

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Blue Ash, Ohio, was held on March 10, 2005. Mayor Rick Bryan called the meeting to order in Council Chambers at 7:30 PM.

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mayor Bryan led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Bryan asked for a moment of silence in memory of the son of former Councilman Robert Schueler who recently passed away.

**ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Rick Bryan, Vice Mayor Robert Buckman, Councilman Lee Czerwonka, Councilman Henry Stacey, Councilwoman Stephanie Stoller, and Councilman Mark Weber

MEMBER ABSENT: Councilman James Sumner

Vice Mayor Buckman moved, Councilman Weber seconded to excuse Councilman Sumner. A voice vote was taken. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Marvin Thompson, Solicitor Mark Vander Laan, Clerk of Council Jamie Eifert, Deputy Clerk of Council Sue Bennett, Assistant City Manager David Waltz, Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Funk, Service Director Dennis Albrinck, Fire Chief Rick Brown, member of the press, and interested citizens

Mayor Bryan appointed Service Director Denny Albrinck to read the legislation in its entirety in the rear of Council Chambers. Mr. Bryan explained to the audience that anyone interested in hearing the ordinances and resolutions read in their entirety is welcome to move to the rear of the Chambers. He also mentioned that written copies of the legislation on tonight's agenda may be found on the ledges near the City Administration's desks.

**ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**

Councilwoman Stoller moved, Councilman Weber seconded to accept the revised agenda. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted yes. Motion carried.

- “1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER
2. OPENING CEREMONIES
3. ROLL CALL - Clerk of Council Jamie K. Eifert
4. APPOINTMENT OF PERSON(S) TO READ ORDINANCES IN FULL IN REAR OF COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA
6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
  - a. Regular Meeting of February 24, 2005
7. COMMUNICATIONS
  - a. Communications to Council - Clerk of Council Jamie K. Eifert
  - b. Reports From Outside Agencies
  - c. Recording of the 2004 Annual Report
8. HEARINGS FROM CITIZENS
9. COMMITTEE REPORTS
  - a. Finance & Administration Committee, Mark F. Weber, Chairperson
    1. Resolution No. 2005-1, encouraging the preservation of the pedestrian bridge over Ronald Reagan Highway (SR 126)
  - b. Public Works Committee, Henry S. Stacey, Chairperson
    1. Ordinance No. 2005-21, awarding bid for the 2005 Paving Program (phase I)
  - c. Public Safety Committee, Stephanie Stoller, Chairperson

1. Ordinance No. 2005-22, awarding bid for the purchase and installation of hydraulic fire rescue equipment

10. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Property Acquisition

12. ADJOURNMENT”

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilman Czerwonka moved, Councilman Weber seconded to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 24, 2005. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted yes. Motion carried.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

**Communications to Council**

There were no communications to Council.

**Reports From Outside Agencies**

There were no representatives from outside agencies present at the meeting.

**Recording of the 2004 Annual Report**

Councilman Czerwonka moved, Councilman Stacey seconded to accept the 2004 annual report as submitted. A voice vote was taken. All members voted yes. Motion carried.

**2004 ANNUAL REPORT - ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**Finance Division**

The responsibilities of the Finance Division include the accurate recording of revenues and expenditures for all City departments and divisions (except Mayor’s Court operations); the scrutiny of financial transactions to insure compliance with various statutory, Charter, and administrative guidelines; the cautious investment of City funds and the protection of assets; the preservation of records supporting financial transactions; and the maintenance of an organized record filing and retrieval system which permits access for City operations and auditing. With the many informational and other reports that must be completed and submitted each year for various agencies, a reliable information storage and retrieval system is essential.

The Finance Division is responsible for receipting and depositing cash, checks, electronic fund transfers, and other revenues; tracking credit card usage at the Recreation Center, Community Development Office, and Golf Course Clubhouse, reserving funds for current obligations (encumbering); monitoring the performance of the approved Budget; matching invoices and issuing payments; handling vendors and employee payroll; as well as coordinating a number of larger-scale projects that must be done throughout the year. During the 2004 fiscal year, the financial records were closed on the 2003 budget and payroll accounts; the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for 2003 was completed, audited, and submitted for GFOA certification; the 2003 financial records were extensively reviewed by the Auditor of State; the 2004 Final Budget was prepared; and the 2005 Tax Budget and Proposed Budget documents were prepared and submitted to Council. While the Finance Division operates in the current year, it must close and audit last year while planning the financials for the upcoming year.

Other 2004 projects included completion of the annual fixed asset system update and reconciliation (including infrastructure assets), a review of records storage procedures, the disposal of obsolete records, and the ongoing maintenance of the permanent real estate deed and right-of-way files within the Finance Office. For the second year, programs were used for the printing of W-2’s and 1099’s on the laser printer, thus eliminating the need for pre-printed forms. During 2004, direct deposit of payroll was implemented, and many finance office forms and procedures were examined to improve efficiency.

During the latter part of 2004, supplemental Bond Anticipation Notes were issued for the funding of the Phase II Widening of Reed Harman Highway Project (\$1,000,000.), and notes were also issued totaling \$5,100,000 to assure funds were available in early 2005 to retire maturing notes for the Xomox property and the ongoing roadway improvement project. The maturity of the notes (11.5 months) was selected to fit within the timing for the issuance of a \$3.5 to \$4.0 million General Obligation Bond in early fall of 2005 for the Reed Hartman Highway Widening project. The proceeds from the bonds will be used to pay the maturing notes, thus converting the short-term construction funding to a longer term obligation.

As is customary, the year-end 2004 supplies inventory was taken but the City was spared the usual State Auditor accompaniment. To assure that all license plate monies due the City were being correctly recorded and paid, the Finance Division once again extended a contract with an external audit firm which resulted in increased receipts from this source. License plate revenue must be constantly monitored, as revenue distribution errors are very common. The Ohio BMV has launched a new program to correct these distribution errors, but the need for monitoring remains. If the State’s new efforts to fix distribution errors works well, there may not be a need for this contractual service in the future.

The City maintained its ongoing membership with the joint self-insurance pool called the Miami Valley Risk Management Association, Inc. (MVRMA) headquartered in Kettering, Ohio. During the year, Blue Ash’s

representative to the Board of Trustees served on several MVRMA committees, and the Finance Division assisted MVRMA with the 2005 insurance renewal effort. This relationship with MVRMA has proved to be an effective and cost saving measure providing reasonable annual insurance costs. The stability reflected in these annual expense levels is tied to a satisfactory loss record for all departments and divisions of the City of Blue Ash. A recent loss analysis for Blue Ash revealed a four year average claims and defense cost of just over \$41,879 per year. The entire 20 member pool reflected a four year average annual loss of \$709,104.

The test of how well a Finance Office operates is measured not only by the outcome of the annual audits required by the State Auditor's Office, but also by how rapidly they can respond to requests for information and how quickly the books can be closed with accuracy at the end of the year. The Finance Division achieves an enviable level of performance each year in setting up the Proposed Budget, reconciling payroll, closing the books as of December 31, preparing the changes for the Final Budget, and getting started on the current year's activity. As further measure of their efforts, the 2003 Audit Report was excellent, with no findings, citations, or significant managerial recommendations.

When the books were closed (on a cash basis) on December 31, 2004, the City possessed a total ending fund balance (before encumbrances) of \$14,622,289.87, of which \$5,431,894.98 was shown in the General Fund. A General Fund balance of \$4,937,753.61 remained after all related encumbrances were satisfied. Interest earnings on all invested fund balances throughout the year were \$111,835.76, with General Fund earnings of \$75,441.67. Total receipts for the year (not counting transfers, advances, or rollover notes) were \$33,471,566.67 with corresponding expenditures of \$33,042,171.55.

The Government Accounting Standards Board issued a number of new requirements that had to be met by the City of Blue Ash for the 2003 and 2004 Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFR). The Finance Officer complied with those new standards in the preparation of the 2003 report, and shall continue that process for the 2004 CAFR. There were countless modifications to the manner in which the City of Blue Ash had to present its financial information. One of them included a requirement that the City inventory and value all of its infrastructure assets such as roadway right of way and easements, the roads themselves, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and storm sewer collection systems, and other categories of such assets as well. These changes, will be incorporated into the 2004 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report which will be prepared in conformance with GASB34.

The Finance Division worked on a revised travel reimbursement policy during 2004, and it was accepted and issued in January of 2005 (includes Per Diem standards). Additionally, this area worked cooperatively with the Technology Officer to expand access to the City's budgetary software and also for access to the fixed asset records. Training was held relating to these efforts.

The Finance Division staff and the Finance Officer look forward to another productive and effective year in 2004.

### **Administrative Services Area**

The primary responsibility of the Public Information Officer's area is to provide support services to the City Manager's Office and to the members of City Council. Aside from this activity, there are a number of annual efforts and special projects which are coordinated from this area. Among those items are "theme selection", design, layout, and delivery of the full color 2005 community calendar. Examples of other efforts include the drafting and formatting of the resident and employee newsletters, and coordination of the Student Government Day which occurs in the spring of every year.

The Public Information Officer and her staff continued the annual promotion for the sale and placement of memorial bricks at the Blue Ash Veterans Memorial Park. An additional 65 bricks were purchased and installed before Memorial Day of 2004, bringing the total of inscribed bricks at the memorial to 4600. The inscribed memorial brick program continues to be successful, as orders are received throughout the year in anticipation of placement before the Memorial Day ceremony. The City has received a number of favorable comments regarding the program, with most mentioning the City's willingness to consider special requests for placement of memorial bricks among the existing inscriptions. This office also handles flag purchasing and periodic flag replacements on the memorial. This office also works to coordinate the City's Sister City relationship with Ilmenau, Germany, and plays a key role in the City's participation in Blue Ash Sister City, Inc.

In addition to the ongoing activities involving the preparation of Council agendas and information packets, general public relations, and support to the City Manager's Office, this area addressed special events assistance with the Memorial Day Parade (and dignitary attendance), the Veterans Day event, and overall administrative support in the bidding and other areas to City departments and divisions. One of the areas which continues to be positively received by the public is a program providing information about the City of Blue Ash to all new residents and businesses. This initial contact from the City Manager's Office, accompanied by an information booklet and a calendar, is a positive first step in welcoming new citizens to the City.

Although working on agenda packet preparation and Council support is a significant portion of this area's responsibility, effort must be expended in planning future Council meetings and in providing accurate record keeping and documentation for past Council action. All Council minutes are finalized and maintained in the permanent files in this area, as are related records pertaining to Board of Sites, Planning Commission, and Civil Service Commission. Responsibility is also centered here for the permanent storage, retrieval, and preservation of original Council ordinances and resolutions and related information pertaining to activity by Blue Ash City Council. Throughout the year, it has proved beneficial for the Public Information Officer to create a photographic record of special events and historical occurrences affecting the City of Blue Ash, not only for the preparation of the annual calendar and use in newsletters and by other City divisions, but for permanent record. The Public Information Officer also serves as the Deputy Clerk of Council.

This area was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Residential Tree Program that provides significant subsidies to residents wishing to beautify their property with trees in visible areas around their homes. This program will continue in 2005.

The City's first Internet home page was activated in 1998 as a result of the efforts of the Public Information Officer and the contractual assistance of several highly qualified Blue Ash residents. The site can be accessed on the Internet at [www.blueash.com](http://www.blueash.com), and the site contains modules for feedback, guest registration,

and the opportunity for leaving e-mail messages concerning issues, problems, or comments. The group which originally assisted in the creation of the web site relocated to northern California, and the decision was made to transition the web site to a local firm called TQI.Net. Refinements and updates to the web site were installed during 2004 with the assistance of the Technology Officer and an outside contractor. Other activities included management of and exhibit rotation for the Blue Ash History Room, and involvement in the Hunt House project.

Other efforts included monitoring the City's underground storage tank installations, including the required annual registration, insuring, and reporting requirements with the appropriate State agencies. During the year, this group complied with the necessary testing and reporting requirements regarding the City's elevator at the Recreation Center and the North Fire Station, the certification of all boilers in City facilities, the required testing of backflow and containment devices on water services, the periodic testing of the sprinkler systems as monitored by the Fire Department, and coordinating the preventive maintenance contract on City-wide HVAC equipment with Peck Hannaford & Briggs. During 2004, a plan was established which would transfer responsibility for many of the above "facility maintenance" items to the Project Coordinator, (Dan Weber). This process started in 2004 and will continue in 2005.

Assisting the Finance Division, the Administrative area handled the addition, tagging, disposal, and tracking of fixed assets throughout 2004. This effort, which employs a customized program on one of the City's servers, permits the retrieval of data on the City's fixed assets, including vendor, cost, current location, and acquisition date. Data derived from this system is a necessary component for the Finance Division's preparation and submission of a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Other items include coordination with the City Manager's Office of the Student Government Day and continuing coordination with the Technology Group on upgrades to our communication capability (computers, phones, pagers, cell phones, and radio, etc).

The Administrative Services group has been pleased to assist other departments and divisions with their major projects, and such support was provided in a number of areas in 2004.

The Administrative Services Group stands ready to assist, where possible, with projects targeted for 2005 completion.

**CITY OF BLUE ASH FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT  
FOR THE MONTH ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2004**

| MONTH TO DATE                               | 2003                  | 2004                  |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>START OF MONTH FUND BALANCE: 12-1-04</b> | \$9,688,053.11        | \$8,856,247.04        |
| <b>Revenues:</b>                            |                       |                       |
| Earnings Tax Collections:                   | 1,445,362.62          | 1,341,143.14          |
| Debt Financing (long term)                  | 0                     | 0                     |
| Debt Financing (short term)                 | 0                     | 6,100,000.00          |
| Other Revenue Received:                     | <u>846,308.29</u>     | <u>793,586.72</u>     |
| = Total Monthly Receipts                    | 2,291,670.91          | 8,234,729.86          |
| <b>Expenditures:</b>                        |                       |                       |
| Bond Retirement                             | 0                     | 0                     |
| Short term debt refinancing                 | 0                     | 0                     |
| Other Expenditures:                         | <u>2,886,829.27</u>   | <u>2,468,687.03</u>   |
| = Total Monthly Expenditures:               | <u>-2,886,829.27</u>  | <u>-2,468,687.03</u>  |
| <b>ENDING FUND BALANCE: 11-30-04</b>        | 9,092,894.75          | 14,622,289.87         |
| <b>YEAR TO DATE STATUS</b>                  | <b>2003</b>           | <b>2004</b>           |
| <b>START OF YEAR FUND BALANCE: 1-1-04</b>   | 12,119,277.19         | 9,092,894.75          |
| <b>Revenues:</b>                            |                       |                       |
| Earnings Tax Collections:                   | 20,595,095.72         | 20,483,282.08         |
| Debt Financing (long term)                  | 10,000,000.00         | 0                     |
| Debt Financing (short term)                 | 3,100,000.00          | 11,200,000.00         |
| Other Revenue Received:                     | <u>10,209,768.12</u>  | <u>9,988,284.59</u>   |
| = Total YTD Receipts                        | 43,904,863.84         | 41,671,566.67         |
| <b>Expenditures:</b>                        |                       |                       |
| Bond retirement:                            | 2,035,000.00          | 2,460,000.00          |
| Short term debt refinancing:                | 9,500,000.00          | 3,100,000.00          |
| Other expenditures:                         | 35,396,246.28         | 30,582,171.55         |
| = Total YTD Expenditures:                   | <u>-46,931,246.28</u> | <u>-36,142,171.55</u> |
| <b>ENDING FUND BALANCE: 12-31-04</b>        | 9,092,894.75          | 14,622,289.87         |

100% of the fund balance was invested as of 12-31-04. Interest paid to date on matured investments: \$111,835.76. Receipt and expenditure figures do not include interfund transfers.

**2004 TECHNOLOGY ANNUAL REPORT**

During 2004, the Technology Office continued to implement technology based growth and improvements throughout all City departments & divisions. Primary goals were better customer service to business and residents, as well as improving operations within the City. We also focused on reducing costs and improving coordination between different departments. With that in mind, with 2005 came the completion of three major projects for the City. First was the completion of Phase II of the telephone system upgrade project which brought about the integration of the Service Garage facility with the Municipal and Safety Center/ Recreation Center facilities. The Service Garage received a stand alone telephone system that is linked back to

the Municipal and Safety Center providing seamless connectivity for the transfer of phone calls, improved customer service, uniform voice mail, and enhanced interdepartment coordination. The Sports Center, Golf Course Clubhouse, and Golf Maintenance facilities also received phone system improvements in the form of "voice over IP" telephone sets and connectivity back to the City building via high-speed T1 telephone connections. These improvements, as well as last year's installation of a new telephone system at the new North Fire Station, permitted City personnel to better serve our residential and business citizens and to benefit from better coordination between the departments. Through the use of seamless four-digit extension transfers, a single voice mail system, and auto attendant (menu-driven) functionality, callers were provided with more choices as to who they needed to reach, and to get their questions answered as quickly as possible. Due to a reduction in annual maintenance contract cost, and also in the reduction in the number of standard telephone lines required at each facility, the City will see a substantial savings on telephone cost in the future. The Technology Officer, working in coordination with the City's Public Information Officer, Sue Bennett, was able to implement the long awaited update of and renovation to the City of Blue Ash website. We now have a revamped look to the City website and additional functionality that provides for a more dynamic and informative website. The software employed for this project will eventually facilitate the different City departments being able to update their information and interact with the businesses and residents of the City of Blue Ash in a more effective fashion. In addition, we were able to construct the internal Blue Ash website which will allow a more efficient sharing of internal information between the different City departments, allow a reduction of paperwork, and foster better teamwork between the different departments with regards to information sharing activities.

Our third major project comprised the installation of software for the Police Department database. This database will bring together several key areas within the Police Department, eliminate redundancy of records, and put much more information at the fingertips of Police Department staff for their daily duties. In the past, the Police Department has maintained or relied upon several separate databases, spreadsheets, and information sources to perform their duties. With the new Police Department database, all such data will be consolidated under one system. In the future, the Police Department will be able to use the new database to efficiently do cost analysis for budgetary requirements, to do trend analysis for criminal activities, and as a knowledge base for investigations.

In addition to these three major projects, there were several smaller areas that received improvements to facilitate improved day-to-day operations. The Golf Course Clubhouse, Golf Maintenance, Sports Center, and Recreation Center all received substantial cabling infrastructure upgrades to facilitate better telecommunications and network communications. The Fire Department's database received a major software upgrade which resulted in a more stable and efficient program. As part of our ongoing efforts to improve operations, several offices received new computers (replacing older and slower hardware). The Police Department upgraded its dated voice tape recorder to a digital system. They also upgraded their video camera recorder (tracking various City-owned facilities) to a digital recording system. These upgrades will save the Police Department a great deal of time, when it is required to extract recordings for court cases and investigations.

The Community Development group completed its installation of the CAGIS and new building permit software database. The CAGIS system has facilitated a greater access to plat information, utility information and zoning data. The building permit software has allowed improved coordination between our Community Development staff and NIC, whom we rely upon for building inspections. As a whole, the CAGIS access, and new building permit software, provides us great opportunity for coordination for both internal and external offices. The Police Department has already taken advantage of CAGIS for planning special events plans and traffic routing. Other users include the City's Project Manager, Service Department, and Fire Department.

## **BLUE ASH INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT**

For year ending December 31, 2004, the Blue Ash Tax Department collected \$20,483,282.08 in earnings taxes. That amount represents a decrease over the tax collection in 2003 of .54%. Of the total amount, five percent (5%) came from individual net profits, seventeen percent (16%) from business net profit accounts, and the remainder of seventy-eight percent (79%) was collected from withholding taxes.

Transient Occupancy Tax (Hotel-Motel Tax) collections totaled \$690,707.71 in calendar year 2004. The collection figure for 2004 equated to an increase of .95% over the previous year. The attached chart shows the negative impact on the hotel/motel business with cutbacks in travel and entertainment since the attack on America on 9/11. Collections for Transient Occupancy Tax have been on the upswing since that infamous day but may take several years to surpass collections prior to that year.

The Blue Ash Tax Department issued 772 subpoenas during the year in an effort to enhance the enforcement of the tax code. Irrespective of the fact that issuing subpoenas by certified mailings is a time-consuming activity for the tax office, it is a function that is vital to the collection of delinquent taxes. Tax Master Balances ending December 31<sup>st</sup> showed balances due totaling \$30,586.54. Many of the accounts listed on the Tax Master Balances report have signed promissory notes and are in the process of paying off their tax obligations or have been turned over to the court for legal action. The Tax Commissioner filed 153 cases in Mayor's Court during 2004 with some of those cases being called several times before a defendant appears in court for adjudication of the case. Many of the defendants do not appear until they have been stopped for a traffic violation and are required to post a bond because of a tax offense warrant.

Nine (9) tax accounts remain in bankruptcy and must be periodically handled by the Tax Commissioner as forms

need to be completed and filed with the Bankruptcy Court and the status of the accounts changes.

Changes that were generated by the state legislature to bring about greater uniformity with all taxing municipalities in Ohio were incorporated into Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 718. Those changes necessitated that our own Blue Ash Tax Ordinance be amended during 2004 and were sent to the tax board of review and council for approval.

As usual, the tax office updated the Blue Ash street locator as was needed throughout the year. This document is made available to all departments in the city by computer or by hard copy.

