

**2011 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS  
GOALS FOR 2012**



PREPARED BY: JOSEPH BICA – Mayor & Director of Public Safety

March 5, 2012



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Residents,

As I look back on the past two years as Mayor I feel the sense of significant accomplishment. In January of 2010 the City was facing a \$1.8 million dollar general fund deficit with declining tax revenues, interest income at the lowest point in decades and looming State budget cuts. After closing the books on December 31, 2011 our actual operating deficit was \$272,000.00 vs. a projected \$827,000.00 deficit. Although the financial issues are critical, we as a City administration cannot focus solely on this issue.

As we have moved into 2012, I push the staff into thinking not of the past and what we have done, but what can we accomplish short and long term. As the administration we need to be planning, strategizing and positioning the City for 10, 25 and 50 years from now. Working on workforce development, economic development, expansion of infrastructure, land banking, brown-field cleanup, sale of water, housing stock, strategic development and land planning to name a few. How and what we do today will be the seeds or the foundation for Ravenna in the year 2062.

This administration will continue to promote accountability, transparency, ethics, efficiency and collaboration while embracing technology to assist with all those core values. My goal for 2012 is to strengthen the relationship and communications with Ravenna City Council to enhance our alignment with strategic planning as we move the City progressively forward.

Attached are reports as prepared by the various department heads in the City. These summaries are accomplishments from 2011 and more importantly the goals for 2012. The current state of the city will require this administration and City Council to continue to make further changes to maximize the operational efficiencies of each department for the best of the overall City.

In conclusion, it has been an honor to serve the City of Ravenna for the past two years. I would also like to extend my thanks to my wife Dona and daughter Kara for their understanding and patience with my position, it's not always fun being the wife or daughter of the Mayor.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joseph Bica Jr.' in a cursive script.

Joseph Bica Jr.  
Mayor & Director of Public Safety

## **FINANCE & INCOME**

### **GENERAL FUND REVIEW & OUTLOOK**

#### **2011 IN REVIEW – FOCUS ON THE GENERAL FUND:**

The City of Ravenna began the 2011 year with a projected General Fund annual operating deficit of \$827,012 based on revenues of \$6,335,426 vs. expenditures of \$7,162,438. As was the case the past three years, revenue stagnation prompted yet another round of budget cuts and adjustments in an attempt to reduce the impact of the net operating loss on a rapidly depleting General Fund balance. 2011 began the year with \$1.7 million dollars in General Fund reserve, and if deficit spending was to continue at a pace of better than \$800,000 per year, this balance would be spent down in its entirety in two years.

As the year progressed, operational changes were made in the areas of personnel and budgetary spending. This coupled with a slight uptick in Income tax revenues began to chip away at the operating deficit. The most significant reduction in expenses was in the area of Group Healthcare costs. Medical claims payable for the year came in 40% less than the 2011 budgeted amount. As noted in the past, the City's healthcare plan is structured as a partially self-funded plan; meaning the annual baseline budget for Healthcare is based on the City's maximum liability exposure. The net effect of the above revenue increases and cost reductions was to help reduce the 2011 operating deficit to \$272,111 vs. the \$827,012 projected. This in turn produced a year end General Fund balance of \$1.4 million dollars.

*Looking to 2012, the uphill battle will continue as the incremental loss of State-provided Local Government Funds over the next two years will create yet another revenue hole that must be filled. All gains made in operational changes, income tax increases, interest income increases and hospitalization savings have been lost to the additional 25% reduction in local government funding and the loss of the estate tax (approximately \$280K).*

### **SPECIAL REVENUE AND ENTERPRISE FUNDS**

#### **STREET FUND:**

The key to Street's stabilization in 2011 was the ability to maintain reduced staffing while maintaining quality services to our residents. The savings produced by reduced labor costs coupled with Healthcare savings kept the fund in the black for the second straight year.

The Street Fund finished the year with a \$21,414 surplus, based on revenues of \$1,098,522 and annual operating expenses of \$1,077,108.

**PARKS AND RECREATION:**

Much like the Street Department, the Parks & Recreation Department turned an annual operating surplus in 2011 for the second straight year. While the margin was a slim \$21,203, revenues of \$775,852 outpaced expenses of \$754,649 in 2011. This was the second straight year that a combination of watchful spending and increases in the two major self-generated revenue categories, Program Fees and RAC Memberships, enabled P&R to cross the break-even point and reach an annual operating surplus.

**WATER FUND:**

Much of the success of the Water Fund the past two years is attributable to the stabilization of labor costs as a part of overall operating expenditures. Wage freezes in 2010 and 2011 were at the forefront of cost cutting measures and the net result was that the Water Fund produced a surplus of \$362,753, inclusive of Capital expenses. As noted in 2010, cost-cutting measures in Enterprise Funds provide funding for management to implement long-term Capital Replacement and Improvement Plans.

**SEWER FUND:**

The Sewer Fund turned the corner in 2010, and utilizing the same operational cost savings measures as the Water Fund, ended 2011 with a \$270,157 annual operating surplus. This number should only improve over the next several years as the fund is about to shed a significant amount of debt service in 2012. Like the Water Fund, the ability to stabilize labor costs is the key to the Sewer Fund creating a surplus that provides funding for much needed recapitalization.

**SUMMARY:**

The 2012 budgetary forecast shows all four funds mentioned above projecting out to have operating surpluses at year end. Street and Parks & Recreation will need to be monitored and managed much closer, as the margins are slight and any disruptions in either revenues or expenses may tilt the outcome to a spending deficit.

**GOALS FOR 2012:****LABOR:**

Labor has been, and will continue to be the City's largest single operating cost. The staffing reductions that took place over the past three years have left many departments operating at minimum levels, and in some cases, below minimum levels. Work load demands have increased. Employees are required to adapt to new time management practices. Individuals are now finding their duties and work environment redefined as the City navigates through tough economic times. All of these factors produce a new set of challenges for employees. And as the workforce shrinks in size, but as individual job demands expand, the City must now look to safeguard its most valuable assets by providing a more comprehensive series of

programs that address issues outside the scope of traditional collective bargaining agreements or personnel policies.

With all that's been said and written about today's economy and its impact on individuals in the workplace, the City invest in H/R and personnel expertise to create a plan that addresses the health, well-being, and condition of its immediate and future workforce through the development of a Workplace Wellness Initiative that is focused on:

- Workplace Safety
- Employee Health and Wellness
- Employee Assistance Programs

The City can no longer afford to view labor costs in terms of an hours-times-wages equation. The real cost of labor extends well beyond the obvious expense that is recorded in a fiscal year. Creating a work environment that fosters and promotes organizational wellness is not only a measure the City can take to help contain the ancillary costs of labor, but more importantly address the well-being of its largest investment.

#### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:**

##### **OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND TRAINING:**

The City has a head start on this phase, as Safety Compliance has been at the forefront of personnel related training and development the past three years. Through the program instituted by the Safety Compliance Officer, the City continues to develop a culture of occupational safety throughout all departments. The City has seen the program transcend simple BWC compliance to our current of position of employee participation in both practice and policy. The goal of the program over the next three to five years is to continue to foster safe and best workplace practices through training, education, and a "common sense" approach to workplace behavior. At the same time the Safety function as a whole will begin to focus on broader based programs that include:

- Professionally sponsored Safety Training Programs
- Continuing on-site Education opportunities
- Ergonomics
- Safe practices as a behavior

The ultimate goal of the Safety Program is to not only ensure individuals are equipped with the education, training, and tools to perform their jobs with minimum risk of illness and injury, but to also recognize the importance of safety in any task performed outside the workplace.

