

Call The Roll

An E-Publication of Columbus City Council

Summer 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Columbus is at a crossroad. And as it should be in a true democracy, our citizens will ultimately decide whether we continue progressing as a special place for people to live and businesses to thrive or we begin to decline.



City leaders stand together in support of Columbus' Three-Point Plan to maintain neighborhood services.

The facts are clear, a structural imbalance exists in our operating budget that can only be fixed one of two ways: additional revenue as part of the city's three-part plan or severe cuts that will directly impact our quality of life for years to come. Those who take the time to visit the city's [web site](#) to review these facts should come to the same conclusion that we have: our three-part plan to reform city government, attract new jobs, and seek new revenue will not be easy, but it is the right thing to do for our community. And it is the only thing we can do to maintain the standard of living we are accustomed to in Columbus.

Additional revenue will allow us to maintain our safety forces at today's levels; it will allow us to keep open recreation centers; it will allow us to resurface streets and build new sidewalks; it will allow us to protect our most vulnerable citizens by funding our dental clinic, women's health clinic and neighborhood health centers.

These and many other features of the operating budget directly impact the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Why is this important? For one, we need to keep our community strong. Secondly, according to the *National Association of Realtors*, the median home value in Columbus is significantly higher than any of the seven other largest cities in Ohio. In fact, the median price of a home in Columbus is at least 40% higher than those in Akron, Canton, Cleveland, Toledo, and Youngstown. Many people have invested in Columbus, either by buying a house or starting a business here, and we want to help them protect their investment. This means keeping our residents safe and having healthy, stable neighborhoods. To do so, we need to maintain our basic city services and keep our city heading in the right direction.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Mentel, President
Columbus City Council

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COLUMBUS' FLEET MANAGEMENT GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION



Administration Committee Chair A. Troy Miller toured the award-winning Columbus Division of Fleet Management.

Out of 34,000 public fleet operations in North America, the top 100 were recognized recently by a panel of judges at the Government Fleet Exposition in Denver, Colorado and Columbus was named the 17th best in the country.

Working with the Columbus Division of Fleet Management to improve on this already impressive status, Administration Committee Chair [A. Troy Miller](#) sponsored *ordinance 0610-2009*. This legislation upgrades the city's *Fleet Focus* software, which is a high-tech system to bill, manage, monitor and analyze all maintenance-related data for city-owned vehicles.

"These improvements will allow the Division of Fleet Management to track the work that is being done on city vehicles in real-time," said Councilmember Miller. "The *Fleet Focus* software also provides a completely automated system that is paperless, enabling the work to be done in a cost

effective and environmentally friendly manner."

Fleet Focus gives Columbus the ability to provide accountability by tracking an unlimited number of city-owned vehicles such as refuse trucks, fire apparatus, compost graders and snow plows to support the daily operational requirements of city government.

Columbus' ranking as one of the 100 Best Fleets was based on nine criteria used to measure the performance of a public fleet. The criteria included accountability, the use of technology and information, evidence of a high-trust culture, performance recognition, collaboration creativity, quick and efficient turnaround and competitive pricing, and staff development and resource stewardship. 2009 represents the second year in a row Columbus has been placed in the top 100 fleets in the nation and the first year it has reached the top 20.

"Congratulations to Kelly Reagan and everybody in Fleet Management for earning this well-deserved recognition," Mayor Michael B. Coleman said. "Columbus once again has been recognized as one of the most advanced and efficient fleets in the nation."

100 Best Fleets is a nationally recognized industry benchmark recognition program in the public sector. The program plays a leading role in promoting, encouraging and enhancing the public sector's work performance and helps identify outstanding operations as models throughout industry.

"I am proud of all Fleet Division employees for making the 100 Best Fleets," said Columbus Fleet Administrator Kelly W. Reagan. "This honor was achieved by our entire team working on the floor, with the continued support and guidance from Mayor Coleman, City Council and the Department of Finance and Management."



Councilmember Miller thanked the staff members who work every day to ensure the city's fleet operation runs efficiently.

Click [here](#) to listen to Councilmember A. Troy Miller discuss his thoughts on using technology for Fleet Management.

GREATER EFFICIENCIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE PLANNED FOR CLERK'S OFFICE



Councilmember Eileen Y. Paley and Municipal Court Clerk Lori M. Tyack discussed how the new kiosks will increase efficiencies and save city resources.