The tax department maintained a total of 8799 earnings tax accounts as of December 31, 2004. Following is a breakdown of those accounts.

| <u>Type</u>                      | <u>Number of Accounts</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Business Net Profit Accounts     | 2204                      | 25%               |
| Resident Net Profit Accounts     | 2398                      | 27%               |
| Withholding Accounts             | 1951                      | 22%               |
| Non-Resident Net Profit Accounts | 784                       | 9%                |
| Cross Reference Accounts         | 436                       | 5%                |
| Contractor Withholding Accounts  | 491                       | 6%                |
| Contractor Net Profit Accounts   | 520                       | 6%                |
| Transient Occupancy Tax Accounts | 15                        | negligible %      |
| Total                            | 8799                      | 100%              |

Listed below are the ten largest taxpayers in Blue Ash in 2004.

| <u>Taxpayer</u>             | <u>Type of Business</u>          |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Procter & Gamble            | Consumer Goods Manufacturer      |
| Ethicon                     | Surgical Instrument Dev. & Dist. |
| Fidelity                    | Mutual Planners                  |
| Ingersoll-Rand (Steelcraft) | Door Manufacturer                |
| Sara Lee                    | Food Products Headquarters       |
| Wornick Co.                 | Pre-Packaged Food Manufacturer   |
| Mercy Health System         | Home Health Services             |
| Belcan Engineering          | Engineering Services             |
| Time Warner                 | Telecommunications               |
| LSI Industries              | Lighting Manufacturer            |

Enforcement of the tax code which includes daily correspondence; drafting new and maintaining old promissory notes; checking and verifying names, addresses and employee status of new and renewal memberships for the Recreation Department; maintaining not only the tax master file but also the mail master file; issuing subpoenas to delinquent taxpayers; handling phone calls from taxpayers who may be upset about their delinquent status or simply need their tax questions answered or their tax accounts checked; assisting taxpayers with the preparation of tax returns; and ultimately taking delinquent taxpayers to Mayor's Court consumes a great deal of time for the staff. Auditing tax returns, withholding tax reconciliations, and W-2 forms for the thousands of employees who work in Blue Ash is an arduous and time-consuming task for the members of the Blue Ash Tax Office staff but is necessary and valuable when additional revenue is factored. With the assistance of the Blue Ash Police Department during 2004, the tax office staff was able to utilize one of the BAPD's methods to locate delinquent taxpayers.

The objective for the staff of the tax office for 2005 is to continue to serve the residents and businesses in a professional, courteous, and friendly manner and to continue the process of improving methods of collecting and processing local taxes. We look forward to another successful year.

**HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF GROSS EARNINGS TAX RECEIPTS**

| <b>YEAR</b> | <b>NET PROFIT</b> | <b>WITHHOLDING</b> | <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>PERCENTAGE INCREASE<br/>OVER PRIOR YEARS</b> |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|---|
| 1978        |                   |                    | 2,262,430.00 | 20.10%  |
| 1979        |                   |                    | 2,766,542.00 | 22.30%  |
| 1980        |                   |                    | 3,159,553.00 | 14.20%  |
| 1981        |                   |                    | 3,500,020.00 | 10.80%  |
| 1982        |                   |                    | 4,063,155.00 | 16.10%  |
| 1983        |                   |                    | 4,749,210.00 | 16.90%  |
| 1984        |                   |                    | 5,410,408.00 | 13.90%  |

| YEAR | NET PROFIT   | WITHHOLDING   | TOTAL         | PERCENTAGE INCREASE<br>OVER PRIOR YEARS |        |
|------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---|--------|
|      |              |               |               |   |        |
| 1985 |              |               | 6,220,170.00  |   | 15.00% |
| 1986 |              |               | 6,735,637.00  |   | 8.30%  |
| 1987 |              |               | 7,591,695.00  |   | 12.70% |
| 1988 |              |               | 8,748,870.00  |   | 15.20% |
| 1989 | 2,402,394.00 | 7,365,002.00  | 9,767,396.00  |   | 11.60% |
| 1990 | 2,789,757.00 | 8,014,354.00  | 10,804,111.00 |   | 10.60% |
| 1991 | 2,531,090.00 | 8,407,826.00  | 10,938,916.00 |   | 1.30%  |
| 1992 | 2,975,205.00 | 9,195,730.00  | 12,170,935.00 |   | 11.30% |
| 1993 | 2,572,994.00 | 9,671,803.00  | 12,244,797.00 |   | 0.60%  |
| 1994 | 2,741,223.00 | 10,390,598.00 | 13,131,821.00 |   | 7.20%  |
| 1995 | 3,204,740.00 | 11,545,360.00 | 14,750,100.00 |   | 12.30% |
| 1996 | 4,229,007.00 | 11,834,648.00 | 16,063,655.00 |   | 8.90%  |
| 1997 | 7,031,394.00 | 12,440,054.00 | 19,471,448.00 |   | 21.20% |
| 1998 | 4,951,501.00 | 14,066,294.00 | 19,017,795.00 |   | -2.33% |
| 1999 | 3,866,652.00 | 14,768,703.00 | 18,635,355.00 |   | -2.01% |
| 2000 | 5,559,358.00 | 15,568,770.00 | 21,128,128.00 |   | 13.38% |
| 2001 | 4,708,722.14 | 16,951,098.00 | 21,659,820.14 |   | 2.52%  |
| 2002 | 3,806,072.43 | 15,850,948.03 | 19,657,020.46 |   | -9.25% |
| 2003 | 4,495,385.13 | 16,099,710.59 | 20,595,095.72 |   | 4.77%  |
| 2004 | 4,273,945.83 | 16,209,336.25 | 20,483,282.08 |   | -0.54% |

### Year-To-Date Income Tax Receipts

(Combined Net Profit & Withholding Collections)

|                 | 2002         |        | 2003         |       | 2004         |       |
|-----------------|--------------|--------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|                 |              | %      |              | %     |              | %     |
| <b>January</b>  | 1,670,088.60 | -26.73 | 2,091,759.24 | 25.25 | 1,936,246.99 | -7.43 |
| <b>YTD</b>      | 1,670,088.60 | -26.73 | 2,091,759.24 | 25.25 | 1,936,246.99 | -7.43 |
| <b>February</b> | 1,737,865.89 | -30.84 | 1,751,726.74 | 0.70  | 1,945,384.95 | 11.06 |
| <b>YTD</b>      | 3,407,954.49 | -28.88 | 3,843,485.98 | 12.78 | 3,881,631.94 | 0.90  |



|                  | 2002                 |              | 2003                 |             | 2004                 |              |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|--------------|
|                  |                      | %            |                      | %           |                      | %            |
| <b>March</b>     | 1,406,822.03         | -2.64        | 1,519,074.00         | 7.98        | 1,513,156.05         | -0.30        |
| YTD              | 4,814,776.52         | -22.80       | 5,362,559.98         | 11.38       | 5,394,787.99         | 0.60         |
| <b>April</b>     | 1,998,218.92         | -23.32       | 2,097,206.44         | 4.95        | 2,140,654.95         | 2.07         |
| YTD              | 6,812,995.44         | -22.96       | 7,459,766.42         | 9.49        | 7,535,442.94         | 1.01         |
| <b>May</b>       | 1,687,704.93         | -10.09       | 1,721,417.72         | 2.00        | 1,713,576.50         | -0.40        |
| YTD              | 8,500,700.37         | -20.07       | 9,181,184.14         | 8.01        | 9,249,019.44         | 0.70         |
| <b>June</b>      | 1,706,625.16         | 30.97        | 1,383,961.62         | -18.91      | 1,223,869.31         | -11.57       |
| YTD              | 10,207,325.53        | -15.10       | 10,565,145.76        | 3.51        | 10,472,888.75        | -0.80        |
| <b>July</b>      | 1,536,205.50         | -27.42       | 1,613,204.93         | 5.01        | 1,778,214.17         | 10.23        |
| YTD              | 11,743,531.03        | -16.95       | 12,178,350.69        | 3.70        | 12,251,102.92        | 0.50         |
| <b>August</b>    | 1,487,785.13         | 7.79         | 1,911,825.14         | 28.50       | 1,638,348.07         | -14.30       |
| YTD              | 13,231,316.16        | -14.75       | 14,090,175.83        | 6.49        | 13,889,450.99        | -1.42        |
| <b>September</b> | 1,697,052.02         | 14.43        | 1,517,264.47         | -10.59      | 1,410,095.53         | -7.06        |
| YTD              | 14,928,368.18        | -12.20       | 15,607,440.30        | 4.55        | 15,299,546.52        | -1.90        |
| <b>October</b>   | 1,914,898.47         | 11.58        | 1,668,052.49         | -12.89      | 1,951,133.54         | 16.97        |
| YTD              | 16,843,266.65        | -10.02       | 17,275,492.79        | 2.57        | 17,250,680.06        | -0.14        |
| <b>November</b>  | 1,363,505.52         | -11.70       | 1,874,240.31         | 37.46       | 1,891,458.88         | 0.90         |
| YTD              | 18,206,772.17        | -10.15       | 19,149,733.10        | 5.18        | 19,142,138.94        | 0.00         |
| <b>December</b>  | 1,450,248.29         | 3.87         | 1,445,362.62         | 0.00        | 1,341,143.14         | -7.21        |
| YTD              | 19,657,020.46        | -9.25        | 20,595,095.72        | 4.77        | 20,483,282.08        | -0.54        |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>19,657,020.46</b> | <b>-9.25</b> | <b>20,595,095.72</b> | <b>4.77</b> | <b>20,483,282.08</b> | <b>-0.54</b> |

### **HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION**

The Human Resources Department consists of one full-time Human Resources Officer, one full-time Administrative Clerk, and one part-time secretary. This department is responsible for the hiring, termination, discipline, promotions, training and evaluation processes of the City's employees. The department also administers employee benefits including medical, dental, vision, life and AD&D, worker's compensation, employee's assistance program, and various employee appreciation events. Our goal is to assist and support the employees of Blue Ash in a manner that will enable them to ensure that Blue Ash is a "City of Choice."

#### *HIRING*

We conducted 3 Civil Service Exams for the Police Department, 1 of which was a promotional exam for a newly created Sergeant's Position due the retirement of Captain Pohlman. The remaining two were for the Patrol Officer hires and the Mayor's Court Clerk.

There was also a Civil Service Promotional Exam conducted for the Fire Chief due to the retirement of Chief Fehr. Additionally there were 9 new hires of part-time staff in the fire department due both to the addition of 4 part-time positions and to the turnover of part-time staff, which is typical of the Fire Service.

#### **1. Police Department**

?? 4 Patrol Officers (3 new positions, 1 position covering officer on military leave)  
?? 1 Mayor's Court Clerk (Due to vacancy)  
?? 1 Sergeant (Promotional exam – Captain's retirement and re-organization)

#### **2. Fire Department**

?? 9 Part-time (4 resignations/5 New Positions)  
?? 1 Chief Promotional Exam (Promotional exam - Chief retirement)

#### **3. Economic Development**

?? 1 Economic Development Director (1 New Position)

#### **4. Recreation Department**

?? 1 Recreation Leader (1 New Position)

#### **5. Human Resources**

?? 1 Human Resources Officer (Resignation)

|                                  |   |                             |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Resignations:                    | 6 | (2 full-time / 4 part-time) |
| Retirements:                     | 3 | (3 full-time)               |
| Additional Authorized Personnel: | 9 | (4 full-time/5 part-time)   |
| Military Leave:                  | 1 | (1 full-time)               |

|                                     |           |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Total New Hires:</b>             | <b>17</b> | <b>(8 full-time / 9 part-time)</b> |
| <b>Total Promotional Processes:</b> | <b>2</b>  | <b>(2 full-time)</b>               |

**LONG TERM PROJECTS**

**CIVIL SERVICE**

The Civil Service Commission formally met twice this year once in the spring for the introduction of the new Human Resources Officer, and once for the annual meeting in December. At the annual meeting there was a review of both the pay plan and the upcoming activities in the year ahead.

**INSURANCE**

Dental and Life Insurance were reviewed and subsequently renewed at their annual renewal date in the summer. Optical insurance was not up for renewal in 2004, but is slated for review and renewal in 2005.

Health Insurance changes were made for the annual renewal in November. Benefits changed slightly including a change to a 3-tier prescription plan. The health insurance carrier recently underwent a restructuring and reorganization process; therefore, some transition issues are still being resolved. Consequently, more time is being spent on working with our third party administrator to iron out employee issues/complaints, which have increased dramatically in the last three months. Some of these issues include incorrect billing, customer service, and claims.

**ORGANIZATIONAL TRAINING**

The organizational training focus for 2004 was performance evaluations. Working with an outside consultant the City's performance evaluation system was redesigned. The focus of the new design was to adequately define what qualities and competencies to expect from employees, how to communicate with employees, and how to encourage employee input in the evaluation process. Supervisory staff members were trained on the basics of performance evaluation, how often to do them, how they improve communications with staff, and how to avoid pitfalls. All senior level managers attended the training in the summer and consequently received their evaluations from the City Manager. The Division Heads and middle level managers both attended the training and received an evaluation from their supervisor in the Fall. Finally, all middle level managers have been instructed to meet and review their employees. At this time approximately 35% of the full-time and permanent part-time employees in the organization have gone through the new evaluation process.

**UNION CONTRACTS**

Both the IAFF Lieutenant's contract negotiations and the IAFF Firefighter's contract negotiations were finalized in the spring of 2004. The negotiation schedule for the future is as follows:

|           |                    |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Fall 2005 | IAFF Lieutenants'  |
|           | IAFF Firefighters' |
| Fall 2006 | FOP                |
|           | AFSCME             |

Throughout the year we participated in contract interpretation issues; responded to grievances; participated in formal labor management meetings, etc.

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

We continue to monitor and administrate workers' compensation. Our statistics below are a positive improvement and a trend we are working to continue.

| <b>SUMMARY OF WORK-RELATED INJURIES AND ILLNESSES</b> |      |      |      |
|---|------|------|------|
|   | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
| <b>Number of Cases</b>                                |      |      |      |
| # of Deaths   | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| # of Cases with days away from work                   | 6    | 12   | 12   |
| # of cases with job transfer or restriction           | 1    | 0    | 3    |
| # of other recordable cases                           | 14   | 15   | 14   |
| <b>Number of Days</b>                                 |      |      |      |
| # of days away from work                              | 36.5 | 216  | 128  |
| # days of job transfer or restriction                 | 30   | 0    | 70   |
| <b>Injury and Illness Types</b>                       |      |      |      |
| Injury  | 20   | 27   | 29   |
| Skin Disorder   | 1    | 0    | 0    |
| Respiratory Condition                                 | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Poisoning   | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Hearing Loss  | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| All Other Illnesses                                   | 0    | 0    | 0    |

**ROUTINE ADMINISTRATION**

**ANNUAL REPORTS**

- ?? CIVIL SERVICE
- ?? EEOC
- ?? OSHA
- ?? SERB

**CODE OF ORDINANCES**

- ?? Updated the Code of Ordinances in May 2004.
- ?? Acquired an on-line version of the Blue Ash Code of Ordinances.
- ?? Reviewed the Code up-date procedure and worked with Dinsmore and Shohl to make modifications improving the efficiency of the process.
- ?? Coordinated and updated each department's code book.

**EVENTS / AWARDS**

- ?? Blood Drive
- ?? Christmas Pot - Luck and Donation Event Sponsoring 2 Families in Blue Ash
- ?? Employee Appreciation Picnic
- ?? Gift Certificates
- ?? Golf- Outing
- ?? Mammogram Van
- ?? New City Identification Cards
- ?? Perfect Attendance Awards

**PAYPLAN**

- ?? Reviewed and prepared pay plan for Council.
- ?? Presented proposals to the Civil Service Commission at the annual meeting
- ?? Updated the databases with the new pay plan information.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Human Resources Staff attended the following seminars / meetings:

- ?? Employment Law Seminar – *Dinsmore and Shohl*
- ?? HR Roundtable – *Greater Cincinnati Human Resources Association*
- ?? Internal Software training on HR Visual – *HR Information Solutions*
- ?? International City/County Manager's Assoc. Conference – *International City/County Manager's Assoc.*
- ?? Local Government Roundtable – *Center for Local Government*
- ?? Public Records Law Seminar – *Center for Local Government*
- ?? Women's Health Seminar – *Horan and Associates*
- ?? Workers' Compensation Seminar – *Ohio BWC*

**STANDARD MONITORING AND ADMINISTRATION**

- ?? FMLA
- ?? Sick Leave
- ?? Unemployment
- ?? Vacation Leave

**SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

**I. Introduction**

This annual report is intended to give its reader an idea of the work of the Service Department during the year 2004. It does not, cannot, and should not list or detail every single activity or work assignment of its employees and its crews. Hopefully, it will give you a feeling for the many activities the Service Department performs to meet the duties and responsibilities it has been assigned. (See also Appendix B)

**II. Snow and Ice Control (2003-2004 Season) (See Appendix A)**

The 2003-2004 snow & ice removal season was the first season for which the Service Department had use of its new 4100+ ton salt dome. The dome had been filled during the summer and early fall of 2003 immediately after the dome was completed. This new and enlarged facility won the Street Maintenance and Sanitation Officials of Ohio's (SMSO) "**EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE**" award in May of 2004.

The 2003-2004 snow & ice season was relatively "light and easy". While we did respond twenty-eight (28) times, most of the snow events were light in terms of accumulation and more importantly, the temperatures were normally in the twenties and low thirties which makes the treatment relatively simple. A total of 1980.07 tons of salt was used. This total was 421.6 tons below our previous ten-year annual average of 2401.67 tons. Three thousand five hundred and forty-two (3,542) gallons of calcium chloride were used in treatment efforts.

A. 2003-2004 Snow Call Outs (See Appendix A)

B. Ten Year History and Averages

The following chart lists the number of call-outs, including pre-treatment/anti-icing efforts; tons of salt used; gallons of calcium chloride used; mileage of trucks used in applying treatment excluding miles driven by supervisors; regular hours; overtime hours; and total hours worked, including supervisors; and the consequent yearly averages.

| <u>Season</u> | <u># Call-Outs</u> | <u>Tons Of Salt</u> | <u>Gallons Of Calcium Chloride</u> | <u>Mileage</u> | <u>Regular Hours</u> | <u>Overtime Hours</u> | <u>Total Hours</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 94-95         | 13                 | 2823.00             |                                    |                |                      |                       |                    |
| 95-96         | 18                 | 3663.00             |                                    |                |                      |                       |                    |
| 96-97         | 13                 | 954.25              |                                    |                |                      |                       |                    |
| 97-98         | 12                 | 1429.05             |                                    |                | 535.50               | 516.25                | 1051.75            |
| 98-99         | 22                 | 2634.75             | 922.00                             |                | 807.50               | 1188.50               | 1996.00            |
| 99-00         | 17                 | 2223.50             | 1445.50                            | 8142.80        | 565.00               | 1024.75               | 1589.75            |
| 00-01         | 20                 | 2868.00             | 2157.00                            | 9376.80        | 728.25               | 1028.75               | 1757.00            |
| <u>01-02</u>  | 11                 | 1030.50             | 1095.00                            | 4971.90        | 397.00               | 355.25                | 752.25             |
| <u>02-03</u>  | 44                 | 3799.18             | 9684.20                            | 27,970.40      | 2199.25              | 2126.00               | 4325.25            |
| <u>03-04</u>  | 28                 | 1980.07             | 3542.00                            | 15,772.38      | 1112.50              | 954.00                | 1758.00            |
| <u>TOTAL</u>  | 198                | 23,405.30           | 18845.70                           | 66,234.28      | 6345.00              | 7193.50               | 13,230.00          |
| <u>AVG</u>    | 19.8               | 2340.53             | 3140.95                            | 13,246.86      | 906.43               | 1027.64               | 1890.00            |

C. Anti-Icing

The Service Department continued to employ anti-icing procedures where applicable and possible. This procedure involves applying liquid calcium chloride directly to the dry streets in advance of an oncoming snowstorm. This provides some initial melting benefit and also helps to deter the binding of the snow to the streets, which allows for easier snow removal. This technique was used four (4) times in 2003/2004.

**III. Leaf Collection**

The Service Department collects leaves in both the spring and the fall of the year.

**SPRING LEAF PICKUP PROGRAM**

The Spring Leaf Pickup Program began in 1996 as a one-week affair but was modified to a one-day program beginning in 1997 to make it more efficient but still provide this service.

