

Call The Roll

An E-Publication of Columbus City Council

July 2007

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Thank you for taking a moment to read the July 2007 edition of *Call The Roll*, the monthly electronic publication of Columbus City Council. In this edition you will read about many new City Council initiatives to invest in our neighborhoods and strengthen our community—including the passage of the 2007 Capital Improvements Budget (CIB). Most of the CIB is dedicated to major infrastructural improvements and public safety projects such as the construction of two neighborhood policing centers and the Division of Fire's new training academy. Council also amended the CIB to provide funding for other important priorities, including new emergency warning sirens, mobile command police substations, and improvements to our playgrounds, parks, and recreation and health centers.

In addition to working with my colleagues on improving already established neighborhoods, I was honored to participate in the announcement of an *entire* new neighborhood Downtown. This unprecedented new development by Jeff Edwards and his team is called *One Neighborhood*, and will include 260 condos and seven parks in a nine block area from Fourth Street east along Gay Street. This is an exciting era for Columbus as we continue to establish ourselves as one of America's great 21st century cities!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael C. Mentel". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael C. Mentel
Council President

Council President Mentel and Mayor Coleman joined together to help unveil plans for a new nine block Downtown neighborhood.



Inside this edition:

[Municipal Court's Electronic Imaging Project Moves Forward](#)

[Franklin Park Conservatory Expansion](#)

[New Policing Center Encourages Community Involvement](#)

[Capital Improvements Budget in Place](#)

[Pedal Instead](#)

["Fire Ops 101"](#)

[Introducing the Whetstone Community Center](#)

[Opening Day for the Summer Youth Employment Program](#)

[President Mentel Announces the Creation of The Office of Homelessness Advocacy](#)

[New Directions Clothing Closet](#)

[SouthPointe Market Grand Opening](#)

The video version of *Call the Roll* is now available on-line! Click [here](#) to watch!

COURT'S ELECTRONIC IMAGING PROJECT MOVES FORWARD



Hearcel F. Craig, chair of the Judiciary and Court Administration Committee, provided critical funding for the Court's imaging project through his CIB amendment request.

The amount of paperwork that comes through the Franklin County Municipal Court each day is staggering. Everywhere one looks there are bright, color-coded folders and boxes packed with old files, situated in or between canyons of filing cabinets.

The Municipal Clerk maintains well over 25 million documents in these and other storage units. Even with a sophisticated filing system, locating these documents and delivering the crucial court information they contain into the hands of law enforcement can take critical time.

That's why Columbus City Council, under the leadership of Judiciary and Court Administration Committee Chair [Hearcel F. Craig](#), is helping the Municipal Clerk meet the legal requirements of records retention while also improving public safety at the same time.

Councilmember Craig recently amended the 2007 Capital Improvements Budget (CIB) to include \$830,000 for the next phase of an electronic imaging program that will take millions of court files and digitize them in a data base.

"With paper documents, Clerk officials sometimes have to spend 15 to 20 minutes looking for a file," said Craig. "When a crime is committed, seconds count. This imaging project will allow officers in the field to use their mobile data terminals in their squad cars to access vital court documents. This new system will speed up the investigative process significantly."

Last year, Municipal Clerk Lori Tyack's office began the immense task of creating electronic images for more than 25 million court documents dating back to 1992. The funding in the 2007 CIB and other Council legislation will allow the Clerk to convert files from 2003-2006.

"We have probation officers, the prosecutor's office, the court, and others who request files every day," said Tyack. "To be able to access the files at one's own office space or at another governmental agency makes a lot of sense."

Tyack emphasized that this information cannot be accessed by the general public. If a public records request to see case files is made with her office, personal information will be removed to help prevent identity theft.

"We are looking to create a process that is efficient and effective, while also being able to protect the public," said Councilmember Craig.



(Top) Once completed, the imaging project will make thousands of court documents readily accessible to Columbus police.



(Left) Councilmember Hearcel Craig and Municipal Court Clerk Lori Tyack discussed the advantages of converting the court documents to a digital format.

FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY EXPANSION



One of the most idyllic sites in Columbus is about to receive a multi-million dollar makeover. With the help of various partners—including Columbus City Council—the Franklin Park Conservatory recently launched the first phase of its \$20 million expansion plan.

