CHARTER AMENDMENTS

At the General Election on November 8, 2016, there will be 2 proposed Charter amendments on the ballot. These amendments were adopted by the City Commission. Complete copies of the ordinances are available at the City Clerk’s Office.

The first issue is amending Charter Section 4 which would clarify that the City Commission can meet in executive session for purposes of discussing emergency management issues and economic development. Currently the Charter is silent on these issues but the Ohio Revised Code permits executive session for these reasons. The City is moving forward with many development projects and in order to plan for or advance a project, often discussions need input from the City Commission prior to the announcement of the project or the information being public. This amendment makes the Charter consistent with what is authorized by State law. The Charter amendment would also allow for the Charter to remain current with Ohio law as it may be updated. The language on the ballot is:

Shall Charter Section 4 be amended to clarify that the Commission may meet in executive session to discuss emergency management, economic development and other areas only as specifically defined and authorized by the Ohio Revised Code?

The second issue seeks to amend Charter Section 5 regarding how the mayor is elected. This amendment was brought forward at the request of the City Commission. The Commission appointed a charter review committee specific to the issue, appointing one member from each ward. The Committee studied the history of the charter section, years of election results and the pros and cons of several options, including a review of the charters across Ohio. The Commission held a work session with the Committee where the options were presented. The Commission unanimously voted to amend the Charter to its language prior to the 1975 amendment. Before 1975, the mayor was appointed by the Commission. Currently, a candidate must run for mayor and commissioner separately and then win both elections to be mayor. However, in at least three elections, the candidate who won mayor lost the commissioner race and thus was not elected to the Commission. Two of the members serving on the Committee in fact had won the mayor’s seat but did not serve the Commission because they had lost the commission seat. Thus the person who was mayor was not elected as mayor by the citizens.

By amending the Charter, there is no longer any confusion as to how to vote on the ballot. The citizens would continue to vote for all five commissioners, only having to vote one time for each person they want elected. Therefore, the person who would become mayor was already approved by the citizens who elected him/her to commission. The mayor has no independent authority from the commissioners other than to preside over the commission meetings, perform marriage ceremonies and serve as the representative for the City for purposes of being served with notice from a court of law. Where there is no independent authority of the mayor, as every commissioner’s vote is weighted equally, the amendment is consistent with the charters throughout the State of Ohio. The amendment is effective for the mayor who would begin to serve in 2018.

Shall Charter Section 5 be amended to allow for the City Commission to elect the mayor at its first meeting in January for a term of two years, commencing in 2018?

A yes vote means you are voting FOR the charter change. If you have any questions about the Charter amendments, please contact Law Director Stacy Wall at 778-2042.

GENERAL ELECTION DAY INFORMATION

General Election Day is Tuesday, November 8, 2016 from 6:30 AM until 7:30 PM.

For precinct locations, ballot information, voter information or election results, please contact the Miami County Board of Elections at 440-3900.
CITY OF PIQUA IS AWARDED A $300,000 CDBG GRANT

The Ohio Development Services Agency, Office of Community Development (ODSA, OCD) awarded the City with a $300,000 CDBG Critical Infrastructure Program Grant. ODSA received sixty-nine (69) Community Development Program Competitive Set-Aside applications this year. Funding requests for the Competitive Set-Asides, which include Neighborhood Revitalization, Downtown Revitalization, and Critical Infrastructure projects, totaled $21,908,000. ODSA was able to fund thirty-seven (37) top ranking proposals.

The $300,000 CDBG Critical Infrastructure Program Grant along with the City’s PY 2016 CDBG Community Development Allocation of $75,000 will be used to install 450 linear feet of 48 inch storm water pipe in the Shawnee Neighborhood. The installation will start at the intersection of Cleveland Street and Second Street and run west to the Great Miami River.

The Shawnee Neighborhood was eligible for the CDBG funding because the Income Survey that was completed in May of 2016 showed that this neighborhood was 69% low and moderate income. To be eligible for the CDBG funding the project area must be over 51% low and moderate income.

The City anticipates implementing the project next year in late spring.

CITY OF PIQUA PAINTS FIRE HYDRANTS

Gray fire hydrants seemed to be the talk of the town last month as the Water Department crews began prepping downtown area fire hydrants for painting. The Water Department rented a unit that stripped the hydrants of old paint. The unit, specifically made for stripping fire hydrants, saved the City on time and cleanup as to what it would have taken to wire brush and prep the hydrants. Immediately after a hydrant was stripped of the old paint, another crew would follow behind and paint the hydrant with a gray primer.

In less than two weeks, city crews were able to strip and primer approximately 140 fire hydrants. The hydrants were located mainly in the downtown area as well as State Route 36 to the east, State Route 66, and County Road 25A on both the north and south ends of town.

After all of the hydrants were stripped and primed, crews began going back to paint the hydrants.

Painting of the hydrants is a much more time consuming project. To date, city employees have completed around two-thirds of the hydrants. A spray gun is used to paint the hydrants and the area around the hydrants is covered to prevent overspray. The employees working on the project have done an excellent job of getting a clean coat of paint on the hydrants and keeping the surrounding areas clean.