**FALL LEAF PICKUP PROGRAM**

The Fall Leaf Pickup Program begins in mid-October and runs to mid-December. Depending upon the intensity of the leaves falling, a total of one to three trucks with three-person crews are assigned. The Service Department has a goal to pass by and pick up leaves in front of every home once a week. When the amounts of leaves are large, overtime hours may be worked to maintain this schedule. **However, in 2004 no overtime was worked in order to conserve budgeted dollars.** In 2002, in an attempt to increase safety and efficiency, a “floater” system of trucks was established. This procedure provided that one worker would take the leaves to the dumpsite as opposed to three. A “floater” truck equipped with a leaf box would be connected to the leaf machine after the filled truck was disconnected. This allowed the crew to continue picking up leaves instead of spending time riding to and from the dumpsite. This proved to increase our efficiency greatly and helped us stay “on schedule.” We also provided pick up trucks to transport some of the crew to the work site so the third person of the crew would not have to ride in the middle of the large truck on a “hump” and without the benefit of a seatbelt. The change in practice also provided the availability of a seat belt for all passengers. The Service Department continued this procedure in 2004.

|             | <u>1998</u> | <u>1999</u> | <u>2000</u> | <u>2001</u> | <u>2002</u> | <u>2003</u> | <u>2004</u> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Regular     | 2180        | 2564.75     | 2139.50     | 2235.50     | 2069.75     | 2476        | 2274        |
| OT Hours    | 34          | 261         | 127         | 166         | 121.50      | 68          | 0           |
| TOTAL HOURS | 2214        | 2825.75     | 2266.25     | 2401.50     | 2191.25     | 2544        | 2274        |
| Cubic Yards | 4522.50     | 3007.50     | 3663.00     | 3217.75     | 4012        | 3935        | 3106.50     |
| CY/MH       | 2.04        | 1.06        | 1.62        | 1.34        | 1.83        | 1.55        | 1.36        |

**V. Special Events/Assisting Other Departments**

The Service Department plays an integral and important role in the various special events sponsored by the City of Blue Ash. A great deal of time, energy, and expense are spent setting up for these events; cleaning the grounds during and after the events; and finally tearing them down. The number of man-hours spent for the three major events the past four years are as follows:

| <u>Event/Project</u> | <u>Year</u> | <u>Regular Hours</u> | <u>Overtime Hours</u> | <u>Total Hours</u> |
|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Summerbration        | 2001        | 529.50               | 321.00                | 850.50             |
| Summerbration        | 2002        | 495.00               | 303.75                | 798.75             |
| Summerbration        | 2003        | 661.00               | 301.75                | 963.50             |
| Summerbration        | 2004        | 614.50               | 321.75                | 936.25             |
| JULY 4 <sup>th</sup> | 2001        | 363.00               | 64.25                 | 427.25             |
| JULY 4 <sup>th</sup> | 2002        | 279.25               | 76.50                 | 355.75             |
| JULY 4 <sup>th</sup> | 2003        | 322.00               | 48.00                 | 370.00             |
| JULY 4 <sup>th</sup> | 2004        | 287.00               | 40.50                 | 327.50             |
| T.O.B.A.             | 2001        | 1266.60              | 601.75                | 1868.35            |
| T.O.B.A.             | 2002        | 1113.00              | 686.00                | 1799.00            |
| T.O.B.A.             | 2003        | 1168.00              | 590.25                | 1758.25            |
| T.O.B.A.             | 2004        | 993.25               | 564.75                | 1558.00            |

The Service Department provided manpower and equipment for other special events, including Memorial Day Parade (111.00 regular hours; 72.25 overtime hours); Airport Days/Car Show (231.25; 75); Heritage Days (0; 0); and others (236.5; 80.5).

The Service Department also assisted other departments in 2004. (See Appendix B)

**V. 2004 Street Paving Program**

The City of Blue Ash’s 2004 Paving Program concentrated on those streets which had been subjected to gas main and water main replacement projects constructed in 2003 and 2004. The streets were ground, SAMI’d, repaved, and sealed with a rejuvenator (1<sup>st</sup> time test project). Streets receiving these treatments included:

|            |                 |                 |              |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
|            | Highland Avenue | Brown Avenue    | West Avenue  |
| The eastbo | Conklin Avenue  | Ridgeway Avenue | Perry Avenue |

und lane of **Hunt Road** from West Avenue to the railroad at Blue Ash Road was ground and repaved to match the westbound lane in the same area which had been repaved by Greater Cincinnati Water Works after the replacement work in 2003.

A small section of the northbound lane of **Blue Ash Road** was also ground and repaved to address a deteriorated condition of the street.

The north end of **Reed Hartman Highway** received its final course of asphalt as part of the I-275 Reed Hartman Highway Project.

**Osborne Boulevard** received its final course of asphalt in anticipation of the Reed Hartman Phase II project. The street was opened to give motorists an additional route to avoid the construction in the area.

**Plainfield Road** from Locust Lane to approximately 250' north of Cooper Road and **Cooper Road** from The Timbers to approximately 500 feet south of Plainfield Road was repaved as part of the Plainfield Road, Phase II Improvement Project.

## VI. Capital Projects

### A. Plainfield Road, Phase II

This project was completed in 2004 and involved the widening of the Cooper and Plainfield Road intersection, the installation of our eight foot (8') wide sidewalk/bike path on the west side of Plainfield Road, a Greater Cincinnati Water Works water transmission main installation, new curb and gutter, and an improved storm water system.

This was the "second phase" of a project intended to provide greater capacity and vehicular movement for Raymond Walters College and the new Blue Ash Elementary. "Phase I" was completed in 2003.

The reason this project was broken into two parts was the work that had to be done in the Carpenters Run Pioneer Cemetery. Disinterment activities were needed on both the east and west side sections. It was anticipated that between four and seven graves might be disturbed for the project. However, as the project progressed, twenty-six gravesites or possible gravesites (1 on the west side, 25 on the east) were unearthed. Very few human remains or artifacts had weathered the very wet ground and time itself. The City worked with the Blue Ash Historical Society, the Archeology Department of the University of Cincinnati, and a professional cemetery excavation company (Natural and Ethical Environmental Solutions) to plot the cemetery, properly excavate the gravesites, study the remains and artifacts unearthed, and eventually properly reinter the remains in the cemetery. The reinterment should take place in 2005.

### B. I-275 and Reed Hartman Highway

By the end of 2004, this dual project (a road widening project and a safety project) was substantially complete. Final landscaping matters will be attended to in the Spring of 2005. This will make this project's actual "completion date" a year and a half after its original completion date of September 2003.

This was an ODOT project constructed in cooperation with the City of Blue Ash, the City of Sharonville, the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Planning Commission (OKI), and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

### C. Reed Hartman Highway Improvement Project - Phase II

The City began construction on its Reed Hartman, Phase II project in March of 2004. This project extends the widening of Reed Hartman Highway from the P & G south entrance (the southern terminus of the I-275 & Reed Hartman Highway Project) to a point 930 feet south of the new "Osborne Boulevard" and the Corporate Center driveway.

This project involves adding an additional lane both north and south on Reed Hartman, an upgraded storm water system, the extension of a Greater Cincinnati Water Works 30" water main, curb and gutter, and improved traffic signalization (including LED lenses, UPS – uninterrupted power source, video detection, and provisions for electric supplied by a generator).

Final completion date for this project is June 28, 2005.

## VII. Storm Water

### A. Hamilton County Regional Storm Water District

In 2003, the City of Blue Ash officially became a charter member of the Hamilton County Regional Storm Water District in order to cooperatively meet on a district wide basis the NPDES – Phase II (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) requirements intended to promote and enhance the storm water quality of the City and surrounding areas and the U.S. as a whole. A five-year plan outlining activities to address the five minimum control measures promulgated by federal law was developed and submitted to OEPA. These five measures include:

1. Public Education and Outreach
2. Public Involvement and Participation
3. Illicit Discharge Detection
4. Construction Site Runoff Control
5. Pollution Prevention/Housekeeping

In late 2004, City Council agreed to have the HCSWD assess the taxpayers of Blue Ash a very small part of the fee assessed to the City for Phase II activities. All of the assessment for 2003 and 2004 were paid from the general fund. Certain requirements for 2005 will be addressed by the city at its cost through its staff.

**B. Street Cleaning**

Street sweeping is performed not simply for its aesthetic value but more importantly to keep debris from entering catch basins and storm sewer pipes. Such sweeping keeps the storm sewers open and running and helps to prohibit hazardous materials from entering the creeks and streams into which the sewers empty. This maintains and/or improves the quality and the safety of the waterways.

Street sweeping, catch basin cleaning /repair/installation, and storm sewer cleaning/repair/installation are just some of the activities which are required to meet federal storm water regulations under Phase II of the NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit process.

During 2004, Service Department personnel swept 1650.2 lane miles of streets. A schedule for quarterly and bi-monthly sweeping has been established to keep Blue Ash streets, sewers, and waterways safe, clean, and in good repair.

**C. Catch Basin Cleaning / Repair / Installation**

The Service Department inspected and cleaned 2494 catch basins located within the City of Blue Ash in 2004. Repairs were made to 62 of the catch basins. Three (3) new catch basins were installed. These efforts are undertaken to assure that this part of the storm water drainage system is functioning properly and will take the water necessary during rains and downpours. While the system is not designed (as is no system) to instantaneously take all rain water during heavy storms, if it is clogged or in a state of disrepair, it is unable to take what it can and will cause unnecessary flooding problems for businesses and residents.

Service Department personnel clean and inspect all catch basins once a year at the conclusion of the leaf season. The Vactor purchased in 1997 makes this job faster, easier, more efficient, and safer.

**D. Storm Sewer/Cleaning/Repair/Installation**

An additional, yet vital aspect of the catch basin cleaning and inspection program is the inspection, cleaning, and repair of the City's storm sewer underground lines. This work is also done with the use of the Vactor. During 2004, 837 lineal feet of storm sewers were cleaned and/or repaired. City crews installed 207 lineal feet of new storm sewer line.

**E. Storm Sewer Mapping**

In late December, CDS Associates, Inc., the City's Engineer, delivered three sets of maps detailing the Blue Ash storm water system. These sets totaled 108 pages each. One set is in the Service Director's office, one set is in the Community Development office, and one set is at the Service Garage. CDs were also prepared and included with all sets of these maps. These maps list all of the catch basins; all the retention and detention basins; the size and type of all the pipes along with direction of flow; the fourteen separate drainage areas; a map detailing "no curb" or the type of curb on the streets throughout the City; and the floodway areas. The maps also include the location of all the sanitary sewer lines in Blue Ash.

These maps will be a great resource for the City in the years ahead. They will need to be updated as years pass. In 2005, all the outfalls will also be charted by the Hamilton County Storm Water District and added to the maps as part of the NPDES – Phase II requirements.

**VIII. Signage, Street Signage and Striping**

See Appendix B under traffic for statistics of street signage and street striping. 2004 marked the first full year the Service Department had use of its computerized sign maker.

**IX. Personnel**

1. Christine Shinkle, Service Worker I was on extended medical leave for all of 2004.
2. Paul Kelley, Part-Time Laborer III, left the City's employment on June 6, 2004 to pursue work in Texas.



Those individuals on the staff of the Service Department as of December 31, 2004:

- Dennis E. Albrinck, Service Director
- Robert Bennett, Part-Time Laborer III
- Terry Chapman, Service Coordinator
- Gary Coffman, Serviceworker I
- Keith Cooper, Serviceworker I
- Dennis Cunningham, Service Superintendent
- Rich Dole, Assistant Service Director
- Timothy Freson, Mechanic II
- Bill Gardner, Serviceworker I
- John Getner, Serviceworker I
- Steve Gillespie, Serviceworker II
- Weldon Haynes, Part-Time Administrative Clerk
- Bruce Jones, Serviceworker II
- Randy Kirschner, Serviceworker II
- Seth Land, Part-time Laborer III
- Art Long, Serviceworker II
- Mark Martin, Serviceworker I
- Jim Noel, Serviceworker I
- Ryan Noland, Serviceworker I
- Mark Ober, Service Worker I
- Doug Painter, Part-time Laborer III
- Greg Schoenberger, Mechanic I
- Chris Shinkle, Serviceworker I
- Joyce Smith, Part-Time Administrative Clerk
- Bill Stabler, Service Coordinator
- Steve Thomas, Service Worker I
- Judi Ward, Secretary

**X. Capital Equipment**

Through the generosity of Council and the Administration, the following Capital Equipment purchases were made in 2004 to allow the Service Department to more efficiently, more effectively, and more safely perform its many responsibilities.

|     |   |                 |
|-----|---|-----------------|
| 1.  | Tandem Truck w/cab, chassis, body                   | \$64,927        |
| 2.  | Snowplow for new tandem                             | \$8,515         |
| 3.  | Welder Spool Gun for Mechanics                      | \$4,375         |
| 4.  | Upgrade for Scanner                                 | \$588           |
| 5.  | Two Chairs for Mechanics Office                     | \$353           |
| 6.  | Desk and Chair for Sign Shop                        | \$1,417         |
| 7.  | Work Station and Chair for Computerized Sign System | \$1,669         |
| 8.  | Curb Saw and Stand                                  | \$888           |
| 9.  | High Lift Transmission Jack                         | \$1,475         |
| 10. | Weed Eater w/attachments                            | <u>\$450</u>    |
|     | Total   | <u>\$84,657</u> |

**XI. Waste Disposal and Recycling**

A. Waste Disposal & Recycling (Rumpke)

In 2003, at the request of the City Manager and with the approval of City Council, Service Department staff negotiated the elimination of solid waste pick up and disposal services for businesses within the City to begin April 2004. The City would continue to pick up and have disposed the solid waste trash of residents, apartment and condo complexes, schools, non-profit organizations, and churches at no cost to these entities. The City would continue to pay for its own accounts as before. The elimination of this service would bring the City's slate of disposal services in line with national offerings as well as reduce its costs by over one million dollars per year after buy out payments were completed in 2004 (\$220,000) and 2005 (\$240,000). Savings for 2004 were estimated at \$732,257 and \$1,009,000 for 2005. Estimated savings for the first full calendar year without any buy out payment (2006) is \$1,200,000. March of 2006 will be the beginning of a new contract.

Total costs for Rumpke services in 2004, **including** the \$220,000 buyout payment for 2004, were \$1,104,537.20. If one were to add a 3% increase in unit costs scheduled to take place in 2004 to the 2003 total Rumpke cost (\$1,721,700.24), one could project a total 2004 cost of \$2,238,210.31. This would be a savings of \$1,133,673.11.

|                    | 2002                  |                       | 2003                  |                       | 2004                  |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                    | COST                  | AMOUNT                | COST                  | AMOUNT                | COST                  | AMOUNT                |
| <b>RESIDENTIAL</b> |                       | Ton                   |                       | Ton                   |                       |                       |
|                    | \$284,421.32          | 4770 s                | \$293,911.24          | 5466 s                | \$303,231.46          | 4975 Tons             |
| <b>COMMERCIAL</b>  |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|                    |                       | 406,07 l.c.y          |                       | 391,86 l.c.y          |                       | 134,82 l.c.y          |
| Front Load         | \$682,206.11          | 5 .                   | \$683,426.54          | 6 .                   | \$246,512.40          | 0 .                   |
| Roll-Off           | \$639,066.00          | 185,10 l.c.y          | \$649,297.50          | 203,01 l.c.y          | \$225,662.80          | 131,07 l.c.y          |
| Special Services   |                       | 0 .                   |                       | 0 .                   | \$5,921.83            | 2 .                   |
| Buy Out Payment    |                       |                       |                       |                       | \$220,000.00          |                       |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>   | <b>1,321,272.11</b>   | <b>591,175 l.c.y.</b> | <b>\$1,332,724.04</b> | <b>594,876 l.c.y.</b> | <b>\$698,097.03</b>   | <b>270,867 l.c.y.</b> |
| <b>RECYCLING</b>   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|                    |                       | Ton                   |                       | Ton                   |                       | Ton                   |
| Curbside           | \$62,242.00           | 751 s                 | \$65,381.18           | 731 s                 | \$69,286.88           | 719 s                 |
|                    |                       | Ton                   |                       | Ton                   |                       | Ton                   |
| Drop-Off           | \$27,500.00           | 636 s                 | \$24,000.00           | 654 s                 | \$28,000.00           | 583 s                 |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$89,742.00</b>    | <b>1,387 Tons</b>     | <b>\$89,381.18</b>    | <b>1,385 Tons</b>     | <b>\$97,286.88</b>    | <b>1302 Tons</b>      |
| <b>YARD WASTE</b>  |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
| Brush              | \$12,241.00           |                       | \$1,536.00            |                       | \$0                   |                       |
| Misc.              | 4,532.90              |                       | 4,147.78              |                       | 5,921.83              |                       |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$16,773.90</b>    |                       | <b>\$5,683.78</b>     |                       | <b>\$5,921.83</b>     |                       |
| <b>TOTAL COST</b>  | <b>\$1,712,209.33</b> |                       | <b>\$1,721,700.24</b> |                       | <b>\$1,104,537.20</b> |                       |

|                                   |   |             |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Recycling incentive received 2000 | = | \$25,115.01 |
| Recycling incentive received 2001 | = | \$37,103.81 |
| Recycling incentive received 2002 | = | \$37,993.58 |
| Recycling incentive received 2003 | = | \$39,608.52 |
| Recycling incentive received 2004 | = | \$37,259.00 |

B. Household Hazardous Waste Program

The City provides a great service for its residents with its Household Hazardous Waste Program. Residents can bring their old and unneeded household items such as leftover paints, used oil, and cleaning supplies to the Service Garage for proper disposal. The City spent \$32,160 to provide this service in 2004. Midwest Environmental provided the disposal service.

C. Trash/Brush Drop Off Program

Another excellent service offered to residents is the "Trash/Brush Drop Off Program." This program allows residents to bring brush and a variety of other trash items to the Service Garage and place it in open-top containers for proper disposal. A total of 1,417 such drop offs were made in 2004, an average of 118.08 drop offs per month. With our new facility and additional staffing, we can confine this service to Blue Ash residents only. In the past, because the compound was "open" and clerical staff was not on duty during all hours of operation, businesses (Blue Ash and non-Blue Ash) or non-Blue Ash residents were able to drop things off without registering even though they were not eligible to use the containers. This is a service that has been and continues to be used by many of our residents. It is interesting to note that we recorded 1,414 drop offs in 2003, three less than in 2004.

D. Freon Removal Program

Beginning April 1, 2003, the City initiated a new program which allowed homeowners to call the Service Garage and request the pick up of old refrigerators, air conditioners, and dehumidifiers that need the freon removed before being properly and legally disposed. The City picked up the appliance, removed the freon, and arranged for the disposal. Previously, the homeowners had to contract with an authorized agent and pay for the removal before Rumpke would pick up and dispose of the appliance. The City received an "Excellence in Public Service Award" from the Street Maintenance and Sanitation Officials of Ohio (SMSO) at the APWA/SMSO Annual Conference and Exposition held in Columbus, Ohio in June 2003.

By the end of December 2004, 81 units were collected at the curb but the City had the CFC's

extracted from 165 units. The difference in the numbers relates to those units brought to the Service Garage by residents themselves. Total cost for these extractions was \$3,450.

## **XII. STEP Committee (Safety, Training, and Education Program)**

The Safety, Training, and Education Program Committee consists of individuals from the Service Department appointed by the Service Director to oversee and plan training and education programs; review and institute safety procedures; obtain safety equipment; and review all accidents involving Service Department personnel, equipment, and facilities.

The Committee was established in 1996. Present members of the committee include Rich Dole, Assistant Service Director; Dennis Cunningham, Service Superintendent; Tim Freson, Mechanic; Artie Long, Service Worker II; Steve Gillespie, Service Worker II; and Randy Kirschner, Service Worker II (union rep).

Activities for the year 2004 included the following:

### A. Testing

1. Random drug/alcohol tests were administered four (4) times involving thirteen (13) employees. All tested negative.

### B. Inspections

1. Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection
2. Quarterly "Vehicle Safety Equipment Inspections" were performed for all Service Department vehicles.
3. Quarterly "Electrical Tools" Inspection (Initiated in 2003)
4. Quarterly "Gasoline Powered Tools" Inspection (Initiated in 2003)
5. Emergency Generator (Every Tuesday – Self-Assessment) (Semi-Annual Inspection)
6. Impeller on Leaf Machine – Weekly During Leaf Season

### C. Accident Review

1. Four (4) personal injury
2. Four (4) vehicle/equipment damage

### D. Training/Education

1. Proper Operation and Safety of Vactor – 6 hours – 9 employees
2. Computerized Sign Maker – 20 hours – 3 employees
3. Work Zone Safety – 3 hours – 20 employees
4. Forklift Operation and Safety, including Work Platform – 4 hours – 6 employees
5. Operation and Safety of New Gas Powered Extendable Pruner & Concrete Saw – 1 hour – All
6. Elgin Street Sweeper Maintenance – 1/2 hour – 6 employees
7. New Phone System – 6 employees
8. Snowplow Roadeo Week – All
  - a. Maneuverability Training and Practice
  - b. Written Test (CDL, Snow Removal Policies & Procedures)
  - c. Film Viewing and Discussion
  - d. Dry Run of Snow Routes
  - e. Snowplow Roadeo
9. Regional Snowplow Roadeo – Our two contestant drivers, Jim Noel (7<sup>th</sup>) and Keith Cooper (10<sup>th</sup>) placed in the top 10 of 70 drivers from SW Ohio – 6 employees
10. Performance Evaluating Training – 3 hours – 8 employees
11. Trenching and Shoring Safety – 6 hours – 20 employees
12. 928 Loader Operation – 9 employees
13. CDL Licensure Class B – Seth Land

### E. Conferences Attended

1. SMSO/APWA – Annual State Conference and Exposition – Cleveland, Ohio – Albrinck
2. Mid-American Truck Show – Louisville, Kentucky – Freson, Schoenberger, Cunningham, Dole

3. APWA International Congress and Exposition – Atlanta, Georgia - Albrinck

F. Group Meetings

1. City Manager (Marvin Thompson) – All
2. Snow Plow Routes Additions and Changes - All

**XIII. Conclusion**

During 2004, the Service Department continued to perform the many tasks, both large and small for which they have responsibility. Streets were swept, repaved, and cleared of snow and ice; sidewalks, repaired; trees, trimmed or removed; storm sewers inspected, cleaned, repaired, or constructed; leaves, collected and disposed of; street and informational signs produced, maintained and erected; traffic signalization, maintained and improved; and vehicles and equipment, bought, maintained, and repaired. Beginning in April, solid waste collection and disposal services for businesses were eliminated, thus potentially saving the City over a million dollars per year while still providing residential pick up and disposal service, recycling service, household hazardous waste disposal service, and a “CFC” pick up and disposal service.

