

Message From Mayor Susan Renda

Dear Resident,

As I stated in last month's newsletter, this will be the last time I write to you as your mayor. The last 12 years have flown by, as years tend to do. I will miss this job and writing to you every month, but it is time for me to go. Dan Fritz will do a fabulous job in this position and, thus, I leave knowing the Village will be in good hands. As promised I will take a look back at some of the more significant events and accomplishments over the last 12 years.

Fiscal Responsibility

I came into office in 2008 as the country was sinking into the great recession. Shortly thereafter, the Ohio Legislature and the Kasich administration eliminated the estate tax (a significant revenue source for the Village), personal property tax and the inventory tax. Furthermore, they significantly reduced the Local Government Fund. All these actions combined to reduce our revenues. We did not raise taxes until a grim financial picture forced us to do so in 2018. Instead, we decided to do more with less and to that end, the Village:

- Participated in a Baldwin Wallace Collaboration Study to find ways to collaborate with other communities to save money;
- Participated in a county-led shared services and collaboration study among Orange, Pepper Pike, Woodmere and Moreland Hills with a goal of sharing services and equipment, which we regularly do;
- Conducted internal efficiency studies and adjusted operations as needed to maintain maximum efficacy and conservative fiscal management;
- Entered into an agreement to share a Building Department with Pepper Pike;
- Converted four of five waste water treatment plants to pump stations and entered into an agreement with NEORS, effectively getting out of the decidedly expensive waste water treatment business;
- Sold Village-owned property on Hiram Trail after Council determined there was no public use for that property;

Increased Communication and Outreach to Residents

- Introduced the updated newsletter, *Moreland Hills at a Glance* and the biannual, more comprehensive *In and About Moreland Hills* in 2008;

- Updated the website twice over 12 years in an effort to make communications interesting, informative and appealing;
- Created resident-based Vision Committee, Master Plan Committee, Green Commission and Parks Commission to gather resident input;
- Created online resident surveys in 2011, 2012 and 2014;
- Offered Police-led educational outreach to residents on various safety issues and offered "Fight Like a Girl" self-defense classes;

Cared for the Environment

- Created the biannual *Greening the Hills* paper shredding and hazardous waste collection event;
- Preserved Forest Ridge in perpetuity (144 acres of forested land, streams, and ravines and 3.5 miles of hiking trails-off Chagrin River Road); it was paid for primarily through state and federal grants and private donations procured with the help of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy (WRLC);
- Allowed WRLC to build their environmentally-friendly headquarters on Chagrin River Road;
- Acquired the abandoned and blighted BP station at the corner of SOM and Miles Roads;
- Accomplished the required environmental remediation work on that property, planted flowers and trees and converted the property into Veterans Gateway Park by adding an American flag and a flag for each branch of the military;

Maintained Infrastructure

A 2008 study of the existing Service Facility showed it was unsafe for our employees and inadequate for operations. The Village hired an architectural/engineering firm to design the new facility and set a budget of \$3 million.

- Built the facility without taking on debt, as we had saved for it over several years;
- Finished the facility on time and slightly under budget (\$2.8 million);
- Built a retaining wall along Chagrin Blvd. to achieve hillside stabilization and save the road using a combination of Village funds and state grants in 2009;
- Ten years later, the Village is building a retaining wall along S. Woodland Rd. to achieve hillside stabilization and to save the road using a combination of Village funds and state grants.

Sad Events

In 2013, our beloved Building Commissioner and friend, Greg Potts, died unexpectedly leaving a hole in our hearts. Many generous residents and Village employees donated time and money to build a fishing dock designed by our Engineer Jeff Filarski. We named it "Potts Pier" in honor of Greg.

Happy Events

- In 2011, Moreland Towne Center was finished and restaurants and retail establishments opened;
- In 2013 Police Chief M. Dale Canter came out of retirement to deftly guide our Police Department through a difficult time;
- In 2015 I dedicated Veterans Gateway Park to those who have served their country in the military;

Ongoing Projects

In 2016, the Village updated its master plan. Residents voted to approve one of the recommendations included in that study: a limited rezoning of property along Chagrin Blvd. to allow for the development of a new neighborhood, Moreland Commons. According to our Treasurer, the estimated tax benefit to the Village upon completion will be approximately \$200,000 per year.

