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## **P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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**May 30, 2009**

### ***Grass Cutting “Arrest”***

Sandusky – The story about the man arrested for mowing grass in a public park has taken on a life of its own. The City of Sandusky urges all who are interested in this story to please visit our website at:

[www.ci.sandusky.oh.us](http://www.ci.sandusky.oh.us)

We believe our position on this matter is not being told.

Sensationalism in journalism is irresponsible.

Please visit our site. Thank you.

## **Adopt-a-Park and Volunteerism**

The sensationalized story of a man mowing the grass at one of our parks has taken on a life of its own. Truly the power of the pen can be mighty, but the power of truth is greater. There is a societal responsibility to fully explain and share a well balanced, complete picture.

The following statement was issued to the press hours after the incident occurred:

*As everyone knows, during the spring season our grass grows. When it rains, it grows even faster.*

*The City of Sandusky has an extensive park system, with over 600 acres of ground to maintain. Like most municipalities in northern Ohio, the City of Sandusky is also experiencing the pains of an economy which is not producing the type of revenues it needs to maintain the level of services it has been able to produce in the past. The result of these lost revenues means that cuts need to be made. These cuts include fewer employees in the services divisions of our workforce, including not being able to hire seasonal employees as we have in the past. However, our park system has not shrunk, which means that the 600 acres of land are being maintained by, at times, no more than three individuals.*

*Our employees are excellent workers who care very much about the quality of work they provide. However, as mentioned earlier, during a wet spring season, the amount of work we face can be overwhelming.*

*During these times when the grass is higher than any of us like, frustration can grow nearly as fast as the grass. How an individual handles that frustration is very important. Many of our citizens take pride and ownership in our city. Most contact us and offer to help or volunteer in some way to help keep our city beautiful. To all of them we are very thankful.*

*However, from time to time, the frustration an individual feels can lead them to take actions which may not be the best. Sometimes their actions can lead to liabilities and unsafe conditions.*

*Today a gentleman's frustration boiled over and he decided to mow Central Park on his own. Although he was asked repeatedly to stop, he persisted and ignored both our horticulture employees and the Police Officers who became involved. Unfortunately, his anger and frustration got the best of him and he refused to stop. Our Police Officers followed proper protocol and needed to arrest the individual for persistent disorderly conduct.*

*We feel this was a very unfortunate situation.*

*Before this should happen again, we urge all who wish to help us to simply communicate with us before taking action on their own. Communication is the key to assuring that a positive action is taken rather than a negative one.*

*For information on our Adopt-A-Park program, call the City Manager's Office at the number listed above or email our office at [kkresser@ci.sandusky.oh.us](mailto:kkresser@ci.sandusky.oh.us).*

*Thank you.*

It is important to understand that our employees acted in a proper manner. It is also important to understand that this gentleman was not arrested for mowing the grass at a park.

We are a nation which believes in civil discourse. We are also a nation governed by laws. The City of Sandusky respects the process and believes it should be permitted to be completed.

The process should not be politicized. Unfortunately, this situation seems to be going down this path. We support the Prosecutor's Office and will support whatever decision is made, including the dropping of the charges.

In addition, we respect Mr. Hamilton's unbridled enthusiasm toward volunteering to help our city and urge him to help lead the charge in getting others to work together in keeping Sandusky, Ohio a beautiful community.

We invite all those citizens from across our country who have contacted us in regards to this story to visit Sandusky, Ohio. We know you will truly enjoy your experience at "America's Roller Coast."