infrastructure improvements in various drainage basins throughout the city. City Attorney Lueders requested written confirmation from either the DNR, DOJ or both, in documenting the deadlines imposed by the DOJ. DNR officials agreed to this request and therefore when received, the City should be in a good position to move forward with the Fall River IGA and improvements to the city's treatment plant and collection system as outlined in the Wastewater Facility Plan. Mr. Gilbert from the DNR also reported that the city must hold a public hearing in the very near future prior to the receiving final approval of the Wastewater Facility Plan from the DNR.

The City government received a safety inspection from the Department of Commerce on January 14-15. We have received written reports and compliance orders to correct those noted deficiencies. Department heads have until February 22 to resolve department specific violations. Lisa Haen from MEUW has been contacted and in working with the city administrator, will be writing a plan to address city-wide safety plans, training and compliance. This action plan will be submitted to the Department of Commerce prior to March 1. The Council will be briefed in more detail prior to March 1, 2010.

City administration along with staff from the Water & Light Department completed their review and analysis of the ten proposals received for engineering services. The engineering team has recommended that the following firms be invited to present their qualifications at interviews later in February: Baxter-Woodman, Ruckert-Mielke, Strand Associates and Yaggy Colby. Councilmember's Parpart and Bomkamp will represent the Council at this juncture.

Congratulations are extended to Superintendent of Schools Mark Jansen's from his announcement that he is retiring on the end of this school year. Mark has not only been an advocate leader for local education efforts in Columbus, but has also participated and volunteered his time for many community activities. His commitment to Columbus will be left in his legacy and contributions. We wish him well in his future endeavors.

Following thru on enhancements to the city's financial process and promoting more staff efficiency, approval has given to purchase, install and train city employees on software programs for payroll, purchase orders and budget transparency between city hall and departments. These items were approved as part of the 2010 budget and are a sole vendor item. The total amount is \$15,400 and agreement details are in the Council's mail boxes. It is anticipated that the programs and training will take place in the near future and be completed by late spring.

The City Administrator, General Engineering's Kent Fish and Mr. Ron Davis from the DNR met on last week to review the DNR's grant requirements, permitting and construction stipulations and inspections. Kent Fish from General Engineering will be the principal contact for the city on this project and items relating to the Udey Dam Grant.

As earlier reported the Credit Rating for the City of Columbus has been retained at A3 for the promissory note offering for 2010-2011. The pre-sale report clearly states the city's current debt, tax and economic status from both an internal financial perspective and the effects of our local economic development efforts. For the record and comparisons purposes, although the city continues to strengthen its undesignated General Fund Balance, working toward a 15-18 % ratio, Moody's places a significant emphasis on the median equalized valuation for small communities. In the case of Columbus our valuation is \$373 million as compared to similar sized Wisconsin cities median valuation of \$405 million. To achieve an A2 ranking, Columbus would have to grow to result to a valuation in the neighborhood of \$718 million. Thanks to the excellent work of Dave Wagner and Greg Johnson for their professional assistance in this transaction.

Public Safety Building move-in is tentatively scheduled for the end of this week, depending upon final punch list completions. If the Department can meet specific communications and security issues a press release will be issued on Friday morning announcing at what time and date the Police Department will be conducting business from the new location at Ludington Street. If circumstances determine otherwise, the Council and public will be notified as expediently as possible.