Major road projects were completed (Plainfield Road, Phase II), virtually completed (I-275 & Reed Hartman Highway) and begun (Reed Hartman Highway, Phase II).

Service Department personnel were an integral part of the many special events sponsored by the City of Blue Ash for which it is well known.

The Service Department continued to train, educate, and evaluate itself. It worked hard at becoming more efficient and better organized (APWA Self-Assessment). And it continued to emphasize creating a safer environment in which to work!

The Service Department will continue to provide those services for which it is responsible and work to improve them. It will also continue to be an integral part of the “team-oriented” approach to serving our business and residential citizens and accomplish our “Blue Ash Team Mission”:

“To provide superior services, facilities, and activities for all citizens utilizing key guiding principles of integrity, compassion, innovation, professionalism, and commitment.”

(Blue Ash Team Mission Statement)

“We will continually improve the quality of community life for all residential and business citizens to ensure Blue Ash is always the “City of Choice” through enlightened, efficient, and dynamic unified municipal government”.

(Blue Ash Team Vision Statement)

**PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

Recreation Center – Kathy Swensen, Superintendent

The Recreation Department had a very productive year in 2004. We continue to strive to meet the needs of the community in all aspects of recreation. We offered a nice mixture of small events, large events, classes, sports programs, entertainment, and camps. The public was supportive of our efforts, and our facilities were used to capacity with this programming variety.

We added a new full-time staff member this year in June. Brian Kruse came on board right at the rush of the summer season, and he made a very smooth transition. He is directly supervising aquatics, adult leagues, control desk staff, and fitness. We are thrilled to have him on staff, and we are pleased with his enthusiasm. He is a great addition to our Recreation Center team and brings many new ideas and plans that will continue to help our department stay progressive in 2005.

The department pulled together in mid-year to meet the challenges of tightening the budget. We made well thought-out changes to operations and staffing that helped us spend our allotted money more responsibly. The staff worked well as a team and supported the decisions with enthusiasm.

Brian Kruse – Recreation Leader:

**Aquatics:**

2004 was another busy summer for the outdoor pool. As usual, our typical summer presented atypical weather. Summer began with weeks of dry weather and ended with unusually wet and cool weather in late August. Memorable moments include replacing the front pool pump, which was inoperable after being submerged for nearly an entire night. The Facilities Maintenance crew worked through the weekend to remedy the problem.

The pool staff set records this summer when we entered five teams of five lifeguards in the Red Cross State Championships. Our teams swept 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> place in a series of rescue challenges. **This is a first in**

**the history of the competition!** We are fortunate to have very low lifeguard turnover and only plan to hire 3-4 new guards for the 2005 season. Jon and Dan did an excellent job staying within a tight budget, and resolving situations in the most efficient way whenever possible.

**Leagues:**

We offered 28 different leagues throughout the year and ended with a total of 1,089 participants who played in over 500 plus scheduled matches. Basketball is our most popular sport and is offered throughout three seasons. Since Brian is new this year as league manager, he has made an effort to become acquainted with the leagues players' and captains. For each league, he's held an organized captains' meeting with PowerPoint presentation to help dispense important league information before the season.

One of the tasks undertaken by Brian was investigating fees paid by teams in other leagues. As a result of his findings, effective January 2005, each team will pay a portion of the officiating fees for Volleyball and Basketball (formerly paid by the City). That change will save nearly \$16,000 in the Miscellaneous Contractual account.

**Control Desk:**

The year of 2004 was a time of transition for the control desk staff. Brian came on board the beginning June 1, so the staff was "under new management." The staff was patient while Brian learned the ropes and they welcomed him as their new supervisor. We made some staff changes to improve the group as a whole. Two employees were let go, and two employees were transferred from other Recreation areas. The supervisory staff excelled this year, and as a group. Time and time again they go beyond what is expected. In late 2004, we developed a Racquetball punch pass to allow participants to save on fees and pay in advance for court fees. The pass is similar to our guest pass procedure, and we have had a positive response to this new feature.

**Fitness:**

Dan Guthrie, Fitness Coordinator, showed his interest in the Fitness Field and changed his major to Health Promotions this past year. Dan's enjoyment in this field is evident in the work he does in the Fitness Center. We offered new incentive programs that quickly filled time after time. "Climb Mt. Blue Ash," "Summer Cardio," and the "Turkey Trot" all filled to capacity and helped many members live healthier lifestyles. Dan introduced a new incentive program, "The Million Pound Club," and it was the first solely based on strength training. After just one week, the chart of 50 was full, and over 20 members reached the one million pound goal.

Equipment purchases for 2004 included 6 treadmills (\$24,000), 2 Stair climbers (\$5,200), 1 Combo Ad/Ab Selectorized Machine (\$2,800) and 2 Combo Leg Curl/Extension Selectorized Machines (\$5,200).

Tiphonie Crane – Recreation Supervisor

**Programs**

We developed a new evaluation process for the instructors to ensure that we are providing the best possible programs and classes to our community. The instructors will be assessed on a regular basis by using evaluation forms and participant feedback.

**Camps**

The summer camp format will be restructured for 2005 to be a more all-inclusive camp. This new format allows us to hold registration earlier (something residents and members have requested in the past). Hopefully the earlier registration date will ease the registration process as the new camp format will allow more campers to enroll.

**Office - Susan Trammel, Supervisor**

This has been a fairly good year for the office with the exception of a few staff challenges. Membership renewals are coming in more frequently as mail-ins, which has been a benefit to those working the window. More and more people are also registering for classes over the phone.

We made the decision to change the office opening time to 9:00 AM, which seems to be working well for everyone. We've received no complaints from the public. We are still open one evening a week until 6:00 PM for those who may not have the flexibility of coming in earlier in the day.

Other significant changes include printing two brochures a year instead of three. This required creative use of space in the Winter/Spring 2005 brochure, which will cover January – May, but it allows us to present the camp and swim registration information well ahead of the registration date. Printing only two brochures also reduces the production cost, which will help us cut the printing budget considerably. The change that affected the office most this year was the loss of an office clerk position. Kitty Meyer had been with the recreation office since 1993. Due to the budget cuts, her position was eliminated. She has since accepted a job with her former employer and is enjoying her new responsibilities. The loss of this position requires Susan to cover the morning shift in the office.

**Tot Room - Jaime Schneider, Supervisor**

The year 2004 has proven to be a very good year. We created Story Time, which was a free program open to the public to acquaint them with the Tot Room and the classes we offer. We included stories, crafts, snacks, and physical play time in this free, 45-minute program. The Tot Room staff was reduced due to the

restructuring, so we are utilizing the office staff to fill in any openings. The core staff has been together a while and will continue to be the backbone of the Tot Room. At the end of the year, we began accepting infants in the Tot Room in hopes of increasing class attendance and revenue.

**Food Service - Barb Griffin – Recreation Supervisor**

**RECREATION CENTER**

**Pool:**

- ✂✂ Eliminated one shift
- ✂✂ Eliminated back line which made concession easier to work with one less person
- ✂✂ Introduced daily specials
- ✂✂ Held “grill outs” once a month on the pool deck
- ✂✂ Eliminated some products and introduced healthier options
- ✂✂ Placed a handicapped student in concession through a work/study program affiliated with Sycamore High School
- ✂✂ Served more product for Dog Days at the Pool

The concession ran very smoothly with one less shift. Our new products went over well, so we may make a few additional changes in 2005. The daily specials and the monthly grill outs were well received. Our “student” concession worker improved as the summer progressed. His teaching aide felt he did well, and the pool concession was a good placement for him. Once again Dog Days at the Pool drew a good size crowd. The concession did very well for that event especially since we offered more food options. Revenue from Dog Days was \$340.

**Amphitheater:**

As well as the weekly Concerts in the Park and Heritage Day, we hosted East Side Players. They performed two musicals; each ran for two weekends. Good weather and entertaining shows attracted a nice size audience, and the concession stand did well. Revenue for East Side Players was \$3,974.64.

**Recreation Center:**

- ✂✂ Opened the concession in the Catering Kitchen for
  - SAC Holiday Basketball Tournament
  - Sycamore Athletic Booster’s spring Basketball Tournament
  - Holiday Craft Show

Although the Holiday Craft Show did not attract many customers, both the basketball tournaments did. Revenue for the Holiday Tournament was \$2,210.66. Recreation revenue: \$67,600.

**Sports Center**

- ✂✂ Added new breakfast items
- ✂✂ Changed a few products
- ✂✂ Assigned inventory to one employee
- ✂✂ Acquired a new area to store product
- ✂✂ Added another Coke Merchandiser

The Sports Center Concession stand ran well this season. It was very helpful having a new storage area and extra Coke Merchandiser. Assigning one employee to oversee inventory also helped tremendously. The Knothole Tournament was very successful again this year and generates substantial revenue. We also hosted a Celebrity Softball Game, which was organized by the Teen Response Youth Organization. This event attracted 1,500-2,000 people. Revenue from the Teen Response Celebrity Softball Game was \$2,202.25. Sports Center Revenue: \$53,000.

**Sandtrap**

After 25 years, the City decided to start serving alcohol at the golf course to help increase revenue. This was a successful move, because revenue increased by approximately \$42,000. Preparing to sell alcohol required a considerable amount of groundwork. During the winter months, we set policies, selected beer products and pricing, hired six new employees, and sent all Sandtrap staff to TIPS training (an alcohol awareness program). We had a successful season and encountered very few problems related to alcohol consumption. We serviced 574 guests at our golf outings and believe that the beer sales greatly enhanced the outings. The sales definitely increased outing revenue. Sandtrap Revenue: \$111,902.

### **Catering**

We catered four Sister City luncheons at the Sandtrap this year, and the Committee was very pleased with the accommodations. The Student Government Luncheon was held in April, and we hosted the State Auditors one time.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

See the end of the Parks & Recreation report for a breakdown of budget/revenue for SummerBratton; Red, White & Blue Ash; and Taste of Blue Ash.

### **SummerBratton**

SummerBratton 2004 was a huge success! The estimated attendance for this year's event was approximately 75,000. National entertainment featured included: The Spinners, Lou Gramm of Foreigner, and Joe Nichols. The Family Fun Area had a variety of free activities for everyone to enjoy. This year we included a family fun stage that featured a ventriloquist, musician Doug Gehner as a singing cow, and a magician. The family fun entertainment was well received by all.

### **Red, White & Blue Ash**

Red, White and Blue Ash 2004 was also a huge success! The weather was perfect! The crowd showed up early and continued to arrive until the fireworks show. New locations for the food booths and children's area were well received by the attendees. The national entertainment, STYX, was awesome and a hit with the crowd. The fireworks were spectacular, and without a doubt, the best we've had to date! Estimated attendance for Red, White and Blue Ash was 100,000.

### **Taste of Blue Ash**

The Taste of Blue Ash was a success, despite the rain on Saturday evening that cancelled all activities. The new restaurant layout was well received by the public. We were complimented on the ease of locating all the restaurants, the additional children's activities, and the new over-flow seating area in the Hill's parking lot. Paul Rodgers of Bad Company was a hit on Friday night. Saturday's attendance was down due to the storm that hit at 5:00 PM. Sunday was very busy; the crowd arrived around 1:00 PM to secure a spot to see The Charlie Daniels Band perform at 3:00 PM; attendees stayed for the remainder of the day and were very enthusiastic during the Darryl Worley performance at 8:00 PM (in the drizzling rain). Estimated attendance for this year's event was 150,000.

### **Best of Taste Competition**

After success in 2003, we again held the Best of Taste competition prior to the Taste of Blue Ash. The competition was deemed a success by all who attended. This year's winners were:

- ?? Best Appetizer - (a tie) Parker's Blue Ash Grill for their Parker's Dynamite Sticks and Watson Brothers Bistro and Brewery for their Reuben Wontons
- ?? Best Entrée - Donatos Pizza for the Chicken Mariachi Pizza
- ?? Best Dessert - Servatii's Pastry shop for their delicious Key Lime Pie
- ?? Mayor's Choice - The Bistro at DoubleTree for their Chicken Fontina Baguette

### **Baseball Festival**

We had a great turn out for the first annual Baseball Festival! The weather was perfect, 70 and sunny. Moeller, Ursuline, and Sycamore baseball/softball teams helped us with the event by running clinics and working the free games; they all did a great job. Champions Baseball also helped run clinics. We received donations from the local schools to give away as prizes; the clinics and prizes were a big hit with the participants. We received numerous compliments about the event. Estimated attendance for the event was 750.

### **Dog Day at the Pool**

Dog Day at the Pool was again a huge success with the dogs and their owners!! A total of 450 people attend this doggone fun event. Buster's Pet Place was our title sponsor—they filled bags of goodies for the dogs, and we handed them out as they arrived. A total of 12 dog vendors participated. This year's new activity was a dog/owner look-alike contest and a dog trick contest---the participants really enjoyed the contests. The BARC Café sold yummy food, and we took in a total of \$368.

### **The Wall That Heals**

The Wall That Heals (Vietnam Veterans Moving Wall Memorial) arrived in Blue Ash on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The Opening Ceremony was held on Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Ceremonies were held nightly, and they were informative and emotional. We were very fortunate to have several Vietnam veterans and local singers participate in the ceremonies. Approximately 800 students from area schools attended to learn more about the Vietnam War. 100 volunteers assisted with the activities. This was one of the most meaningful events we've held at the Blue Ash Recreation Center.

### **Heritage Day**

Heritage Day 2004 began with rain. By 3:00 PM the skies cleared, and people began to arrive for the festivities. We made a few logistical changes this year that we felt worked out well. We constructed only three buildings: a general store, a schoolhouse, and the jail. This helped cut back on pre-event staff hours, and attendees did not seem to miss the other buildings. We also moved the storytellers to the fishing bridge, so they had an audience all day. The Sycamore shelter was utilized for the crafters, and we placed the wood carvers in the Blue Ash shelter. Many great vendors were scattered throughout the park. Entertainment by the Native Americans and the stage performers was good. The family activity area did well despite the rain--220 kids enjoyed the activities. Food sales were down, no doubt due to the poor weather early on; we took in about \$1,200.

### **Halloween Walk in the Woods**

The Halloween Walk in the Woods is a family-friendly event for ages 10 and under. This year' approximately 500-600 children participated. We provided snacks and beverages in the Blue Ash shelter. At the same location, we offered tattoos, a mask craft, and a magician.

### **CONCERTS**

#### **Tuesday/Friday**

The 2004 concert series presented by Fifth Third Bank was once again a huge success! The Tuesday Concerts in the Park featured big band, concert, bluegrass, and jazz. Friday Nights on the Square showcased oldies, Cajun rock, classic rock, and country. For 2004, the AOL City Guide honored us by presenting its "City's Best Places for Live Music" award to the Blue Ash Towne Square. Both concert series were well attended with an approximate total attendance of 40,000.

#### **Thursday**

This year we offered our Thursday lunch concert series in September hoping the cooler weather would increase attendance. Concertgoers included moms and their children, business people, and retirees. Warm 98 held their corporate takeovers at the concerts and helped us promote the event. US Bank was our presenting sponsor. Approximate attendance was 500.

### **Hazelwood Community Center**

This year we planned many summer programs at the Hazelwood Community Center. The programs were geared toward children ages 5 through 14 and set up similar to a day camp...daily activities with a weekly "theme." The first couple of weeks went well, but interest dissipated over time. The activities were almost "too" structured; the children seemed more interested in a "drop in" format for activities. With that in mind, we plan to offer only a few structured events in 2005. With the help of the entire staff, planning for this should be smooth and the events a success.

Wendy Langston continued the reading program on Thursdays when school was in session. This program is very popular and one of the best things offered at the Center.

After reviewing the daily attendance at the Center, we decided to cutback on the hours of operation. We will be trying the limited hours in 2005.

### **Parks & Grounds Maintenance**

This year Amanda Brock was promoted from her part-time job to a full time position. She is now responsible for our greenhouse, pole and wall planters, and downtown area. She also does our landscape design, and she designed the North Fire Station landscaping and supervised its installation.

The summer of 2004 brought to light how inadequate our irrigation was for the planters downtown. That resulted in the poorest showing of color and plant material ever. That situation has been addressed, and the downtown planters will be back to their usual standards in 2005.

A rainy spring season caused our staff to fall behind on mowing, mulching, and landscaping, but our talented staff always finds a way to get things done.

In 2004, we contracted with Kelly Green to blow mulch into the landscape beds throughout the City, greatly reducing staff hours and expenses for that task. That was very beneficial since we acquired responsibility for the grounds of the Hunt House and the former Xomox property.

At the Sports Center, another field was constructed for 6-8 year old players. This brings our total number of fields to 11, 3 of which are exclusively for younger players. New scoreboards were purchased for fields 2 and 4, and 23 bleachers were replaced. A new 30' gate was installed on the fence line at P&G to eliminate any safety problems moving people out of the park during the Fireworks. We hosted a Baseball Festival, Champions Baseball Camps, Knothole Tournaments, Celebrity Softball, the Senior Softball Tournament, and a photo shoot for Hemmings Motor News that featured the Crosley automobiles on Crosley field.

In the Nature Park, we worked with Facilities Maintenance to repair the drainage pipes in the creek behind the Amphitheatre. That required fabricating a new grate to cover the retention basin and completing the landscaping, which included installing a new split rail fence.

Other items completed include:



- ?? Repaired and repaved walking paths
- ?? Paved areas around the shelters
- ?? Installed gravel on some paths to control mud and stop erosion
- ?? Installed new grills at the shelters
- ?? Refinished picnic tables
- ?? Built and installed 20 new birdhouses and repaired bird feeders to re-establish the bird habitat
- ?? Broadcast wildflower seeds
- ?? Re-landscaped the entrance to the Amphitheatre
- ?? Instituted a playground safety and maintenance program

We cleared, graded, and seeded the strip between the Municipal Building and the Recreation Center parking lots. City entrance signs were painted and refurbished. We installed landscaping on the Kenridge buffer. This was a year for cleaning out old and diseased landscape plants and trees and replacing them with sod for the most part. Many of the irrigation heads in the curb lawns downtown had to be replaced due to vandalism during the Taste.

We began work on the warehouse that was acquired at 6171 Interstate Circle, which will be the new home for the Parks & Grounds Maintenance Dept. However, before we can occupy the building, we must remove the carpet and walls that are saturated with mold and cigarette smoke.

We purchased two new Kubota Zero Turn Mowers and traded in our old International tractor in exchange for Kubota attachments. To reduce expenses, we overhauled and refurbished one of our Toro mowers and replaced engines on our push mowers instead of purchasing new units. We purchased new water pumps for truck watering and irrigation repair. We replaced 4 trimmers and a chainsaw and purchased equipment to prune pole plants. Those items will greatly increase work safety.

We are looking forward to 2005; the majority of the staff we had last year is returning, and we look forward to moving into our new facility.

**Golf Course**

Golf rounds were up 8% (2,900) in 2004 vs. 2003. A number of factors contributed to the increase including:

- ?? Seasonal temperatures throughout the prime golf season with no prolonged periods of extreme heat and humidity
- ?? Slightly below normal rainfall during the prime golf season with 0 days closed due to weather during these months (3 days lost in 2003)
- ?? Internet advertising and the use of coupon specials (to attract customers)
- ?? Sale of beer for the first time

The sale of beer at the Sandtrap Restaurant proved to be very successful with over \$37,000 in gross sales contributing to an operating profit for the year.

**Golf Course Maintenance**

**2004 Capital Equipment Purchases:**

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| ?? Carryall                | \$7,352.00       |
| ?? Toro Triplex 3250D      | \$19,206.12      |
| ?? Water Pump              | \$1,57.01        |
| ?? Toro Sidewinder         | \$23,611.73      |
| ?? Small Rototiller        | \$325.00         |
| ?? Toro 4000D              | \$36,024.66      |
| ?? Aerway                  | \$6,809.00       |
| ?? Portable Cooling System | \$1,327.40       |
| ?? Tines for Aerway        | \$276.65         |
| ?? Maintenance of Equip.   | \$1,433.45       |
| ?? Raden Tines             | \$508.00         |
| ?? Weedeaters              | \$708.00         |
| ?? Carryall Windshield     | \$321.00         |
| <b>Total:</b>              | <b>\$98,060.</b> |

**2004 projects completed:**

- ?? Tree replacement on hole #5 next to Carpenter's Run
- ?? Removal of bunker next to practice green
- ?? Construction of new bunker on wedge green
- ?? Construction of nursery green along with the irrigation required
- ?? # 15 tee drainage

- ?? Re-contour #3 approach
- ?? Construction of mound on corner of Cooper and Plainfield for the purpose of displaying our sign for the Golf Course after the road-widening project

**Summary:**

Crews that remained employed over the winter concentrated their efforts on tree removal. Trees are selected for removal if they fit four criteria

1. Tree damaged and poses a hazard
2. Tree dead or dying - not an immediate hazard but could be in the future
3. Tree inhibits play (slows the golfers)
4. Tree is undesirable (not much more than a weed)

During the early winter months, crews removed approximately 50 trees.

Over the winter months, our maintenance technicians concentrated their efforts on preparing the equipment for the upcoming season. This includes everything from major repairs to basic maintenance.

