

Municipality of Germantown

State of City 2016

My name is Stephen Boeder, Mayor of Germantown and I am proud to present the 2016 State of the City address.

The Municipality of Germantown is located in the southwest corner of Montgomery County and has a population of about 5500 people. Some appealing features of Germantown include:

- Natural resources like Twin Creek and Little Twin Creek
- It's city parks, Kercher and Veterans
- Proximity to Germantown Metro Park
- A charming historic downtown
- Valley View Schools and a
- Strong community spirit

Germantown is ranked among the safest cities in the United States and has a Council/Manager form of government. Ms. Judy Gilleland is the City Manager. In addition to myself, the City Council members are:

Mr. Lynn Koogle, President of Council, Mr. Terry Johnson, Mr.

Mike Kuhn, Mr. Rick Reed, Mr. Rob Rettich IV and Mr. Brian

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Each Council member serves on one or more committees or Boards established by Council. In addition, members serve on County and Regional commissions, including the Miami Valley Communications Council, the Montgomery County Regional Dispatch Center Communications Committee, the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission and Technical Advisory Committee and the Montgomery County District Advisory Council on Public Health.

Members of City Council have strived to enhance the lives of the residents by passing ordinances and budgets that support police, fire and medical services, attract and keep highly qualified employees and maintain City services and Germantown's infrastructure.

The major points covered in this State of the City address fall into one of the following categories:

- A. Infrastructure
- B. Administration
- C. Utilities
- D. Police
- E. Fire-EMS
- F. Community
- G. Finances
- H. 2016 Accomplishments
- I. 2017 Goals

INFRASTRUCTURE

In Germantown, like most cities, maintenance of streets, water lines, sewers, storm drains and sidewalks is a major budgetary item. Through the use of Ohio Public Works Funding, significant improvements have been made in Germantown's infrastructure, such as:

- Phase IV of the Cherry Street reconstruction project was completed and funding for the final phases has been secured from the Ohio Public Works Committee(OPWC);
- OPWC funding was also secured for a new water line located along Germantown – Farmersville Pike from Comstock to Stivers Road.
- The engineering design work was completed for Phase III of the sanitary sewer relining program. This will involve Pollyanna, Kemp, Marshall and Bradley Streets. The relining will be done in 2017.
- The widening of Weaver Road and laying the final asphalt layer in Hickory Pointe subdivision was completed;
- Completed maintenance work on Center, Warren, Gunckel and South Cherry Streets;
- Completed painting of the downtown curbs and caboose, depot and shelter in Veteran's Park;

- Repaired dugout roofs and replaced bleachers at Kercher Park.
- Repaired tobacco barn along bike trail
- Sealed parking lots at the City Building and Veterans Park.
- Repaired bulk water station;
- Completed upgrades to Germantown Aquatic Center and made plans for major improvements in the pool in 2017, including replacement of the pool liner, pumps and filters.
- Initiated a review of a streambank erosion hazard on Twin Creek below Astoria Road. This was brought to Council's attention because of the potential danger to canoeists. The engineering fixes to this hazard have to go through State and Federal agency review.

Administration

In January, 2016, Ms. Judy Gilleland was hired as Interim City Manager. In September, Council approved a contract for Ms. Gilleland to continue as City Manager. She has extensive experience in managing the business of City government.

Mr. Terry Klein retired as the City's Finance Director. The Council was very appreciative of the work Mr. Klein did to organize the City's

financial records. Ms. Pat Shively was hired as his replacement. Ms. Shively brings an extensive background in financial management and record keeping to the job.

In addition, there has been one or more new hires to replace retirees or to fill vacated positions, along with a more efficient alignment in personnel responsibilities in the administrative staff.

A major undertaking in 2016 was completing a pay comparability study of the salaries paid to all City employees, including the police department. Cities and Villages of comparable size to Germantown were included in this study. As a result of the study, Council was made aware of the differences in pay schedules between Germantown and the other cities. In some instances, Germantown's pay was comparable to the other cities while in other instances, it fell significantly below.

The City Council was concerned over those instances where our pay schedule was significantly less than that of other cities. The Council felt that offering a competitive pay was important in hiring and keeping highly qualified employees. To correct these differences, Council passed the necessary legislation.

Council is very aware of the budgetary impact over the decision to adjust salaries. In this case, the additional pay obligation was manageable.

