

From the Mayor

November 1, 2013

Each month in this column, I try to communicate on various issues and topics that are relevant to our local government. Passing along information directly can help clarify sometimes confusing issues. This month, I chose a few, unrelated issues that have come up that require a little more conversation.

First, let's look at the new downtown parking changes. The City has created 138 parking spaces that allow unlimited daytime parking. These spaces are designed to accommodate extended downtown parking needs and are located within two blocks of the center of downtown. Two-hour parking signs have been removed from those "half blocks" that have been converted to the new unlimited parking. Two-hour parking signs remain in those half blocks in the immediate business district, exclusively for "customer" parking.

We have ordered new "Unlimited Daytime Parking" signs to mark the new and converted half-block areas, but unfortunately, they have yet to be delivered. We will also create new signage for the current municipal lot and the City Hall lot designating public and reserved parking. In the meantime, the Traffic Commission appreciates your patience. A map of the new parking configuration can be found at www.warsaw.in.gov. Simply click the "Downtown Parking Map" link on the home page.

Our downtown Christmas decorations will start to pop up soon. As in the past, we will continue to use wreathes on the poles and lights on the trees in the streetscapes. Our parks will put on their usual spectacular display in Central Park that you will not want to miss. Last year we did not hang decorations across the traffic signal poles because our large garlands were acting as "wind sails" which created stress issues at the base of the poles. A maintenance contractor advised that the signal poles were not engineered to withstand the excessive torque created by anything stretching from the top of one pole to the next. We are working with the WCDC to add more lighting to the downtown buildings this year to enhance our holiday decorations. Remember, Warsaw First Friday on December 6 will kick off our "Hometown Holiday" season complete with our new holiday pop-up shops at the former license branch building on S. Lake Street.

Finally, we have been receiving complaints about fireworks being set off within the City and people wanting to know what the rule is. Indiana State Code 22-11-14-10.5 is the "rule." It defines and regulates all classes of fireworks in the State of Indiana. It gives local cities and towns or the county the ability to create an ordinance that limits when "consumer" fireworks can be used, with the exception of the following dates and times: June 29, 30, July 1-8 from 5:00 pm through two hours past sunset (except July 4, 10:00 am through midnight) and 10:00 am December 31 through 1:00 am Jan 1. Warsaw does not currently have a limiting ordinance.

Consumer fireworks are the only class of fireworks that can be sold to and used by the public. They can have a “pyrotechnic composition” of no more than 50 milligrams for ground devices (cones, spinners, firecrackers, etc.) or 130 milligrams for aerial devices (roman candles, spinners, bottle rockets, etc.). All devices that exceed those specifications are illegal.

If you have any comments on these or other issues, please email me at mayor@warsaw.in.gov or stop by City Hall. Your input is important.