

Mayor's Report for March 2015

The City of Columbia carried away two of six awards presented by the St. Louis Metro Section of the American Planning Association (SLMS-APA) for outstanding community plans and best planning practices across the region.

Columbia's recently-adopted Main Street District Plan took this year's Award for Outstanding Plan Making, which recognizes plans representing significant advancement of planning which bring a greater awareness of good planning to the region. The Awards Review Committee was impressed by the Plan's no-nonsense approach, including a candid analysis of not only the programs and policies that have worked, but of those that haven't worked.

Alderman Mary Ellen Niemietz was honored with the Dwight F. Davis Award, which recognizes individuals who have advanced or promoted the cause of planning in the public arena. The Awards Review Committee observed that Mary Ellen has been "an outstanding planning advocate in the City of Columbia, Illinois for almost two decades" through commitment to projects like Explore Columbia, the community's first comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan, and the Admiral Trost Subdivision Park Master Plan. I would like to thank Alderman Niemietz to her unending dedication and efforts for the City of Columbia.

I met with the executive director of the Bi-State Development Agency to discuss plans for development of the American Bottom.

From February 1, 2015 through March 23, 2015, the Columbia Police Department has taken a total of 71 identity theft reports from our residents. We remind everyone that it is important to monitor your credit and identity to ensure it is not being used by others.

I attended the ground breaking ceremony for the new Helping Strays, Humane Society of Monroe County shelter off Hanover Road. This will be a great addition for Columbia and the entire County.

The Public Works Department is currently seeking applications for summer help. Applications will be accepted until April 24 and are available at the City Clerk's Office.

I had the honor of being the MC for the Columbia PTA trivia night. The Columbia PTA does so many great things for our youth. Thank you.

The Illinois Municipal League is keeping close tabs on pending legislation in Springfield. We are working with state legislators to oppose cuts to municipal funding as well as fighting unfunded mandates forced on municipalities.

I attended the Southwestern Illinois Council of Mayors monthly meeting. Congratulations to Mayor Tom Smith of Waterloo for being voted Vice President. He will do a great job representing all of Monroe County.

The Limb Pickup Program has been scheduled for the week of April 6 thru April 10. If you have limbs to be picked up, please place them by the curb in front of your residence by 6:00 a.m. on Monday, April 6.

The city council is working hard to achieve cost savings in the new budget. Finance Committee meetings have been very productive leading up to our approval of the budget later this month.

The City of Columbia recently approved the resurfacing of the two remaining tennis courts at Bolm-Schuhkraft Park. This project is being funded by some of the savings from the bond refinancing and is expected to be completed by the end of the summer.

The Public Works Department, through its contractors Visu-Sewer and Spectra Tech, recently completed the lining of 3,500 linear feet of sewer main and 12 manholes.

Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting

M&B Ice Company Inc.: 610 S. Main Street (Bulk Ice Dispensary)

April Upcoming Events

6-10: Tree Limb Removal

9 (5:30 – 8:00pm): MoCo Expo, check out what some of our local business have to offer music & prizes – American Legion

11: A Cause For Paws, Masquerade Ball benefiting Helping Strays HSMC – The Falls

17 & 18: City Wide Yard Sale - map available April 14

18 (10am – 2pm): Collecting electronics, appliances, batteries, gently used items (clothing, toys & household items) and paper shredding (5 boxes maximum please) – High School Parking Lot

25: Bethany United Methodist Church Rummage Sale

25 (10 am – 12 pm): Healthy Kids Day (free to all families and youth in the community – Monroe County YMCA

Details can be found at <http://www.columbiaillinois.com/calendar.aspx> or City Hall.

Remember if you are not involved, you are missing out. So GET OUT and GET INVOLVED!

Columbia is the “Outstanding Community Volunteerism” 2010 Governor’s Cup Winner.

If you have any questions, concerns, comments or just want to chat please contact me at (office) 281-7144 ext. 109, (home) 281-5199 or khutchinson@columbiaillinois.com.

Sincerely,

Kevin Hutchinson, Mayor