In Other Administrative Business:

- The Charter Review Committee was organized to complete a review and update of the City Charter. The Charter requires this action every five years.
- The City entered into a contract for having streets swept four times.
- The Council held a retreat at Senior Center to give an update on activities of the City
- The City maintained their participation in the Tactical Crime Suppression Unit(TCSU);
- The Council passed a resolution to accept an update to Operational Agreement of the Franklin Wastewater Plant between Germantown, Franklin, Carlisle and Warren Co;
- The Council passed a resolution enacting a moratorium on marijuana sales and production;
- A summer employee was hired to perform upkeep in the downtown business area;
- The collection of City Income Taxes was outsourced to the City of Cleveland, which manages the income tax collection for a consortium of cities;

- Council passed a three-year Capital Improvement Plan;
- The Council initiated discussion and legislation on implementing a smoking ban in city parks, based upon the Park Board's recommendation;
- The Council passed legislation to authorize Manager to enter into a contract to have major upgrades to the pool;
- A review of the City's zoning ordinance was initiated;

Utilities

The City has its own well fields, which makes our water rates very economical. The City of Oakwood surveys 66 entities each year regarding their water and sewer rates. Germantown has the 15th lowest water rate with an estimated cost of \$91.41 for three months. The lowest rate in the survey was \$55.26 for the same time period and the highest was \$197.97.

In 2016, two important OEPA inspections of our drinking water system were completed. The Ohio EPA made their Triannual Water Quality Inspection and Lead and Copper sampling. The two reviews turned up no issues that needed to be addressed by the City.

Germantown, Carlisle, Franklin and part of Warren County send their wastewater to the Franklin Wastewater Treatment Plant. Germantown

ranks 45th amongst the 66 jurisdictions for costs of wastewater treatment at a three month average cost of \$145.35. The lowest cost in the survey was \$72.92 and the highest was \$240.81.

The combined costs of water and wastewater treatment for Germantown in the three month period was \$236.76 which ranked them 25th. The lowest surveyed cost was \$148.60 and the highest, \$418.56.

In 2017, the City intends to make plans for the construction of a new water tower to be built in 2018 or 2019.

Police

In January, the Council was made aware that the police personnel had filed a petition to the State to authorize a vote for union representation. While the Council was in support of the Department in its right to organize, Council wanted to insure that the personnel had all the information needed to make a decision. Through the efforts of the City Manager, outside legal counsel and police department personnel, all the employees in the police department received impartial information on the pros and cons of union representation.

The department voted down union representation. The issue of union representation made Council aware of the need to make changes in the compensation schedule of not only the police department employees

but all employees of the city. As previously discussed, the pay comparability study was done and changes made accordingly.

The police personnel are an important asset to the City. Germantown has been ranked as one of the safest cities, amongst those of similar size, in the United States. The Germantown Police Department has played a major role in securing this ranking.

Included in the list of police activities are:

- Support of the ValleyView Community Drug Coalition;
- Participation in a candlelight vigil at Barker Field on May 7;
- Placed an officer in the Valley View Elementary School;
- Conducted a drug drop off day and collected 86 pounds of prescription drugs;
- Placed Officer Richard Wood's name in the Dayton Police Memorial;
- Accepted a donation for the purpose of buying new guns;
- Maintained a good relationship with the Montgomery Sheriff for combatting drug related activities; and
- Actively enforced traffic laws;

- A new police cruiser was purchased;

Fire-EMS

The Germantown Fire-EMS serves Germantown and German Township. The operation is supported by a two (2) mil levy paid by city and township residents. Funds are also received by assessing patients requiring transport. This fee is paid out of their insurance.

The Fire-EMS Department has been the recipient of many donations from individuals. The Germantown Rescue Inc has been a major supporter. The support from individuals and Germantown Rescue Inc. has enabled the Department to obtain the most up-to-date equipment.

In 2016, the department had three day crew members working 6AM to 6PM. Paid-on call personnel worked the balance of the day. There are currently 16 paid-on call personnel.

The fire and medical personnel perform an invaluable service for the residents of Germantown and German Township. In 2016, 1020 calls were answered with over 80% requiring medical assistance. In addition to making emergency calls, Fire-EMS personnel, with equipment, participated in Saturday Night Out events, National Night Out and school activities.

Community

The residents and businesses in Germantown have a great community spirit. There is a true sense of people coming together to support a common goal. Here are a few examples:

- During the Memorial Day Program, residents come together to honor those who have served or are serving in our nations military and to pay our respects to families and friends who have lost someone who has given the ultimate sacrifice. Following the program at Veterans Park, there is a walk to the Germantown Union Cemetery for a concluding program;
- The Veterans Memorial Museum has become one of Germantown's treasures. The Museum is located on South Main Street and houses relics of the country's wars since the Civil War.
- The Germantown Historical Society owns a building on Center Street which houses many significant relics of Germantown's history. One of their major annual events was held on August 6, the Arthur Huffer Jr. Memorial Hot Air Balloon Launch and Germantown Founder's Day celebration.
- The Germantown Senior Citizens Center has as its mission to advocate for the well-being and dignity of all people by providing educational and recreational programs that will assist people in leading independent and useful lives. While the word, senior, is in its name, the Center is a place for people of all ages to go. Under the direction of Ms. Chenoa Erisman and with the support of

volunteers, the Center is able to offer a wide variety of activities including bus trips to eat out, shop and attend entertainment shows.