Several part-time, supervisory positions were created. These new positions were filled, and the new hires proved to be a beneficial addition to our staff.

In the spring, normal maintenance activities resumed along with aerification of greens, tees, and collars. We made a concentrated effort to ensure all flowerbeds on the golf course and in Carpenter’s Run were planted and mulched by the Memorial holiday. The majority of these goals were achieved, which allowed plants more time to mature before the stress of summer.

During the busy summer season, we employ our largest staff. The bulk of our time is spent readying the course for play and attempting to stay ahead of the golfers. Weekly activities include mowing:

- ?? Greens six times per week
- ?? Tees and approaches two to three times per week
- ?? Fairways three times per week
- ?? The remaining turf areas an average of two times per week

We also change tee cups daily and perform bunker maintenance. This is just a brief overview of what the typical duties are in the Golf Maintenance Department.

This past summer we enjoyed cooler temperatures and adequate moisture, although at times, we had more rain than needed. The summer months provided us with very few days in the 90s, which contributed to nice playing conditions.

In September the wet weather gave way to drier conditions. For the first time all year, some of the non-irrigated areas started to struggle; by mid-October everything was very dry. Then in late October abundant rainfall created excessively wet conditions, which remained throughout the rest of the year. Our rainfall total for the year was 48.25” compared to our average of 41.38”.

Towards the end of December, we were hit with a significant snowfall. The Golf Maintenance employees assisted in clearing our respective areas of responsibility.

One thing that differed from previous years was the aggressive fertility program that was implemented. The reason for this approach was to encourage turf health to resist disease and environmental stresses. In previous years, disease pressure could get out of control. This year we had a pretty good handle on it throughout the season, and the disease was kept at a manageable level.

Overall this year things turned out exceptionally well; the course conditions remained good, and play increased.

**2004 SPECIAL EVENTS - BUDGET INFORMATION**

|                            |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| SUMMERBRATION .....        | \$163,200 |
| RED, WHITE & BLUE ASH..... | \$285,770 |
| TASTE OF BLUE ASH .....    | \$297,129 |

**TOTAL OF MAJOR EVENTS..... \$746,099**

**SPONSORSHIP/REVENUE**

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Warm 98/Mojo/Star.....                         | \$30,000 plus promotions |
| Coke.....                                      | \$25,000                 |
| Fifth Third Bank .....                         | \$25,000                 |
| Ohio Lottery.....                              | \$20,000                 |
| Sara Lee.....                                  | \$10,000                 |
| Time Warner Cable .....                        | \$10,000                 |
| Donato's Pizza.....                            | \$ 2,000                 |
| Trauth Dairy.....                              | \$ 3,000                 |
| Rozzi's .....                                  | \$ 5,000                 |
| River City Sunrooms.....                       | \$ 3,000                 |
| Fidelity Investments.....                      | \$ 3,000                 |
| Office Depot .....                             | \$ 5,000                 |
| Kroger .....                                   | \$ 3,000                 |
| Coldiron Concessions .....                     | \$60,000                 |
| Restaurant Fees.....                           | \$21,000                 |
| Vendor Fees.....                               | \$ 1,750                 |
| Festival Services .....                        | \$ 7,000                 |
| Sign Sponsors.....                             | \$ 2,000                 |
| Other Corporate Sponsors.....                  | \$ 4,000                 |
| DoubleTree Guest Suites (In-Kind - value)..... | \$ 3,000                 |
| Community Press (In-Kind - value) .....        | \$15,000                 |
| <b>TOTAL SPONSORSHIP/REVENUE.....</b>          | <b>\$260,750</b>         |
| <b>PERCENTAGE OF OVERAL BUDGET.....</b>        | <b>35%</b>               |

Special Note: As of December 20, 2004 we have already secured an additional \$26,750 in Sponsorship for 2005. Majority of current sponsors have renewed or increased their contributions for 2005.

**FACILITIES MAINTENANCE - 2004 Year End Review**

2004 was a great year for the Facilities Maintenance Team. This year we concentrated on reaching or surpassing the goals and objectives that we had set for 2004. Training, team building and most importantly, cost reductions, were our primary targets. Bringing on a new facility, the North Fire Station, and a new event, The Healing Wall, were two of the new challenges that we faced as they were added to our list of responsibilities.

Our team consists of 8 full time and 14 part time employees. We service and support all Blue Ash city buildings and their occupants for the owners, the Tax Payer. Our level of maintenance is based upon each facility's usage and the budgeted funds set forth. Part time employee hours range from 6 through 30 hours per week. Some of our part time employees are retired Blue Ash residents who are supplementing their income or just want to be involved. Part Time employees perform daily and seasonal janitorial duties for all Public, Administration and Recreation facilities (22 buildings). Full time employees perform the annual opening and closing of Blue Ash's summer facilities (restrooms, shelters, pools etc.) as well as daily preventative maintenance on all City buildings (over 36 structures). Some of our duties include electrical, plumbing, carpentry and various other skills of all building trades. We also maintain over 400 residential streetlights and manage over 2,000 other City lights including Traffic Control fixtures.

When you think of the scope of Facilities Maintenance duties, think of your house. You are responsible for all exterior and interior maintenance, including your driveway, as well as utilities from the meter inward. We have the same responsibilities on a much larger scale.

**Highlighted Projects:**

**Nature Park** – Dry Bridge erosion problem

Engineering and project estimated cost by Childers & Cunningham Architecture & Planning Co. was \$74,000.00 without building a waterfall attraction. We accomplished this project in-house for less than \$20,000.00 and added a park waterfall attraction. Net result was a \$54,000.00 savings of taxpayer's money and beautification of the Nature Park.

**Pool** – Painting

We painted the pool in-house for less than \$20,000.00. The estimated cost from Shamrock Pools was over \$66,000.00. Saved taxpayers over \$46,000.00.

**Hunt Bridge**

Removed & rebuilt all retainer walls & replaced bridge in-house for less than \$10,000.00. Estimated cost from Buchannon Const. Was \$26,000.00. Saved taxpayers \$16,000.00

**Other Projects –**

Repaired broken Baby Pool Attraction

Police Carport Drains/New Fueling Controls  
Completed Police Impound Project  
Remodeled Police Dept workout and shower area  
Replaced Recreation offices, Golf Clubhouse & Administration carpet with new flooring  
Resurfaced Tennis Courts 1, 2, 3 & 4  
Resealing of Recreation & Town Square lots  
Various other projects.

Total estimated savings on above projects is over \$300,000.00 of taxpayer's money.

We also performed over 150 unscheduled maintenance requests in addition to our 100 scheduled preventative maintenance, and monthly checks, the annual open & closing of all parks, restrooms, concessions, pools and fountains while facilitating and executing all recreational entertainment events.

**Recreational Events:**

Recreational events responsibilities include setting up sound & lighting, tables, grills, tents, electric and stage props as well as managing the production. We handle the Tuesday Night Concerts in the Nature Park, Friday Nights on the Square, Thursday Lunch concerts as well as our spring and fall dance, Memorial Day, Summerbration, Veterans Day, Fourth of July, Taste of Blue Ash, and Heritage Days. Our team is one of the first to show and the last to leave these events. We feel that in collaboration with the Recreation Dept we had a big part in receiving the award of being one of the best live entertainment facilities in the Tri state by AOL.com. this year. This was a huge success for our city.

Considering all these accomplishments by our Facility Maintenance Team, we are looking forward to another exciting year with cost savings & team building at the top of our list.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**SECTION I – DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES**

The Blue Ash Police Department began 2004 with an authorized strength of thirty-seven full-time sworn officers, and six full-time dispatchers. During the year, Council authorized the full-time sworn officer strength to increase to thirty-eight. The rank structure was reflected as one chief, three captains, one lieutenant, seven sergeants, twenty-six patrol officers, and six dispatchers.

With the retirement of one captain from the force, Council authorized a change in the rank structure of the police department to reflect one chief, two captains, one lieutenant, eight sergeants, twenty-six patrol officers, and six dispatchers.

A current organizational chart is included with this annual report.

During 2004, the following personnel changes occurred within the Police Department and Mayors Court:

- ?? Auxiliary Officer Ken Johnson was hired 1/5/2004.
- ?? Sergeant Dan Noonan retired 1/9/2004.
- ?? Patrol Officer Allison Norton was hired 6/2/2004.
- ?? Patrol Officer Jeffrey Lewis was hired 6/21/2004.
- ?? Patrol Officer Lester Peters was hired 6/21/2004.
- ?? Mayors Court Clerk Virginia Chasteen resigned 7/29/2004.
- ?? Captain John Pohlman retired 8/1/2004.
- ?? Patrol Officer Roger Pohlman was hired 8/2/2004.
- ?? Auxiliary Officer Mike Allen resigned 10/1/2004.
- ?? Mayors Court Clerk Brenda Traxler was hired 10/11/2004.
- ?? Dispatcher Kim Reuscher resigned 10/26/2004.
- ?? Patrol Officer Steve Schueler was promoted to Sergeant 11/5/2004.

During 2004, one full-time patrol officer was activated in the military reserve. The Department ended the year being one full-time dispatcher and one-full time patrol officer short, not including the patrol officer on military leave.

At the end of 2004, the Police Department consisted of thirty-seven full-time paid police officers, seven part-time paid auxiliary police officers, two volunteer unpaid auxiliary police officers, five full-time paid dispatchers, two full-time paid clerical staff, two part-time paid clerical staff members, two full-time paid Mayors Court staff members, and one part-time paid Mayors Court staff member, for a total of forty-six full-time paid employees, ten part-time paid employees, and two volunteer unpaid employees.

**SECTION II – DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

In September of 2004, a police officer was assigned full-time to the Directed Patrol Unit within the Operations Bureau. This officer performs duties that include juvenile complaints, drug investigations, and hotel enforcement liaison. Through a grant provided by the Ohio Department of Public Safety/Ohio Investigative Unit, the Directed Patrol Unit has been successful in concentrating enforcement efforts in the area of liquor violations,

as well as sale of tobacco products to underage persons.

During 2004, the Police Department conducted investigations that resulted in seizures of approximately 74 pounds of marijuana, 296 grams of cocaine, 58 grams of crack cocaine, 105 grams of methamphetamine, 32 grams of heroin, 5 grams of psilocybin, and 65 assorted tables of prescription drugs. \$30,662 in U.S. currency associated with criminal acts was seized, with either forfeitures awarded or pending.

A motor vehicle stop of an individual with a suspended driver license uncovered a ring of individuals involved in identity theft with losses to area retailers exceeding \$200,000. As a direct result of this investigation, the Hamilton County Clerk of Courts removed the digitized images of traffic citations from their internet website, which is where the criminals were finding their victims.

A Blue Ash resident was robbed and kidnapped from his residence. This investigation revealed that the victim was driven to a number of automatic teller machines around the area where he was forced at gunpoint to withdraw cash and give it to his abductors. After being driven to Dayton, Ohio, the victim escaped and all parties involved were arrested and are currently awaiting sentencing.

The clerk of a Blue Ash convenience store employee was robbed at gunpoint. The cashier struggled with the gunman, who fled the scene in an awaiting auto. Investigation revealed that this offense was related to a string of 12 other robberies in Ohio and Kentucky. Evidence gathered from the scene of the Blue Ash robbery linked an individual arrested in Kentucky.

In September of 2004, Detective Joe Schlie was one of forty Ohio police officers from local, state, and federal jurisdictions to receive an award from the United States Attorney's Office of the Department of Justice. This award was for his work in an investigation wherein the primary target was involved in storing stolen cigarettes in a Blue Ash warehouse. The target was also involved in a large-scale operation of theft of commercial goods that were often stolen from semi-tractor trailers and resold with millions of dollars being sent to the target's home in the Middle East. The proceeds of this multi-state criminal enterprise were used to support international terrorism.

The Traffic Safety Unit administered three traffic related grants funded by the State of Ohio: The Hamilton County DUI Task Force grant, the Ohio Safe Commute Program grant, and the Third Grade Seat Belt Program grant.

The Traffic Safety Unit continued active liaisons with the Hamilton County Safe Communities Group, the Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD), the Governor's Highway Safety Office, the Injury Free Coalition for Kids organization, the National Safe Kids Campaign, the American Automobile Association (AAA), and the TriHealth Think First program.

The Police Department purchased with forfeiture monies a computerized traffic counter as well as Highway Data Management Software, allowing the Traffic Safety Unit to conduct surveys related to traffic complaints received from residents. The counters measure volume of traffic, speed, and types of vehicles that travel over the selected roadway.

The Police Department purchased with forfeiture monies equipment and software that allows trained investigators to map incident scenes. The equipment, called "Total Station", is capable of forensic mapping, and is similar in appearance to surveyor tools.

The Police Department purchased with forfeiture monies an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) that links to the Ohio Bureau of Identification and Investigation in London, Ohio. With this piece of equipment, investigators can photograph a latent fingerprint from a crime scene, submit the fingerprint, and conduct a search of fingerprint files of arrested individuals for comparisons. To date, this piece of equipment has made several "hits" in this manner.

The Police Department upgraded the video and audio recording equipment used in the dispatch center from analog to digital. This equipment is used to record CCTV surveillance cameras located on city properties, as well as to record the primary incoming telephone lines and city police radios.

The Police Department purchased a Records Management System software. The software will allow the Police Department and Mayors Court to computerize their records. Computerization had been a topic of discussion in the Department for years, and had been researched extensively for most of 2004. The purchase, design, and training associated with this conversion was implemented in the last quarter of 2004, with targeted changeover being January 1, 2005.

During the 2003-2004 school year, the Police Department continued to teach the DARE program to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at the Edwin H. Greene Middle School. A total of 580 DARE certificates were issued. The program has continued into the 2004-2005 school year.

The Police Department attended, sponsored, or conducted over 60 public presentations, demos, booths, and meetings including: Good Scout Awards, Concealed Carry Law Presentation, Hug-A-Bear Project, Personal Safety Seminar, Disaster Team Training, Bank Robbery Workshop, Operation ID, Annual Bicycle Safety Rodeo, Women's Self Defense Workshop, Shop with a Cop, and Northeast Community Challenge (NECC) meetings.

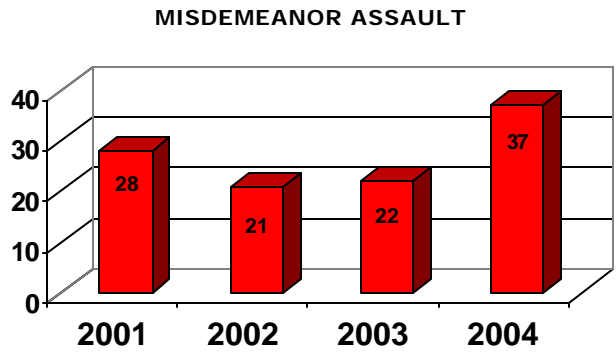
The Blue Ash Mayor's Court processed 3,489 traffic citations and 377 criminal citations in 2004. The total number of Mayor's Court cases increased by 2.90% over 2003 figures, from 3,757 to 3,866. The 2004 revenue from Mayor's Court cases was \$246,476.60, up from \$228,155.34 in 2003.

**SECTION III – CRIMINAL OFFENSES REPORTED**

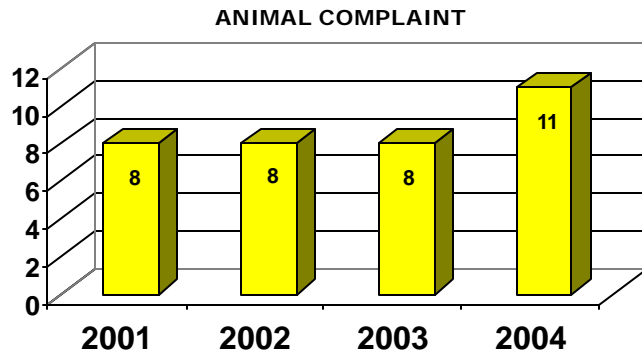
Section I summarizes reports to the police department that are of a criminal nature. Overall, criminal offense reports decreased 8.63% over 2003 figures, dropping from 1228 to 1122. 71.93% of reported crimes were successfully cleared. In 2002, the police department received 1343 criminal offense reports, increasing from 1277 in 2001.

In calendar year 2004:

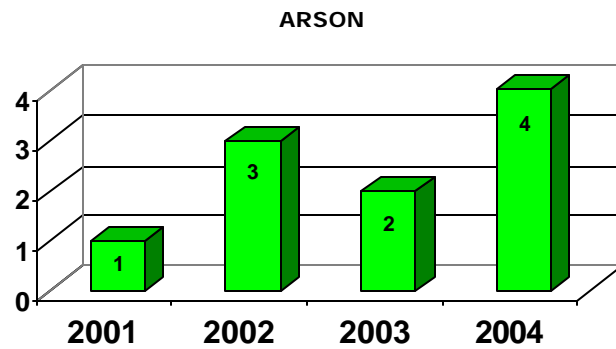
**Assault** reports increased 68.18% over 2003 figures. 97.29% were cleared.



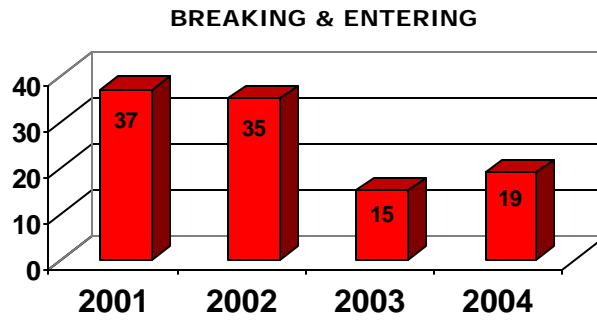
**Animal Complaint** reports increased 37.5% over 2003 figures. 90.91% were cleared.



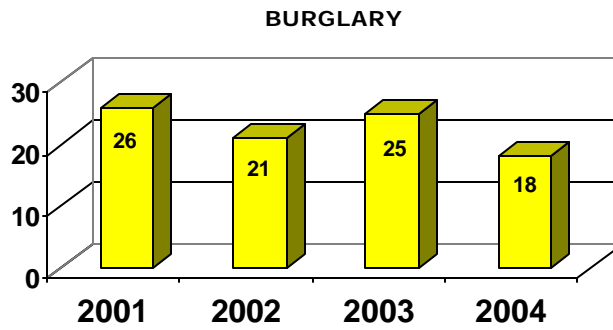
**Arson** reports increased 100% over 2003 figures. 25.00% were cleared.



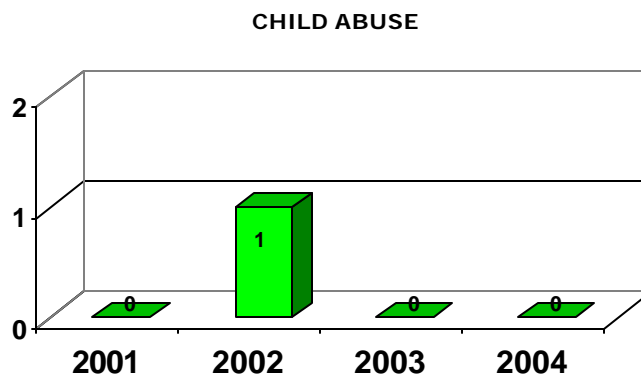
**Breaking and Entering** reports increased 26.67% over 2003 figures. 26.32% were cleared.



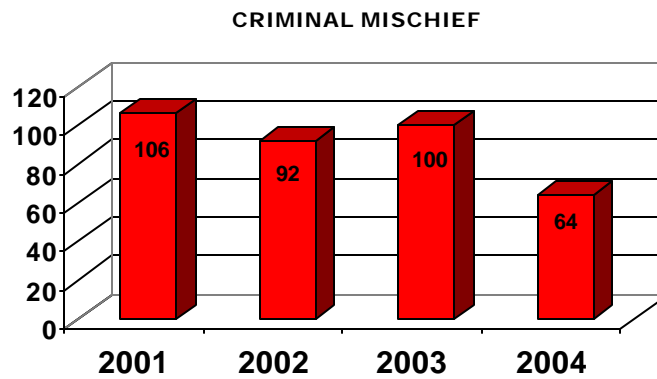
**Burglary** reports decreased 28.00% over 2003 figures. 33.33% were cleared.



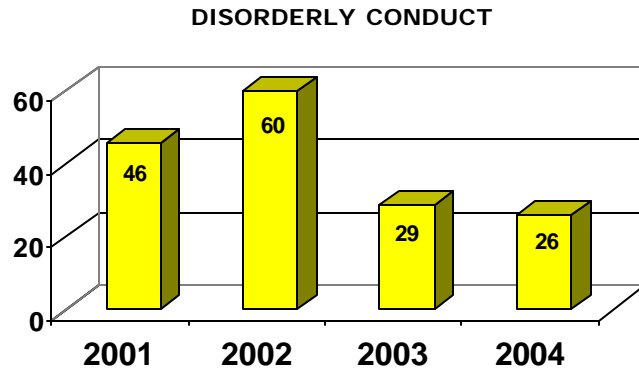
**Child Abuse** reports remained unchanged from 2003 figures.