## **HEALTH & WELLNESS:**

The topic of an Employee Health and Wellness program has been discussed from a variety of angles over the past several years. If a comprehensive Workplace Wellness Initiative is to succeed, a Health and Wellness program is the logical second phase, and should focus on:

- Medical Wellness
- Fitness Programs
- Behavioral and Emotional Wellness

Implementation of the Health and Wellness plan can be crafted to first address City-wide objectives followed by a second phase that deals with department-specific goals. It is within these departmental goals that the overlap between Wellness and Safety will begin to take shape. Both programs will benefit by expanding the scope of how each task-oriented issue is addressed.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM:**

A critical component of a comprehensive Workplace Wellness Initiative is providing support to employees on a more personal level through an Employee Assistance Program. EAPs offer confidential access to a variety of professional services that are typically outside the scope of traditional healthcare plans and provide employees with a broad range of resources that may include counseling in the areas of:

- Legal
- Finance
- Behavioral and Psychological
- Family and Marital
- Substance abuse

An effective EAP rounds out the three basic components of the Workplace Wellness Initiative. As employers, the City can build Safety and Wellness programs that measure individual and organizational goals, but it is the EAP that often times provides the greatest benefit to employees and their families.

## **BUILDING THE PROGRAM:**

The above overview of the Workplace Wellness Initiative is intended to provide a starting point for identifying the components of developing the program. From here, the City may wish to take advantage of its proximity to the area's network of Healthcare professionals for guidance in crafting and implementing a program that can be up and operating by the end of 2012. The goal is that each subsequent year, the program is enhanced and improved to arrive at a product that fulfills the objectives of the City and serves the needs of employees.

**CONCLUSION:**

The challenge of managing the City's finances will continue to be at the forefront of all decisions made as we move into 2012 and the immediate future. While smaller spending has been, and will always be the overall objective of sound budgetary management, the City now looks to innovative means of closing the gap between expenses and revenues. Joint ventures, inter-governmental collaborations, and revenue generating capital improvement projects, are but few of the new and creative ways management has addressed filling budget deficit voids.

As noted in the 2011 year end summary above, the impact of healthcare costs on the bottom line can be significant. Last year it was significantly favorable. Conversely, in any given year, it can be significantly unfavorable. And like joint ventures and collaborations, as an entity that has now arrived at near minimum staffing levels, it only makes sense to invest in the health and well-being of our workforce as another new way of doing business.

**INVESTMENT STRATEGY:**

In 2010 it was noted that the 2011 investment objective was to move towards longer maturities and less reliance on the StarOhio pooled money market fund. The ability to capture higher yields impacted our total investment earnings, as the portfolio consisting of mostly CDs and Agency Notes finished \$34,223 better than 2010, an 85% increase over the prior year. Firstmerit Bank was again selected as the depository for the City's operating accounts. With the cost of bank fees in excess of short term earnings rates, the City will again be well served by covering bank costs with the sweep earnings through maintaining a compensating balance at Firstmerit.

**COLLECTIONS:**

While the collections of delinquent Utility Bills are filed as property tax assessments, Income Tax delinquencies still run through the traditional collection cycle. The process begins in-house and may, in some instances; end up being resolved in court by the City's collection attorney.

And while litigation is always a potential solution to a tax collection matter, the Income Tax Department will continue its fair and reasonable approach to handling delinquency collections, particularly in a time when so many of our residents are experiencing financial difficulties.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Established in April 2010, the Department was charged with the responsibilities of both Community and Economic Development activities to enhance and to promote the prosperity of Ravenna.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

#### **Business Retention and Expansion:**

- Met with over 90 Businesses (roughly 2 per week) (existing and potential) and Community Organizations
- Supported Expansions: Portage Precision Polymer; Saint Gobain; McDonalds; Astra; Paris; Sheetz
- Supported New Businesses: Mongoose Motors; Spectrum; ODOT; MIT/MKM; Bettina's Collectibles and Antiques; Bennett Land Title; Blimpie; Town Tavern
- Established Business-to-Business Network and held first networking event with financial seminar
- Participated in local and regional Chambers of Commerce

#### **Community Development Initiatives: RECEIVED \$602K in Grant moneys EIGHT TIME THE DEPARTMENTS BUDGET**

- Received \$6,100 Economic Development grant and contracted with Portage County Regional Planning Commission to complete asset mapping for the city
- Received \$50,000 Connecting Communities Grant (Study of the St Rt 44 Corridor for alternative transportation methods)
- Received \$86,000 USDA Farmers Market Grant
- Received \$1,500 Ravenna United funding to host the KSU educational forum on Joint Economic Development Districts
- Received \$3,500 Ravenna United funding to support marketing campaign for the city and coordinated the development of business cards and stationery
- Represented City of Ravenna on the following Boards and Commissions:
  - Community Improvement Corporation of Ravenna
  - Ravenna Design Review Commission
  - Geauga Ashtabula Portage Partnership Workforce Investment Board (GAPP WIB)
  - Portage Area Regional Transit Authority (PARTA) Advisory Board
  - Visioning in Portage (VIP)
  - Habitat for Humanity of Portage County
  - Community Action Council of Portage County
  - Portage County Regional Planning Commission

- Portage Revitalization and Economic Planning
- Start UP Ravenna Farmers (SURF Board)

**Brownfields Redevelopment:**

- Received \$405,000 and Coordinated the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund grant (former White Rubber asbestos abatement and demolition)
- Received \$50,000 OH EPA Brownfields Action Plan Program to study Cleveland and Chestnut Corridors

**GOALS FOR 2012:**

**OBJECTIVE:**

Update the Economic Development Website with a focus on business retention, expansion and attraction.

Strategy 1:

Incorporate the City of Ravenna asset mapping and parcel identification information into a user-friendly site selection tool.

Action Steps:

- Convert the asset inventory into a searchable format (excel database of criteria).
- Work with the City Engineer and Information Technology Department to determine possible solutions.
- Develop network with area realtors, the Portage Development Board and other county economic offices to share information on available properties, buildings, etc. within the County.

Strategy 2:

Continue to build the Business to Business (B2B) Network by facilitating the quarterly seminars.

Action Steps:

- Identify and facilitate the workforce needs of employers and coordinate with area technical schools, colleges, and universities to bridge gaps.
- Relay information regarding current state and federal grant programs and funding opportunities.
- Continue to collaborate with area Chambers of Commerce to bring relevant business connections and professional development opportunities to local businesses.

## **OBJECTIVE:**

Establish Ravenna as a community that welcomes new and innovative businesses.

### Strategy 1:

Commit to practicing regionalism, improving quality of life and building community strength.