“The Franklin Park Conservatory is a jewel that the entire Columbus community can treasure,” said Recreation and Parks Committee Chair [Priscilla R. Tyson](#). Councilmember Tyson participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the Palm House addition, which is the first stage of the project.

“This park contributes significantly to our quality of life and serves as a true asset for the City as we work to attract and retain new talent in the 21st century economy,” said Councilmember Tyson.

Councilmember Priscilla R. Tyson Councilmember Tyson also noted at the groundbreaking that her City Council colleagues unanimously and enthusiastically supported President Mentel’s Capital Improvements Budget amendment to provide an additional \$150,000 to assist the Conservatory’s efforts.

Construction plans call for the 112-year-old Conservatory to add two rooftop gardens, a new 4-acre community garden, a pavilion, and greenhouses for horticultural and educational programs. The Conservatory receives approximately 250,000 visitors each year.

The ceremony ended with a twist on the traditional groundbreaking. Instead of shoveling a symbolic spade-full of dirt, Councilmember Tyson and other honored guests were asked to color in one eye of a Japanese *daruma* doll. The tradition requires a person to fill in one eye when making a wish or goal, and then waiting until the goal is accomplished or the wish is fulfilled to fill in the other eye. The guests will be invited back next summer when the addition to the Palm House is completed to fill in the second eye on their *daruma* dolls.



NEW POLICING CENTER ENCOURAGES COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Safety Committee Chair Andrew J. Ginther highlighted the multi-faceted role of the new Neighborhood Policing Center.

A near North Side neighborhood is getting more than just a new police sub-station. Safety Committee Chair [Andrew J. Ginther](#) joined leaders from Columbus and The Ohio State University for the groundbreaking of the Moody/Hall Neighborhood Policing Center.

“The Moody/Hall Center provides a home-base for a comprehensive approach to improving neighborhoods,” said Councilmember Ginther. “First and foremost, this building will be the focal point for public safety efforts in the area. Secondly, with the addition of a Neighborhood Pride Center, this building will serve as a gathering place for residents to discuss ways to improve their community.”

The new policing center will be built at 248 E. Eleventh Ave. and will serve the University District and Weinland Park areas. In addition to providing permanent space for Columbus Police officers, the building will also have space for University Police and members of the Community Crime Patrol. The building will also house a Neighborhood Pride Center and meeting rooms for residents to use and discuss ways to make their area a safer place to live and raise a family.

Mayor Michael B. Coleman announced that the building will be named after two men who worked to strengthen ties between the City and Ohio State: former Columbus Mayor Tom Moody, who served from 1972 to 1984, and the late Bill Hall, former Vice President of Student Affairs at OSU.

“This policing center brings together law enforcement agencies and community organizations in an innovative and unique way to increase safety and the visibility of police officers in the University and Weinland Park area,” said Mayor Coleman.

“The fact that the City has recognized the need to make this type of investment is a sign that they are ready to change this neighborhood,” said Robert Caldwell, president of the Weinland Park Civic Association. “If we can take advantage of this opportunity and work together as a community, we can continue to see this neighborhood transform.”

“Today’s groundbreaking brings us one step closer toward realizing one of the most important partnerships between the University and the City,” said former Ohio State President Dr. Karen A. Holbrook. “The start of construction is a major step toward securing an increased police presence in this community for our students and longtime residents.”



Former Ohio State President Karen Holbrook (far left), Mayor Michael Coleman (second from left), and Councilmember Andrew Ginther (far right) joined community leaders to break ground at the site of the new police sub-station.

OSU and Columbus are splitting the \$4.4 million cost for the building.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS BUDGET APPROVED



President Pro Tem Kevin L. Boyce was commended for his leadership during the extensive CIB process.

It is one of the most important and challenging documents that City Council works on every year, but few pieces of legislation touch the lives of Columbus residents more than the Capital Improvements Budget (CIB). The CIB pays for much of the construction projects—from sidewalks to new fire stations—that are built each year. After months of meetings with the Mayor’s administration and many others, City Council approved an \$820 million dollar plan.