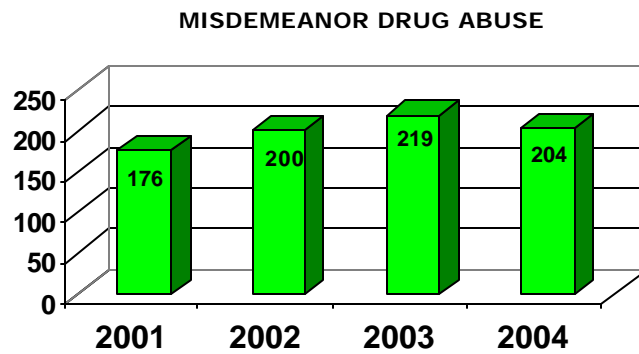
**Criminal Mischief** reports decreased 36.00 % over 2003 figures. 37.50% were cleared.



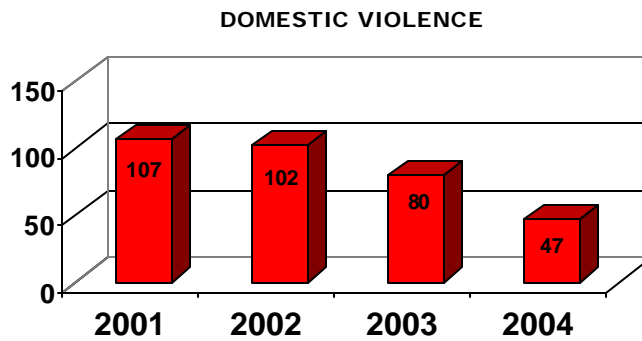
**Disorderly Conduct** reports decreased 10.35% over 2003 figures. 84.62% were cleared.



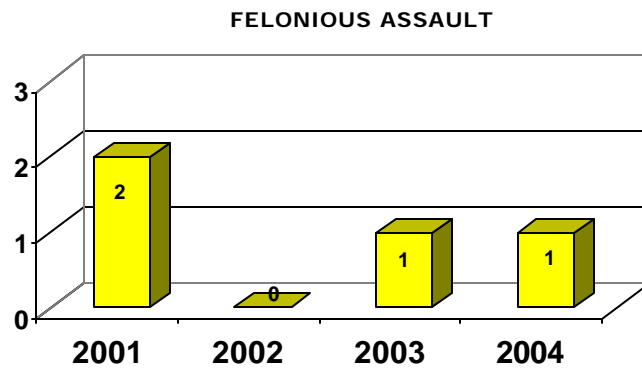
**Misdemeanor Drug Abuse** reports decreased 6.85% over 2003 figures. 99.02% were cleared.



**Domestic Violence** reports decreased 41.25% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



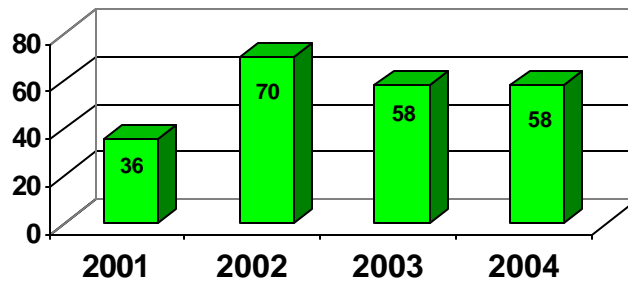
**Felonious Assault** reports remained unchanged from 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



**Felony Drug Abuse** reports remained unchanged from 2003 figures. 98.28% were cleared.

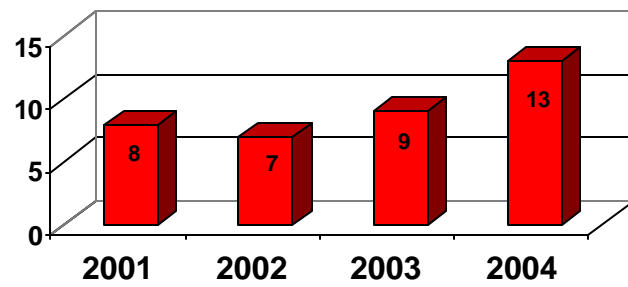


### FELONY DRUG ABUSE



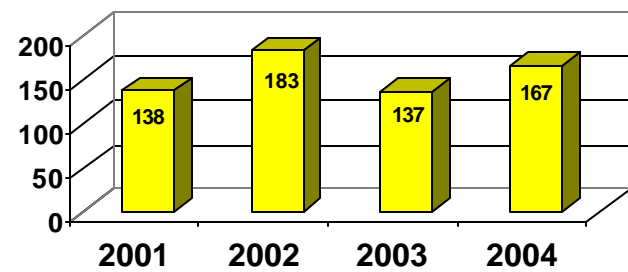
**Felony Sex Offense** reports increased 44.44% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.

### FELONY SEX OFFENSE



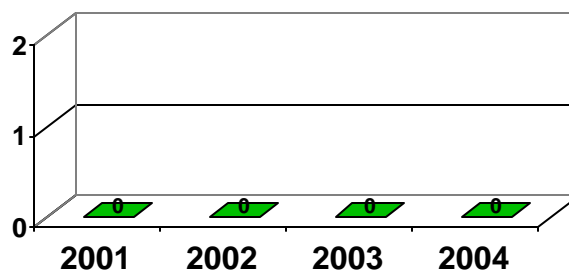
**Felony Theft** reports increased 21.90% over 2003 figures. 43.71% were cleared.

### FELONY THEFT

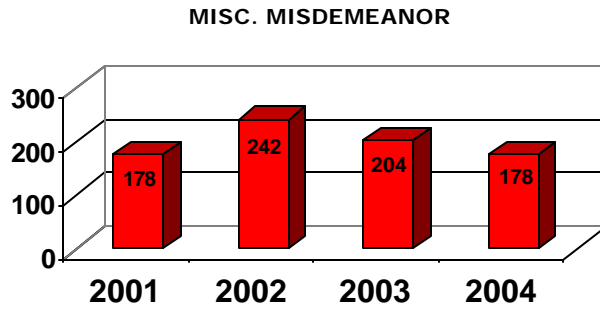


**Homicide** reports remained unchanged from 2003 figures.

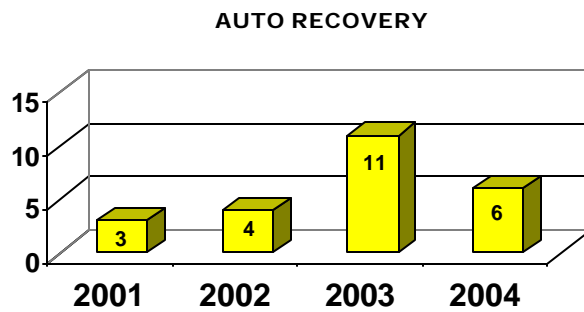
### HOMICIDE



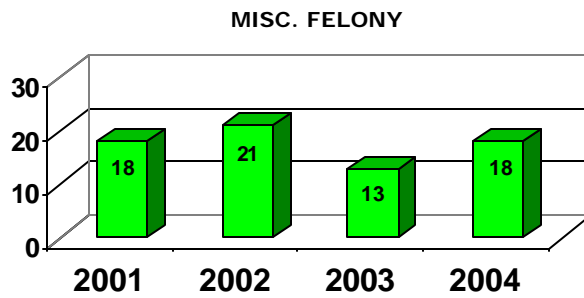
**Miscellaneous Misdemeanor** reports decreased 12.75% over 2003 figures. 94.94% were cleared.



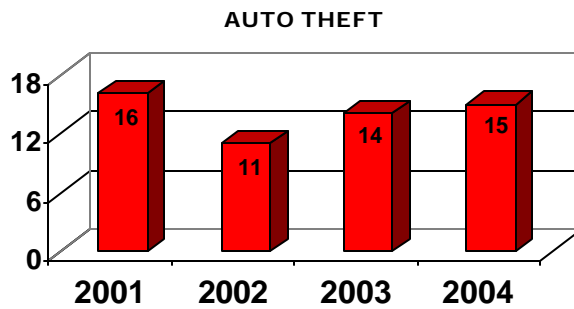
**Stolen Auto Recovery** reports decreased 45.46% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



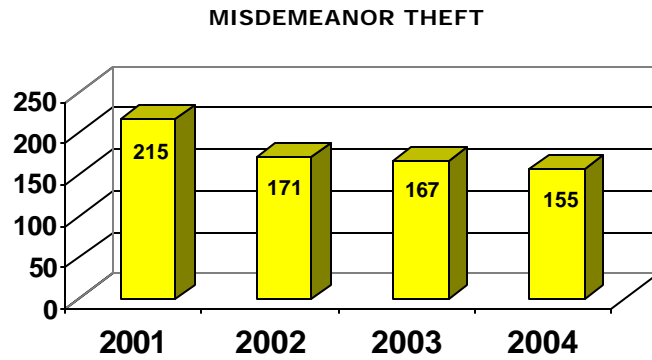
**Miscellaneous Felony** reports increased 38.46% over 2003 figures. 66.67% were cleared.



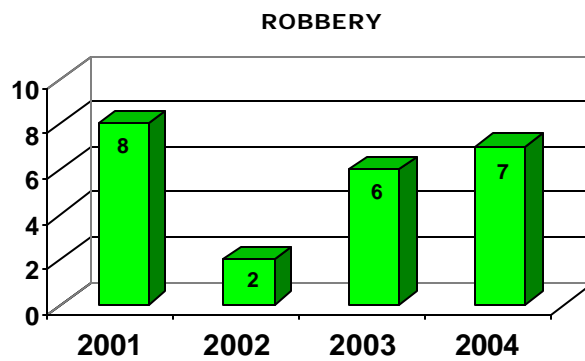
**Auto Theft** reports increased 7.14% over 2003 figures. 46.67% were cleared.



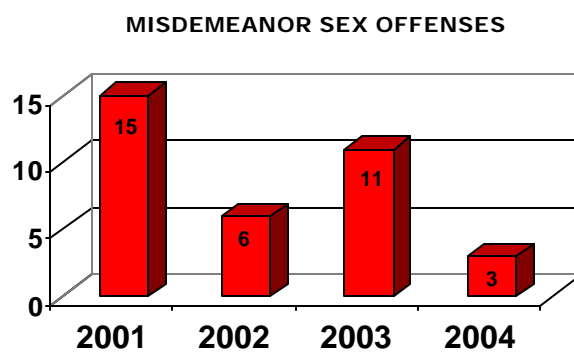
**Misdemeanor Theft** reports decreased 7.19% over 2003 figures. 43.23% were cleared.



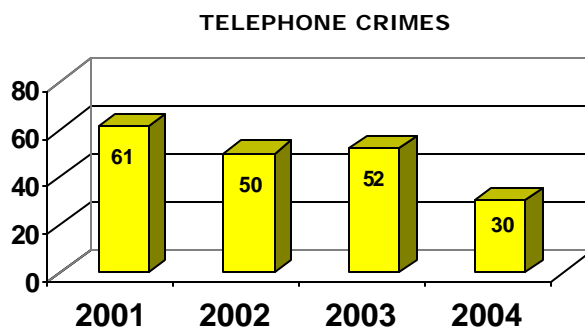
**Robbery** reports increased 16.67% over 2003 figures. 57.14% were cleared.



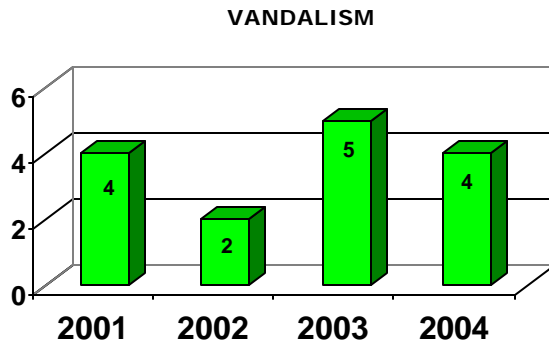
**Misdemeanor Sex Offense** reports decreased 72.73% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



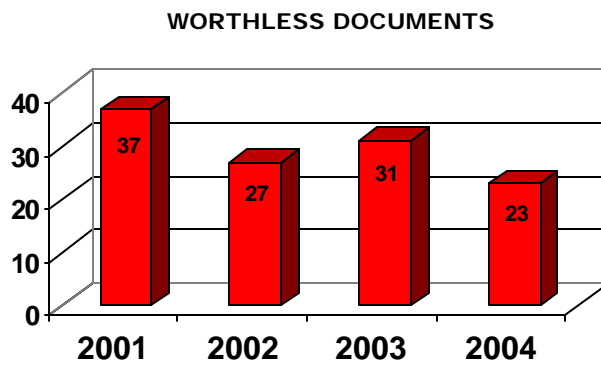
**Telephone Crime** reports decreased 42.31% over 2003 figures. 46.67% were cleared.



**Vandalism** reports decreased 20.00% over 2003 figures. 50.00% were cleared.



**Worthless Document** reports decreased 25.80% over 2003 figures. 73.91% were cleared.



**Weapon Offense** reports increased 55.56% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.

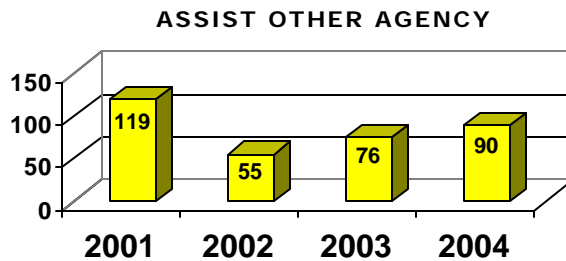
#### SECTION IV – NON-CRIMINAL INCIDENTS REPORTED

Section II summarizes reports to the police department that are of a non-criminal nature. Overall, non-criminal reports decreased 7.43% over 2003 figures, dropping from 606 to 561. 99.12% of non-criminal incidents reported were successfully cleared. In 2002, the police department received 761 non-criminal reports, increasing from 737 in 2001.

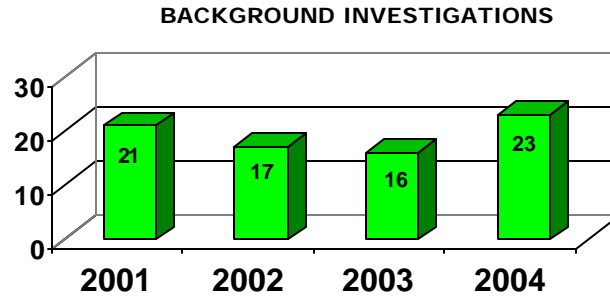
In calendar year 2004:

**Aided Case** reports decreased 48.31% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.

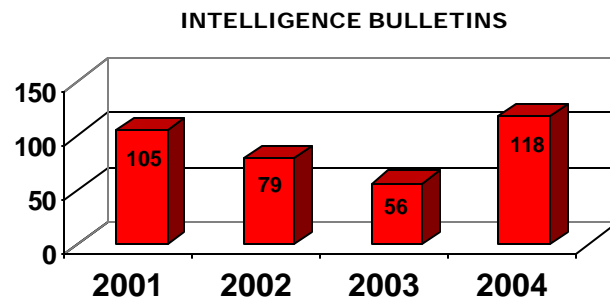
**Assist Other Agency** reports increased 18.42% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



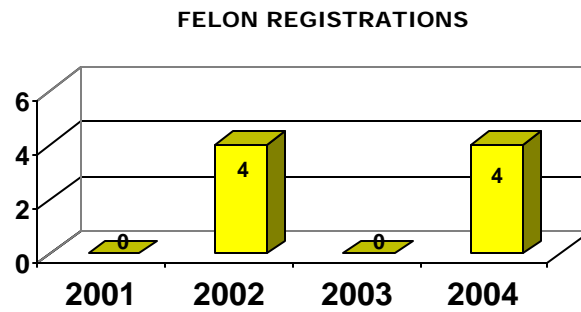
**Background Investigations** increased 43.75% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



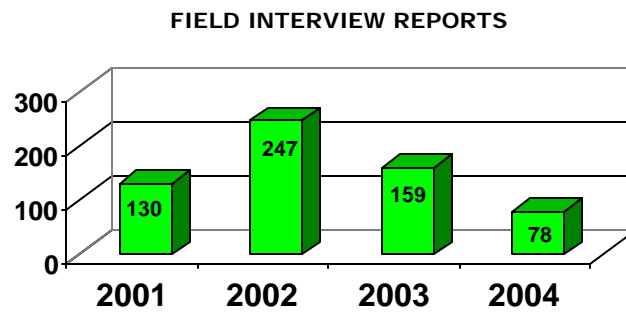
**Intelligence** reports increased 110.71% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



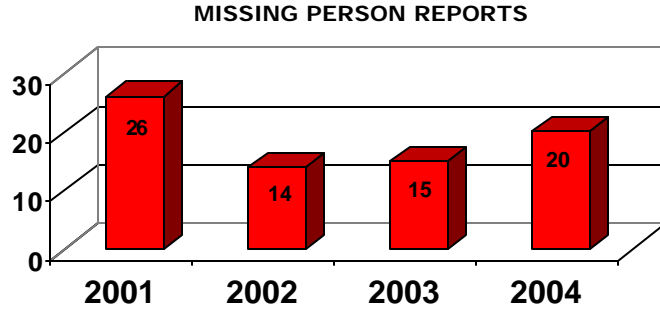
**Felon Registrations** increased 400% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



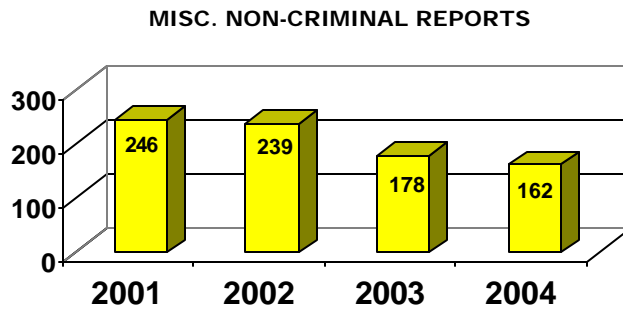
**Field Interview** reports decreased 50.94% over 2003 figures. 100.00% were cleared.



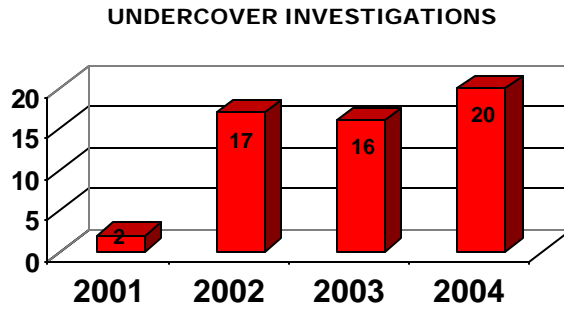
**Missing Person** reports increased 33.33% over 2003 figures. 95.00% were cleared.



**Miscellaneous Non-Criminal** reports decreased 8.99% over 2003 figures. 98.15% were cleared.



**Undercover Investigations** increased 25.00% over 2003 figures. 95.00% were cleared.

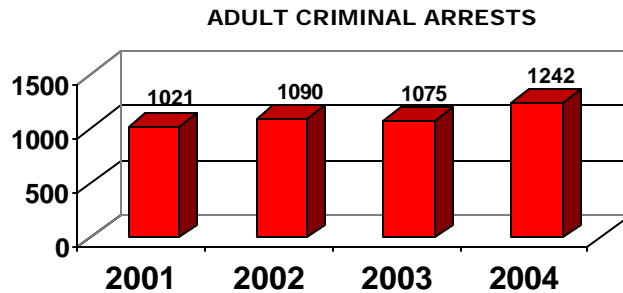


**SECTION V - ARRESTS**

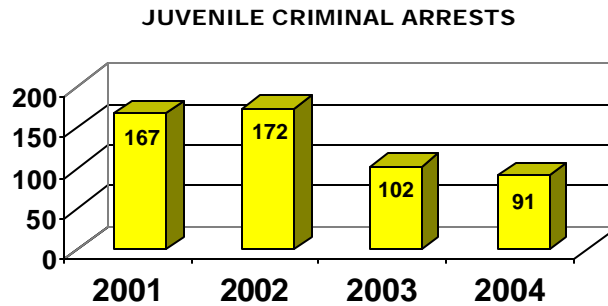
Section III summarizes criminal and traffic arrests made by the police department. Overall, criminal and traffic arrests increased 4.88% over 2003 figures, increasing from 5,025 to 5,270. In 2002, the police department made 4,905 criminal and traffic arrests, dropping from 4,950 in 2001.

In calendar year 2004:

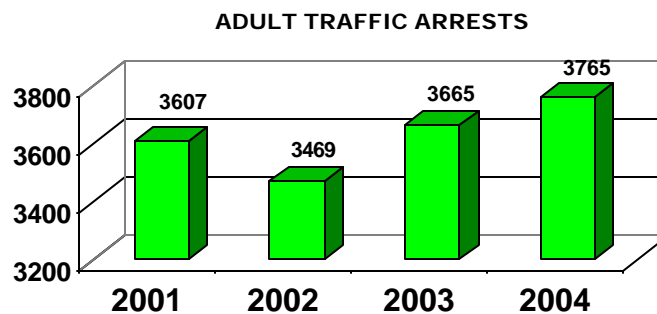
**Adult Criminal** arrests increased 15.54% over 2003 figures.



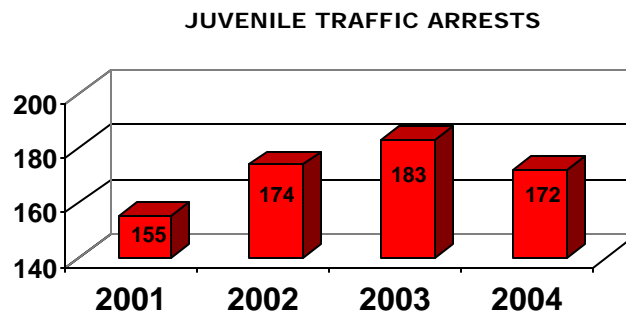
**Juvenile Criminal** arrests decreased 10.78% over 2003 figures.



