

STATE of the TOWN

2014-15

Fiscal Year 2014-15 was another strong year for the Town. We continued to receive recognition from national ranking organization such as *Business Insider*, *Value Penguin* and *Only in Your State*, being named the #1 Place to Live in Tennessee, the 2nd Safest Place to Live in Tennessee and the 15th Best Suburb in America. Others are obviously learning what we have known for years.

With the approval of the 2014 – 15 budget, the Town launched an aggressive campaign to better maintain and, as appropriate, improve and expand our Town buildings and facilities. We completed a very thorough bid and selection process for the construction of the new Public Works facility, which is now under construction. There were several other significant facilities projects funded and completed during the year and we will talk more about those later in this presentation.

Town Council and Administration

The Signal Mountain Town Council welcomed two new members, with the election of Chris Howley and Bob Spalding. In short order, these gentlemen settled into their new roles and proved themselves valuable additions to the Council.

At the same time, we had to say farewell to two very capable and dedicated Council members, Susan Robertson and Annette Allen. I would like to thank them again for the great work they did for our community.

The 2014 – 15 budget was the first one developed, presented and managed by our Town Manager Boyd Veal. During this year he also completed the 11 month program and received the professional designation of Certified Municipal Finance Officer from the State of Tennessee.

Across the board, our town departments have fared well thanks to the dedication of our department heads and their staff:

Finance Department

Carol White

- We reduced the principal on the Town's school-related loan from \$1.2 million to \$847,000 by making scheduled and additional payments.
- We also retired a Capital Outlay Loan, paying off the \$370,000 balance well ahead of schedule.
- We completed the process of securing a \$3 million capital projects loan for major facility projects such as construction of the Public Works facility and an additional fire station on Shackleford Ridge.
- The Town's General Fund began the 2014-15 fiscal year with an unassigned fund balance of \$5,352,341 and ended with an unassigned fund balance of \$6,665,936.
- Both savings and solid revenues contributed to the continued strength of our fund balance. Most notably:
 - State income tax receipts exceeded budget projections by approximately \$400,000.
 - Sales tax receipts exceeded budget projections by approximately \$58,000
 - All Town departments finished the year under budget which led to general fund expenditures coming in \$464,000 below our original 2014-15 budget.
- Through the continued funding and management of the Vehicle Replacement Fund, the Town was able to fully fund the purchase of \$1.2 million in replacement equipment, including a fire truck and an automated garbage truck.
- At last month's Council meeting Brian Wright of the Johnson, Murphey & Wright accounting firm presented the Annual Financial Report for the 2014 – 15 fiscal year. The Town received a "Clean" audit with absolutely no findings or issues of concern. Mr. Wright was very complimentary of the Town's administrative and financial management.

Police Department

Chief Mike Williams

- During the year, we welcomed our new Police Chief Mike Williams. He has been an excellent addition to our Town's leadership team.
- The Police Department responded to more than 2,100 incidents.
- The Department has continued its commitment to training by exceeding state requirements for new officers and providing training beyond the required annual in-service training. During the year officers attended training in numerous disciplines including:
 1. DUI enforcement
 2. Domestic Violence
 3. Defensive Tactics
 4. Active Shooter Response
 5. Preventing School Violence
 6. Management and Supervision
 7. RADAR Operations
 8. Dealing with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
- Two new officers successfully completed the 10 week state police academy and an additional 8 weeks of training with the department's Field Training Officers.
- Continued to dedicate man-hours to traffic enforcement and traffic safety efforts with funding from a traffic enforcement grant, received from the Governor's Highway Safety Office.
- Initiated an SMPD FaceBook page as part of a continuing effort to improve community engagement and communication.
- Re-assigned an officer to the Signal Mountain Middle / High School as a School resource Officer.
- Continued to work toward State Accreditation, updating and streamlining department policies.

Fire Department Chief Eric Mitchell

- The Fire Department responded to 838 calls for service during the year, Which was a significant increase over the prior year.
 - 62% - Medical / Rescue (technical rope rescues and vehicle rescues)
 - All Fire Department shifts are staffed with Emergency Medical Technicians
- Fire personnel completed over 7000 hours of training including:
 - Emergency Medical
 - Drivers/Apparatus Operation
 - Rescue (vehicle, rope)
 - Hazardous Materials
 - Structural Firefighting
- The department partnered with the Tennessee Fire and Codes Academy and hosted three academy courses. Personnel from seven departments across the state joined our staff for the Fire Officer I, Fire Officer II and Fire Instructor I courses. We had eight members complete the Fire Officer I & II courses and five complete the Fire Instructor I course.
- Department personnel completed 146 pre-fire plans visits on commercial buildings; and 219 fire and life/safety inspections on Commercial Buildings and businesses.
- Inspected and flowed 260 fire hydrants

Building Codes Department

Chief Eric Mitchell

- The Building Codes department continues to be very busy. We hired an additional Building Inspector who is also assisting with fire inspections. He is now performing electrical inspections, a function (permitting and inspection) previously outsourced to Hamilton County.
 - 352 total permits were issued.
 - 18 permits for new houses
 - 161 general construction permits (additions, renovations, repairs)
 - 55 plumbing permits
 - 62 mechanical and gas permits
 - Total Construction Value = \$11,575,161.00
 - Permit Fees = \$61,059.00
 - Over 2000 inspections were conducted

Facilities Maintenance

Chief Eric Mitchell

- Replaced the roof on the Fire & Police building
- Replaced old and poorly functioning HVAC units in the Town Hall with new high efficiency units
- Installed French drains around the Fire and Police Building and Town Hall to stop the effects of water infiltration and siding damage
- Completed the bid process and awarded a contract for a new fire sprinkler system and an updated alarm system at MACC