“The largest portion of these funds is targeted for enterprising projects,” said Finance Committee Chair and Council President Pro Tem [Kevin L. Boyce](#). “Water, sanitary storm sewers, and electricity account for almost 75% of the total CIB.”

The CIB requires all who work on the plan to prioritize each request. The process begins with the Mayor’s office crafting a preliminary spending plan and submitting it to Council. Members of Council then amended the budget to add projects to further improve the lives of Columbus residents.

The amendments to the 2007 CIB made by Council include:

- \$830,000 for the Municipal Court Clerk’s digital imaging system sponsored by Judiciary and Court Administration Committee Chair [Hearcel F. Craig](#).
- \$400,000 for streetscape improvements for the Columbus College of Art and Design sponsored by Development Committee Chair [Maryellen O’Shaughnessy](#).
- \$300,000 for refurbished police mobile command substations sponsored by Safety Committee Chair [Andrew J. Ginther](#).
- \$200,000 for emergency warning sirens sponsored by Safety Committee Chair Andrew J. Ginther
- \$200,000 for a pilot program for recreation center security cameras sponsored by Recreation and Parks Committee Chair [Priscilla R. Tyson](#).
- \$150,000 for capital improvements to the Franklin Park Conservatory sponsored by Council President [Michael C. Mentel](#).
- \$150,000 for the building of safer playgrounds at Columbus parks sponsored by Recreation and Parks Committee Chair Priscilla R. Tyson.
- \$125,000 for dog parks sponsored by Recreation and Parks Committee Chair Priscilla R. Tyson.
- \$120,000 for police transportation shuttle buses sponsored by Safety Committee Chairman Andrew J. Ginther.
- \$50,000 for health care center improvements sponsored by Health, Housing and Human Services Committee Chair [Charleta B. Tavares](#).
- \$10,000 for HVAC improvements to the King Arts Complex sponsored by Finance Committee Chair Kevin L. Boyce.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS BUDGET APPROVED (CONT.)

“I’d like to remind everyone that the Capital Budget and the Capital Program are dynamic documents subject to many changes,” said Boyce. “Federal and state matching funds for a particular project may disappear, emergency situations can take priority, and unforeseen environmental costs and inflation can have an impact on how we utilize this bond money.”

“As always, the City took a very thoughtful approach to the planning and negotiations that went into the approval of the Capital Budget,” said Council President Michael C. Mentel. “My Council colleagues, along with Mayor Coleman and City Auditor Hugh Dorrian, should be commended for their hard work and diligence.”



After a press conference to announce the CIB, President Pro Tem Boyce took time to listen to citizen feedback.

PEDAL INSTEAD



En route to the Latino Festival, Councilmember Maryellen O'Shaughnessy stopped by the bike corral in front of City Hall to thank John Gideon of the Central Ohio Bicycle Advocacy Coalition for volunteering his time to help operate the corral.

Pedal Instead. That’s the message this summer for families coming into Columbus to enjoy the many festivals and events our city has to offer.

The Recreation and Parks Department is setting up “bike corrals” to allow bicyclists to leave their bikes inside a safe and secure area while they enjoy the festivities.

“We were looking for ways to help citizens reduce their gas and oil consumption, as well as help them promote a healthier lifestyle,” said [Maryellen O'Shaughnessy](#), an avid bike rider and chair of the Public Service and Transportation Committee. “We can help accomplish these goals by the simple act of providing a safe area for riders to leave their bikes as they attend Columbus events.”

A bike corral will be set up at City Hall, on the corner of Broad and Front Streets, for the Jazz and Rib Fest July 20-22 and again September 15 for the Grange Insurance Family Fun Fest.



The corrals are staffed by volunteers so parking is free. Donations are being accepted to help cover operational expenses.

FIRE OPS 101



Water and towel in hand, Safety Committee Chair Andrew J. Ginther prepares to begin the *Search and Rescue* training operation.

What does it take to rescue a baby from a burning building? Or free someone trapped in the wreckage of a car? How about climbing a 110-foot ladder? Four Columbus City Councilmembers participated in a unique, hands-on fire training academy called “Fire Ops 101” and can answer all those questions and more.