In an ongoing effort to increase efficiencies and save city resources, Councilmember [Eileen Y. Paley](#) sponsored legislation to install two kiosks in the Franklin County Municipal Clerk of Court's office, allowing users to pay traffic fines electronically. Paley's legislation appropriated \$16,000 from the Public Safety Initiative Fund and authorized Municipal Court Clerk Lori M. Tyack to use the money to purchase the kiosks.

Tyack also plans to work with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles later this fall to enable the kiosks to provide a more convenient way for customers to pay license reinstatement fees. The fees normally associated with using this service will be paid by the consumer, saving the city an estimated \$100,000 in processing costs.

government and promote greater efficiencies," said Paley, who chairs the Judiciary and Court Administration Committee. "It is a smart investment that will save the city a significant amount of money."

The kiosks will be placed in strategic locations on the second floor of the Municipal Court Building near the area where fines currently are being paid and processed.

"This new option will allow those who have license suspension issues to pay reinstatement fees, pay their court costs and obtain their driving privileges all on the same day," said Tyack.

Paley also emphasized that the purchase of the two kiosks does not impact the city's beleaguered general revenue fund, which is used for day-to-day operating expenses. An earlier ordinance sponsored by Paley transferred a portion of the Hotel/Motel Excise Tax fund to pay for the kiosks.

The kiosks should be installed by October 2009.

"This is another example of the city of Columbus working with our partners to find ways to streamline



A rendition of the type of kiosk that may be used in the Municipal Clerk's Office.

COUNCIL BEGINS PROCESS FOR LIQUOR PERMIT RENEWAL OBJECTIONS



Columbus residents serve a vital role in keeping their neighborhoods safe. A Neighborhood Block Watch program or National Night Out event are proven ways to raise awareness of criminal activity and foster better communication and cooperation between residents and the Division of Police.

Public Safety Committee Chair [Andrew J. Ginther](#) is once again asking Columbus residents to assist the City Attorney's office and Columbus Police to prepare the city's annual liquor permit renewal objections. Each year, City Council submits a list of businesses to the Division of Liquor Control that are believed to be operating in a manner that demonstrates a disregard for Ohio laws, regulations, or ordinances.

Councilmember Ginther is asking the public to assist Council with the city's annual liquor permit renewal objection process.

"Columbus residents are the eyes and ears for City Council, helping us build a case against a business that is clearly not operating in the public's best interest," said Ginther. "Ultimately, it is up to the state to revoke a liquor license, but this is an important step in the process that gives residents some measure of control when it comes to the operation of a problem business in their area."

Area commissions, civic associations, or neighborhood organizations wishing to request an objection against a particular establishment must submit a letter to Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer's office **no later than September 1, 2009** to allow for a proper investigation. The letter must state reasons why the liquor permit premises create a problem and should include as much detail as possible regarding the negative impact the establishment has on the surrounding community. The letter also must designate a contact person, allowing the City Attorney's office to communicate with an organization's point person throughout the process.

Please address correspondence to: Office of Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.
ATTN: Natalia Harris, Assistant City Attorney
90 W. Broad Street, Room 200
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Nsharris@columbus.gov

PROMOTING BICYCLE SAFETY

This summer safety can start with a click of a bicycle helmet.

Columbus' bicycle helmet law went into effect on July 21, one year after approval of the measure designed to prevent serious head and brain injuries among young people. The law requires anyone under the age of 18 to wear a helmet when riding a bike or non-motorized vehicle.

"This law is about protecting our children," said Councilmember [Charleta B. Tavares](#), chair of the Health, Housing and Human Services Committee. "We want children to be outside, riding bikes and getting exercise; and we want them to do it in the safest possible manner."



According to data, 700 area children visited the emergency room at Nationwide Children's Hospital with bicycle related injuries in 2007. Studies show helmets can lower the risk of brain injury by up to 88 percent. For more information on the helmet law go to www.injurycenter.org or watch a public service announcement at: <http://assets.columbus.gov/GTC-3/bikehelmetpsa.wmv>

TYSON RECEIVES SEVEN GENERATIONS AWARD



Mayor Michael B. Coleman and Councilmember A. Troy Miller congratulated Councilmember Priscilla R. Tyson for receiving this year's Seven Generations Award.