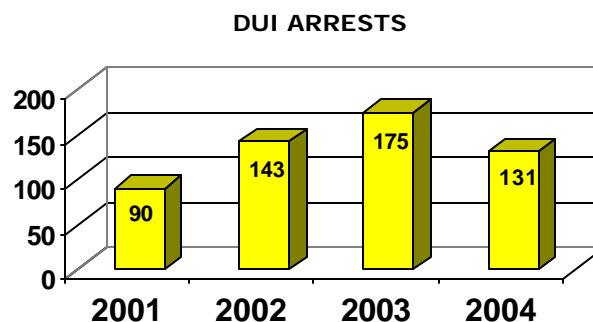
**Adult Traffic** arrests increased 2.73% over 2003 figures.



**Juvenile Traffic** arrests decreased 6.01 % over 2003 figures.



**DUI** arrests (included in adult and juvenile traffic arrests) decreased 25.14% over 2003 figures.

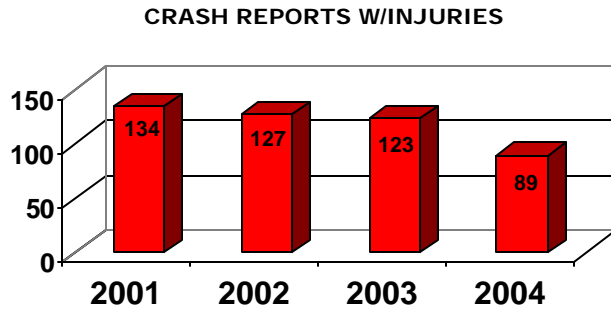


**SECTION VI – VEHICLE CRASHES**

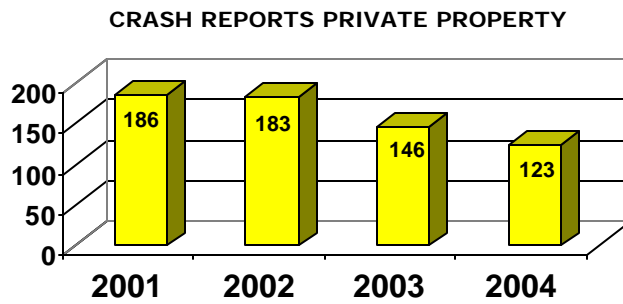
Section IV summarizes vehicle crash reports received by the police department. Overall, vehicle crashes decreased 24.19% over 2003 figures, dropping from 744 to 564. In 2002, the police department received 736 vehicle crash reports, increasing from 592 in 2001.

In calendar year 2004:

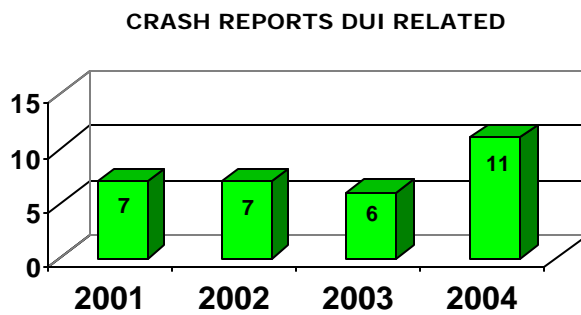
**Vehicle Crash Reports with Injuries** (included in total vehicle crash reports) decreased 27.64% over 2003 figures.



**Vehicle Crash Reports on Private Property** (included in total vehicle crash reports) decreased 15.75% over 2003 figures.



**Alcohol/Drug Related Vehicle Crash Reports** (included in total vehicle crash reports) increased 83.33% over 2003 figures.

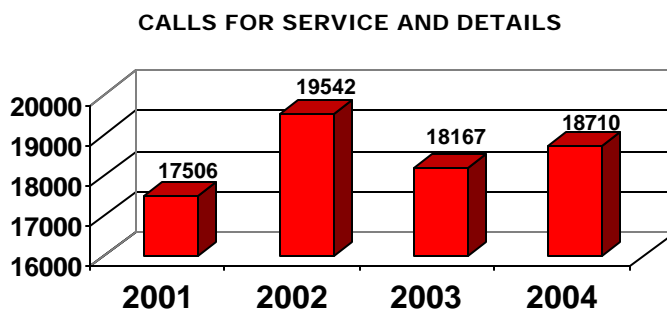


**SECTION VII – MISCELLANEOUS STATISTICAL**

Section V summarizes miscellaneous statistics for the police department.

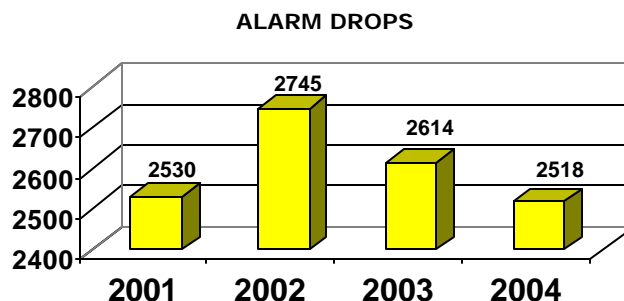
In calendar year 2004:

**Calls for Service** and **Details** increased 2.99% over 2003 figures.



**Alarm Drops** decreased 3.67% over 2003 figures.





### **Blue Ash Fire Department 2004 ANNUAL REPORT**

The year 2004 was not only a busy year for the Blue Ash Fire Department, but also a year of significant change. In January we were settling in to our new station and adjusting to a two station operation. With the two stations up and operating, we saw the need for more supervision. Therefore, in January we promoted three firefighters to the rank of Fire Lieutenant.

After the promotions, an executive coach (*Judy Office*) was brought in to assist with team building and restructuring of our department. Judy worked more with Fire Administration than she did with the entire department, however she eventually got an opportunity to work with everyone. She was a great asset to our team building efforts.

As our department was restructured, responsibilities were shifted. We now have a Lieutenant responsible for the following areas: Fire/Hazmat, Fire Prevention, Training, EMS, Maintenance, and Support. Fire Administration is still overseeing personnel, planning, policies, and budgeting.

The next big change in 2004 was the announcement of Jim Fehr's retirement, which was effective July 30, 2004.

After his retirement, a promotional exam was given and on September 2, 2004 Richard Brown became the fourth Fire Chief for the City of Blue Ash.

In late fall our medical director accepted a job in Lexington, Kentucky and would no longer be able to remain as medical director for our department. After interviewing several physicians who were interested in the position, Dr. Greg Frappier was chosen. Dr. Frappier generally works out of Jewish Hospital and has been received very well by our paramedics.

On November 1, 2004 our department started billing insurance companies for EMS runs. This is a soft billing practice and our residents should never see a bill. We hope to collect about \$250,000 annually.

#### **Fire / EMS Runs:**

During 2004 we responded to 679 fire runs and 1,283 emergency medical runs for a total of 1,962 runs. The breakdown of all runs are shown in the attached graphs.

#### **Training:**

Our department completed 2,775 hours of in-house training. This does not include the hours that were completed outside. We also had two of our employees selected by Hamilton County USAR Team to attend an advanced building collapse training. This class was over a week long and extremely, physically demanding.

#### **Arson Fire:**

On June 23, 2004 our department responded to a structure fire on Glendale-Milford Road. After the fire was extinguished, our fire investigators found that this appeared to be a suspicious fire and requested the assistance of a police investigator. Through the cooperative efforts of the fire and police departments, they were able to get a conviction of arson against the person who was living at the house.

#### **Fire Prevention:**

The fire department staff completed 154 fire inspections and 522 preplans during the year 2004. The department also continued to monitor the removal, installation, or piping replacement of underground storage tank facilities.

#### **Fire Hydrants:**

The City of Blue Ash currently has approximately 900 fire hydrants. There is a spring and fall hydrant maintenance completed each year. We had 32 fire hydrants that required an outside contractor to make repairs (28 hydrants required mechanical repairs beyond the scope of BAFD personnel, 3 hydrants were struck requiring repairs, and 1 fire hydrant repair was covered by driver's insurance). As in the previous year, we used Holthaus Plumbing Company and Quality Hydrant Repair for the repairs. There were 14 fire hydrant top ends rebuilt due to mechanical problems and 17 fire hydrants with lubrication problems that needed repaired.

#### **Other Departmental Activities:**

The carbon monoxide, smoke detector, and weather radio programs continue to be a success for the residents of

Blue Ash. Smoke detectors are provided and installed free to residents that own homes built in 1974 or before. Carbon monoxide and weather radios are sold at a minimal cost to residents. We also have continued our public education classes to our community including CPR, What To Do Before The Life Squad Arrives, the Fire Safe House, conducting and monitoring fire drills in schools and industry, Industrial Emergency Response Training, Hazardous Material Spill Control, etc. for fire safety protection. The programs combined served over 3,250 people throughout the year.

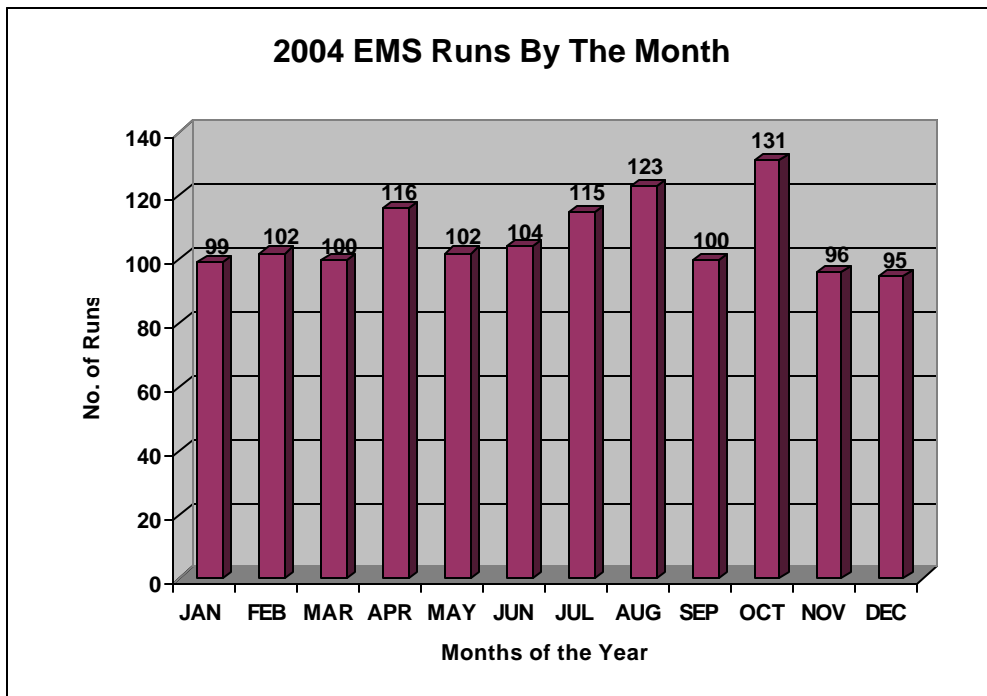
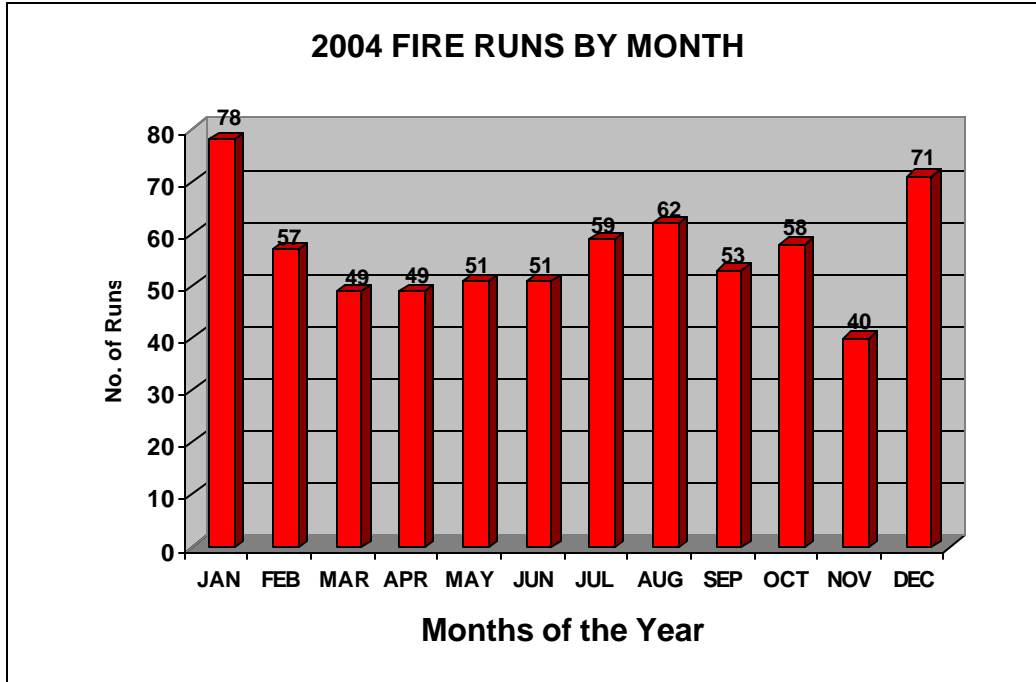
The car seat technicians at the Fire Department have continued this safety program also. For the year 2004 they have correctly inspected and installed a total of 164 car seats.

**BLUE ASH FIRE DEPARTMENT YEARLY TOTALS**

| <b>YEAR</b> | <b>FIRE</b> | <b>EMS</b> |
|-------------|-------------|------------|
| 1978        | 166         | NONE       |
| 1979        | 249         | NONE       |
| 1980        | 257         | NONE       |
| 1981        | 238         | NONE       |
| 1982        | 311         | 556        |
| 1983        | 318         | 671        |
| 1984        | 354         | 741        |
| 1985        | 400         | 782        |
| 1986        | 410         | 830        |
| 1987        | 507         | 883        |
| 1988        | 577         | 924        |
| 1989        | 654         | 1053       |
| 1990        | 626         | 1038       |
| 1991        | 580         | 1066       |
| 1992        | 622         | 1066       |
| 1993        | 591         | 1210       |
| 1994        | 602         | 1217       |
| 1995        | 687         | 1202       |
| 1996        | 757         | 1152       |
| 1997        | 703         | 1209       |
| 1998        | 847         | 1258       |
| 1999        | 856         | 1331       |
| 2000        | 890         | 1357       |
| 2001        | 793         | 1276       |
| 2002        | 691         | 1290       |
| 2003        | 750         | 1322       |
| 2004        | 679         | 1283       |

***The following is a summary statistical analysis comparing 2003 and 2004 Fire Department information.***

|    |  | <b>2 0 0 3</b> | <b>2 0 0 4</b> | <b>Comparison</b> |
|----|--|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| A. | Fire Runs                                      | 750            | 679            | - 9.47%           |
| B. | Fire Loss                                      | \$116,050      | \$78,200       | - 32.62%          |
| C. | EMS Runs                                       | 1,322          | 1,283          | - 2.95%           |
| D. | Mutual Aid Given (all)                         | 41             | 42             | + 2.44%           |
| E. | Mutual Aid Received (all)                      | 14             | 9              | - 35.71%          |
| F. | Plan Review                                    | 319            | 522            | + 63.64%          |
| G. | Training Hours All Employees                   | 3,192          | 2,775          | - 13.06%          |
| H. | Public Training Classes (Individuals Attended) | 2,101          | 2,657          | + 26.46%          |
| I. | Fire Safety House Training / Activity          | 2,710          | 593            | 78.12%            |



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

The Community Development Division offers a one-stop resource for commercial and residential developers. The division provides plan consultation, plan review, permit issuance, zoning compliance, inspections and code enforcement services. The Community Development Division also oversees the City's neighborhood revitalization program and property maintenance efforts.

In the first quarter of 2004, the function of the Community Development Division and the changing development needs of the community were evaluated by the city administration. As a result, changes were implemented to better utilize the city's human and financial resources. At the end of 2004, the division had been re-organized to include economic development in addition to community development functions.

The staff consists of three full-time staff and one part-time staff. The full-time staff includes an Economic Development Director, a Development Coordinator and an Administrative Clerk. The part-time position is also an Administrative Clerk. The city engineering services continue to be delivered by CDS and in March of 2004 the city retained the services of National Inspection Corporation to provide building inspections, zoning and property maintenance.

## **Economic Development**

Historically, Blue Ash has easily attracted prominent businesses. Realizing more communities are competing for businesses, the City Administration changed its approach to economic development through the creation of a new Economic Development Director position. This position would be responsible for promoting the City of Blue Ash as a dynamic, premier business destination to existing and prospective businesses.

Last year Blue Ash added a number of notable companies to its roster including Sunny Delight Beverage Company, CTI- a Clinical Trial and Consulting Services, Lockwood Greene, and Modern Office Methods. Regency Commons, a retail project on Reed Hartman Highway was initiated in the summer of 2004, and will provide needed restaurants and amenities for our businesses population as well as residents. (Attachment A includes a list of construction projects that were completed in 2004 and those under construction.)

Blue Ash's vacancy rate is gradually decreasing as the economy shows signs of recovery. The first quarter of 2004, the vacancy rate for commercial space was 20.9%. The rate was 17.7% at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2005. When comparing Blue Ash's direct vacancy rate with neighboring communities, it is tied with Springdale in vacancies behind West Chester and Mason. Attachment B shows the community comparison. Attachment C outlines the vacancy rates in the City of Blue Ash from 2000-2004.

In the last quarter of 2004, the Economic Development Director selected key Blue Ash firms and made personal visits to members of their management teams. The visits allowed the business community to share their thoughts about doing business in Blue Ash and served as a "first alert" for potential issues. During two of these visits, companies mentioned upcoming expansion projects and requested the city's assistance and advice. These meetings also provided leads for suppliers of local companies that might be candidates for relocation to Blue Ash.

Using a business retention survey created by the Greater Cincinnati Chamber, we are interviewing Blue Ash companies and tracking trends with other communities in the region. Results from the 2005 surveys will be available in the 2005 Annual Report.

A City of Blue Ash promotional folder and brochure has been produced to highlight the attributes of Blue Ash. Pages can be customized to meet the needs of site selection consultants, real estate professionals, current and prospective Blue Ash firms who request City of Blue Ash information. Future plans are to develop a brief promotional DVD that can be distributed to companies and accessed through our web-site.

Each year the Business Courier produces its "Book of Lists" featuring the top firms in a variety of disciplines. New Blue Ash firms and our more established firms were featured in this year's book. For a complete listing see Attachment D.

## **Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement**

National Inspection Corporation (NIC) proactively addresses properties that do not comply with city standards. NIC handled 1,148 property maintenance cases from March through December of 2004, as compared to 124 property cases documented from 2003. As of 1/3/05, 1134 cases or 99% had been resolved. Of the 1,148 cases, citizens reported 23% and 77% were initiated by NIC. Property maintenance and grass/weeds complaints were the most frequent issues handled by the NIC. (See Attachment E for the year-end summary report.)

### **Building Permits and Inspections**

A total of 549 building permits were issued in 2004 with an estimated value of \$23,510,360.00. While the number of 2004 permits issued was 11% lower than in 2003, the value of the projects exceeded 2003 by 4%. There were 23 new residential construction permits with an estimated construction value of 1,144,100 and 14 commercial/industrial permits valued at \$4,913,100.

In 2004, there were 1,096 building code inspections; 526 residential and 570 commercial. The total number of inspections in 2003 were 571. (See Attachment F for the summary of residential and commercial permits and Attachment G complete listing of new residential property.)

The City of Blue Ash Community Development Division went "live" with CAGIS in 2004. CAGIS stands for "Cincinnati Area Geographic Information System" and is a tool being utilized by Hamilton County, numerous cities within Hamilton County in addition to CGE and MSD. The two main components of CAGIS are Permits Plus and also GEN 7. Permits Plus allows the City to track building permits and other related activity with NIC, Hamilton County, Metropolitan Sewer District and Cincinnati Gas and Electric in real time. GEN 7 is a multi-layer area map capable of showing a multitude of information including color aerial photographs, location of all the fire hydrants within Blue Ash, and many other options. As more training becomes available, the City envisions using this resource for zoning reference and tracking revitalization projects.

## **Revitalization Program**

In 2004, the revitalization program provided financial assistance to 26 Blue Ash homeowners for code compliance and property upgrades. Financial aid totaling \$86,661.80 provided eligible residents with a range of services from porch replacement to emergency electrical repairs. Of the funds distributed, 39% were for projects in Hazelwood, 14% were in Arcadia and over 47% in various Blue Ash neighborhoods. (For a complete listing of

2004 revitalization projects and related costs see Attachments H and I.) In addition to individual revitalization projects, the City also conducted two clean-up days that enabled citizens to discard large appliances, yard debris and general household items.

