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Talk of the Township

Spring 2009
Volume 19

Trustees: Robert McGee ♦ Matthew Beamer ♦ Timothy Donnellon

Meet your new trustee

When Tim Donnellon says, “never say never,” he means it—literally.

“When I left (the office of trustee) in 1997, people would ask me when I intended to go back,” Donnellon said. “I always answered, ‘I never say never.’ But I couldn’t imagine any circumstances that would bring me back to this position.”

That is, until he threw his hat into the ring, along with 11 other applicants, to fill the seat of Barbara Wiedenbein, who resigned as of Dec. 31, 2008.

Donnellon, whose philosophy is open and transparent government, was a hands-down choice for Trustees Bob McGee and Matt Beamer.

“We had 12 candidates on the list and both Matt and I felt that he was the most qualified for the position,” McGee said. “We needed someone who could jump into the position. Since he had been in that position in the past for eight years, he knows what is required of him and is highly qualified to handle the job.”

Donnellon did indeed jump. Since his swearing in on Jan. 13, he has been instrumental in getting more public records uploaded to the Union Township Internet site, and has provided an “Economics 101” response to WKRC’s Jeff Hirsch’s report about the Ivy Pointe commercial development, explaining aspects of the economic development partnership among Clermont County, the city of Milford, Cincinnati United Contractors and Union Township that were omitted in Hirsch’s report.

What does Donnellon expect to see in a year’s time?

“Right now, I think the most important issue is to look at our safety services; determining the size they should be, the services they should provide to a community this size, and determining how we can afford that,” Donnellon said. “It will be a challenge to put those things together.”

Another snapshot of the township in one year would be further development of Ivy Pointe and other areas like it.

“I would like to see businesses lined up for these sites, businesses that can take part in paying income taxes, under a joint economic development district,” Donnellon said. “We need to re-



assess bringing in some revenue from the people who do not live here but work here and use our services.”

Donnellon explained that the benefits from joint economic development districts like Ivy Pointe are two-fold.

“We want to be able to create an environment that is attractive to businesses,” he said. “These districts are attractive because of our location and the amenities we can provide. At the same time, it enables us to bring in revenue for the township, easing the burden for our residents. Businesses use our services, too. There are good reasons across the board to develop areas like Ivy Pointe.”

Brainstorming further, Donnellon said he would like to see regular events at township parks.

“More concerts, festivals, arts and crafts, more sports field usage,” he said. “I would like our residents to take full advantage of our parks.”

Donnellon is a self-professed political junkie, keeping tabs on national politics, as well as what’s going on in his neck of the woods.

“That’s all I do” he said. “I go to work at 9 a.m. and I leave work at 9 p.m. I watch politics and conduct the township’s business. That’s what I do.”

But no man is an island, and Donnellon has been married to his wife, Monica, for more than 25 years. They have one son, Tim, who graduated from Xavier University in 2007 and is working at a law firm as he makes plans to attend law school.

Donnellon has a reputation as a straight-shooter and has vowed to speak open and honestly with the residents of the township, as well as the media.

“I think we’ve already turned a corner, but it’s going to take some time,” he said.

To help move the township forward and to keep his promise of open government to the public, Donnellon said he is always available to the residents of Union Township. You can reach him at 752-0544.

Spring Clean-up

While we all look forward to the springtime weather, along with spring comes home maintenance and lawn mowing season. People will soon be spending more time outdoors and have a greater awareness of conditions on neighboring properties. The Union Township Planning and Zoning Department would like to take this opportunity to remind all our property owners about our responsibility under the law to maintain and keep both commercial and residential property free of junk and debris, and in good condition. Storms in the fall and winter have wrought havoc in many areas. Over time, storm debris can be a haven for unwanted pests and can become a real eyesore. If you need assistance in finding a way to dispose of your fallen branches and other organic debris, please contact the Union Township Service Department at 513-753-2221 for a Tree and Brush Voucher. This pass will allow you to drop off your tree and brush debris free of charge at Bzak Landscaping, located at 931 Round Bottom Road. If we all do our part to maintain our property by keeping our lawns trimmed and free of junk and debris, we can stop the proliferation of nuisance violations where we live.

Duckworth takes the helm as administrator

On Monday, March 9, David Duckworth was welcomed as Union Township's new administrator. Duckworth, who brings more than 19 years' experience as administrator of neighboring Miami Township, was appointed by resolution by the Board of Trustees Feb. 18. At the trustees' meeting March 25, ink was put to paper and Duckworth's status as the township's newest hire became official.

A native Kentuckian, Duckworth earned a bachelor's and master's degree in public administration from Northern Kentucky University. He is also a graduate of the prestigious University of Virginia Senior Executive Institute, as well as the 1994-1995 Lead Clermont class.

That combination of specialized education and years of experience as a township administrator made Duckworth the "superior candidate" out of a field of 21 candidates, said Bob McGee, chairman of the Union Township Board of Trustees.