### Action Steps:

- Explore the alternatives for collaborative economic development with neighboring townships (JEDD, JEDZ, CEDA, Annexation, Merger, etc.)
- Identify target industries and clusters that have the greatest growth potential. Explore possibilities of biomedical corridor utilizing NEOMed and Robinson Memorial Hospital as partners.
- Nurture the partnership between the Community Improvement Corporation of Ravenna and Hiram College to establish the Arts/Business Incubator, which may be used as a model for future opportunities.
- Develop a Citywide Brown-fields Plan, including inventory of potential sites, existing infrastructure, and possible funding/reuse strategies. Utilize the Ohio Department of Development Brown-fields Action Plan Pilot Program and the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund.
- Facilitate the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study Connection Communities Grant, "Safe Alternatives, Less Traffic" study of the State Route 44 corridor.
- Introduce a new jobs tax credit program for City Council consideration.

## **PUBLIC SERVICE**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

- Transitioned to new service director
- Increased inspections and enforcement of city property maintenance code.
- Coordinated and completed re-fueling station at street garage.
  - Total gallons to date 84,591 (over seven months)
  - At an average of \$3.21 per gallon (diesel & gas)
- Investigated street department property drainage issues and worked to develop plans to remedy storm water violations.
- Developed new criteria for storm water quality credits in the storm water utility policies and procedures.
- Bid and contracted mowing
- Met with Rootstown Water Company officials and reviewed planned improvements to facilitate vacating Crystal Lake Water Plant.

- Removal and abatement of old transformer(s) from Crystal Lake
- Initiated legislation for chronic nuisance abatement
- Initiated RFP for Energy Consumption Audit
- Facilitated software development for building department, nuisance abatement (currently in beta testing)
- Encourage cross departmental communication and coordination
  - Monthly Service Department staff meetings
- Began process of updating policies and procedures within service departments
- Facilitated partnership with Ohio Department of Transportation and upgrades at the Street Garage
- Initiated claims procedure for damage to city property (in progress)

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

Encourage and enhance communication and coordination among the 5 Service Departments

- Through meetings, face to face communication and electronic communication.
- Utilize technology to assist in coordination of work among departments.

#### **POLICY & PROCEDURE:**

Provide department heads the tools to update and write standard operating procedures (SOP).

- To define how the departments operate and to standardize to assure consistency in procedures.
- To define process and examine if current operations are the most effective and efficient

#### **TECHNOLOGY:**

To assist in the implementation of technology in departments to facilitate their work

- Sundance Software: to assure the program is being utilized and providing the functions necessary to monitor and track work, complaints, and inspections.
- Fleet Management: to obtain a program that can be used to track and monitor maintenance of all city vehicles and equipment.
- GIS Mapping: to provide city employees and council access to maps and data regarding the city's infrastructure, assets and vulnerabilities
- Scheduling Software: to provide tools for departments to schedule, monitor time and pay employees.

#### **CHRONIC NUISANCE ABATEMENT:**

To formalize the procedures to fully implement the chronic nuisance ordinance

- By writing the procedure and sharing with all department heads
- Integrating software program to track and alert chronic nuisances
- Establish a process to evaluate compliance plans

## **REGIONAL COLLABORATION:**

To evaluate services and needs within the Service Department to identify areas in which local governments can work together to increase efficiency/effectiveness in services provided

- By conducting a needs assessment to identify areas of weakness that need improvement
- By building relationships with colleagues
- Through sharing and research of best practices
- Networking local Service Directors with common needs

## **COORDINATION:**

To facilitate coordination among department heads, staff and/or external contractors to assist in implementation of projects.

- Honeywell Project: to be the point of contact for Honeywell project manager in coordination with the City Engineer.

## **ENGINEERING**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2011:**

The 2011 year has again been a busy year for our department with a staff of three full time and one part time employee, our department has overseen approximately \$600,000 in Capital Improvements varying from 2,700 L.F. of water line construction, to City Park Restrooms to asphalt road repair, utilizing approximately half of this valuation in grant money and private developer money.

This office completed the design of the Cleveland Road water line improvement project a year early in order to score better with Ohio Public Works Commission. The cost of this project is \$650,000 and about 2/3 will be grant, to be constructed in 2012.

A neighborhood revitalization grant was applied and received for an assortment of improvements in the Fair Allotment development including asphalt, fire hydrants, curb sidewalk, sanitary and abandonment of force main. The grant covers \$300,000 and \$50,000 RLF and \$50,000 C.D.B.G. will be utilized in 2012 construction. Design will be in house during 2012.

Completed a water rate analysis and uncovered a \$90,000 bill due to the City and drafted a new claims procedure to improve collection of funds for damaged City facilities.

Applied for and was awarded four AMATS grants; two resurfacing projects, 2000 ft. sidewalk extension and new traffic signals totaling \$2.35 million worth of improvements over the next four years, which the grant will cover approximately 80%.

## **GOALS FOR 2012:**

- Completion and utilization of the Sundance Software for rental properties, contractor registration, building permits, and property maintenance.
- Go 'live' with the G.I.S. system so department heads have this resource at their fingertips which includes rental property information, utility information, zoning, asset mapping data, all connecting to Portage County's data
- Implement a new construction bidding format which allows bidders to download the information directly from our web site thus reducing the amount of collation and paper used.

The outlook for 2012 has capital improvements construction valued at over \$1.6 million encompassing a variety of projects. Over the next four years there is over \$13 million worth of C.I. projects programmed to be administered through the Engineering Department.

## **BUILDING**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2011:**

The Building Departments primary focus was adhering to the Ohio Building Code, processing permits, plan reviews, inspections, zoning reviews, Planning and Zoning Commission and BZA.

This year saw a total commercial project valuation of approximately \$3 million. There were a combined 510 inspections conducted by our Building Department staff. The deviation between permit fees collected and inspectors paid netted positive nearly \$22,000; thus representing the operations of the department efficient and effective. The contractor registration again netted \$33,600.

Rental properties and property maintenance underwent a transformation mid-year when a shift in staff promoted a venture between PMHA and the City; with this, PMHA now performs rental inspections for the City which began August 3. There were 770 rental inspections performed.

Also implemented September 1 was a new ordinance increasing rental inspection fees and an application fee for all new and expired rental properties. In addition, this ordinance imposes penalties should a rental property not be brought current when advised to do so. Enforcing this ordinance netted additional receipts near \$12,000 over 2010. More importantly, this ordinance gives us the ability to update our rental list and perform safety inspections of the rental stock. To this point we believe the rental unit counts to be nearly 71% of our housing stock, which is based on water billing customers.

Property maintenance remains a priority. Currently there is 16 to 20 hrs. spent on this task per week. Eight to twelve hours per week are being performed by the City Engineer, which is not an effective use of my time. An increase in the property maintenance personnel's hours has been requested. To accomplish the ongoing task of cleaning up this town, the zoning code needs to be adhered to strictly with Councils support.

## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2011:**

#### **STASTICS:**

- Vital Statistics went to state issuance (anyone can obtain birth certificate at any vital stat registrar in state of Ohio regardless of birth place)
- Birth Certificates issued: 2011: 3,460    2010: 3,075
- Death Certificates issued: 2011: 2,014    2010: 2,182
- Communicable Diseases investigated: 76 diseases; 20 Hepatitis C and 23 Chlamydia
- Immunizations provided: 540 shots to 464 people, 191 were Tdap to adolescents and adults and 228 flu shots
- Screenings Provided: 522 Blood Pressure checks, 24 Blood Sugar, 22 Cholesterol and 101 TB tests

#### **TIME OF CHANGE:**

- Decision was made to not be the lead agency for the Safe Communities Grant
- Health Department was closed on Fridays furloughing the staff's hours as a means to save costs in the general fund
- Health Commissioner Lynette Blasiman of 14 years resigned in August
- Gap of Health Commissioner filled by Service Director on Interim basis

#### **STUDY CONSOLIDATION OF HEALTH DEPARTMENTS IN COUNTY:**

- A task force was formed in April 2011
- Report finalized February 2012
- Significant support by County/Township Trustees and City of Ravenna to consolidate
- Interest to collaborate by City of Kent

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

#### **STRENGTHEN PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE:**

Build a network of resources, knowledge and expertise around public health services

- By expanding the knowledge of the essential public health functions on the Board of Health
- By partnering with community partners who promote, provide or educate regarding health services

- By participating in coalitions and committees that address health or impact health

### **COMMUNITY ASSESMENT NEEDS:**

Lay the foundation to implementing community needs assessment for the city

- By working collaboratively with the two health departments to identify what data to collect
- To share data with healthcare providers in the city, or those who serve city residents, examples may include;
  - Robinson Memorial Hospital
  - Community Health Center
  - Schools
- To work with Universities to assist in data analysis and epidemiology
  - To assist with comparative analysis within our community and the state of Ohio and National data
  - To interpret and analyze vital statistics data

### **DEVELOP PUBLIC HEALTH PREVENTION PROGRAMS:**

Utilizing the information obtained from data analysis and epidemiology to address health needs

- Assessing what programs are currently provided and the effectiveness of the programs at addressing the health need
- By working with the other health departments to pool resources to address needs
- By working with public health partners
- By working with coalitions and consortiums developed around health needs

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS in 2011:**

#### **Parks:**

##### **John Tontimonia City Park**

- Summer Day Camp Headquarters – CI project: this building received a much needed facelift with new garage doors, a man door and siding. To be completed in 2012 will be the finishing touches with paint.
- Proposed and approved capital improvement project to the tennis court, skate park and basketball courts was not completed.
- Beginning construction on the new restrooms. Completion date slated for April 2012.
- Capital improvement project: Two new carts were purchased for the park. One was stolen in 2011 while the other one required extensive repairs.

##### **Havre's Woods Park**

- Proposed capital improvement project was not able to be completed but slated for spring 2012 (shelter, dugout and block building roofs).

## Chestnut Hills Park

- No new capital improvement projects. Maintained park to the best of the department's abilities.

## **Annex Building:**

- Proposed and approved vestibule at the back entrance capital improvement project not completed but scheduled for 2012.
- Proposed and approved new roof capital improvement project not completed but scheduled for 2012.

## **Recreation:**

- Successful first year partnership with Fit Chicks, Inc. in forming the Ravenna Fun Fitness Series. Three events were hosted with proceeds going to the Ravenna Parks and Recreation Department (\$11,876.59).
- Brought the community together in support by voting in the Pepsi Refresh Project program. Out of 333 entries the city came in 14<sup>th</sup> place after 30 days of voting online, by email and by Facebook in December for a Cultural Arts Programs for At-Risk Youth.
- Awarded \$500.00 from National Garden Association 2011 Subaru Healthy Sprouts Grant for gardening equipment the Summer Day Camp gardening program.
- Awarded \$1,000.00 from Youth Services of America United Healthcare HEROS Grant for a service learning project in the grant's physical and emotional health issue area. High School student members of the Ravenna Youth Council who enrolled in the Teen Led Change received RAC memberships and the group planned and executed a fitness education event for the local elementary schools.

## **RAC:**

- Capital improvement project: group exercise room received a new look. The floor and walls were carpeted to finish off a clean look. The walls were damaged and needed covered up. A cabinet and shelf added to the new look.
- Portage County Sheriff's office utilized the RAC for an employee wellness program. The twice a week class for 8 weeks brought people to the RAC who have never been here before and/or introduced them to an organized exercise program. Classes were held in the cycling room as well as group exercise room.
- Purchased 1 treadmill (the Curve)
- Partnered with Robinson Memorial Hospital Diabetic Education to enroll diabetic members to the RAC at a discounted first time member rate.

## **GOALS FOR 2012:**

### **PERSONNEL:**

#### Policies and Procedures

- Shore up the loose ends of office practices – if don't adhere to city policy/ordinance

#### Office

- Front desk – train to take over the operation of the office and functions when Cindy Meers retires (this is at least a two year training process to cover all areas); cover telephones, decrease secretarial jobs currently performed by other staff
- Provide funding for training opportunities which has ceased the last 3 years

#### RAC

- RAC supervisor/coordinator
- Less time by office staff at the front desk (although this has been beneficial for office staff to see and know RAC members it is also hindering their focus on programming and other duties)
- Day time janitorial employee – during peak seasons a person who will focus only on cleaning RAC or works year round with limited time during non-peak seasons
- Maintenance employee to keep up preventative maintenance on RAC equipment (this is not a full time position and will have hours to accommodate needs)

#### Parks

- Mowing crew changes from contract to in house.
- Pay Ordinance – change contract parks crew from 4 to 6 employees but keep 120 hours per week (was 4 employees with no more than 30 hours per week)
- Provide funding for training opportunities which have ceased the last 3 years

#### Recreation

- Wage increase for various contract employees – i.e. Tumble Time, Sporties for Shorties, softball officials, sports supervisors, sports camps, summer day camp, etc.
- Look into employment of full time Sports Coordinator
- Look into grant writer to research and write grants for programming as well as CI projects

#### **OPERATIONAL:**

- Clean up records, files, databases
- Collection of debt from business sponsors for sports and participants in all programs using the income tax department (as utility billing uses) and use this option of debt collection on a regular basis when the conventional method does not accomplish the goal (mailing letter)
- Ravenna Youth Scholarship Fund increase the dollar amount and/or number of usages by an individual who qualifies
- Equipment – RAC, parks to be continually updated

## **PROGRAMS:**

- Survey Monkey – get input from citizens - meet with Kerry on how to set up
- As a result of the citizen survey work towards offering programs most desired
- Continuous review of programs – elimination and addition
- Continue to be economically compatible with the industry standard in costs
- Grants to subsidize programs that are currently in place or new ones
- Offer high quality programs
- Online registration of programs – concerns about NCTP vs. CTP status and payment
- Computer stations for sign ups outside department office
- RECWARE up and functioning to its full capacity to bring the department into the next century
- Utilize the city’s website to its full capacity for the department
- Utilize the city’s website for program schedules (download rather than handing out copies), changes in schedules, to keep participants updated
- Keep the department’s portion of the city’s website up to date
- Advertise programs on Facebook and Twitter

## **STREET DEPARTMENT**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

- Our mechanic has started providing service for other departments in the city allowing departments to realize a savings in vehicle maintenance.
- One of the biggest highlights for the street department was the co-op with The Ohio Department of Transportation.
- This relationship has turned out to be better than anyone had imagined.
- We have been able to take advantage of some great opportunities that have benefited both parties.
- This collaborative effort has enabled us to share in training, equipment and given us an opportunity to make major improvements to our facility that we would not have accomplished otherwise.
- These include constructing an equipment wash bay, enlarged entry ramps to accommodate larger equipment including the city’s fire engines.
- We will be installing new floor drains and oil separator bringing our facility up to the Ohio E.P.A regulations.
- Surveillance cameras now monitor our property 24 hours 7 days a week with electronic locking doors for safety and security.
- In 2011 the idea of the City of Ravenna building a fuel depot finally became a reality allowing us to sell fuel to The Ohio Department of Transportation, The Ravenna School System, and The Portage Parks District.