Safety Committee Chair [Andrew J. Ginther](#), Development Committee Chair [Maryellen O’Shaughnessy](#), Administration Committee Chair [Priscilla R. Tyson](#), and Judiciary and Court Administration Committee Chair [Hearcel F. Craig](#) were guests of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Local 67 for a one-day training experience at the Ohio Fire Academy in Reynoldsburg.

The training event consisted of a series of drills designed to simulate real life scenarios. During the exercises, Councilmembers used the latest fire fighting equipment while wearing full turnout gear. One of the drills, the *Search and Rescue* exercise, provided Safety Committee Chair Andrew J. Ginther an opportunity to use the division’s thermal imaging cameras. The state-of-the art thermal camera equipment significantly enhances rescue operations by allowing fire fighters to “see” in smoke-filled environments. Ginther championed legislation for the purchase of the cameras earlier this year.

“It is essential that we continue investing in cutting-edge technology,” said Safety Committee Chair Ginther. “Whether it’s the latest turnout gear or more advanced equipment, we must provide our fire fighters the tools they need to remain national leaders in their areas of service.”

“You cannot put a price tag on safety,” said Councilmember Hearcel F. Craig. “Although we are in tighter fiscal times, we must do everything we can to provide our fire fighters the best equipment possible.”

The physical demands of the exercise drills demonstrated to the Councilmembers how vital it is for fire fighters to receive advanced training.

“Safety is key,” said Councilmember Maryellen O’Shaughnessy. “In order to keep Columbus residents safe, fire fighters need the type of training that prepares them to operate effectively in dangerous environments.”

Having experienced the types of challenges fire fighters endure, all four Councilmembers noted how they now have an even greater appreciation for the job these brave men and women perform.

“Until you’ve walked in their shoes you cannot fully appreciate what they do,” said Councilmember Priscilla Tyson. “This experience gave me a greater understanding of the service Columbus fire fighters provide.”

“We’ll continue to rely on the fire fighters to tell us what they need in order to do their jobs,” said Ginther. “This training experience brings real tangibility to the requests that the Division of Fire brings before Council.”



Prior to the *Live Fire and Engine Company Training*, Fire Fighter Dave Eckle (kneeling) demonstrates water house maneuvering techniques to City Attorney Rick Pfeiffer (left) and Safety Committee Chair Andrew J. Ginther (right).

FIRE OPS 101 (CONT.)



After receiving instruction on auto extrication from Fire Fighter Brian Mills (center), Councilmembers Priscilla R. Tyson (left) and Hearcel F. Craig (right) had first-hand experience using a set of hydraulic cutters.

Combined with wearing full turnout gear, wielding a hydraulic tool can add over 80 pounds of additional weight to a fire fighter's body. Fire fighters often have to use this equipment in extremely tight areas and under very stressful conditions.



Not for the faint-of-heart, Councilmember Andrew J. Ginther scaled Ladder 15's 110-foot ladder.



Councilmember Hearcel Craig suits up for the *Live Fire Experience* training session.



Lt. Jack Reall, President of IAFF Local 67 (center), gave Councilmember Maryellen O'Shaughnessy (left) a first-hand view of the Fire Division's newest EMS vehicle. The vehicle was purchased with legislation sponsored by Councilmember Ginther.



Columbus City Council would like to thank the International Association of Fire Fighter's Local 67 for providing a tremendous learning experience and invaluable insight into the daily lives of Columbus Fire Fighters.

INTRODUCING THE WHETSTONE COMMUNITY CENTER



Recreation and Parks Committee Chair Priscilla R. Tyson discussed how the renovated Whetstone Community Center will better serve Columbus.

One of Columbus' most popular recreation centers is about to get a fresh look and a new name.

The Whetstone Recreation Center has served Clintonville and greater Columbus for over 50 years. Now, with a \$5.4 million investment by Columbus City Council, the center will be expanded to offer many new features for residents to enjoy.

City and community leaders shared the work during the official groundbreaking ceremony to symbolize the more thorough work that they shared while developing the renovation plan. The plan includes an 8300 square-foot addition to the existing building, with a new community room and fitness area.

“We’re pleased to announce that this building will feature the latest *green* technology,” said [Priscilla Tyson](#), chair of the Recreation and Parks Committee. “The windows, heating and air conditioning systems will employ the latest in energy-saving and environment-friendly technology.”