"His qualifications are quite impressive and his 19-plus years as the administrator of Miami Township were surely a plus for us, and him as well, in the selection," McGee said.

Certainly, Duckworth is often associated with the success of Miami Township's annual Midsummer at the Meadows, an event that has grown into three days with an attendance of thousands.

"He was definitely part of the group that developed a very strong park and recreation system in the township, including the Midsummer at Miami Meadows Park event," said Mary Makley Wolff, Miami Township trustee.

In listing the accomplishments, the Miami Township park system is the one of

which he is most proud.

"I was involved with many individuals in the planning and design of the ... park system," Duckworth said.

"It was a professional achievement to take something from concept to implementation."

"Those are the kinds of things that contribute to his legacy," said Makley Wolf.

Duckworth has been candid in saying he is a proponent of open and transparent government. He said his management style complements that.

"I am a strong advocate of management team philosophy. If you involve department heads and senior managers in organization decision making, goal setting, long-range planning, etc., it makes the organization run far more effectively," he said.

Makley Wolf said he puts that philosophy into action.

"Early on, Dave helped with the consolidation of the fire department under township control," Makley Wolf said. "Previously, it had been several groups and by bringing them under one umbrella, it has functioned much more efficiently. Dave helped assemble a team of department heads who work very well together. He has a good eye for talent."

That eye has apparently been operative for quite awhile, as he has been married for 20 years to Mary McGing, talented



founder of the McGing Irish Dancers.

THE Mary McGing?

"Of the world famous McGing Irish Dancers," Duckworth said proudly.

The Duckworths have two children, 17-year-old Madeline and son, Declan, 14. In his spare time, when the new administrator is not watching his children participate in sports and other activities, he said he enjoys tinkering with home improvement projects.

"I just bought a miter saw, so I think that I am now Tim 'The Toolman' Taylor!!!" Duckworth said.

He rounds out his "dabbling" with flying lessons, " ... in the hopes of someday getting my pilot's license," he said.

But that is where the dabbling ends. Anyone who already knows Duckworth knows he is an avid golfer, participating in golfing events both locally and beyond.

And, finally, there is the basketball.

"I am a native of Lexington, Kentucky, so I am a huge Kentucky Wildcat basketball fan. I hope no one holds this against me!" he said.

Personal profile aside, Duckworth seems to manage to integrate the varied aspects of his life into a workable whole like cogs on a wheel, and McGee is hoping that wheel will ensure a smooth road ahead.

"We were looking for someone who could take the ball and run with it, and the decision was unanimous," McGee said.

Makley Wolf said Duckworth has the qualities the township needs.

"The county depends on strength and Dave definitely has the skills that Union Township can use, and will only strengthen it."



Vietnam Vets Honored by Clermont 20/20

The Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 649 were honored at Clermont 20/20's Salute to Leaders March 5. The chapter was nominated for the Union Township Award, by the Board of Trustees, for their annual memorial ceremony and charitable and community-oriented events.

Above all, the Vietnam Vets were honored for their " ... ongoing support and maintenance of the Veteran's Memorial, including the helicopter, brick memorial pavilion and other related facilities.

The photo shows, from left: Jim McDonough, Dean of the University of Cincinnati Clermont and chairman of Clermont 20/20; Diane Sears, president of Auxiliary 649; Jack Haigwood, president of VVA 649; and Alisa Poe, event chair and chair-elect of the Clermont 20/20 Board of Trustees.

Kitchen fires. . . protect yourself!

The Union Township Fire Department tracks trends in the fire service as they relate to identifying fire related incidents in our community. Recently, The Union Township Fire Department has recognized the need to address fire prevention efforts with respect to cooking fires. A number of cooking fires in the past month has resulted in several thousand dollars in damage for property owners. The fire department would like to promote safe cooking and provides these tips in achieving that goal.

- ✓ Never leave cooking food unattended. If you must leave, turn off all cooking appliances.
- ✓ Never place combustible materials such as towels, potholders, papers, etc. near any heating appliances.
- ✓ Never attempt to move a pan of grease that is on fire. Put a lid over the pan and turn the heat off or use an ABC Fire Extinguisher. Alert your family so that evacuation can begin.
- ✓ Never wear loose fitting clothing while cooking. It is more likely to come into contact with a heating source and become ignited. Wear tight fitting clothing around arms and waist.
- ✓ Don't leave small appliances (toasters, can openers, etc) plugged into outlets. Always unplug after each use.
- ✓ Never leave pot handles sticking out for children or adults to knock over. Be sure to turn handles to the back of the stove.
- ✓ Don't use any electrical appliance if it appears to be malfunctioning. Please have the appliance checked, repaired, or replaced.
- ✓ Clean all grease from exhaust hoods, including filters that may be above the cooking area. The removal of grease decreases the flame spread potential during a fire.

