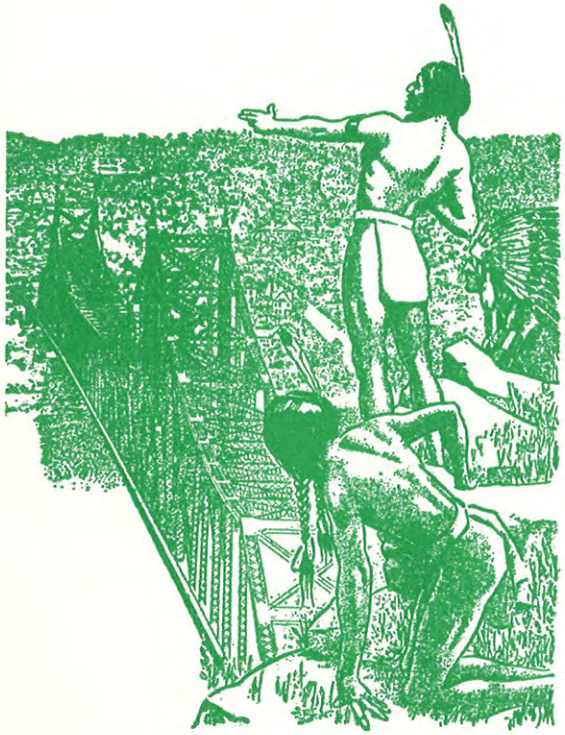
BOROUGH OF SEWICKLEY

Report For The Year 1955
To The Residents of Sewickley



The Borough of Sewickley

INCORPORATED 1853

Pennsylvania

January 31, 1956

Residents of Sewickley Borough:

This annual report, covering the year of 1955, is the first such report prepared for general distribution to the public in over twenty-five years. The purpose of the report is to acquaint you with the organization, finances, operation and accomplishments of your local government.

We have made this report as short as possible with the hope that everyone will take the time to read it. The other members of council join me in the wish that the contents will be of value and will stimulate your interest in the government of the borough.

Respectfully,

F. H. Atwood

F. H. Atwood
President of Council

Borough of Sewickley

BURGESS

Charles A. Woods, Jr.

BOROUGH COUNCIL

F. H. Atwood, President
C. E. Wahl, Vice President
W. R. Carson
W. B. Clarke
J. D. Culbertson III
W. S. Diehl
Oliver McClintock
J. A. Purdie
G. L. Trudell

Tax Collector ..... J. Conway Macon

Auditors ..... H. L. Carroll, G. M. Watson, Robert Ingram

Constables ..... J. J. Start, J. P. Bloomer, R. J. Hays

Justices of the Peace ..... L. V. Gibb, W. E. Evans

OFFICERS AND BOARDS APPOINTED BY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS

Borough Manager	Raymond L. Howe
Solicitor	Roy Rose
Secretary	Edward Ellerton
Treasurer	Frank A. Nash
Police Chief	T. J. Prendergast
Fire Chief	Wade Baltz
Street Foreman	F. J. Yant
Health Officer	H. L. Carroll

COMMISSIONERS OF SEWICKLEY WATER WORKS

A. J. Dawson, President

James Clarke
B. E. Rhodes
D. M. Gray
Roy Rose

BOARD OF HEALTH

W. F. Holthaus, President

H. S. Irons
E. W. Myers
D. S. Irvine
Dr. George Reigel

H. L. Lang, Secretary

PLANNING COMMISSION

Harry S. Hull, Jr., Chairman

W. Henry Beighlea
Carl E. Wahl
D. Herbert Trader
J. G. Williams

PARKING AUTHORITY

Robert Angros, Chairman

W. W. Collin
William S. Tallman
W. C. Gourley
Martin W. Wise

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

J. E. O'Leary
R. C. Wright

T. W. Neely, Secretary

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

J. A. Purdie
L. H. Shadduck

J. G. Williams

1955 Financial Statement

INCOME

Cash balance, January 1, 1955	$ 51,789.27
Real Estate taxes	111,468.19
Occupation taxes	566.53
Earned Income taxes	44,704.74
Per Capita taxes	18,615.85
Licenses and permits	4,948.35
Rubbish & dump fees	2,128.68
Parking meters	25,807.88
Police fines	7,120.25
State grants for streets	5,283.08
Miscellaneous	4,736.01
Withheld taxes	88.86
	$277,257.69

EXPENDITURES

Administrative	$ 16,604.76
Engineering	1,688.67
Tax collection	8,106.73
Municipal building	9,506.67
Police protection	62,782.64
Fire protection	7,590.08
Board of Health	2,363.68
Sanitary sewers	1,759.51
Garbage collection	15,724.85
Rubbish collection	23,221.92
Incinerator	6,745.84
Streets	34,171.20
Street lighting	10,979.72
Parks and playgrounds	2,281.07
Shade trees	1,618.72
Parking lots	10,891.45
Miscellaneous	6,817.00
Cash balance, December 31, 1955	54,403.18
	$277,257.69

Actual cash receipts	$ 225,468.42
Actual cash expenditures	222,854.51
Excess of income over expenditures	2,613.91
1955 Real Estate Tax Rate	11 mills
1955 Assessed real value	$10,096,170.00

As of January 1, 1956 the Borough and the Water Works had no outstanding debt.

