

The Village of Beverly: A Journey of Community and Progress Under Mayor Jim Ullman

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Nestled along the banks of the Muskingum River, the Village of Beverly, Ohio, is a place where community spirit thrives, and everyone knows your name. Mayor Jim Ullman, a lifelong resident, has dedicated many years to leading Beverly toward a future brimming with promise. Born and raised in the village, Mayor Ullman briefly left but quickly returned, drawn back by the close-knit community where everyone helps each other out—a village that feels like one big family.

Upon starting his journey as mayor, he faced the challenge common to many small towns: encouraging community participation. Reflecting on his 45 years as a member of the local volunteer fire department, he recalls a time when volunteers were plentiful. However, as the years passed, the number of active volunteers dwindled, and many of those who remained were aging. Despite these challenges, Mayor Ullman firmly believes that when people come together, great things happen. His efforts to involve the community have led to significant achievements, both large and small.

One of Mayor Ullman's goals has been fostering a sense of community pride and involvement. The formation of the Beverly and Waterford Growth and Revitalization Organization (B&W Gro) is a testament to the power of community involvement. This group, composed of active community members, has taken on various projects to beautify the village, such as planting flowers and creating a trail around an island on the Muskingum River, which had been unused since the 1960s. The trail has since become a local attraction, drawing visitors to the area.

B&W Gro has also been successful in securing grants for community improvements, including a prestigious federal grant awarded to only 25 applicants across the United States. This grant brought federal and state officials to Beverly, helping to realize some of the dreams that Mayor

Ullman and the community had for the village. One of the most exciting outcomes of these efforts is the recent awarding of a \$1.25 million grant for a multi-use trail and marina along the Muskingum River.

Mayor Ullman is known for his hands-on approach to leadership. Whether it's working alongside the street crew on traffic control, pouring concrete, or tackling other municipal projects, he leads by example. His leadership style extends to how he interacts with the community. Mayor Ullman frequently walks or rides his bike around town, stopping to chat with residents. He's deeply involved with the area Chamber of Commerce and Building Bridges to Careers at local schools, and he regularly speaks to government classes, introducing himself to those who may not yet know him and encouraging people to get involved in the community.

Mayor Ullman's journey as a mayor was shaped by two mentors who encouraged him to join the Mayors' Partnership for Progress (MPP). The MPP provided him with a network of fellow mayors and city managers facing similar challenges. Through this partnership, Mayor Ullman has formed valuable relationships with state representatives and other officials, helping him bring many of Beverly's dreams to life. One of the standout achievements resulting from this collaboration was Beverly becoming the first municipality in Washington County to have a streetscape plan. This opened the door to additional grant opportunities and set a precedent for future projects.

Looking ahead, Mayor Ullman has big plans for Beverly. Several infrastructure projects are on the horizon, including replacing a water storage tank, building a new water treatment plant to meet EPA requirements, and upgrading the wastewater plant. Of all the upcoming projects, the multi-use trail, marina, and bringing the Sweet Corn Festival back to Beverly are particularly exciting for Mayor Ullman. These initiatives are expected to draw visitors to Beverly, boosting local businesses and bringing new life to the village.

Reflecting on his tenure as mayor, Mayor Ullman underscores the critical importance of cultivating relationships. "Develop relationships," he advises, emphasizing the value of connecting with a diverse range of stakeholders, from local businesses to state agencies like ODOT and ODNR. These relationships have been pivotal in securing the resources that have driven Beverly's success. However, Mayor Ullman is quick to share the credit, highlighting the efforts of the village staff and the community. For him, the true measure of success is in their collective achievements. His hands-on leadership, dedication to community involvement, and focus on relationship-building have created a robust foundation for Beverly's ongoing growth and development.