**Staff Training /Professional Development**

2004 Regional Planning Conference – Indianapolis, IN  
International Economic Development Conference- St. Louis, MO  
Ohio Department of Development – Nine Weeks to a Better Community Course

**PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2004**

Gazebo Tea Garden-- 10461 Kenwood Road  
Gallenstein Investments Office Building-- 10816 Millington Court  
Chabad Jewish Center-- 3977 Hunt Road  
Addition at Montag's Furniture-- 4819 Cooper Road  
Renovation at Builder's Resources-- 4680 Cooper Road  
Renovation at Wendy's-- 11007 Reed Hartman Highway (drive-thru relocation)

**PROJECTS ON UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN 2004**

Aeropointe Medical Building on Glendale-Milford Road  
Neyer building on Lake Forest Drive  
Blue Ash Estates on Cornell Road  
Cooper Springs on Cooper Road  
Weisgeber Dental Office-- 5381 Cornell Road  
Regency Commons--11255 Reed Hartman Highway

**PROJECTS WITH DEVELOPMENT PLANS SUBMITTED**

Paradiso on the Square on Cooper Lane  
Reserves of Blue Ash on Myerdale Drive  
Arby's--9237 Plainfield Road  
Grasshopper Site on Plainfield Road  
Bob Sumeral Expansion-- 9401 Kenwood Road

**NEW NOTABLE TENANTS**

EMC2-- 9825 Kenwood Road  
CTI-- 10123 Alliance Road  
Sunny Delight-- 4747 Lake Forest Drive  
Modern Office Methods-- 4747 Lake Forest Drive  
Qdoba-- 9749 Kenwood Road  
Cactus Pear-- 9500 Kenwood Road  
Lockwood Greene-- 10123 Alliance Road  
Bridge Pointe-- 4240 Hunt Road  
Cold Stone Creamery-- 9618 Kenwood Road  
Matthew 25 Ministries-- 11060 Kenwood Road  
Dal-Tile-- 4650 Lake Forest Drive  
Oncology Medical Building-- 4350 Malsbary Road

***LEAVE 1 BLANK PAGE FOR 2 GRAPHS...***

**BLUE ASH FIRMS FEATURED ON THE BUSINESS COURIER "BOOK OF LISTS"**

|    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Architectural and Engineering Firms   |  |
|    | Belcan Corp -Anderson Way                               | \$61 Million in local billings         |
|    | Lockwood Greene -Alliance Road                          | \$31 Million in local billings         |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Commercial Printers                   |  |
| 1  | Miami Systems Corp. -Alliance Rd.                       | \$146 Million in revenue               |
| 3  | Rosenthal & Co. -Alliance Rd.                           | \$36 Million in revenue                |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Environmental Consulting Firm         |  |
| 10 | The Payne Firm -Cornell Park Drive                      | \$4.8 Million in local billings        |
| 13 | Psara Technologies Inc.                                 | \$2.5 Million in local billings        |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Residential Mortgage Firms            |  |
| 2  | National City Mortgage -Cooper Road                     | \$933 Million in loans originated      |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Manufacturers                         |  |
| 8  | Ethicon Endo-Surgery -Creek Rd.                         | 1,500 local employees                  |
| 8  | LSI Industries -Alliance Rd.                            | 1,500 local employees                  |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Private Companies                     |  |
| 39 | Miami Systems Corp -Alliance Rd.                        | \$146 Million                          |
| 79 | Dugan & Meyers Construction Co.                         | \$73 Million                           |
| 92 | Michelman Inc. -Shell Road                              | \$67 Million                           |
| ?? | Fastest-Growing Tri-State Private Companies             |  |
| 2  | Phillips Edison & Co -Grooms Rd.                        | 63.9% Percent change in revenue        |
| 17 | Belcan Corp. -Anderson Way                              | 13.5% Percent change in revenue        |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Women-Owned Businesses                |  |
| 3  | UMR Inc. -Pfeiffer Rd.                                  | \$28 Million in revenue                |
| 4  | Armrel-Brynes Co. -Grooms Rd.                           | \$18 Million in revenue                |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Commercial Building Contractors       |  |
| 11 | Dugan & Meyer Construction -Kenwood Rd                  | \$50 Million in revenue                |
| 12 | Duke Construction -Lake Forest Dr.                      | \$47 Million in revenue                |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Suburban Office Centers               |  |
| 11 | LakeForest/WestLake                                     | 398,465 Total rentable square feet     |
| 16 | Northmark Business Center I, II, III                    | 305,561 Total rentable square feet     |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Telecommunications Equipment Supplier |  |
| 8  | Inter-tel -Creek Rd                                     | 30 Total local employees               |
| 9  | Ideacom Cincinnati -Malsbary Rd.                        | 25 Total local employees               |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Computer Training Centers             |  |
| 1  | New Horizons Computer Learning Center                   | 44,458 student days sold               |
| 10 | Kizan Technologies -Cornell Rd                          | 1,135 student days sold                |
| 11 | Arden -Glendale-Milford Rd.                             | 705 student days sold                  |
| 12 | Tactix Consulting Group -Carver Woods                   | 500 student days sold                  |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Computer Consulting Firms             |  |
| 2  | Sogeti USA -Lake Forest Drive                           | \$41 million, 230 employees            |
| 3  | itelligence Inc. -Lake Forest Drive                     | \$30 million, not disclosed            |
| 5  | Compuware Corp. -Lake Forest Drive                      | \$16 million, 110 employees            |
| 6  | Computer Horizon Corp -Lake Forest Drive                | \$15 million, 100 employees            |
| 7  | Vector ESP, Inc. -Techwood Circle                       | \$15 million, 30 employees             |
| 10 | Trasys LLC -Alliance Road                               | \$10 million, 92 employees             |
| ?? | Wealthiest Tri-State School Districts                   |  |
| 2  | Princeton   | \$969,849 per pupil property valuation |
| 3  | Sycamore  | \$848,129 per pupil property valuation |
| ?? | Largest Tri-State Temporary Employment Firms            |  |
| 1  | Belcan Tech Services -Anderson Way                      |  |
| 4  | ADECCO Employment Services                              |  |
| 12 | Spherion Professional Services                          |  |

**2004 Blue Ash New Residential Sales**

| <b>STREET<br/>ADDRESS</b>    | <b>ISSUE<br/>DATE</b> | <b>ESTIMATED<br/>COST</b> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 4729 Alpine Ave              | 4/14/2004             | \$110,000.00              |
| 9785 Cooper Springs          | 8/19/2004             | \$500,000.00              |
| 4522 Florence Ave            | 4/30/2004             | \$120,000.00              |
| 9760 Highland Ave            | 5/11/2004             | \$96,778.00               |
| 10245 Kenwood Rd             | 6/28/2004             | \$151,620.00              |
| 11081 Labelle Ave            | 10/19/2004            | \$150,000.00              |
| 11087 Labelle Ave            | 9/20/2004             | \$150,000.00              |
| 11093 Labelle Ave            | 10/5/2004             | \$161,000.00              |
| 11032 Margaretta Ave         | 11/26/2004            | \$158,100.00              |
| 4619 Miller Rd               | 5/6/2004              | \$150,000.00              |
| 3445 Mohler Rd               | 8/2/2004              | \$300,000.00              |
| 10401 Rachel Anne Ct         | 4/8/2004              | \$250,000.00              |
| 10409 Rachel Anne Ct         | 4/14/2004             | \$250,000.00              |
| 10410 Rachel Anne Ct         | 4/16/2004             | \$250,000.00              |
| 10414 Rachel Anne Ct         | 6/1/2004              | \$250,000.00              |
| 10430 Rachel Anne Ct         | 12/16/2004            | \$325,000.00              |
| 10293 Ryans Way<br>Ryans Way | 7/14/2004             | \$700,000.00              |
| 10294                        | 2/26/2004             | \$350,000.00              |
| 10326 Ryans Way              | 6/11/2004             | \$350,000.00              |
| 10334 Ryans Way              | 5/6/2004              | \$375,000.00              |
| 10350 Ryans Way              | 9/30/2004             | \$350,000.00              |
| 10366 Ryans Way              | 1/21/2004             | \$350,000.00              |
| 11339 Swing Rd               | 8/19/2004             | \$152,000.00              |
| <b>TOTAL 23 HOMES</b>        |                       | <b>\$5,999,498.00</b>     |

**City of Blue Ash  
2004 Revitalization Efforts**

|                               | <b>2004</b> | <b>2003</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total Applications            | 36          | Unknown     |
| Total Grants Awarded          | 26          | 24          |
| Total Assistance<br>(dollars) | \$86,661.80 | \$79,778.50 |
| Average Grant (dollars)       | \$3,333.15  | \$3,324.10  |

| <b><u>Location of Grants</u></b> | <b><u>Number of Applications</u></b> | <b><u>Grants Awarded</u></b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Hazelwood                        | 19                                   | 14                           |
| Arcadia                          | 6                                    | 3                            |
| Other Parts of Blue Ash          | 11                                   | 9                            |
| <b>Totals</b>                    | <b>36</b>                            | <b>26</b>                    |



**City of Blue Ash  
2004 Revitalization Efforts**

| <b>Street</b>    | <b>Work Performed</b>                             | <b>Total Project<br/>Cost</b> |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Donjoy Drive     | New Furnace/Air Conditioning Unit                 | \$4,380.00                    |
| LaBelle Avenue   | Insulation/Winterization                          | \$3,800.00                    |
| Leslie Avenue    | Windows and Doors                                 | \$4,100.00                    |
| Prospect Avenue  | Siding  | \$5,000.00                    |
| Conklin Road     | Roof, Gutters, Back Door, Garage Door,<br>Windows | \$5,000.00                    |
| Conklin Avenue   | Bathroom Remodel                                  | \$5,000.00                    |
| Monroe Avenue    | Glass Block Windows, Paint, Back Door             | \$2,500.00                    |
| Conklin Avenue   | Windows and Doors                                 | \$5,000.00                    |
| Margaretta Drive | Replacement Stairs/Porch and Safety Checks        | \$4,800.00                    |
| Idalia Drive     | Insect Termination and Roof Replacement           | \$4,900.00                    |

| <b>Street</b>     | <b>Work Performed</b>                     | <b>Total Project Cost</b> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Lebanon Avenue    | Removal of dangerous overgrowth           | \$1,080.00                |
| LaBelle Avenue    | Driveway Replacement                      | \$4,050.00                |
| Laurel Avenue     | Siding, Driveway Replacement, Remove Shed | \$5,000.00                |
| Florence Avenue   | Emergency Electrical Repairs              | \$3,424.00                |
| Longren Court     | Siding                                    | \$4,800.00                |
| Cook Avenue       | Replacement Roof                          | \$3,500.00                |
| Alpine Avenue     | Replacement Roof, Upgrade Gutters         | \$5,000.00                |
| Ellman Avenue     | Porch Replacement                         | \$4,800.00                |
| Idalia Drive      | Removal of dangerous overgrowth           | \$480.00                  |
| Corine Avenue     | Replacement Gutters                       | \$1,960.00                |
| Centennial Avenue | Removal of dangerous situation            | \$1,845.00                |
| Lebanon Avenue    | New Furnace and gas hook-up               | \$3,150.00                |
| Kemper Avenue     | Removal of dangerous overgrowth           | \$225.00                  |
| Corine Avenue     | Emergency Furnace Call                    | \$200.00                  |
| Oak Avenue        | Emergency Furnace Call                    | \$180.80                  |
| Blue Ash Road     | New Furnace                               | \$2,487.00                |
|                   |   | \$86,661.80               |

| <b>Breakdown of funding</b> | <b>Number of Grants awarded by Area</b> | <b>Average of Assistance</b> |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Hazelwood                   | 14                                      | \$2,399.60                   |
| Aracadia                    | 3                                       | \$4,166.66                   |
| Other Parts of Blue Ash     | 9                                       | \$4,507.44                   |

**HEARINGS FROM CITIZENS**

No citizens wished to address Council.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Prior to the Council meeting, Council members received the following report describing agenda items:

“The following offers a brief description of the items included on the March 10th Council Agenda:

**9.a.1. Resolution No. 2005-1 - Encouraging the preservation of the pedestrian bridge over Ronald Reagan Highway (SR 126)**

As was directed by Council at the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, this resolution addresses the issue related to the suggestion of ODOT to remove the pedestrian bridge that connects the Kenview Hills neighborhood to the Junior High area in order to make safety improvements at the I-71/Ronald Reagan Highway interchange. The resolution expresses the City’s desire to work with Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) officials to identify options which would not only explore the potential interchange safety issues identified by ODOT, but to also consider strongly the City’s desire to preserve (or relocate) the pedestrian bridge or, if that is not possible, to provide alternative pedestrian connection in recognition of Council’s long-term goal of neighborhood connectivity.

Please address questions regarding this resolution to the Mayor or City Manager.

**9.b.1. Ordinance No. 2005-21 - Awarding bid for the 2005 Paving Program (phase I)**

The City of Blue Ash's 2005 Appropriation Ordinance/Budget has \$600,000 slated for repaving efforts. The repaving of Cornell Road is included in this year's plan. In order to increase our chances for an attractive bid for this project, especially from the contactor (Barrett Paving) who is on site for the Reed Hartman Phase II project, we elected to bid this project separately and early. Such an early bid would also allow us to ascertain the funds remaining to pave additional streets since the initial estimate for Cornell Road was in the \$500,000 range.

The City advertised for bids in the **Northeast Suburban Life-Press** on February 16, 2005. Bids were opened and publicly read aloud on Tuesday, March 1. Two bids were received, both of which met City specifications. After review, the bid from the John R. Jurgensen Company was deemed to be the best bid based upon past performances, quality, price, and service. Ordinance No. 2005-21 authorizes the awarding of the bid to John R. Jurgensen Company based upon unit prices.

Please direct questions regarding this ordinance or project to the Service Director.

**9.c.1. Ordinance No. 2005-22 - Awarding bid for the purchase and installation of hydraulic fire rescue equipment**

Bids were recently solicited by the Fire Department for the purchase (including installation) of budgeted hydraulic fire rescue equipment for Engine 13. The bidding opportunity was advertised in the **Northeast Suburban Life Press** on February 16<sup>th</sup>, and the only bid received was opened on March 1<sup>st</sup>. The bid received from Vogelpohl Fire Equipment, Inc. did match the City's specifications and requirements, and the Fire Chief recommends acceptance of this bid for a total ordinance threshold of \$37,000. This amount would include purchase and installation of the equipment, a trade-in value for existing equipment, and just over \$2,000 for potential field changes which could arise related to unforeseen installation issues.

Please direct questions regarding this bid or equipment to the Fire Chief at 745-8534."

**Finance & Administration Committee, Mark F. Weber, Chairperson**

Councilman Weber asked the Clerk to read Resolution No. 2005- 1 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

RESOLUTION NO. 2005-1

ENCOURAGING THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION TO PRESERVE THE CONNECTIONS  
BETWEEN BLUE ASH NEIGHBORHOODS WHILE ACHIEVING  
NECESSARY SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS AT THE I-71/RONALD  
REAGAN HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE

Councilman Weber moved, Vice Mayor Buckman seconded to adopt Resolution No. 2005-1. Councilwoman Stoller commented that in the downtown Cincinnati area where Seventh Street meets I-71, there is a similar visibility problem with the signal and a bridge. The resolution of this problem in Cincinnati does show that there are potential methods to overcome visibility problems with signals/bridges (without removing the bridge). There being no further discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Weber, Buckman, Stacey, Czerwonka, Stoller, and Mayor Bryan voted yes. Six yeases. Resolution passed.

**Public Works Committee, Henry S. Stacey, Chairperson**

Councilman Stacey asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2005-21 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2005-21

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A  
CONTRACT FOR THE 2005 PAVING PROGRAM, PART 1 FOR  
THE UNIT PRICES AS SHOWN ON THE ATTACHED BID  
SUMMARY; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilman Stacey moved, Councilman Weber seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Buckman, Stacey, Czerwonka, Stoller, Weber, and Mayor Bryan voted yes. Six yeses. Motion carried.

Councilman Stacey moved, Councilman Czerwonka seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2005-21. In addressing a comment from Councilman Stacey, Service Director Denny Albrinck concurred that he also was surprised the contractor already on site did not submit the lowest bid and that bidding was advantageous to the City. There being no further discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Buckman, Stacey, Czerwonka, Stoller, Weber, and Mayor Bryan voted yes. Six yeses. Ordinance No. 2005-21 passed.

**Public Safety Committee, Stephanie Stoller, Chairperson**

Councilwoman Stoller asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2005-22 by title only.

THEN WAS PRESENTED AND READ BY TITLE ONLY:

ORDINANCE NO. 2005-22

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO AWARD A BID FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF HYDRAULIC RESCUE EQUIPMENT FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$37,000; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilwoman Stoller moved, Councilman Weber seconded to suspend the rules of Council requiring a second reading of the ordinance. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Stacey, Czerwonka, Stoller, Weber, Buckman, and Mayor Bryan voted yes. Six yeses. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Stoller moved, Councilman Czerwonka seconded to adopt Ordinance No. 2005-22. There being no discussion, the Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Czerwonka, Stoller, Weber, Buckman, Stacey, and Mayor Bryan voted yes. Six yeses. Ordinance No. 2005-22 passed.

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

City Manager Thompson commented that he anticipates bringing three potential contracts to Council for consideration in the near future. The first relates to the Administration's desire to contract with an outside consultant for a revised and updated Downtown Plan. The Administration has had several meetings recently with a prominent UC Professor very knowledgeable in this area. He is knowledgeable not only from an academic standpoint, but also has a "real world" perspective, and he has also helped other area communities with similar plans. It is likely a proposed contract will be presented at the next meeting.

The second relates to the Administration's desire for outside consulting assistance with "branding" for the City. Blue Ash, more than ever, must compete with area communities, especially in the economic development sense. Though more information will be presented to Council in the future, it is likely that a contract recommendation will be presented within the next two months.

The third relates to outside architectural assistance related to the renovation of the historic Hunt House. Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Funk has been working with an architect knowledgeable about historical homes/renovation, and it is likely an ordinance will be presented for Council's consideration at the next meeting allowing a contract to help determine what needs to be done to stabilize this historic property as well as short- and long-term concepts as to potential improvements. In addressing a question from Councilman Stacey, Mr. Funk confirmed that an additional walk through of the Hunt House can be planned at Council's convenience.

There were no objections from Council members regarding any of the three potential future legislative items or concepts described above. For matter of clarification, Mayor Bryan commented that the downtown redevelopment is not progressing as quickly as Council or the Administration would like and the hopes are that a trip to Chicago planned this weekend to visit successful downtown renovation projects (including several Council members as well as Assistant City Manager David Waltz) will generate ideas for Blue Ash's downtown. Mayor Bryan commented that if the idea of the downtown planning consultant is to be able to take a variety of ideas for downtown improvements (i.e., from all Council members) and condense those into workable concepts for our downtown, he is very much in favor of such a contract. Regarding the proposed contract for professional outside help in "branding," Mayor Bryan commented that he believes it would be helpful for a consultant to assist us in determining what it is that Blue Ash stands for and ascertaining what makes us different. Mayor Bryan is also in favor of professional architectural assistance related to the Hunt House.

Assistant City Manager Waltz reminded Council to meet at the Municipal & Safety Center at 2:00 PM on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, for transportation to the airport for the Chicago trip to visit a variety of successful downtown renovation projects.

In addressing a comment from the Mayor, Mr. Waltz commented that we did receive word recently of an investment firm's plans to relocate to Blue Ash. Though further information will be forwarded to Council at the next meeting (when more details are known), it is anticipated that their target date is April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Service Director Denny Albrinck commented that the contractor on the Reed Hartman Highway Phase II project will begin this season's work soon and will be complete by June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Funk asked Council to provide any comments or feedback regarding the new microphones being used this evening in the Council Chambers. It seemed to be the consensus of Council, and members in the audience, that this new equipment represents an improvement in sound quality.

In addressing a comment by Councilman Czerwonka, City Manager Thompson commented that the Administration would look at the existing signs (seemingly too many) placed at the CMC office building near Osborne Boulevard on Reed Hartman Highway.

Councilman Weber commented that several months ago, a neighbor on Southgate Drive experienced an electrical fire (fortunately no one was hurt). The problem was caused by water coming into the circuit box. He explained that this, unfortunately, may not be an uncommon situation on houses over 20 years old. He has been working with the Fire Chief on methods to get this safety word out (without causing undue alarm) to encourage residents in housing of this age to have this potential problem checked out by a professional. Information will be included within the next newsletter as well as potentially on the cable channel to inform the citizenry. In addressing further questions from Council, Fire Chief Rick Brown commented that it appears specific brands of electrical equipment are prone to this problem. He also plans to work with the local newspaper to spread this safety message.

Vice Mayor Buckman asked if it would be possible to have the speed limit on Kenwood Road in the Belleview area reduced from its existing 35 MPH to 25 MPH, as it is just a little further south on Kenwood. Mr. Thompson concurred that it is difficult to turn out from Belleview in this area and stated that he would ask the Police to look into this request.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

After all items on the agenda were acted upon, Councilman Czerwonka moved, Councilwoman Stoller seconded to convene an Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to property acquisition. The Clerk called the roll. Councilpersons Stoller, Weber, Buckman, Stacey, Czerwonka, and Mayor Bryan voted yes. Six yeases. Motion carried.

After matters pertaining to property acquisition were discussed, Vice Mayor Buckman moved, Councilman Weber seconded to convene to the regular meeting. A voice vote was taken. All Council members voted yes. Motion carried.

***ADJOURNMENT***

All items on the agenda having been acted upon, Vice Mayor Buckman moved, Councilman Weber seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members voted yes. The Council meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 PM.

---

Rick Bryan, Mayor

---

Jamie K. Eifert, Clerk of Council

MINUTES WRITTEN BY:

---

Susan K. Bennett, Deputy Clerk of Council