

Message from Mayor Hruby

City of Brecksville <information@brecksville.oh.us>

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From the Office of the Mayor
Jerry N. Hruby

On Sunday, November 29th, the Holiday Tree Lighting and Fireworks Display were a great success and very well attended. Thank you to our Safety forces and Service Department for the fine job they did in keeping us safe, preparing the holiday lights and for assisting with traffic before and after the event. We appreciate the many emails, texts and phone messages from our residents and neighbors. We hope you all enjoyed it and that it brought a moment of joy to you and your families.



Unfortunately, Monday and Tuesday - the 1st and 2nd of December, we experienced one of the largest snowfall winter storms in the past 11 years according to the U.S. Weather Service. At one point, there were 2,100 properties without power. Outages were created by fallen trees and branches, making some areas of the community impassable for a period of time. We were well prepared for this storm, having a full fleet of trucks and equipment ready. Our crews kept the main thoroughfares of our community as our top priority. Due to the many fallen trees and power lines, our service crews were spread-out throughout the community not only dealing with snow removal but also tree removal, closing certain roadways and addressing the many problems associated with the heavy amount of snow and its impact upon trees and power lines along our roadways. I want to thank the many residents who called, texted or emailed to express their appreciation to our Safety forces and Service Department. An unusual amount of travelers from other communities called and praised the conditions of our roadways. To those areas of community wherein our residents felt neglected, we got to each and every neighborhood as quickly as possible considering those most served by certain roadways and those in safety jeopardy because of fallen trees, closed roadways and the need to open all roadways as soon as possible for our safety forces and ambulance providers to have access to all residents.

As a result of the many branches that broke off due to the weight of the fallen snow, beginning Monday, December 7th, we will be chipping branches upon request and we do so knowing the obvious needs of our residents. We will not cut up fallen trees nor haul away logs that are too large for chipping. Please place the branches with the butt end toward curb. There is no need to bundle or use twine. The chipping will go more quickly if the branches are spread out along the tree lawn rather than piled high. NO ROOTS OR SOIL – these will damage the chipper blades. To schedule and be part of this specific event, please call the Service Department at 440-526-1384 and your address will be added to our list. Please do not include any other debris other than residential tree limbs and shrubs that were damaged during the storm. We do this as a courtesy service to our residents knowing the volume of tree limbs that have fallen throughout the community.

I would like to make a special note of appreciation to The Illuminating Company, who did an outstanding job in addressing various situations in our community. We received excellent service and they restored the power to most properties within 10 to 12 hours. At one point, our 2,100 customers without power was the second largest number in Cuyahoga County. We initiated a warming center at our Human Services Department at the Community Center. I thank and appreciate Human Services' efforts in assisting our residents who visited for the purpose of keeping warm until they could return to their homes. Any comments can be directed to our Webpage concerning the City's response to the needs of our residents during this major snow storm event.



The Annual Children's Christmas Play that was to be produced this weekend, December 5th and 6th, has been cancelled due to Covid-19. In its place, we will soon announcing a schedule of the showing of many past Christmas Plays that will be aired via a link on the City's Webpage to YouTube. We hope that your families will enjoy watching these original plays, produced by the City's staff who also with their families act out and portray the story. We will run these throughout the month of December and it is a good opportunity for your children to be entertained by the many stories of Christmas that will be presented. Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, Frosty, Rudolph, Santa's Elves and a whole host of other good and bad characters are featured in our stories. Please watch our Webpage for the schedule. They are a gift from our City family to yours.



On behalf of City Council and myself, I am pleased to announce that the quarter percent income tax to our residents who work outside our community will expire at the end of this year. We will resume the 100% income tax credit that our residents enjoyed prior to the enactment of the quarter percent increase six years ago. The quarter percent increase was to last ten years but there was also a sunset based upon the City's income tax revenues reaching the level of \$18 million per year for three straight years. The three years of the \$18 million receipts for income tax has come first, so therefore the quarter percent tax lasted only six of the ten years. During the budget consideration for 2021, discussions were held with City Council and although we have been faced with dramatic reductions in revenues, the administration found it necessary to reduce the 2021 budget proposal by nearly \$3 million. The administration and City Council agree that it is important to recognize the burden upon our taxpayers. We should keep our word and the intent of the ordinance and sunset the quarter percent income tax. During the past six years, we have used the quarter percent income tax to subsidize the operating millage of our Fire, Ambulance, Services, Human Services and Community Center programs and facilities, as well a small portion of debt retirement that remained each year as a result of the quarter percent to the construction of the Police Station, Fieldhouse at Blossom, new Outdoor Aquatics Facility and addition to the Community Center Natatorium. Our income tax grew remarkably in the first three years of the quarter percent income tax credit reduction, reaching the \$18 million threshold and maintaining and exceeding that minimum threshold these past three years. Our predictions were accurate, the need demonstrated and the early conclusion, sunset. Wonderful news to all of us. I extend our appreciation to our taxpaying residents, knowing at the time this issue was quite controversial to some. It was a very difficult decision to make that recommendation to City Council and I reiterate my gratitude to those members who support the issue. As a result, our residents will have increased services, expanded and new facilities. It was a great stopgap measure until we grew our economic development and income tax revenues. The future is bright with Sherwin-Williams, Valor Acres and a continued aggressive economic development program. To those who paid the additional taxes, thank you ever so much on behalf of City Council and our administration.



Please continue doing your best to keep yourself and your families free from Covid-19. Recent days have brought large numbers of new cases within our county but also the glimmer of light that inoculations will be coming soon. That light at the end of the tunnel will not shine bright if we diminish our efforts at this time or in the immediate future. Please do your best to follow the protocols and policies as we also very much look forward to a new year and celebrating this upcoming holiday season. Drive safely, stay healthy and be safe.

God Bless,

Jerry N. Hruby
Mayor



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