- The July 4th celebration has a parade that many people come out to see;
- The Relay for Life program was held on June 11 at the Farmersville Park. The Mayors of Farmersville and Germantown read proclamations. Cancer survivors were recognized and luminaries were placed around the pond in the park to honor cancer survivors and those who have fallen victim to cancer. The event has raised tens of thousands of dollars for the American Cancer Society;
- On the third Saturdays of June, July and August, Saturday Night Outs are held in downtown Germantown. The event includes restored automobiles, local food vendors and a band. Local businesses are also open. In 2016, a fourth night was added and it was called the Saturday night "Mare" because of Halloween. Two new chairpersons took over the event this year, Nick Ranson and Dave Eshbaugh. I sincerely appreciate their willingness to serve.
- The Pretzel Festival draws people from all around the region. This event is held on the last full weekend in September at Veterans Park. Many vendors participate along with bands. Plenty of food is on hand.

- The Twisted Pretzel Bike Run is held on the Saturday morning of Pretzel Festival weekend. Several hundred bikers participated in 2016. With the entry fees paid to participate, the organizers were able to cover costs and give thousands of dollars to local food pantries and supporting organizations. A beer garden was part of the event.
- Christmas in the park was once again held in Veterans Park throughout December. Displays are put up to celebrate Christmas by local churches, organizations and the city. Santa arrives by fire engine and visits with families who attend the event

Finances

Pat Shively took the reigns as our Finance Director in mid-year. She and City staff increased and diversified our financial operations, making processes more efficient. The 2017 budget was developed with all department heads being involved. This allowed each department head to evaluate their specific needs and request funding for much needed capital equipment.

The Finance Department operates its financial system in a manner consistent with effective fiscal management practices and serves as good stewards of our taxpayer dollars. Personnel continue to seek zero percent loans and pursue grants whenever possible.

While our revenues have been reduced over the years by the State 's reduction or elimination of the estate tax, personal property tax and the local government fund, we have been able to absorb those

reductions, meet our obligations and maintain city services well even with the cost of goods and services rising.

We have a general fund reserve of nearly \$900,000, which is a good balance for operations. However, in order to really move Germantown forward with improvements to its infrastructure, we will need to examine ways to increase our revenues. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

2016 Accomplishments

In addition to ones already mentioned the following accomplishments were made in 2016:

- New homes were under construction in Hickory Pointe Section 3;
- O'Reillys Auto Parts opened;
- Purchased some updated equipment for the Public Service Department;
- Strengthened the City's relationship with the Valley View Community Drug Free Coalition;
- The Police Department personnel built their own computer network;
- Purchased a speed radar post sign;
- Purchased and deployed two new X-26 Taser units

- Hosted a meeting of the County IMPACT group on race relations;
- Installed new tornado warning siren at the City Building; and
- Purchased all new advanced technology CPR training equipment with donation from GRS, Inc.;

2017 Budgeted Goals

The Council has budgeted significant improvements in 2017:

- Begin to make preparations for the new water tower;
- Upgrade the police property room;
- Increase part- time police patrol;
- Repair City Building generator;
- Clean water well;
- New water meters and hydrants;
- Purchase two new pick-up trucks and dump truck for Public Service Department;
- Complete Phase V of the Cherry Street Reconstruction Program;

- Purchase a new generator for Public Service Department;
- Complete major pool renovations due to water leaks and concrete deterioration;
- Construct new walkways in Kercher Park; and
- Complete annual street maintenance program involving South Main, Jefferson, Perry and Endress;

Summary Comments:

In conclusion, Germantown residents have many reasons to proud of their city. I consider it a privilege and honor to be your Mayor. We have a great City Council, City Manager and City Staff.

Among the Germantown's features that I value are the parks, streams and woodlands and our schools.

In addition, there is a great library, Veterans Museum, Senior Citizens Center, Historical Society, community pool and historic buildings.

Our streets and sidewalks may not all be in the best shape but our residents should feel safe when they are driving or walking around town.

The city's Police and Fire-EMS departments are invaluable assets. The men and women that serve in these departments have as their mission, insure the well-being of the people they serve.

Germantown is blessed with something many communities wished they would have and that is safe water.

Finally, Germantown is blessed with a strong community spirit. I am continually amazed at the efforts shown by our residents, organizations, businesses, schools and churches to work together for the good of those in need.

The City Council is very mindful of the needed improvements in our streets and sidewalks, the parks and our water system. With the loss of State funding to cities and increased costs, improvements require more time to be completed. Be assured, the City Council, Manager and staff are diligently working to identify priority improvements and using available funding to make those improvements.

If you have any concerns or questions about the City's activities, please let me, another member of the Council or the City Manager know.

That concludes the State of the City presentation. On behalf of the City Council and our Manager, I thank you for your time and attention.