

# Charlack Newsletter

## Message from your Mayor:

January 2005

Since the February meeting is already over, I am going to add that information to this newsletter. I apologize for getting this out so late. We had what I would call some unfortunate events unfold at the last meeting. I know you have been reading about the codification in my newsletters for the past few months. Codification of our ordinance book is necessary if we want to continue to be up to date with Missouri State Statutes. We are required by law to follow State Statutes, and if our ordinance book does not get periodically updated, then we have no way to enforce them. Our code book was last codified in 1992. Codification should happen on a yearly basis by sending in and updating ordinances, and then every 3-4 years, a full codification should be completed. Our full codification was completed and the ordinance was up for the vote at the February 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. In order for us to approve this process and to follow the legal advice given to us by our City Attorney, the vote needed to pass with "Ayes". The vote went as follows: Alderman Speed – "Aye" Alderman Morice – "Aye" Alderman Brun – "Nay" and Alderman Mabra – "Nay". In the last 6 months, we have received no less than 5 draft reviews from Sullivan Publications (the company doing our codification). These draft reviews are changes and updates. Each Alderman had the opportunity to review and discuss any of the changes as each draft review was published. In the last 6 months I met with Sullivan Publications and our City Attorney no less than 8 times. Aldermen were invited. Some came, some did not. Almost every work session in the last 6 months had codification issues. Last month, we held a Public Hearing for Codification. Three weeks ago, all Aldermen received the final copy of the codification. Now, we go for the vote, and 2 Aldermen vote "Nay." I asked them for the record what their reasoning was and at that time, they refused to respond. Alderman Brun called me the following day and we met. He informed me that he was a little confused on the process and the importance of the passing of this ordinance. He apologized after he realized how important this was. I advised him going forward to call a recess or a "time out" during a meeting if anything needs clarification. He stated that he would most certainly do that. Being fairly new to the voting process, I expect a few bumps from new Alderman. I applaud Alderman Brun for coming forward. I have not heard from Alderman Mabra.

Folks, I have been doing this newsletter for almost two years. This is not a City sponsored newsletter. I do this on my time and I pay for it with my money. I ask for volunteers to help send it out and when I don't, my wife and I deliver it ourselves. I made this promise to you that I would send this to you. I have always made it a point to stay objective. I cannot and will not allow anyone, whether they are Aldermen or not, to attempt to stop what is legal and right for this City. I was voted into this position to do what is legal and right for this City. I am quite sure, based on what I said earlier that it was not the fact that they did not have enough time to review the documents. After all of the meetings, the draft reviews, the Public Hearing and the fact that they had the final copy for three weeks prior to the meeting, I am convinced that I supplied them with ample time to review the documents. Even you the residents know how long this has been going on if you read my newsletters. I don't understand it and I don't agree with it. We are here to do what is best for the City. If at anytime an official knowingly does something that is not right for this City, then they do not need to be in this position any longer. What we do as elected officials takes time and energy. If any alderman is given six months of meetings, draft reviews, etc and that is not enough time to review documents, then maybe there is not enough time for them to be an elected official. I apologize for going on as long as I did on this, but I feel strongly about my position and I am not afraid to stand up for what is right. I understand confusion that needs clarification. Again, I thank Chris Brun for coming forward immediately afterward to explain his reasons and to learn more about the voting process.

**Election Filing Closed:** Elections for City officials for the City of Charlack will be held this April 5<sup>th</sup>. Offices up for election this year are Alderman Ward 1 (Currently Alderman Morice's seat), Alderman Ward 2 (Currently Alderman Mabra's seat) and the Mayor's seat. Filing dates for these offices are now closed. The following have filed for office:

Ward 1 – Alderman Andre Morice, who will be running unopposed.

Ward 2 – Alderman Dale Mabra and Ms. Lisa Buschmann

Mayor – Mayor Jim Beekman, Ms. Linda Schultz and Mr. Bernard Edwards.

**Officer of the Month:** Congratulations to Officer John Beekman for winning the officer of the month for January!

**Police personnel:** Chief Palme has hired the final full time Police Officer for Charlack. Welcome Officer Robert Leesman! Officer Leesman is a 2004 graduate of the Police Academy. Our department is now back to full staff.