Administration

Sewickley operates under the Council-Manager form of municipal government. With this type of government council employs a trained person to administer the policies which it formulates. Sewickley has used the Council-Manager government since 1918.

STREETS

Last summer Grant Street was reconstructed from Linden Place to Ferry Street and Nevin Avenue was reconstructed from Cook Street north to the borough line. A total of 5,005 lineal feet of other streets and alleys were resurfaced with a seal coat of tar and chips. Under the present policy of scheduled maintenance every street and alley maintained by the borough, with the exception of brick and concrete pavements, has either been reconstructed or resurfaced since 1950.

Grove Street Extension was added to the system bringing the total in the Borough to 17 miles of streets and 4 miles of alleys.

There are 331 street lights serving the entire borough and the three parking lots.

The streets in the business district are swept daily, except in snowy weather, with the mechanical sweeper aided by a hand cart, and the residential streets are swept weekly. Leaves are picked up during the fall months, not only from the streets, but also from private property when placed on the curb. Snow removal, cindering, and salt applications are performed when and where necessary.

All elm trees and pin oaks on borough property were sprayed last spring. Many old and dead trees were removed. Five new trees were planted on Grove Street.

During 1955 9,760 man-hours of labor were spent on this type of work.

GARBAGE & REFUGE COLLECTION & DISPOSAL

During the year weekly collections of garbage, and papers and rubbish were made. Approximately 30,000 cubic yards of this refuse was burned in our incinerator. Bi-weekly collections are made for cans and bottles, which are disposed of at the Glen Mitchell Road dump. This dump and the incinerator are open to the public on a small fee basis. A new chassis for the garbage truck was purchased and put in operation.

The greatest problem in refuse collection is grass, sod, hedge cuttings, small branches, etc. Large amounts of this material disrupt schedules, and as a result it is sometimes impossible to collect it all at one time. This problem resulted in numerous complaints during the year.

A total of 21,149 man-hours of work were spent on these services during 1955.

STORM SEWERS

We have recently completed a study to determine how to correct the problem of storm sewage backing up into cellars and flooding certain streets after hard rainfalls. This is caused because in some parts of the borough there are no storm sewers and the catch basins and house drains are connected to small sanitary sewers. A six year program of new storm sewers, financed from current revenues, is proposed to correct this.

A new storm sewer was constructed on Grove Street between Beaver Street and Centennial Avenue to serve the new Grove Manor plan of lots on the old Tener property.

SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

Since the earliest times Sewickley's sewage has been dumped into the Ohio River. As the result of a state-wide campaign, Sewickley, together with Pittsburgh and all its surrounding communities, has been ordered by the State of Pennsylvania to cease polluting the rivers and to construct a modern sewage disposal plant.

During November the electorate approved a $700,000 sewer bond issue by a vote of 1563 to 396. This money will be used to construct a sewage treatment plant and the necessary sewer collection mains.

A contract was entered into with Osborne to receive and treat their sewage at the Sewickley plant. They will share in the costs.

Morris-Knowles, Inc. was employed to design and supervise construction of the new sewage treatment plant. It is hoped that construction will begin late in 1956 or early in 1957. Residents will be billed a monthly sewer service charge based on actual water consumption. This will meet plant operating costs and debt retirement.

Throughout the year 1,216 man-hours of labor were spent on sewer maintenance.

SIDEWALKS

A new sidewalk was constructed adjacent to the borough park at the south-east corner of Broad and Beaver Streets, and repairs were made to the sidewalk at the Chadwick Street playground.

There are many old and dangerous sidewalks in the borough. Many of these are made of brick and tree roots have pushed them up and made them uneven. For several years there has been a program to replace unsuitable sidewalks, and during 1955 walks in front of 55 residences were either renewed or repaired. Repairs to sidewalks adjacent to private property are the responsibility of the property owner.

BUILDING INSPECTION

During 1955 a total of 120 permits were issued. The estimated value of work was $485,645.00. A breakdown of the work involved is listed below:

Nature of work	No. Permits
New residences	7
New garages	8
New stores, banks, etc.	4
Remodeling existing buildings & plumbing	97
Demolish existing buildings	4

PARKS AND RECREATION

The borough maintains the War Memorial Park on Blackburn Road, the Chadwick Street playground, a park at Beaver and Broad Streets, and a park at Broad Street and the Ohio River Boulevard.

