
Report to the Woonsocket City Council
Department of Human Services
Department of Economic Development

December 2010 – February 2011 Report

Monthly Report

Department of Human Services

December

- Distributed items that employees donated to the “Giving Tree” throughout the community in conjunction with our social service agencies, as well as walk-ins
- Partnered with Beacon Charter School students to once again have an Elderly snow shoveling program.
- On December 7th the city hosted the Main Street Candlelight Stroll; participants included the Beacon Charter High School, RiverzEdge Arts, Main Street-Riverfront Initiative, NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley and the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Corridor Commission as well participating businesses. There were free horse and carriage rides, a fire entertainer and ice sculptures at River Island Park, and the arrival of Santa Claus. The event was a success and continues to be a favorite amongst attendees.
- Assistance was provided to resident of the Rebekah Street fire. Individual had Christmas presents that were destroyed for his minor children. Contact was made to the WPD in regards to their annual Toys for Tots campaign. Individual was provided with toys for his family. Assistance also was given to individual by referring him to several sources for long term housing.
- The city’s 2010 Christmas ornament featured the Police and Fire Department(s). A limited edition of 250 ornaments was made and sold for \$ 15 each and was extremely successful.

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Department of Human Services

January

- Assisted family through the EMA Displaced residents program administered by EMA Director Gary Lataille. The family was living in a home with no heat or water. There were 4 minor children and 2 of them had medical conditions. Tenants were housed for 2 nights at the Woonsocket Motor Inn. This office also assisted the property owner in with contact/resources trying to obtain funds for boiler replacement.
- Provided resident with information for her elderly parent regarding RIPTA's Flex and Ride Program.
- There were several residents that were "victims" of unpaid water bills by their landlords and were subject to water shutoffs if payment arrangements were not made prior to the posted dates. Every attempt was made to assist them with housing assistance until either payments were satisfied or new housing was found.
- Assisted Municipal Court Judge Gariepy with finding non-profits who will take individuals in need of community service hours. There are several churches and the food pantry and Because He Lives.
- Assisted several elderly individuals in completing the RI 1040 property tax relief form.
- Worked with the staff at the Senior Center to make sure parking lot was cleared for snow removal by the city. The huge amount of snow this winter made parking more difficult for seniors and created less space.
- Continued overseeing expenditures and invoices for the Senior Center and processing the vouchers.

Monthly Report

Department of Human Services

February

- Assisted a caseworker/ESL coordinator at the Harvest Community Church with housing assistance for 84 year old elderly woman.
- Assisted female homeowner with trying to find resources to help pay for a retaining wall on her property. Individual was laid off from work and feared losing her home. She was referred to RI Housing for assistance.
- Assisted resident with a referral to the POINT for her elderly mother. The Point is Rhode Island's Aging and Disability Resource Center.
- Assisted veteran with getting rides through the Veteran's Affairs office from his home to the Veterans Hospital in Providence. This is a free shuttle service provided to veterans. Also referred a veteran that needed assistance filling out paperwork with the city's Veteran's Advisor. The Veteran's Advisor also has weekly hours set at the public library.
- Assisted tenant with mold issues and water leaking at West School Street Apartment. Housing Inspectors investigated.
- Assisted tenants on Robinson Street with relocation due to water shutoff at their apartments. They were told about housing options through the Family Resources Community Action Program and The Woonsocket Housing Authority. Tenants from two of the apartments came to this office for assistance.

Monthly Report

Department of Economic Development

December

- Briefings with wastewater re: enforcement at specific sites / businesses (these updates were necessary to determine eligibility for JCIP participation)
- Meetings and paperwork to certify 77 Restaurant (Nick Haddad et al.) to JCIP program
- Meetings and paperwork to certify American Wood Pellet Company to JCIP program, includes drafting of resolution for Council consideration, etc.
- Meetings with American Wood Pellet Co. and Providence & Worcester Railroad re: requirements for reactivating rail spur at 85 Fairmount St.
- Meeting with business owner to determine suitable sites for locomotive engine technology testing
- Coordinated meeting with business owner, HAZMAT, engineering and building re: potential recycler construction near Highland Park

January

- Meetings with rooming house owners re: proposed ordinance
- Several interactions, including meetings with the Mayor, with National Grid re: various projects around the City, including Singleton Street project

Monthly Report

Department of Economic Development

January, cont'd

- Reception for new businesses
- Extensive interactions with business looking for site for medical related retail operations, including working with building inspectors regarding the suitability of and progress at one ongoing rehabilitation project
- Facilitation of meeting between National Grid and Stadium Theatre
- Attendance at EZ Council meeting
- Worked with legal counsel and Director Mathews to determine identification of ownership interests and City options regarding various distressed properties

February

- Note: director was away on vacation through Feb. 9
- Meeting with Mayor and potential developer re: Hamlet Avenue
 - Followup: traffic study data
 - Followup: review of traffic flows and potential signaling change proposals with relevant City Hall officials
- Discussions with owner of tax lien at 84 Fairmount re: pending current fiscal year tax sale
- Mayor & Director meet with ownership, Hanna Instruments
- Numerous interactions regarding Vermette's and Seville Dye after roof collapses