- Our City personnel actually designed and built this full depot in house from our engineering department with the designing to our street department pouring the concrete and assisting in setting the two 12,000 gallon fuel tanks.
- In the last two years we have seen major improvements to our street department and we look forward to the progress that we will make in 2012.

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

#### **FLEET DEPARTMENT:**

Setup a city wide fleet maintenance program servicing all city departments and billing each department at a reduced rate for services.

This would allow the fleet maintenance department to establish a line in the budget to replace tools and equipment when needed.

Hire a part time paid intern from the vocational school program to assist the fleet manager with minor duties and services.

Upgrade the mechanics tools and equipment to allow them to work on the newer vehicles and provide them with safe equipment.

Purchase a fleet management program and software.

Street department personnel:

Provide training for the street department employees in the operations of the backhoe, excavator, and other equipment bringing the service workers up to the standards and capabilities of other equipment operators that are in the same job classification and doing assessments of personnel.

Provide personnel with training seminars for the education of the proper procedures for spot paving and street repairs. This is in part of the rebuilding of our paving program. We have established relationships with neighboring entities that are willing to work together in the sharing of equipment and personnel to assist one another in projects while doing more with less.

#### **LICENSURE:**

Provide personnel the opportunity to further their education and obtain pesticide licenses and possibly education for a city arborist within our department.

#### **COMPUTER EDUCATION & TRAINING:**

Provide the education of computer skills for key management personnel  
Such as outlook, excel and software programs.

**MANAGEMENT TRAINING:**

Implement an effective management program for department heads and their assistants in the management of department personnel and achieving the best out of our staff and team.

**PAVING PROGRAM:**

Re-institute our street paving program and repair our deteriorating streets and infrastructure.

**PURCHASE NEW EQUIPMENT:**

Purchase new snow removal equipment and more versatile trucks that can be used for multiple purposes year round instead of equipment that have only a sole purpose and set idle for a large percentage of the year.

**UTILITY BILLING****ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:****OFFICE STAFF CHANGES:**

Joyce McFrederick retired from the water office at the end of May 2011 and we welcomed Evonne Reese to our staff in June.

**DIGITAL CHECK REMITTANCE:**

In January of 2011 we began scanning all checks and payment stubs and started submitting the files electronically to the bank.

**DELINQUENCY SHUT OFFS:**

In 2011 we issued 547 shut off orders, which that number is down from the previous year. In 2010 we had 759 shut off orders.

**SERVICE TO PUBLIC:**

In total the Meter Dept. responded to 2015 work orders generated and assigned by the water office and fulfilled over 1000 marking requests by OUPS. On average we responded to 168 work orders and around 80 OUPS marking requests a month.

The following is a list of all work orders by type of work being done and how many for the entire year.

Final Read - 581

Check for leak - 12

Turn On-154 (non-delinquency related)

Turn OFF-178 (non-delinquency related)

Uninstall Meter- 4

Check Reading -44

Check for possible meter leak -8  
Set meter on new construction- 5  
Change meter to radio read- 52  
Get a reading from the meter manually from meter dial- 20  
Shut off for non-payment- 547  
Seasonal Turn off-18  
Seasonal Turn On -11  
Delinquency Turn-On (we code this differently from a regular turn on so we can track what their turn on fee should be)- 294  
Get serial and ID #'s from meter -7  
Miscellaneous (something that is not common enough to make its own code) -51  
Get a reading electronically - 5  
Uncategorized - 65

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

#### **Procedures Manual:**

Complete a procedures manual to compliment the city's Water Rules and Regulations. Also to document our billing process and how to deal with issues (example: theft of service) with efficiency and equality.

#### **Update contracts with all landlords:**

This will be accomplished by sending out mass mailings and keeping track of what is returned, steps will then be taken to ensure all are updated.

#### **Digitizing contracts and other essential documents:**

We will begin scanning of contract documents and filing them with excel. Also this information will be ready for use in the sun dance system once it becomes available. Scanning of other documents which will fulfill the record retention policies, this will also cut down on storage use in the dungeon.

#### **Phase out green bar Printronix printer completely:**

This will be done by contacting CMI (our billing software company) to program new mailing label templates so labels can be printed on the copier. When we have phased it out I would like to find a buyer for it. Or keep it for the finance department incase theirs would break.

#### **Reduce Paper Costs:**

With the above initiative and a few other procedural changes we hope to reduce paper and printing costs substantially. However reliance on IT and server communication will greatly increase.

#### **Reduce Billing costs:**

CMI is finishing up an E-Bill option in collaboration with IT to allow us to E-mail bills to customers who opt-in for the service. Once a customer "Opts-in" they will no longer receive a paper bill. That is a savings of around \$.50 - \$.60 per bill per customer.

**Finish meter change outs:**

We are in the final stretch to have all change outs complete. We are working closely with Distribution to get the last of the large meters changed. There are less than 20 active occupied residential accounts that have not been changed yet. We hope to have this goal completed by early spring.

**Better training for laptop reading/programming software:**

The software company that supplied the meter reading/programming software did not adequately train my personal. My goal is to find or make a user manual to better define the procedures of anything that might need to be done.

**WATER PLANT****OPERATIONS:**

In 2011 the Water Plant staff continued to strive to deliver the best possible quality of water to their customers. Some notable improvements include: Increasing the amount of water turnover in both water storage tanks, this helps reduce water age in the tanks and in the system. The filter media was sampled and analyzed by the plant staff as well as an outside laboratory. The results showed that the media was very dirty and it was recommended that the media be cleaned. Enough of the cleaning agent was purchased in December of 2011 to treat four of the six filters, cleaning of the media has started with all six filters to be completed in 2012. Slight changes were also made to the filter backwashing procedure to improve the backwashing of the filters. One such change was to lower the water level in the filter prior to opening the filter to drain for backwashing. While this doesn't improve water quality it does save a considerable amount of water.

The raw water quality was closely monitored by the plant staff as well as by the University of Akron throughout the year. The Carbon dosage was closely monitored to help control taste and odor in the water, although we experienced some customer complaints in the fall we feel that we kept it under control. The Carbon is also being feed at the raw building thus giving it more contact time, approximately 10 minutes. Since then we have been experiencing lower turbidities on the filter influent and the filter effluent and we expect it to help with taste and odor and disinfection byproducts also. Further data collection will tell us how much of an improvement it will have on these.

