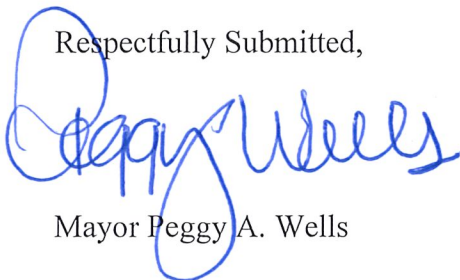


Village of Buckeye Lake
Mayor's Report
September 24, 2018

1. I want to commend Police Chief Wardlow for all her diligent work in getting the police department compliant with state laws and regulations. She has overcome a number of significant obstacles. Her report provides the details. I also want to commend her and Police Officer Steve Ritter for their recent undercover activities that netted a likely serial burglar and additional leads.
2. The Village continues to benefit from a Newark resident fulfilling her community service obligations here. Most recently she spent 10 hours cleaning and painting at the village complex.
3. Some new-to-us and free office cubicles have been installed in the renovated police station. Our bootstrap renovation is nearly complete. New bathroom fixtures will be installed next weekend.
4. The new Verizon phone system has been successfully installed in the village complex.
5. Union Township reports that the price of road salt purchased via ODOT has nearly doubled. The price for this winter season is \$80.77 per ton compared to approximately \$46 per ton last winter. Union Township plans to mix that salt 50:50 with grits to moderate the impact of the price increase. Union Township will continue to offer us the salt/grit mix at its cost.
6. The long awaited and feared "other shoe" is about to drop in the OPEC-HC healthcare fiasco. As you know, last November we joined more than a dozen other governmental entities to successfully force Jefferson Health Plan (JHP) to administer run-out claims without requiring payment of the "loans" JHP made to OPEC-HC. Locally, our group included Licking and Union townships. Since then, the Village of Hebron has also joined the group. Our joint efforts so far this year successfully limited the receiver (appointed by a Franklin County Common Pleas Court judge on a petition filed by OPEC-HC founder, Frank Harmon) to paying only medical claims rather than all claims against OPEC-HC including a claim from Harmon for unpaid commissions. Our group has also assisted more than two dozen governmental entities lead by the Stark County Combined Health District in challenging the decision to place a Council of Governments in receivership. With OPEC-HC's funds now gone with some medical bills still unpaid and other claims pending, both groups don't want to see the receiver's current authority expanded to assess all members to pay these outstanding claims. In addition to Harmon's claim for commissions, there are also significant claims from companies that he hired to administer claims (they either failed to do the work or did it incompetently). Last week JHP issued its OPEC-HC financial reports and indicated in the Stark County action that it intends to pursue former OPEC-HC members to collect \$9 million. This works out to be about \$3,249 per covered employee or \$19,494 for the Village. This is only to repay JHP's "loans." The expansion of the receiver's authority could add another \$500 or so per covered employee or another \$3,000 for the Village. Since our group is expected to represent more than 10 percent of JHP's claim, we will have far more bargaining power than going alone. Our attorney, Mark Stemm of Porter, Wright, believes we have many openings to challenge the legal and factual merits of JHP's claims. The City of Rittman joined our group last week and we expect more to join when they get a bill from JHP. Every additional member spreads out the legal fees and reduces our individual costs. We will have additional legal fees, but they will be far below the claims that will be placed against us.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mayor Peggy A. Wells