Council members and I worked hard together to keep the Village running smoothly. I'm hoping we made it look effortless. We accomplished a lot over the last 12 years; I could have written about much more. But it is time for me to say and goodbye. I hope to see you soon.

- Mayor Susan Renda

Mayor

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Ordinances and Resolutions

The following Ordinances & Resolutions were passed in November:

Ordinance 2019-48 – enacts new Chapter 905, “Use of Public Right-of-Way by Service Providers,” of the Codified Ordinances. This will provide guidelines, due process protections, and regulations applicable to the use of the Village’s public rights-of-way for telecommunications and other utility services.

Ordinance 2019-57 – amends Section 901.01 “Permit Required; Fee,” of Chapter 901, “Excavations” of the Codified Ordinances. This will give clarity and consistency to the Code as it will include a cross-reference to new Chapter 905 (Ordinance 2019-48).

Resolution 2019-58 – authorizes the Mayor and the Clerk of Council to enter into an agreement with the Chagrin Falls Suburban Volunteer Fireman’s Association for the provision of fire protection and emergency medical services for a three-year period.

Ordinance 2019-59 – accepts the donation to the Village of a 6.6 acre parcel of land (PP# 913-06-008) from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

Ordinance 2019-60 – amends Section 157.03, “Members; Terms,” of Chapter 157, “Parks Commission,” of the Codified Ordinances to allow for an additional member of the Parks Commission.

Ordinance 2019-61 – an appropriations ordinance, which is a monthly financial housekeeping item.

Shop With a Cop

The Moreland Hills Police Department will partner with other local police departments to participate in the annual “Shop with a Cop” holiday program. Officers will be taking underprivileged children shopping for holiday presents and food for the children and their families. After shopping, the officers will enjoy a pizza party with the children. The event is December 14.

If you would like to donate your time or make a financial contribution, (**checks payable to George Murray Foundation**) please contact Lt. Todd Dietzel or Officer Scott Bennett at [440.248.7585](tel:440.248.7585). Donations need to be received by December 5, 2019. You can mail or drop off a check to:

**Moreland Hills Police Department
4350 SOM Center Road
Moreland Hills, Ohio 44022**

Thank you in advance for your generosity. We appreciate it, and we know the kids and parents are very grateful.

- Lt. Todd Dietzel
- Officer Scott Bennett

Police and Employees Foundation

Once a year, the foundation sends a letter to all residents of Moreland Hills asking you to consider making a tax-deductible contribution for the benefit of the police and employees of our Village. This is an easy way to say thank you for the good service they provide. Please consider being a part of this tradition that started in 1966. If you did not receive the letter, please contact Village Hall.

Closings and Reminders

Holiday Closures at Village Hall

Christmas Eve: December 24 – Closed

Christmas Day: December 25 – Closed

New Year’s Eve: December 31 – Closed at Noon

New Year’s Day: January 1 – Closed

Service Department Holiday Schedule and Reminders

- Christmas and New Year’s Rubbish/Recycling Pick-Ups: Will not be affected and will continue as regularly scheduled. (Rubbish and Recycling will STILL be picked up on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve).
- All Monday Pick-Ups will not be affected and will **STILL** be done on Monday, December 23 and Monday, December 30.
- The Service Department will start picking up Christmas trees January 6 and will continue through February 7.
- Chipping is done for the year and will resume again next April through October (the third full week of the month).

Meeting Schedule

There will be no BZA or Planning Commission meetings in January.

Insurance Update

As I wrote in a letter to all residents on October 14, there was a mechanical failure at one of the pump stations, which cost \$44,402.25 to repair. So far, our insurance company has paid \$42,058.57 of those costs.

Village of Moreland Hills

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