The hydrants are being painted Safety Red with a Bright White cap. Some hydrants need to be identified as “non-draining” hydrants. Those hydrants will have a blue stripe around the bottom of the white cap. (Non-draining hydrants used to be identified with a red stripe around the yellow hydrant)

The City of Piqua will research the best and most economical way to continue the project into the upcoming years. Piqua has over 1,000 fire hydrants throughout town so the process of getting all of them converted to the new colors will take some time. We all will agree though that this has been a much needed endeavor and the final product looks amazing!

Any questions should be directed to: Bob Jennings, City of Piqua Water System Assistant Superintendent at 937-778-2090 or bjennings@piquaoh.org.
PIQUA’S 4TH FEST IS A SUCCESS!

It was a celebration to be remembered and it was packed full of fun for all in the City of Piqua on the Fourth of July. The festivities began at 10am at Fountain Park and ended around 3pm.

The park was filled with musical entertainment from the Mountain Dulcimer Society of Dayton, Rum River Blend Band and the Piqua Civic Band. While the music was the back-drop for the day, there was much more happening front and center in the Park. Activities included: bike decorating with a parade through the park, Mapcap Puppet Shows, Putt-Putt Golf, Zip-lining, a COSI-Science Exhibition, caricature drawings, photo booths, balloon sculpturing, J & J Express Train rides for the kids, face painting, patriotic hats & flags and much more; and it was all at no cost to the public! The food vendors did an amazing job serving everyone at the park as well.

Following the celebration at the park, the venue changed to Lock Nine Park along the Great Miami River. There were food trucks and an ice cream truck on hand for food purchases. The musical group “The Hired Guns” opened for the famous musical group “The Coasters”, which is a classical American rhythm and blues rock and roll vocal group which totally entertained the crowd!

To top off the night, Fireworks by Pyrotechnico light up the sky with a spectacular display of patriotic colors.

This was a beginning for a new tradition in Piqua and next year promises to surpass!

UTILITY LOCATING RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the greatest responsibilities for any homeowner or business is to make certain that before they do any work on their property that involves digging, is to make sure they properly have all their utilities marked. Those utilities range from water lines, waste water lines, electric, gas, cable, and a multitude of other possibilities.

There is a simple way to achieve this and that is to call the Ohio Utilities Protection Services or better known as “OUPS.” They can be contacted toll free at 811 or 1-800-362-2764. By calling OUPS, they will contact all the utility providers and make sure that those utilities are marked within 48 hours before you dig. It is very important to realize that by law, you are required to call before you dig.

There are two main reasons why you need to call. First, safety is the most important reason. Hitting a gas line or electrical line could create a life safety hazard. Secondly, if you are digging, and cause damage to a utility, and you did not get it marked, then those financial obligations would fall on the property owner as well as fines and penalties.

There is however one key part that the City wants to inform all property owners about. The City of Piqua is responsible to mark the following utilities (Water, Waste Water, Storm Water, and Electric), within these following boundaries. Any utility that falls out of these parameters, the property owner would have to have them located by a private contractor.

Water – The City will locate water lines up to the right of way or the meter pit, whichever is the closest.

Waste Water – The City will locate waste water lines up to the right of way or the meter pit, whichever is the closest.

Storm Water – Storm Water lines are only located in the public right of way. The public right of way is from the back side of the side walk to the street.

Electric – The City will locate up to the meter box. This typically falls at or near the building itself. The City will also mark any electrical in the street.

Remember to call 1-800-362-2764 before you begin any project or start the digging process.
ANNUAL KIWANIS HALLOWEEN PARADE

Ghosts and Goblins! Princes and Princesses! It’s that time of year again! The Annual Piqua Kiwanis Halloween Parade is gearing up for another exciting night on Wednesday, October 26th. This is the 60th annual parade which was begun in 1956 by Joe Thoma, Jr.

The evening’s festivities will begin with judging of costumes promptly at 6:15 p.m. in the Unity National Bank Parking Lot in Piqua with the parade starting at 7:00 p.m. Costumes will be judged for children up to age 14 years old in 11 categories: Scariest/Ugliest, Most Original, Best Couple, Funniest, Prettiest, Cartoon Character, Science Fiction, Historical/Political, 3 years old & under, Princesses, and High School Band. First, second, and third prizewinners will be chosen in each category with prizes of $20.00, $10.00, and $5.00. Two grand prizes sponsored by Unity Bank, a girl’s bike and a boy’s bike, will be given for the outstanding costumes chosen by the judges. Prizes and treats will be given to the children at the conclusion of the parade on the front porch of the YMCA.

“We are looking forward to a fun event for the youth in our community,” said Kelly Meckstroth and Niki Watson, co-chairs of the event. “This is an annual Kiwanis Club event that has grown in size and popularity since its inception,” the co-chairs added.

Kiwanis is a global organization dedicated to changing the world one child and one community at a time. Anyone interested in finding more out about the Kiwanis Club of Piqua is invited to call Brian Phillips at 778-1586. Kiwanis meets on Wednesdays at noon at The Bistro Room (formerly Backyard Bistro) at 1876 Commerce Drive.

TRICK OR TREAT IN THE CITY OF PIQUA

It’s time to get the costumes out and the candy ready for Trick or Treat night in the City of Piqua. Trick or Treat/Beggar’s night will be held on Monday, October 31, 2016 from 6 – 8 PM.

The date of Monday, October 31, 2016 was recommended by the Miami County Council for all of Miami County.

Be safe and have fun!