

January 3, 2012

I am pleased to present the 2012 State of the Village Address per The Ohio Revised Code. I took office on Tuesday, October 18, 2011. Since then I have been very busy with several challenges, yet I feel with the village finances we are in a good position to move forward cautiously with 2012 and at the same time continue to work toward improving the infrastructure of the Village of McConnelsville. The General Fund balance to start out 2012 is \$288,863.55, an increase of \$16,966.55 over last year. We were able to give all employees a modest cost-of-living raise for 2012, and I encourage all personnel to continue their education and training for their respective job duties.

We have a lot of work to do with our infrastructure. We currently have 2 out of 5 police cruisers that are not safe to be on the road. Last week I put one of them out of service since the costs to repair it are too high to justify. The second one will be decommissioned as soon as possible. We have one dump truck in need of replacement and the second one has been requiring a lot of costly repairs. We still do not have the streamline water project up and running and we have several unfinished projects that must be completed. None of these will be inexpensive to complete.

I have been working to cut some unneeded expenses and looking to improving the efficiencies of some of our buildings, yet a few of them need some major work. We will need to cap the expenses and monies we have spent on the park as there have been major monies spent on that project. The park will need to function as it is for the time being.

I am very concerned about the cost of what we are required to pay for water. The water fund has decreased this past year by approximately \$23,400.00. Since this is a big red flag, I have been investigating and have found we are buying water from Malta but have some redundant expenses. Additionally, we have no backup water source which gives me great concern for the future. We also have some water customers who are purchasing water from us for less than what we have to pay Malta for it. This will need to be researched and corrected so not to burden the tax payers.

I am also concerned about the overall loss of several businesses and professional services within the village limits, which will hurt the village income.

Upcoming expenses include purchasing two new police cruisers and a new pickup. I am also exploring the cost of a new dump truck, spreader, and plow. Additionally, the pool needs some major work but a grant will help with those expenses immensely.

Upcoming projects include removing the old water tower, removing the old reservoir, rebuilding the radio system to meet the new required government standards, and adding a part-time office assistant to help enhance our efficiency and customer service for the everyday water and sewer customers and office visitors. I would also like to remove the old Water Works building to improve the looks of that site as you enter into downtown, improve the front of the 14th Street Village Maintenance Facility as well as improving the roof and insulating at least half of that structure so we can heat it for wintertime work on village vehicles.

On a positive note, we have replaced several problem water lines, increased efficiency of the water and sewer operations, improved the sewer plant, cleaned and organized several of the buildings, and made major strides in the storm/sanitary sewer separation project. We continue to work diligently to obtain grants and low interest loans to improve village property and infrastructure while helping to comply with EPA mandates and improving the local ecology. We have reorganized committees and have two new council members who are eager to work with the existing council members and village employees to enhance a new sense of team spirit within the entire village. We will also soon be appointing sub committees with civilians to engage, help, volunteer, and assist in improving the Village of McConnelsville to make it cleaner, safer, and a community to continue to be proud of.

John W. Finley
Mayor
Village of McConnelsville