

One of the ways the City of Powell saves money each year is by collaborating with other agencies, organizations and municipalities on a variety of services and purchases. These collaboration efforts generate thousands of dollars in savings annually for the City and its taxpayers.

The various forms of collaboration stretch across several City departments. The Finance Department collaborates with the Regional Income Tax Agency (RITA) on income tax collection, an effort that Finance Director Debra Miller said generates “a volume savings.”

“In this case, 193 municipalities pull together and use the same tax collection system,” she said, adding that the City’s cost to RITA for these services averages “about 2 percent of our total collections.”

Miller said that bringing the work that RITA does for the City in-house would cost the City approximately 4 percent of the total collections. That total accounts for additional staff needed to complete the tax collection work, along with additional office space, computers and software.

The City also saves money in the area of risk management, according to Miller. By collaborating with six other central Ohio cities in the Central Ohio Risk Management Association (CORMA), the City realizes “significant savings” on liability insurance for its buildings and vehicles.

“We do quite a bit of the administrative work ourselves instead of having an insurance company do it,” Miller said. “By being in the CORMA pool, we look at a 20 percent savings each year over having our own policy.”

The City’s Public Service Department uses collaboration each year for the purchase of its vehicles, which includes lawn mowers used by the public service staff. Public Service Director Jeff Snyder said some type of vehicle purchase is made annually, and purchasing the vehicles and equipment through cooperative bidding produces a savings over buying directly from a dealer.

In 2011, the Public Information, Police and Parks and Recreation departments collaborated with three local service clubs – the Powell Kiwanis, Olentangy Rotary and Powell Sertoma clubs – to keep all of the City’s events on the calendar. After City Council voted to cut the City’s 2011 events budget, an effort was made by staff to recoup the \$10,000 in an effort to retain such popular events as the Memorial Day Parade, Lolli-Pops! Kids Concert Series and Community Bonfire. The service clubs agreed to provide the \$10,000 – and eventually secured corporate sponsors to cover those costs – and the City agreed to plan and staff the events as it had done in the past.

“We know how important these events are to the community, and we are grateful to the service clubs and corporate sponsors for stepping up and allowing us to save on our budget while still providing these events to our residents in 2011,” said Public Information Officer Jeff Robinson.

Other forms of collaboration cited by Miller are the use of the Liberty Township Fire Department, which saves the City the cost of creating and running its own fire department (a cost that would run in the millions of dollars annually), and the collection of property taxes by the Delaware County Auditor’s Office.