**House Fire:** I don't know if you are aware that there was a major house fire on Olden this past month. I have not personally talked to the family, but I understand that this was a major loss. Thankfully, due to the bravery of our mail carrier who went into the house and got the residents out, there were no injuries. I received an email from a resident on Olden expressing interest in doing what we can to assist this family. As a City, we cannot really get too involved, but the fact that this resident stepped up, I will certainly let the others know what they can do to help. That is what small Cities do. Please contact Mr. C. David Page at 314-426-5972 if you would like to donate to help this family. It is my understanding that they will need everything from cash donations to furniture. Thanks in advance

## Up and Coming:

Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> – Work Session at the Indian Trails Library (across from City Hall) 7:00pm  
Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting – 7:00pm at City Hall  
Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> – Work Session – 7:00pm at City Hall  
Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup> – Annual Easter Egg Hunt – 11:00am at the City Park (Details will follow in the next newsletter)

**Trash Talk:** Major changes are underway with our trash service. I have recently met with several companies and have negotiated several deals. I proposed to the board that the City cover a portion of the trash bill and it went for vote. It was approved by the majority of the Board (Alderman Mabra voted “Nay”) to cover a portion of trash services for our residents. There are no contracts or agreements at this time. Excel Disposal was recently bought out by Fred Weber and they have asked that they come to our work session on Tuesday. The main problem we have is the percentage of residents who don't pay their bill. The Board and I have discussed this in length. We have received advice from other municipalities, the Municipal League and our City Attorney. According to Missouri Law, Statue 260.215 and Chapter 607, municipalities have the ability to require residents to pay for the safe removal of trash. Our City Attorney has allowed us to pass an ordinance that will require all residents to pay the \$10.00 per month to the City. In turn, the City will pay the trash companies. Any residences that are not paid by the end of the year will have a fee added to their tax bills to cover the cost of this necessary service. Trash service is as vital as electricity or heat. I urge you all to pay your bill to the City so that no additional administrative fees are added to your bills by going through the tax process.

The fact that the City is going to pay a portion of the trash, and good deals have been worked out for the near future, I know the sticking point to all of this is the ordinance requiring ALL residents to pay the bill or it comes on your tax bill. I know it sounds harsh, but we have a responsibility to ensure that solid wastes are properly removed from our city. I also believe that we would not be able to secure services for the prices I have worked out unless the City agreed to pay the bills.

More will follow in the next newsletter or by special flyer.

**MIRMA:** Several months ago, I met with the Chief of Police from the City of Bel-Nor to discuss insurance options for our City. They use a company called MIRMA. Our citywide insurance policy, which handles the insurance for our buildings, parks, etc. was costing the City over \$50,000 per year. MIRMA stands for Missouri Intergovernmental Risk Management Association. They deal strictly with municipalities. The cost for the same type of coverage through MIRMA was \$22,000 less than our current carrier. What's the catch? As members of MIRMA, we will have strict guidelines on how we handle our buildings, city vehicles, safety meetings, etc. None of these guidelines will affect the residents. They are all internal issues that affect how we run City Hall. This savings in our insurance as well as continued cost savings over the last two years were the main reasons I was able to propose the City covering a portion of your trash bill.

**Newspapers and Other Trash:** I have recently received several calls regarding how our City is beginning to look with all of the trash in our yards. The biggest issue seems to be newspapers. Please make every attempt to keep our City beautiful by picking up any newspapers or trash that might have flown into your yard. If the Suburban Journal is delivering their free paper to your residence and you don't read it, give them a call to have them take your name off the list. If you have tried that to no avail, call City Hall. The phone number for Suburban Journal is

## How We Voted and Why:

**Bill No. 05-0553** – An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute all documentation necessary to join the Missouri Intergovernmental Risk Management Association (MIRMA) for citywide insurance. All Aldermen voted “AYE” – Motion Passed.

**Bill No. 05-554** – An ordinance adopting the City of Charlack amended Sewer Lateral Repair Policy. This ordinance increases the amount of money the City pays for sewer lateral repair from 60% to 80% up to \$3500, from \$2500. All Aldermen voted “AYE” – Motion passed.

**Decision to have the City Cover a Portion of Trash Service Costs incurred by the Residents** – Alderman Speed – “Aye”, Alderman Morice – “Aye”, Alderman Brun – “Aye”, Alderman Mabra – “Nay.” Alderman Mabra felt that there were other options that were better than this one.

**Bill No. 05-055** – An ordinance adopting and enacting a new code of ordinances of the City of Charlack (Codification). Alderman Speed – “Aye”, Alderman Morice – “Aye”, Alderman Brun – “Nay”, Alderman Mabra – “Nay”. Mayor Beekman broke the tie with an “Aye” vote. Motion passed. When asked after the meeting, both Alderman refused to comment. Alderman Brun expressed his concerns the following day.

*Please be respectful of your neighbors*

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(Paid for by Jim Beekman)

Please feel free to call me with any questions, concerns, or complaints. If you do not want to receive this every month, call me, and I will take you off the list. Thanks!