**MISCELLANEOUS PURCHASES:**

- Purchased new gas powered portable sump pump, this will allow us to pump out vaults and be an emergency backup to the fixed sump pumps in the plant.
- Purchased electric hoist to raise and lower equipment into basement.
- Purchased needed safety equipment to insure the safety of employees while performing duties. (Tripod, air quality monitor, lanyards, ice cleats)
- Purchased new vehicle (Ford Escape) which replaced Ford wagon.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:**

- Replaced the roof on the raw building.
- Replaced the roof on the main building and garage.
- Replaced Influent and drain actuator on filter #2.
- Replaced drain actuator on filter #1.
- Replaced Tap continuous chlorine analyzer.
- Replaced turbidimeters on all six filters.
- Replaced bench top turbidimeter in the Lab.
- Replaced pressure transmitters on filters 1, 2, 3 and 6.
- Divers replaced the rusted out ladder in the raw water caisson.
- Installed a new compressor for the sludge plate system to backup existing compressor.
- Gravity sludge thickener was sandblasted and repainted.
- New walkway was installed over the east and west secondaries, this improved the ability to safely clean the basins.
- Both rooftop heating units were overhauled, the coils leaked and faulty controls were replaced.

## **MAJOR MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENTS & REPAIRS:**

- Cleaned and performed maintenance on the north and south clarifiers.
- Cleaned influent and effluent channels.
- Cleaned east and west secondaries.
- Divers cleaned out caisson and inspected intake screen.
- Divers repaired brocket supports on Lake Aerator.
- Potassium permanganate feed line was relocated into caisson and inserted in to suction of pipe to raw pumps. Old line was prone to clogging up which would overflow slurry tank.
- A dry inspection of City Park Tank was performed, inside and outside paint deficiencies were found.
- Replaced non-functional drain valve on City Park Tank.

## **WASTE WATER PLANT**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

- Switched to a new polymer to run our sludge press by doing so this will reduce our polymer cost by approximately \$6,000 in 2012.
- Masonry cracks in Digester and old administration building repaired to prevent further damage.
- Researched various techniques to reduce our copper concentrations to stay within EPA limits required by our permit.

- Cleaned and painted buildings in the plant to preserve and enhance the overall appearance of the plant.
- Replaced the pumps at the Freedom Street lift station.
- Had major holes repaired in the liner of EQ retention basins?
- Made repairs to our old final clarifier drivers and rakes.
- Installed a new sludge panel to control sludge press and tie it into the SCADA system.

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

- To run the plant as efficiently and economically as possible.
  - This will be enhanced in 2012 through the projects implemented by Honeywell Building Solutions.
  - Testing of new products that can improve effective treatment and reduce costs
- To continue to make improvements to enhance the plants overall function, efficiency and appearance.
  - Building maintenance
  - Capital improvement projects
  - Honeywell improvements
- To install the new traveling bar screen
  - This is an essential part of the wastewater treatment process and effects the overall functioning of the treatment process
- To replace a pump at our Chestnut Street Pump station
- To have our older final clarifiers sandblasted and painted
- To facilitate a smooth transition with our current NPDES EPA permit to our new permit, applied for in 2011.
- To encourage workforce development by helping wastewater operators obtain valuable class licensure
- To plan and provide an Open House to the residents of Ravenna
  - To educate the residents on the infrastructure and treatment process
- Work on Succession planning for plant and departments smooth transition upon retirement.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

In general, 2011 was somewhat of a 'catch-up' year for some existing projects as well as trying to implement an IT Resources replacement plan to keep our technology compatible and fresh across the various departments. Of course, due to the budget situation we weren't able to tackle many big or 'new and exciting' projects during 2011.

- Purchased new Parks PC's. This resolved a long standing issue with disparate systems within the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Purchased new Engineering PC's. This includes the replacement of the Engineer's and the CAD Technician's PC with high end Dell PC's specially configured and optimized for AutoCAD. Also added large screen 27" LED high performance monitors.
- Purchased new Health Dept. PC's
- Implemented Exchange Server. This brought all of our e-mail in-house and centralized the management of same. This also added a host of capabilities (i.e. calendar sharing) which will greatly enhance the productivity and efficiency of departments
- On-Line Council Minutes. The Council Clerk now has the ability to directly post Council Minutes to the Web Site.
- On-Line Council Calendar. The Council Clerk now has the ability to directly post items to an on-line Council Calendar.
- Enabled direct posting of Events and Announcements to the Home page of our web site. This allows specified users to post high priority items directly to the Home page of the web site.
- Enabled direct posting of Parks and Recreation events to the web site by designated Parks Employees within the Parks Department.
- New data server purchased. This server is on-line and the process of migrating existing data and server roles to this new server is ongoing.
- Volume Licensing for Microsoft Office. By entering into an agreement with Microsoft we standardized all of our Office versions thus increasing compatibility between the various departments. Volume Licensing will also allow us to remain current when new versions are released and save us money over the standard "stand-alone" purchasing of individual products per PC.
- Upgraded to Cisco Smart Switches at Annex, Server Room. This increased network performance, particularly at the Annex. These new switches also give us more control over network routing and optimization.
- Installed VPN connection (extended network to) street garage. The Street Garage was the last remaining 'disconnected' building. By connecting the Street Garage to the City network we are now able to leverage server based resources as well as manage systems remotely such as lock systems, fuel systems, and video surveillance systems at the Garage.
- Started consolidating door lock / security systems back to Server Room. We began switching our current key systems to electronic proximity lock systems. These systems will allow for centralized management of facility access. The system also logs all users activity so building security is enhanced by documenting user entry into our facilities.
- Started Building Dept. On-Line App through Sundance Systems. This on-line application is being developed through a partnership with Sundance Systems. This web based product will track properties, building permits and inspections handled through our Building Department. The system, due to being web based, will also be utilized by

contract agencies and individuals utilized by the City to perform property and permit inspections.

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

For 2012 I am looking at some major changes in our IT infrastructure. For the past several months I've been researching Virtualization technologies and I see this as possibly being a good fit for many areas of our operation. Virtualization gives IT much more flexibility in the management of systems and software and can greatly lower overall hardware costs when fully implemented. Management also gains much more control over our resources which greatly reduces down time due to personal or unauthorized use of City owned systems. I am still doing the research on this and I will have more on this in the coming months.

Another big priority in 2012 will be shoring up some areas of our Network Security. This will be accomplished through the implementation of the Electronic Resource Use Policy as well as some minor changes in our overall network structure. Simply put, the culture towards network security is not where it needs to be, especially considering the near daily attacks on IT infrastructure on a global scale. As we move more and more of our critical systems onto our network it is imperative we make the security of our IT resources a number one priority, not only from the IT Department side, but from each and every end user as well.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

#### **MOTOR POOL PROJECT:**

The Cold Storage Building was completely resided. New overhead garage door was installed. Roof was repaired and then repainted. All the electric wiring and lighting was updated to include a new breaker box for the building.

We installed new fence in the Northeast corner. Most of the fence already had barbed wire security arms installed, we added same to the areas of fence that were lacking. We reused the current gate but flipped it to the inside. We installed new rollers and a Radio Frequency gate operator for additional security. The project was completed under budget.

#### **PROMOTIONS/ ADDITIONS:**

In November both Dave Rarrick and Jeff Wallis were promoted to the rank of Captain. Captain Rarrick is the Services Captain and is in charge of our communications center which now serves eight fire departments and one police department. Captain Rarrick also assists other city departments when they are in need of expertise within the radio communications field. In his role as the Detective Bureau Supervisor he oversees the work of the Detectives here at Ravenna PD but also supervises our evidence room.

