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

July 2010 Report

Monthly Report

Department of Human Services

- Letters for renewals went to all participating businesses and individuals for the city's beautification program. Approximately 70 letters went out with a projected income of \$ 11,000. The Adopt a Corner Program has been in place for many years without an increase in fees. The administration reviewed all the current locations and agreed that a slight increase would necessary to make it cost effective.
- Extensive interaction with residents, city officials and outside parties to manage shelter and health conditions arising from the passing of a City resident at home in the height of the early July heat wave.
 - The individual's death was unknown and unreported for several days, with the heat, unsanitary conditions accelerated very rapidly
 - Once the death was reported and the coroner had removed the body, other tenants in the building needed shelter / relief from the resulting conditions
 - The City's inspectors worked to find a responsible party (building is in foreclosure) while Human Services worked to find shelter for tenants
 - Relief was coordinated and follow up inspections done before tenants were able to return to their apartment

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Department of Human Services

- Assistance was provided to a resident who suddenly found herself homeless. Due to a unique situation she was unable to stay at the Family Resource homeless shelter on Sayles Street. She indicated that she had been a resident at one time at the Haven of Grace Facility. A call was made on her behalf and the manager was made aware that this individual was in a situation where she needed immediate housing and they agreed to take her back as a client.
- There were two fires in the city that affected residents. The first was a house fire on 112 Gilbert Street. It displaced one resident who was living temporarily with a relative. He lost his pet cat, all his furniture, clothing and personal effects. This office reached out to him to assist him with housing needs and help with other related issues. He said he would call when he needed help. The house was declared a total loss by the building official. Another fire three days ago displaced five members of a local family in an apartment heavily damaged by fire on Park Avenue. The Red Cross was on scene and provided the occupants with a place to stay until other living arrangements could be made. At the submission of this report Chief Lataille still didn't have all the reports available in his office to supply information so this office can reach out to those residents that were affected.

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Department of Economic Development

- Meetings with various parties regarding comprehensive plan / zoning change requests, correspondence with the Board regarding various proposals for special use permits, etc.
- Coordination of various departments to expedite, where possible, buyer's due diligence process (inspections) on a vacant industrial property now under purchase agreement
- Communications back and forth with Wal-Mart regarding future of Woonsocket location
- Two meetings to begin and advance the process of negotiating a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) agreement with the successor organization to Landmark Hospital
- Two meetings to negotiate and finalize for Council review two PILOT agreements with Gary Fernandes regarding properties on Main Street and Blackstone Street
- Correspondence and follow-up with RIPTA regarding locations of bus stops on Main Street / constituent request
- Work with 3 local businesses regarding JCIP, small business loan program and other complaints/requests

Monthly Report

Department of Economic Development

Economic Development Planning Process

- Has been underway since mid-Spring to lend focus and accountability to the department's ongoing efforts
- The research supporting the plan has independent value to the department and the City for all future activities
 - Database of commercial properties, ownership, and contact information; inventory of space in enterprise zone, arts district
 - Database of public and private grant opportunities (private section still in progress)
 - Tax base analysis and target levels for sustainable incentive programs
- Time not spent on specific projects was allocated to the plan in July, effort focused on benchmarking Woonsocket to similar cities
- Completion expected in August, with work plan for teams to put effort against in key areas