The Public Works Department (Streets and Sanitation)

Loretta Hopper

- Collected over 3,000 tons of garbage at curbside.
- Supported over 13,000 visits to our transfer station.
- Diverted approximately 95 tons of recyclable material from the landfill through our recycling center.
- Continued the brush chipping program, producing many tons of mulch which was made available to the public, keeping it out of the landfill.
- Offered mulch loading with our backhoe for \$5 per load on the first Saturday of each month during the summer. Over 290 people took advantage of this program.
- Curbside leaf pick-up resulted in more than 700 loads of leaves being hauled. This equates to approximately 2,000 tons.
- Design of the James Boulevard Rehabilitation Project was completed and is now under review by TDOT.
- Trained all Public Works employees in various job related areas such as Construction & Asphalt Inspection, Traffic Control, Chemical Spill Response and Fleet Management.
- Initiated a project to replace the bridge on Shoal Creek Falls road. This project is funded by a 98% grant from TDOT.
- 2 staff members are Certified Solid Waste Professionals through the Solid Waste Association of North America.

Stormwater Department

Loretta Hopper

- Our Stormwater Manager to further our commitment and efforts to improve the water quality in our streams.
- Completed stormwater drainage improvements throughout the Town, including drainage tile replacement on Ohio Avenue, drainage clearing with the Town's Hydro-Jetter, addressing localized flooding issues and initiating a drainage study in the Brockton Drive / Lancaster Drive area. This project involved a major upgrade to the drainage system for this area, and has since been completed.
- We have 4 staff member certified in the Tennessee Erosion Prevention & Sediment Control Program and we have strengthened our runoff prevention enforcement, especially at construction sites.
- Launched a water sampling program to meet MS4 requirements
- The Town sponsored clean water camps in the Town as part of our Stormwater Educational Outreach Program.
- Partnered with the Municipal Technical Advisory Service to conduct *Good Housekeeping* training for 26 town employees. The course teaches best practices for preventing chemicals and other harmful materials, used during municipal operations, from contamination of ground water.

Water Department

William Sanders

- Responded to 926 work orders.
- Read 14,985 water meters and repaired 11 major water line breaks in the Town`s distribution system.
- Responded to 582 Tennessee One-Calls.
- Replaced 375 water meters.
- Awarded an engineering contract to design infrastructure improvements to increase flow in three areas of the water system and to upgrade the water main in the area of the James Boulevard rehabilitation project

Library

Karin Glendenning

- Added over 2,000 new items to its collection, which now contains 33,200 items including books, books on CD and movies.
- Added 185 new members during the fiscal year, giving the Town`s library a patron base of 5,596 with a monthly circulation averaging 5,916 items, resulting in more than 71,000 items being checked out during the year.
- The nine sessions of the Library`s Summer Reading Program included:
 - Two programs by the Tennessee Aquarium
 - A petting Zoo
 - A visit to the Signal Mountain Playhouse
 - Dancers from GPS
 - And a Pool Party to wrap up the summer
 - *Total program attendance topped 1,000*
- The Library hosted French language classes and Military History classes. The Chess Club for young people continues to meet at the Library.
- The Mountain Library Foundation continued fundraising efforts and the design for renovating the lower level of the Library was completed. That construction is now underway. *We greatly appreciate the efforts of the Foundation and everyone who contributed to this project.*

MACC

Barb Storm

- The MACC continued to grow as a vital part of our community offering meeting space and a variety of classes and summer camps and other events.
- Offered almost 90 classes for young and old, not including private music instruction classes.
- Hosted meetings for numerous civic organizations and clubs including, Lion's Club, Signal Mountain Social Services, MACC Board, Parks Board, 3 Garden Clubs and the Iris Society, and sponsored 10 music events and 5 art exhibits.
- Hosted three new events – Dulcimer Festival – Ukulele Festival – Puppet Festival. These events brought performers and students from as far away as Ohio and Illinois
- Thanks to MACC Board member Judy Nowlin a scholarship program was established through Signal Mountain Social Services, resulting in 12 community children being able to take classes or attend camps they otherwise would not have been able to.
- Hosted several concert including:
 - Mountain Cove Blue Grass Band
 - Dale Anne Bradley
 - Neshawn Calloway
 - CSO String Quintet
 - Numerous student recitals and performances
- Hosted Art exhibits including:
 - Michael Field
 - Carolyn Wright
 - Dottie Swasey
- Sponsored the Town Tree Lighting Festival, which broke all attendance records with more than 800 attending.
- Generated revenue of approximately \$62,000.

RECREATION

Jarred Thompson

- Served approximately 2,000 youth in organized programs. A significant increase over the prior year.
- Refinished the gym floor and maintained organized and free play programs for both adults and youth.
- Experienced record numbers in attendance and revenue for the Town swimming pool and concession stand.
- Received an overall score of 100 on the Health Inspection for the 2015 pool season.
- Installed a new irrigation system at Scott and Rutledge Fields.
- Hosted sub-district and district baseball tournaments

As we look ahead to the next several months, we expect to begin the formal design phase of a new fire substation on Shackleford Ridge Road, begin construction of the James Boulevard Rehabilitation project and begin the design phase for new sidewalks in Old Town.

Meanwhile, we continue to enjoy the volunteerism of 86 citizens who, as members on the Town's 15 boards and commissions, provide us with broad-based community involvement and support.

In closing, on behalf of the council, I would like to thank our dedicated town employees and the many citizen volunteers who make this town such a wonderful place to call home