

January 5, 2016

As 2016 is now upon us we continue to enjoy the break from the past few winters both in temperature and snow fall. Here is to hoping that this mild winter continues up to the point it warms up for spring! While this is my hope I anticipate that snow plowing will be necessary again at some point this winter. When that time comes please remember these few items that make it more efficient and safer for everyone: Please make sure that you take extra caution when approaching or passing a snow plow. It is necessary for the plows to back-up at times, especially near intersections, and it is important that you keep plenty of distance between you and the truck; it is very helpful to have as many vehicles parked off the street as possible to allow the crews to push the snow back to the curb in order to provide street parking thereafter. As with every winter a reminder that we try to plow the main streets first, all other streets next, and then will finish up by cleaning up intersections and plowing alleys. As always your patience is appreciated as the crews complete these tasks and continue to keep our streets in great shape.

Also should the weather turn colder and stay that way, it is important to take the extra steps to avoid having frozen water lines. It is always helpful to keep the cabinet doors below sinks open, leave the faucets on outside walls dripping slightly and be sure that the vents in the crawl spaces are closed and/or insulated.

Some big changes have occurred in our village government at the start of 2016. Mayor Roger Broerman completed his 3rd and final term at the end of the year and Dave Kaup has stepped in as the new mayor. Dave has served on the village council for the past 11 plus years and comes with a great deal of experience that will help Fort Recovery continue to progress as we have during Roger's terms. Also long time councilman Rod Thobe retired at year end after having served nearly 36 years as a council member. We owe Rod a great deal of appreciation for his commitment to our community and the leadership that he provided during the many, many great changes that have occurred to Fort Recovery during those years. We will miss the experience and leadership that both Rod and Roger have provided over the many years of service they have given to our community. Elected to serve another four-year term is Scott Pearson who previously served eight years on the council. We welcome Scott back and the current council members will be selecting someone to fill Rod's unexpired term at the next regular council meeting from a list of four gentlemen that stepped up to be considered for the open seat. It is great to have individuals interested in serving the community and it will not be an easy decision for the council to pick only one from the list.

2015 was a busy year as always and many different projects were completed. We are pleased to announce the elimination of our sanitary CSO's after many years of work toward this goal. Our next step in this area will be to begin inspecting and reviewing the sanitary lines for cross connections with storm water in the form of downspouts, sump pumps and yard drains. This will begin this year and will be an ongoing maintenance program for the village to continue to keep our utility systems working properly and effectively. As I am sure everyone has noticed, many streets were paved this past summer to put the final touches on the Phase II Separation Project area along with a few additional streets. ODOT is scheduled to come through this spring and repave State Route 119 which will also be a big improvement!!

Also during 2015 we continued to make some improvements to our sanitary lagoons to keep them working as efficiently as possible. Additional work is being planned now to put the final upgrades on the existing lagoons as we make plans for future additions to our sanitary plant. We also completed a short sanitary extension on State Route 49 south that will service the new Country Breeze Subdivision which will include the soon to be built Dollar General store. One other improvement made this year was the work at the intersection of the two highways that has made it much safer and easier for the large volume of truck traffic that travels through this area. I have heard from many truck drivers who feel that this was a huge improvement and we will continue to monitor this area for any additional traffic control improvements that we feel are necessary.

As we look toward 2016, we again have numerous projects planned and will be planning many of them now to be prepared for construction this summer. In the plans is some additional paving work, specifically repaving John Street along with a few others. We are making plans now to pursue a street reconstruction project with William Street being high on the list. We are working on some additional improvements to our water plant to extend the working life of our plant for as long as we can in a cost effective manner.

We also have some more improvements planned in our parks for this summer with the soon to be developed Recreational Trail in Community Park. This project is partially funded with an ODNr grant along with a generous donation in memory of

Paul Staugler by his family. We will be finalizing those plans as soon as we receive the paperwork from ODNR with a scheduled construction this summer/fall. We also have plans to do a complete renovation of the restrooms in Community Park along with adding some improved benches and trash receptacles. As always we appreciate the continued support we get from the local community in the form of donations to accomplish many of these projects.

In reviewing the recent Community Survey, it was pretty evident that there is a need for improved sidewalks and curbing in many areas of town, along with some stricter zoning codes to enforce some of the issues we face with run-down or abandoned properties. While these issues cannot be corrected overnight, they are areas we will be addressing and coming up with plans to achieve improvements as we move forward.

As always if you have any issue that you feel needs addressed, please don't hesitate to contact me at the village office or stop in and see me and I will be glad to discuss it with you. Also a reminder that our village council meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:30 pm in the village hall and anyone is welcome to attend.

Randy Diller, Village Administrator