Captain Wallis is the Operations Captain. With his promotion it became necessary for Captain Wallis to resign his membership with the METRO SWAT Team where he had been a tactical response officer for fifteen years. In his new role Captain Wallis oversees the day to day operations of the officers assigned to Road Patrol. Captain Wallis also confirms that all training requirements are met in a timely fashion and in accordance with State requirements. We added two new Part Time Patrolmen, Andrew Wert and Russell Sackett. Both are currently working within the FTO program and should be ready for duty in another month.

### **COMMUNICATIONS CENTER:**

The Phase II part of the Communications center is nearly complete. The lobby walls are masonry block filled with sand from top to bottom with a brick veneer. The road patrol officers will regain their break room and the supervisors will regain their office space. Additionally we regained an interview room. All of the aforementioned space was displaced due to the construction of the new communications center.

Two of our senior dispatchers were trained and help develop a brand new Communication Training Manual to be used when training new dispatchers.

We added two part time dispatchers to our communications center:

Laurel Scianna – Full Time Dispatcher with City of Cuyahoga Falls (still there) and has nearly 25 years of experience.

Tiffany Berecek – Worked as a dispatcher for Streetsboro police back in mid 1990s.

### **RAVENNA PD/ ATF TASK FORCE:**

Arrested/ Indicted twenty-nine (29) defendants both federally and locally. Served seven (7) search warrants.

Assisted ATF in a undercover operation which resulted in the arrest of 88 suspects and the following items were seized:

70 guns/ Hundreds of rounds of ammunition/ 1,316 grams of powder cocaine/ 768 grams of crack cocaine/ 1,099 Oxycodone pills/ 215 Ecstasy pills/ 199 Vicodin pills/ 5 grams of Heroin/ 36 Parazalam pills/ Multiple stolen articles.

We continue to do more with less – Ravenna PD's operating budget has been slashed by about \$500,000.00. We have worked and are still working shorthanded – We have lost three full time slots which equates to one half of a normal shift which is quite a hit to a department our size. We have been denied Federal Assistance on three occasions. The men and women of RPD have had no raises since 2009.

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

#### **BUILDING AND GROUNDS:**

- Complete renovation project.
- Repair/ replace front flower bed area (Facing Park Way)

- Remove Cherry Tree from flower box on south side (Facing Spruce Street) with intentions of creating a Memorial Garden complete with granite marker/ lighting. (RPA has donated funds to cover marker purchase)
- Motor pool Area: One lane in and out of gate. Blacktop west of lane (old fuel point area) would be removed and re-seeded for grass. Clean up mulch bed, edge the sidewalk that borders Spruce and maintain same. Get bid for lawn maintenance at motor pool area. Need signage reference Police Motor pool restricted access.

#### **EQUIPMENT:**

- Make main point of entry doors at PD key fob accessible.
- Purchase new department side arms. PD will evaluate three (3) weapons, one each from H&K/ Glock and Springfield Arms. These weapons would be paid for with drug seizure monies. Newer weapons have adjustable back straps for different grip sizes. Current weapons would be traded to offset costs. (\$15,000.00 range)
- VEHICLES – I am currently investigating a new approach to our car purchase program. The cities of Kent and Twinsburg currently purchase their entire fleet of vehicles at one time and then spread those payments over a predetermined amount of time. Normally the PD purchases two vehicles with upfits at a total cost of around \$65,000.00 per year. We then rotate out the two oldest vehicles in the fleet. The new plan would allow us to purchase eight (8) vehicles at once and spread those payments over three (3) to four (4) years. At the end of the term the city could send these vehicles to auction and the profits from said auction could be used to defer some of the costs. I spoke with Chief Noga from Twinsburg and when they sold their fleet of Dodge Chargers the city made approximately \$42,000.00 which nearly pays for one (1) entire year of this plan. I have attached a breakdown of vehicles and associated upfit costs to illustrate monies needed. A big benefit to this type plan is the fleet of police vehicles would be under warranty 75% percent of their life here, which would hopefully reflect in money savings within the vehicle maintenance line.
- MDT Wireless systems. Currently officers use the “air card” system which has sporadic coverage at best. IT Director Wain stated he has the PD MDTs slated for replacement in 2013 to the tune of about \$50,000.00. Going to the MDT wireless system would give officers improved coverage and would cost approximately \$10,000 and we would maintain the current MDTs rather than purchasing new saving about \$40,000.00 (if replaced).
- We are and have been ready for the transition to narrow banding. My original plan was to have the PD completed by the end of January 2012. Due to unforeseen circumstances this date had been pushed back but should be complete in the near future.
- Complete Phase 3 of the transition project. Phase 1 occurred in 2004 when the PD went to a repeater system that was located on station. Phase 2 occurred when we moved that repeater system along with antennas to the GE tower. Phase 3 would be the purchase of a receiver/voter system that would be installed in the southern part of

the city a site that has yet to be determined. This would enhance radio coverage in the southern area of the city which is currently poor at best. Price tag for this project is about \$16,000.00

#### **TRAINING:**

- Review/ update our policies and procedures manual. Put it into format that can be updated at any time by either Captain or me.
- Review/ update FTO (Field Training Officer) program.
- Create new CTO (Communications Training Program). Dispatchers Moore and Taylor are already scheduled to attend this training.
- PELC- Police Executive Leadership College. This is an expensive but worthwhile training program. Both Captains to attend this training in 2012 or 2013.

#### **PERSONNEL:**

- Continue to hire qualified candidates to fill part time/ full time police roles. The Ravenna Police Department is currently short three (3) full time patrol positions. I would like to fill two of these positions during the 2012 calendar year.
- Begin hiring process to fill part time dispatch roles.
- The promotion of Captain Jeff Wallis necessitated his resignation from the METRO SWAT team. Currently the METRO SWAT Board of Trustees retains the services of a team administrator for approximately \$25,000.00 per year. After careful consideration I have tendered an offer to the Executive Board of METRO SWAT in which Captain Wallis would return to the team in the role of administrator. In exchange the City of Ravenna would no longer be required to pay the annual fees associated with membership in METRO SWAT. There should soon be a meeting with the Executive Board members. The city currently spends \$4,000.00 per year for membership.
- The Ravenna Police Department is open for business 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our growth in the communications arena is unrivaled and unprecedented. We have contracted to provide a service to roughly half of Portage County and with that comes an increased need for IT services. As a safety force our needs CANNOT “wait until tomorrow” because the result of that wait can be tragic. We have a myriad of pagers, texts, radios, computers, MDTs, surveillance systems, video/audio digital recordings and the list is endless. The need has come for the City of Ravenna to place Bob Wain in a role that would designate his responsibility to Safety Forces ONLY. The City needs to hire an additional IT person to perform these tasks for the rest of the city.
- Create a codicil within the City’s payroll ordinance that would allow union employees to maintain benefits when they transition to non-union positions. I think everyone would agree that you do not take promotions to have your benefit package decreased.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

- Hired two new firefighters
- Improved vehicle maintenance operations by having Bob Leindecker perform engine and chassis work.
- Obtained supplies and materials for hydrant servicing and testing.
- The department came in under budget even after significant budget cuts.
- Everyone went home safe from a very dangerous job.