When it comes to social service programs having a positive impact on kids while building self-confidence in young adults, few can boast the track record of City Year Columbus. Established in 1994, City Year unites teens and young adults during a year of service to the community. City Year volunteers work in schools as mentors and role models while engaging in a wide range of social service projects. In return, these young people receive leadership skills that will help them succeed in life.

“City Year volunteers make Columbus a special place to live,” said Councilmember [Priscilla R. Tyson](#). “We owe them a *thank you* for all they do.”

City Year also said “thank you” to Councilmember Tyson recently. At their Starry Starry Night fundraising event, City Year honored

Councilmember Tyson with its highest award given to a community or corporate champion, the Seven Generations Award. The award is named after a Native American proverb that encourages leaders to think how the decisions they make will impact society now and for the next seven generations to come.

“Whether I am in Council Chambers or in my business office, I try to frame every decision in that light, how will my actions impact my children’s children and beyond,” said Tyson, who was joined at the event by Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman and Councilmember A. Troy Miller. “I am honored and humbled to have been chosen for this award.”

“Priscilla Tyson set the foundation for the success we enjoy at City Year Columbus,” said Lourdes Barroso de Padilla, City Year’s executive director and member of the first class of volunteers to graduate from the program. “We even have the Priscilla R. Tyson Leadership Award given to a young person who displays great character during a social service project. Since literacy is a special interest for Tyson, the winner gets a \$100 dollar gift certificate to a local book store to buy books that are donated to a local school.”

Past recipients of the Seven Generations Award include: Limited Brands; Dr. Gene Harris, Superintendent of Columbus City Schools; Les Wright, former member of Columbus City Council; Tanny Crane, President of Crane Plastics; and E.W. Ingram, President of White Castle.

Tyson’s advice for City Year graduates?

“Get involved and stay involved!”

CRAIG PROVIDES INFORMATION ON FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDING



Minority & Small Business Development Committee Chair Hearcel F. Craig.

The \$780-billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was designed to help steer the faltering national economy toward recovery. While Columbus has received federal funds to retain this year's police recruit class, improve our infrastructure and create jobs, Councilmember [Hearcel F. Craig](#) has been leading an outreach effort to educate residents and business leaders on the guidelines and certain restrictions placed on the use of stimulus money.

"The city has been proactively trying to dispel some of the myths surrounding the process of applying for and using stimulus funds," said Craig, who chairs the Minority and Small Business Development Committee. "Small business owners, along with minority and female owned businesses, need to understand that the city wants to provide them with the proper information to help them participate in our economic recovery."

Craig turned to the expertise of key members of Mayor Coleman's administration and City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. to evaluate the federal guidelines the city must follow when requesting bids on projects that use stimulus funds. Craig and other city leaders have addressed some of the public's confusion regarding the bidding process in general, and specifically with stimulus grants.

"Since these are essentially federal projects, local laws pertaining to contractors on public projects are held to a different standard than what the city has in place," said Erik Janas, Regional and Government Affairs Advisor to Mayor Coleman. "We are compelled to follow federal guidelines and not necessarily the ones City Council and the Mayor have in place."

Earlier this summer, Councilmember Craig held an informational session to explain these issues for area residents while directing them to city programs designed to help businesses better understand the public bidding process. The session was taped and airs regularly on GTC-3, Columbus' government access channel on local cable outlets.

The GTC-3 programming schedule can be found at: <http://home.columbus.gov/tv/>



Councilmember Craig held a Minority & Small Business Development Committee meeting to discuss the impact of stimulus funding during the national economic crisis.

COUNCIL AND MAYOR LAUNCH 2009 NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE



Councilmembers Craig, Ginther and Paley joined Mayor Coleman in announcing the 2009 Neighborhood Pride areas.

City Council and Mayor Michael B. Coleman launched the 10th season of Neighborhood Pride on the city's far east side in the Tussing Blockwatch neighborhood. The Neighborhood Pride program helps hundreds of families work with city crews to clean, fix up, beautify and strengthen their neighborhoods. Local residents, business owners and city teams joined the Mayor and Councilmembers [Hearcel F. Craig](#), [Andrew J. Ginther](#) and [Eileen Y. Paley](#) to announce four new neighborhoods to be toured.