“This recreation center has served as a gathering space for this community. It’s hosted the sports leagues, the art classes, the senior’s clubs, the community plays, and the teen dances that have helped knit us all into a community,” said Betsy Hubbard, head of the Whetstone Renovation Initiative, a group hoping to raise additional funds for other improvements.

Many of the innovative designs included in the Whetstone project were put in place after extensive meetings between the public and private sectors. Councilmember Tyson praised the community’s effort to truly make the center their own, while reminding the crowd that this is the latest in a long list of partnerships between City Council and those in the neighborhood.

“We listened when you wanted a new fire station, one that not only improved public safety but was designed to compliment the neighborhood,” said Tyson. “We listened when we began the ornamental street lighting program. We listened when you wanted traffic calming devices that look as good as they function. We listened when we planted trees in the public right of way. We are committed to working with businesses to improve High Street traffic patterns and will support community efforts to make sure new businesses are built to the standards that promote the overall quality and enjoyment of the neighborhood.”



Councilmember Priscilla Tyson (third from right) and Recreation and Parks Director Alan McKnight (second from right) celebrated the pending renovation of the Whetstone Recreation Center with a ground breaking ceremony.

When the building re-opens it will have a new name: the Whetstone Community Center. The expansion project should be completed by the fall of 2008.

OPENING DAY FOR SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Helping to cultivate Columbus' future workforce, Columbus City Council and Mayor Michael B. Coleman have collaborated with the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC) and the Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family Services to allocate \$756,000 for the 2007 Summer Youth Employment Program. The program will provide employment opportunities for 1,000 young people between the ages of 14 to 21 years old.

Finance Committee Chair [Kevin L. Boyce](#) and Workforce Development Committee Chair [Charleta B. Tavares](#) spoke at this year's orientation conference held at Columbus State's Workforce Development Center. The training session provided program participants with guidance on job readiness and ethics in the workplace.



President Pro Tem Kevin L. Boyce advised participants of the Summer Youth Employment Program to begin forming good work habits that they can carry into their future professional careers.

"The youth participating in this program will have an opportunity to develop the types of skill sets that are necessary to succeed in today's competitive work environment," said President Pro Tem Boyce. "This experience will provide them with the sense of responsibility that comes from holding a steady job, as well as the satisfaction of earning a well-deserved pay check."



"The Summer Youth Employment Program is designed to provide participants with the skills that they'll need to succeed in their future careers," said Councilmember Tavares. "This program is critical in retaining talent in the our community and shaping our future workforce."



Workforce Development Committee Chair Charleta B. Tavares (top) and Council President Pro Tem Kevin L. Boyce (right) discussed how the jobs they held as youngsters helped shape their careers .

Prior to receiving their work assignments, participants completed an assessment test to determine how the program could best meet their individual needs. Based upon the results, the youth were placed in either academic enrichment or basic skills training. Participants will be involved in classroom and work activity for 25 to 30 hours per week.

OFFICE OF HOMELESS ADVOCACY



Mayor Michael B. Coleman and Council President Michael C. Mentel make their way onstage to announce the formation of the Office of Homeless Advocacy.

“It is unacceptable for anyone in our community to go without food or shelter even for one night.”

Those words from the late Mel Schottenstein, founder of the Community Shelter Board, serve as inspiration for a new plan to help the homeless in Columbus.

City Council President [Michael C. Mentel](#) joined Mayor Michael B. Coleman onstage during the Mel Schottenstein Birthday Celebration at the Columbus Convention Center to make two major announcements regarding homelessness in the city.

President Mentel announced that City Council will create a new position within the Mayor’s

administration to help reduce homelessness. The Office of Homeless Advocacy will coordinate efforts in the public and private sectors to transition people from the streets to permanent housing. The office will also address the critical issues of providing mental health and addiction services to the homeless, as well as job training and placement.

With that goal in mind, a list of City homelessness protocols will be formalized. Numerous departments, including Public Safety and Public Service, currently work with the Community Shelter Board, Maryhaven, and other agencies to identify and eliminate homeless encampments.