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

The fire department has achieved some success in the past in receiving grant awards; we would like to continue that success by participating in the following opportunities and possibly receiving awards:

- Apply for the 2011 Department of Homeland Security Fire Prevention and Safety Grant
- Apply for the 2012 Ohio EMS Grant
- Apply for the 2011 Department of Homeland Security SAFER Grant
- Apply for the Department of Homeland Security Station Construction Grant if it is feasible
- Apply for as many grants as possible when the opportunities are discovered

### **HYDRANT MAINTENANCE:**

The hydrant system has long been neglected. This critical component of our infrastructure needs careful attention to balance the need for maintenance with minimal disruption to emergency service and minimizing disturbance to water distribution and water quality. Tools for performing hydrant maintenance have been acquired and documentation forms have been developed. As the fire department takes responsibility for the maintenance of the hydrants, all time associated with the maintenance, training and testing can be charged to the water fund. This offsets some of the general fund expense from the fire department.

Goals remaining are:

- Develop adequate public notification of hydrant servicing in the area using website postings, newspaper articles, reverse 911 and others
- Flush and service all hydrants; approximately 600
- Flow test and color code 1/5 of all hydrants; approximately 120

### **BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS:**

Since 2006, a number of fire department building improvements have been made. In 2012 we hope to continue improvements and maintain the work that has been done.

- Building improvements and repair to include window replacement and watch area window tinting

- Tuck pointing and mortar restoration on the station house exterior

### **FIRE PREVENTION:**

Fire prevention activities have long been a short coming on the Ravenna Fire Department; as in the past, going forward through 2012 we remain hopeful that we may begin to address the problem.

- Improve fire code enforcement through the hiring of at least a part time inspector. Last year was a typical year for code enforcement in Ravenna. We performed 56 inspections, 12 of them were annual inspections, the rest varied between occupancy, complaint, company walk through and other type of inspections.

### **REGIONAL COLLABORATION:**

Regional cooperation is an area with need of improvement. While there have been some setbacks, there have been improvements. These improvements have come through participation in teams and associations outside of the city of Ravenna.

- Continue improving Ravenna City and Township fire departments working relationship
- Provide CAD monitoring capability to the Ravenna Township Fire Department (cost is being evaluated as Chief Bosso and B. Wain collaborate)
- Participate in regional co-operation efforts through the Portage County, Northeast Ohio and Ohio Fire Chiefs Associations (specialty teams and association memberships)

### **STAFFING:**

The fire department is understaffed according to our adopted ordinances and compared with adopted industry standards, making each position all the more critical. Leadership of the department is heavily reliant on an intact rank structure. Promotional preparation, exams and advancements are critical to leadership continuity, succession and membership ambition and motivation in striving for excellence.

- Bring the secretary back to perform full time hours in order to adequately handle records administration, public education materials and programs. Records requests, receptionist duties including message routing, finance tracking, grant applications- administration and record keeping, supplies and materials ordering and tracking, payroll records filling, filing and maintenance. These and other secretarial duties are not being performed to adequate efficiency as would be by a fulltime professional trained, experience and legislated as staffing in our payroll ordinance. Not having this team member available full time means more distractions for firefighters when they have to perform clerical work.

These firefighters are already spread thin from responding to emergencies, training, station maintenance duties, inspections, apparatus maintenance, public relations, public education and other primary duties. Officer promotions

- Bring the department to full strength by filling the 18<sup>th</sup> spot. Not having this team member means everyone works that much more to compensate for the absence. Ambulance duty rotation is not balanced and members end up performing this

strenuous duty more than members on the other shifts which have a full complement. Overtime is created whenever two members are off duty on the shift that is running short. Firefighters already average a 56 hour workweek; with continuing education requirements, shift fill overtime, emergency overtime, specialty team training and activations the average can reach well into the mid 60 hour work week. The department is legislated by ordinance to be structure with six members per shift. This number is well below the NFPA standard, which was also adopted by local ordinance, of 12 to 16 minimum per shift. Performing lifesaving emergency operations at such depleted staffing levels makes each position exponentially more critical.

- Have more firefighters trained as inspectors
- Obtain scholarships for the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association conference and for educational opportunities
- Have the officers attend more leadership classes such as fire officer 1 and fire officer 2.

### **REVENUE:**

Opportunities to increase revenues are always being considered. With the advent of the Health Care Reform Act, there may be instances where health care costs from ambulance patients can be paid directly to the city resulting from care being provided through fire department “clinics” that administer non critical care that would otherwise take place in an emergency. Collaboration with our health department may make this initiative legal and more credible as opposed to attempting cooperation with the county or RMH.

At least an increase in EMS collection rates should be experienced as a result of this act.

- Monitor changes in the fire service industry that create revenue generating opportunities  
These goals are not all inclusive and are subject to expansion and contraction.

## **SAFETY COMPLIANCE**

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011:**

The Safety Compliance Department continued to make strides toward making safe working conditions for City of Ravenna employees, through equipment purchases and training. In 2011 Safety Compliance conducted for the first time a Confined Space Entry class. This course explained the hazards of confined space entry and the proper use of equipment. It should be noted that no training in this area has ever been given to employees of the water and waste water plant personnel and these employees make entry into confined spaces on a daily basis. It should also be noted that New Confined Space equipment was purchased and is being stored at the waste water plant. Last summer safety compliance held a 10 hour OSHA Construction course administered by the OBWC in which all of our Street Department personnel received their OSHA certification another first for the City. In November 2011 a policy on Bloodborne Pathogens was written by the SCO and Health Nurse and will be the standard for all City employees. The Safety Compliance Officer is now located in City hall

where all reference materials will be kept along with reference materials for Emergency Operations.

While we have made strides in safety we still experience injuries to our work force. These injuries are preventable in some cases and unpreventable in others. We will continue to see our safety forces experience the most of the injuries through strains, sprains and muscular skeletal types on injuries. The injuries that concern me the most are injuries that have been attributed to weight lifting. These injuries are preventable. They cause lost time which in turn reflects in our overall workers compensation costs for example the City experienced a total of 348 lost work days in 2011. Of this total one was due to a torn rotator cuff (140 LD) which should not have happened had the employee just taken the time to think about what they were doing. (I should note that the injury was not related to weight lifting) I only use weight lifting as a concern since these injuries can also be prevented with proper training.

### **GOALS FOR 2012:**

Safety Compliance goals for 2012 are to see a decline in the number of lost time injuries. This I believe can be done through proper training for that reason I plan to request a program on proper lifting through the OBWC. These programs are at no charge to us and are excellent programs.

- Arrangements with the Fire Department to have CPR/AED training done for the entire City workforce this would also include City council members. Dates and times will be announced in the near future for this.
- The department will be rewriting several of the safety policies in 2012 as well as occupational health requirements that will be city wide.
- Coordination with the Service Director in up-dating our EOP and planning of an EOP exercise.
- Citywide ID badges will be issued within the month.
- The department will continue to evaluate and assess our equipment to assure it meets health and safety requirements and standards. And provide the necessary training as required by OSHA.