

R.BENJAMIN STAHLER  
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CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE  
135 NORTH DETROIT STREET BELLEFONTAINE, OHIO 43311-1476  
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The state of the city is strong. Our department heads and associates continue to focus on delivering exceptional service to our community. The City of Bellefontaine continues to balance its revenues with expenses in an effort to keep our financial position stable. Our 2017 yearend revenues were \$9,241,973 and expenditures were \$8,836,735. Our comprehensive revenues were \$25,902,509 and our comprehensive expenditures were \$23,527,670. While our income tax revenues were up from previous years (\$6.4 M), our estimated 2018 revenues remain the same (\$6.4M).

Mary Rutan Hospital, once being a city hospital, bought out the remaining land lease agreement from the city for one million dollars over a five year period. This allowed the city to create a revolving loan fund in Mary Rutan's name. Bellefontaine City Auditor, Jack Reser, and his staff again received the Ohio Auditor's Award for their diligent efforts in overseeing our city's finances. City Treasurer, Mark Fissel, reported that the city's invested funds averaged an annual rate of return of 1.7%.

Our Engineering Department saw the completion of a number of significant projects. The Police Department underwent a redesign of their existing square footage, The Waste Water Treatment Plant began construction on a 5400 sq. foot structure to replace an old and worn out building. We were able to extend our water and sewer infrastructure on Brennan Road which allowed 20 homes to come off septic systems. Our Regional Airport had its taxi lane resurfaced and replace a large section of the runway apron (FAA 90% funded, ODOT Aviation 5%, City 5%). Madriver St. underwent a complete resurfacing with its curbs and sidewalks replaced. (ODOT portion of the project was 80%).

Our Municipal Court saw over 10,000 cases. In keeping step with the electronic world around us, the Court began accepting e-tickets from our Highway Patrol and other agencies. Their numbers remain constant with respect to crimes that are directly related to alcohol and drug addiction. Currently, there are 180 individuals who are working through the department's Probation System.

Our Fire Department responded to 2,833 emergency runs; 601 fire incidents (20%) and 2232 EMS runs (80%). The department replaced its oldest ambulance with a new unit. With the aid of grant dollars, all three ambulances will now carry an auto-pulse unit to assist in CPR. Two of the three ambulances now have power lift cots that can handle a patient weighing up to 700 pounds. The department completed 70 fire safety inspections and all city fire hydrants (847) were tested in 2017. The department continues prevention and fire safety education through public outreach efforts. They offered 132 public events reaching nearly 4400 individuals in 2017.

The Parks Department added several new programs with the goal of maintaining a healthy community. Working in tandem with the Bellefontaine City Schools, a "winter walking" program was developed using our Elementary School Building. 220 different individuals participated over a 10 week period. They continue to build upon the summer outdoor movie series and Myeerah's Outdoor Education Series. There were 1368 youths participate in nine different sporting leagues. Our Hoffman Pool had over 12,000 visitors spend their day swimming. They saw 220 families and 139 individual season passes sold in 2017. The Parks Department took a leading role in our city playing host to nearly 2000 bicyclists passing through our town with the Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure (GOBA) for 3 days.

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The Police Department hired two new officers and enabled us to move two of our more experienced officers to our Middle School and High School. Through the combined financial resources of the Ohio Attorney General's office, City School Administration and Municipal Administration, we are now able to equip our schools and classrooms with this added measure of safety. The department continues its emphasis in the area of community outreach with 48 neighborhood events in 2017. In 2018, we will see our sixth class of the Citizens Police Academy. We celebrate that Police Chief Brandon Standley served at the state level as Ohio Police Chiefs Association's President this year.

We keep our Streets Department very busy clearing snow, removing leaves, and maintaining our city by ways. We were able to purchase a Dura-Patch device which allows for more winter paving repairs which are durable and cost less. With help from ODOT, our Main Street had a traffic study and replaced and programmed 19 traffic signals along this route. The department also helped us to implement at DP&L Grant (\$50K) to replace trees and upgrade street lights with more efficient LED lights.

The Water Department had a busy year with maintenance and improvements. They responded to and repaired 17 water main leaks (compared to 24 the previous year) and took on several significant water main replacement projects in a continuing effort to update our water line infrastructure. The Waste Water Treatment Plant reported another year with no violations to the Ohio EPA codes. They handled over 969 million gallons of raw wastewater which produced 259 dry tons of a bio-solid material. This material was then provided to area farmers to spread on their fields to increase the nutrient content of the soil. They also cleaned and televised over 14,000 feet of sanitary sewer as preventative maintenance.

With the passage of a community ballot initiative in November of 2016, we saw lower aggregate gas and electric rates available to our citizens. The Utility Department continues to incorporate technology into their operation. Our customers may now access their on-line accounts to monitor balances, consumption, usage, and payment options. In 2017, they added a credit card payment option for our customers. Most of their monthly billing statements include informative inserts regarding such things as refuse schedules, recycling tips, leaf collection schedules and much more. The Tax Department completed its second year of working with the Regional Income Tax Authority (RITA). RITA currently serves 320 communities throughout our state. One of the many ways that RITA supports our tax collection process is by way of tracking and offering subpoenas to delinquent tax filers. In 2017 alone, they notified 868 individuals of discrepancies in their reporting.

Our Code Enforcement Officer had a productive year. In addition to being the administrator over many of the city's grants and construction projects, he is also responsible to site violators of our city's codes. In 2017, he reported 767 various violations and resolved 86% of them. In the early months of 2018, City Council will consider the updating our local ordinances to include the additional language in our Property Maintenance Codes.

Our fleet of various cars, trucks and other such equipment keep our Vehicle Maintenance Department busy throughout the course of the year. In 2017 they saw over 200 repairs, 125 oil changes and the installation of new equipment to many vehicles.

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**We have a very busy Regional Airport. 24 of their 28 hangers remain rented. There are 34 aircraft on our field including 7 multi-engine or jet aircraft. In 2017, they sold nearly \$100,000 in fuel. With a staff of 10 associates (including 6 instructors), Midwest Corporate Air had 72 check rides/ licenses issued and taught 66 pilots. These pilots came to Bellefontaine from 18 states.**

**Downtown Bellefontaine continues to thrive with a clear path of “revitalization”. 2017 saw new businesses added to this area; as well, there were dollars invested in structures, store fronts, and second floor apartments. The 100 year old “former Post Office”, which had been abandoned for decades, was saved from demolition and investments are being made to restore this historic structure. The City Streets and Engineering Departments collaborated to unearth the site of America’s first concrete street and reconstruct a replica of this 1891 civil engineering innovation on our Main Street. City Council approved a donation of \$30,000 to the Holland Theatre renovation project.**

**We continue to work closely with area business and industry to promote a healthy economic environment. Our Chamber of Commerce proclaims a very optimistic outlook for our community. The city has become much more competitive with its economic development tools (the formation of a Port Authority and the expansion of our CRA). While there is much to celebrate about our accomplishments, there are still many opportunities that lie ahead. We will continue our focus toward workforce, housing, and drug issues. The Logan County Collaborative continued to address the needs of industry, education and the community is an ongoing effort to assure a sustainable, stable, and skilled workforce to meet the needs of area industry. Relations remain strong between our community and many of our Japanese owned companies that have a presence in our area.**

**As Mayor, I believe we are poised to have another promising year in the City of Bellefontaine! We look forward to 2018 and celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Logan County. We continue to look to the future for the role that our community will play in the continued development of Smart Technologies and Autonomous Transportation. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to represent the City of Bellefontaine. Together, we can strive to keep this community great!**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ben Stahler**

**Mayor**