“I have visited many of these encampments in Columbus and have witnessed the deplorable conditions that these people must endure,” said Council President Mentel. “Columbus is a caring community, and we must work together to find a way to help the homeless. They are citizens of Columbus and they need our help.”



President Mentel discussing City Council’s commitment to fund the newly created Office of Homeless Advocacy.



The Community Shelter Board estimates between 200 to 300 people are homeless in Columbus.

A unit at the Commons at Chantry, a permanent supportive housing program operated by National Church Residences (NCR) and Maryhaven. NCR is a partner agency of the Community Shelter Board and the Rebuilding Lives program.

NEW DIRECTIONS CLOTHING CLOSET



Health, House, and Human Services Committee Chair Charleta B. Tavares discussed how the appropriated funds will assist the five social service agencies in achieving their long-term goals.

Five Columbus social service agencies are receiving emergency help from City Council through the Emergency Human Service Application program.

“At times, the City does not have the financial resources to give on-going operating dollars to social services and health agencies because we just do not have the revenue,” said Health, Housing and Human Services Chair [Charleta B. Tavares](#). “However, we believe it is very important to partner with the agencies whenever possible, and we found two ways to do just that.”

The first is the Emergency Human Services fund that provides operating dollars for local agencies that help individuals or families in

crisis. The second is the Emergency Human Services Capital fund that provides money for capital improvement needs for non-profit health and human services agencies. Tavares visited the Clothing Closet, a store at 199 East Rich Street that provides free, gently used business attire for women who are seeking employment. The New Directions Career Center operates the Clothing Closet and is receiving \$10,000 to rent a building and continue the program.

“We are grateful to Council for the support they have shown to this program as we help rebuild the lives of women in our community,” said Ellen Barney, executive director of the New Directions Career Center.

Other programs receiving Emergency Human Service dollars are:

- \$39,950 for The Breathing Association for capital improvements and alarm systems for a free clinic at 1500 Old Henderson Road.
- \$33,500 for Stonewall Columbus, Inc. for capital improvements and security systems.
- \$25,000 for the Central Ohio Diabetes Association to operate the Near Eastside Healthy Lifestyle Center.
- \$22,824 for Asian American Community Services for renovation and construction costs as well as computer equipment for English as a Second Language classes at 4100 North High Street, Suite 301.



(L-R) New Directions Board Member Velda Otey, Clothing Closet manager LaMona Marshall, Councilmember Charleta Tavares and New Directions Executive Director Ellen Barney.

“This is one-time funds and each of the organizations have to present a sustainability plan to prove that they will be able provide these services for years to come,” said Tavares.

“We are really happy to receive this additional support,” said Jeanne Grothaus, executive director of the Central Ohio Diabetes Association. “This funding will enable us to expand the hours that we currently have at the center and to serve more people who are in desperate need of the services we provide”.

SOUTHPOINTE MARKET PLACE GRAND OPENING

Bargain shoppers now will have a new place to go in Columbus when looking for a great deal. The SouthPointe Market Place along South High Street is now open and breathing new life into a formerly vacant South Side building.

“This is a tremendous investment in the South Side and I think it will be a regional draw,” said Development Committee Chair [Maryellen O’Shaughnessy](#). “We are continuing to look for ways to encourage positive, adaptive reuses of vacant buildings and this works.”

Councilmember O’Shaughnessy attended the ribbon-cutting for the new business located in the former K-Mart store at the 3900 block of South High. There is 70,000 square feet for antique vendors, a flea market, an auction house and an E-Bay store. The development is just one in the area being marketed by owner Jeffrey Katz.

“We think it’s a huge winner, and having it right on High Street is a plus,” said Katz. “We have the highest volume of traffic south of Downtown right outside of our front door. You cannot beat that.”

“The City of Columbus is committed to making sure the South Side is vibrant,” said O’Shaughnessy. “We can see that our investments are working.”

The City of Columbus is currently working with area residents and business owners to come up with an Area Plan, one that address development, zoning and infrastructure improvement issues along the South High Street corridor from State Route 104 south to I-270.



Councilmember Maryellen O’Shaughnessy (right) celebrated the market’s grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.



Councilmember O’Shaughnessy toured the SouthPointe Market Place and visited with the market’s vendors.