"The Neighborhood Pride program works because it is community driven," said Councilmember Ginther, who chairs the Development Committee. "When neighbors band together and work as a team with the city, we are able to do so much more to make our streets cleaner and safer.

Neighborhood Pride is about all of us doing our part, and when we come together to make our neighborhoods better, the entire city wins."

Neighborhood Pride was created by Mayor Coleman in 2000, bringing together city departments to coordinate services proactively into a specific area for a full week. The program was nationally recognized in 2006 as one of the reasons Columbus was selected as an *All America City*. Since 2000, Columbus employees have worked in 60 Pride areas and the Mayor announced four new Neighborhood Pride districts for 2009, including Brice-Tussing, Arlington Park, Deshler Park and Clinton Estates.

"Neighborhood Pride works because families are getting involved on their own street to help solve problems and improve their quality of life," said Mayor Coleman. "We need everyone, including residents, businesses, schools, churches and the city, working together to improve our own neighborhoods. From code enforcement to house painting and from litter pick-ups to block watches, Pride is helping more families get active in their communities."

During Pride's first nine years, the city has helped bring 6,036 homes into compliance, repaired 1,735 streetlights, picked up 1,139 tons of bulk trash, trimmed 3,800 street trees, inspected 21,861 catch basins and painted 5,802 fire hydrants among many other services. The city also provides home safety and code inspections, alley cleaning, street sweeping, utility and storm sewer inspections, mowing, cleaning parks and leading volunteer efforts to remove litter and graffiti.

Approximately 12,707 young people have participated in Pride bicycle safety festivals and the city has distributed 10,087 free bicycle safety helmets. Since 2004, 1,921 residents have graduated from the Neighborhood Safety Academies, where participants learn how to better work with police officers to make their neighborhoods safer. The Safety Academy will hold sessions in each of the four Pride areas in 2009, teaching lessons from a menu of training options and the Neighborhood Safety Action Guide.

In addition to the neighborhood services delivered during Pride, the city also builds partnerships with area businesses, asking them to give back to the community. To date, 655 businesses have become Pride Partners, donating nearly \$529,000 in goods and services. The city also has enlisted the partnership of the Cadbury Schweppes Bottling Group, Franklin County Children Services, Donatos Pizzeria, FasLube, Giant Eagle, Kroger, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Huntington, Save A Lot and the American Red Cross during Pride weeks.

COUNCIL JOINS COMMUNITY IN DEDICATING HUNTINGTON PARK



Huntington Park, standing at the corner of Neil Avenue and Nationwide Boulevard, is the latest attraction in Columbus' already vibrant Arena District. Welcoming fans into the new ballpark is a statue of Harold M. Cooper, whose vision and perseverance made professional baseball in Columbus possible. Indeed, many call Mr. Cooper the "Father of Columbus Baseball."

"Simply stated, Mr. Cooper is the reason we are here today," said Council President [Michael C. Mentel](#), who spoke during the ceremony to unveil the statue. "Mr. Cooper has allowed generations of Columbus residents to enjoy America's pastime firsthand. Without him, Huntington Park would not have been possible. His contributions to Columbus cannot be understated."

President Mentel addressed the crowd on opening day of the new Huntington Park.

clubhouse attendant for the old Columbus Red Birds. Having learned baseball from the ground up, Mr. Cooper eventually became general manager of the Columbus Jets baseball team before entering public service as a Franklin County Commissioner. After Columbus lost its minor league franchise, Cooper created a plan for Franklin County to buy the vacant ballpark along Mound Street and began a new era of local baseball in 1977 with the arrival of the Columbus Clippers. For 13 seasons, Cooper served as commissioner of the International League and in 1984 the county renamed its ballpark "Cooper Stadium" to commemorate all he had accomplished for the people of central Ohio.

"Mr. Cooper taught me about baseball and politics, but most of all he has taught me lessons about life," said Mentel, who once worked for Cooper in a concession stand at the former Jets Stadium. "Mr. Cooper is an icon and this statue will serve as a constant reminder of the gift he has given all of us, the gift of baseball."



The statue of Harold M. Cooper outside of Huntington Park. Cooper is known as the "Father of Columbus Baseball."

HONORING THOSE WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

City Council joined the community at Genoa Park to honor Columbus Police officers who have fallen in the line of duty.



HONORING THOSE WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