Reservations can be made at the Borough Building for use of the large pavillion and cooking facilities at the War Memorial Park. Reservations are not necessary for the other facilities such as picnic tables, swings, horse shoe pits, etc. During 1955 there were 66 groups who reserved the shelter for a total of 3,018 persons. This number of people is only a small fraction of those that actually used the park facilities.

From June 20 to August 19, there was a recreational supervisior on duty at the War Memorial Park. During this time he supervised 2,184 persons, mostly in the pre-school age group.

There is no supervision at the Chadwick Street playground, but it was used extensively during the year. The Child Health Association donated several new swings and a large sand box at this location.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The two patrol cars traveled 63,307 miles during 1955 in patrolling and other police work. A total of 2,532 complaints were investigated and 1,451 arrests were made. During the year 7,308 parking meter tickets were issued of which 250 were voided for valid reasons and 6,510 were collected as of December 31st.

A new traffic light was installed at Blackburn Avenue and Centennial Avenue. Meters were removed from Thorn Street between Broad and Chestnut Streets. A new police car was purchased last spring.

A total of 27,956 employee-hours were charged to police work during the year.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Cochran Hose Company, a volunteer unit, was formed in 1876 and has been incorporated since 1918. The borough furnishes the fire company all their equipment and supplies, some insurance to the members, and pays the company for each practice night and fire attended. By contract with Sewickley Borough they also attend all fires in Osborne.

During 1955, 24 practice sessions were held and 39 alarms answered. Loss due to these fires was estimated at $18,625.00. Fire inspections were made at all the business establishments in the borough.

PARKING FACILITIES

The two metered parking lots on Division Street and Green Street were constructed by the Sewickley Parking Authority whose members are appointed by Borough Council, but under lease agreement are operated by the borough. An unmetered lot is operated by the borough on Blackburn Avenue near the hospital.

During 1955 a revenue of $25,807.88 was collected from the meters on the two lots and on the streets. This was less than the $27,151.43 collected during 1954. In addition to paying $10,000 yearly towards interest and principal on the bonds which were issued by the Parking Authority, the borough in 1954 set aside $15,000.00 into a sinking fund for the early retirement of a portion of these bonds.

In the spring the Blackburn Avenue parking lot was treated with calcium chloride to settle the dust.

187 man-hours were spent on parking lot maintenance in 1955.

PLANNING & ZONING

Early in 1955 a Planning Commission was appointed by Borough Council. This commission held 11 meetings and studied the approval of the Grove Manor plan of lots, the Klimek plan of lots, as well as amendments to the zoning ordinance, and future general planning for the central business district.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment held four public hearings on zoning matters, and granted three variances to the zoning ordinance and refused three.

WATER WORKS

Sewickley is one of the few boroughs in the state that owns and operates its water works on a non-profit basis.

The Water Works is operated by a commission appointed by council, which employs a superintendent, secretary, and other necessary employees.

The works consists of treatment facilities and pumping station near the river; three reservoirs with a combined capacity of 8,000,000 gallons; one standpipe; and 34 miles of water mains. A total of 1,882 customers are served in Sewickley, Sewickley Heights, Osborne, Haysville and a portion of Edgeworth.

During 1955 these customers used 230,000,000 gallons of water.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

During the year extensive repairs were made to the roof of the Borough Building. New furniture was placed in the Borough Manager's office, and the police office was remodeled.

In maintaining the Borough Building, cutting grass, and keeping clean parks and other borough property 3,744 man-hours of labor was spent.

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health is charged with investigating communicable diseases, the licensing and inspection of public eating places, testing of milk, and abatement of certain nuisances.

Twenty-three licenses were issued in 1955 by the Health Officer. He also investigated eleven complaints concerning nuisance abatement. Monthly bacteriological tests were made by the Bacteriologist on milk sold in Sewickley. Weekly reports were received from the Water Works which indicated that at all times the water supply in the community conformed to accepted safe standards.

Highlights for 1956

Commence construction of sewage treatment plant.

Start of six year storm sewage program to stop flooding of basements and certain streets after hard rainfalls.

Purchase of new street sweeper.

Replacement of one police patrol car.

Replacement of pick-up truck in street department.

Resurfacing of approximately three miles of streets.

Reconstruction of Green Street and several other streets.

Instigation of 'Spring Clean Up Week' next spring.

New floors in Borough Manager's and Secretary's office and new furniture in the latter office.

Improvements to the park at Beaver and Broad Streets.