Cooking is the number one cause of fires in the home. Most residential fires occur between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. in the evening. This is typically the time that meals are prepared. Each year in Ohio, 12 people lose their lives due to cooking related fires. Nearly 300 civilians are injured with an estimated \$18,000,000 in property loss reported. Please be aware of cooking hazards and promote safe cooking in your home. The fire department also recommends that everyone change the battery in their smoke detector twice each year.

Drinking & Driving: Education is key

Once again, the time of year has arrived for students to celebrate the transition of finishing their high school education and begin the anticipation of what their future will bring. Many students have chosen career paths or have chosen their college field of study. This time of year known as prom season is a time of year celebrations are earned. But for some students across the country, this time of year may result in devastating endings. According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), teen drivers from the ages of 15-20 are at far greater risk of death in crashes where alcohol is present than the rest of us. "Among 15-20 year old drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2006, 31 percent of the drivers who were killed had been drinking and 77 percent of these drivers were unrestrained (NHTSA, 2008)." NHTSA also reported that in 2007, almost one-third of teenage drivers who were killed in crashes had a positive BAC level of .01 or higher at the time of crash.

Union Township Police is currently working in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Public Safety to promote safe driving during the prom/graduation season. Union Township conducts high visibility enforcement efforts during holidays and special events such as prom season and homecomings. Officers will be increasing traffic enforcement during this time to reduce the number of crashes and fatalities on local roads.

Teenage drivers need to be reminded of the consequences of drinking and driving. Too often, young drivers have the mentality that they are indestructible and "It won't happen to me." Parents need to remind their children, which have so quickly grown up, that there are consequences to every choice they make. "If they are lucky enough to have survived a crash, they will have to face the consequences of breaking the law. That includes a trip to jail, the loss of their driver's license, and dozens of other expenses including attorney fees, court costs, and other fines. They will also stand to lose academic eligibility, college acceptance, scholarship awards, and more (NHTSA, 2008)." Please help in the fight to keep our young teenage drivers safe by educating them and being role models in their lives. The last thing we, as parents, want to do is wonder if we did all we could to prevent a crash from taking a young life full of hope and potential.

On the project list

ROADSIDE RIGHT-OF-WAY TREE-TRIMMING

To ensure the safe passage of vehicles on township streets, Service Department crews trim overhanging branches in the winter as a part of a seasonal program. However, we may not get to all of the predetermined areas before the spring and if you would like for us to come and trim your trees and bushes back off the public right-of-way, please call us with your location. We will haul all the debris away, and clean up the area.

Union Township is divided into ten area zones, with a different zone trimmed each year to ensure that all streets receive attention. Here are some guidelines the crews use while performing the trimming:

- Trees are vertically trimmed from the back of the curb edge or right-of-way to a height of 13.5 feet. Shrubs and trees that block motorists' sight from necessary signage are also trimmed.
- Shrubs and trees that overhang sidewalks, leaving less than 8 feet of clearance will be trimmed.

The advance notice gives residents the opportunity to perform the trimming themselves or hire a professional prior to the start of the program. A flyer will be placed on your door two weeks prior to the start of all work.

PARK SHELTER RESERVATIONS

Are you planning to schedule a special event — family reunion, birthday/anniversary/graduation party or a company picnic — at a Union Township park in 2009? Everyone now has the opportunity to reserve a shelter at parks (where applicable).

Residents and businesses located within the township that wish to hold work-related functions in a township park must submit requests for shelter reservations by filling out a reservation form and turning it in to the Service Department for final approval.

The reservation policy gives residents and businesses time to plan their annual or special summer events at the township's park facilities.

TREE AND BRUSH VOUCHER PROGRAM

Township residents now have the option to obtain a voucher from the Service Department office to get rid of their tree and brush debris, year round. A valid driver's license or proof of township residency is necessary to obtain the voucher. The vouchers are not available for commercial businesses. There is no limit to the number of vouchers residents can use.

For more information about any of these services, call the Service Department at 753-2221.

Monthly Meetings

Trustees	2nd & 4th Tuesday	7 p.m.
Zoning Commission	2nd Wednesday	7 p.m.
Board of Zoning Appeals	1st Thursday	7 p.m.

Don't forget to make the Union Township U.S. Postal Service Contract Unit your one-stop shop for all your postal needs. Stamps, envelopes, packages, priority mail, express mail. Conveniently located on the lower floor of the Civic Center. Open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. Weekday mail pick-up is at 2:30 p.m. and on Saturday at noon.



We're on the web!

www.union-township.oh.us

Contacts

<u>EMERGENCY NUMBER</u>	<u>911</u>
Trustees & Administration http://www.union-township.oh.us	752-1741
Fiscal Officer	753-2216
Planning & Zoning Department	753-2300
Fire Department http://www.utfd.org	528-4446
Police Department http://www.utpd.org	752-1230
Service Department	753-2221
Post Office	947-7330
UTTV	947-7336

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