



## Garrison Wiesbaden Town Hall – December 2023

### | Question and Answer Pool

#### **Aukamm bus stop repairs**

**Q: When will the glass be replaced in Aukamm bus stop (main one on Hessen Str)?** It has been broken for months and with the cold temps, it is not providing any relief from the weather (rain, snow).

A: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Public Works is aware of the damaged bus stop and is currently working the funding portion of this repair project. While there is not an estimated timeline yet for the completion of these repairs, public works is looking into multiple strategies to get it fixed as soon as possible.

#### **Storm debris cleanup**

**Q: When will the tree limbs be picked up that are in the military housing areas?** Several families have brought their down branches/limbs to the curb, but some homes have a significant portion of a tree down and cannot move them. A work order was placed on Tuesday, Nov 26.

Q: I am also wondering this? We have had people come and remove more branches from the trees but now piles of trees just sit scattered across the neighborhood and it's been over a week. **Removal from trees is awesome but what about pick-up of debris?**

A: Please be advised that when a snowstorm happens, the contractor must stop other work to keep the community safe, especially in Hainerberg, where the city does not plow or clean sidewalks there.

Thank you for your patience as this debris clearing situation is being handled. Last Thursday and Friday (Nov 30/Dec 1) DPW assessed Hainerberg for hazardous tree removal.

As of yesterday (Dec 4) one of our contractors (Bechstein), removed two of the biggest hanging branches near the school and Kindergarten. Soon the removal of all other limbs will be done.

Further updates: DPW's contractor WISAG is currently in progress to pick-up the piles of branches throughout the housing areas (and should be at Aukamm this week, Dec 14-21). Due to the amount of storm damages and the soft grounds, it will take a while to clear all trees of broken branches.

## **Snowplowing priority**

**Q: Why do Westfalenstrasse and Wurttembergstrasse not get plowed when it snows?** The sidewalks get plowed and salted but not the streets.

A: The streets in Aukamm are the city's responsibility to plow. DPW only plows the bus routes in our open communities. The city prioritizes their plowing efforts and will get to those streets when they are able.

## **Dog park**

**Q: Is it too late about asking for maintenance and improvements to the dog park on Hainerberg?** It would be great to get deep holes filled in, some of them are very dangerous for us, let alone the dogs. Some sort of water source would also be phenomenal.

A: Thanks for the information, Public Works will do an assessment and get the proper maintenance scheduled.

## **Housing cleanup enforcement**

**Q: Regarding stairwell housing, when company grade officers are assigned to live in the same building as enlisted SMs, who besides the enlisted building manager, enforces the standard that everyone assists in cleaning the building?** Enlisted SMs have no authority to task a commissioned officer.

A: If company grade officers are assigned to live in the same building as enlisted SMs, assumption is that it is only temporary until attrition kicks in. An enlisted building manager should, be able to make general notifications on cleaning responsibilities.

Should enforcement be necessary, then the Building or Stairwell Coordinator can forward up to Section or Area Coordinator for assistance.

## **Construction project planning**

**Q: What is the process for determining how and where money is spent on building improvements / construction projects?** Our building was notified years ago about rolladen being installed. There are no rolladen in any apartment in our building, but the empty/abandoned buildings on Mississippistraße have them. We were told last winter that our building common spaces were getting painted and have never heard anything else about it. But now buildings on Floridastraße are getting new balconies installed - a project that's surely more expensive than painting a stairwell. And those apartments have rolladen, too. The safety-related projects - like installing streetlights where they didn't exist - I completely understand and completely support being prioritized. But we've had to invest hundreds of dollars in AC units and curtains for

temperature regulation and privacy and it's really frustrating to see other buildings get multiple upgrades.

A: All our projects are phased and are done in order. Additionally, projects rely heavily on contractor availability and funding. We understand the frustration that construction timelines can cause, we cannot accelerate the project. Construction has huge implications on our residents so executing too many projects at once will cause significant issues for the neighborhood i.e., parking, closed roads.

### **Holiday tree decorations**

Q: We had a beautiful Christmas tree decorated by the bus stop on Aukamm in past years, last year the tree wasn't decorated. I did a little survey in the neighborhood and people would love to see it back... **Can we get our tree decorated again?**

A: Due to the increase in trees that the Garrison is decorating on several installation areas this year, the one in Aukamm will not be decorated. The Garrison's Public Works department does not have enough materials to decorate every tree currently but plans to acquire more materials to support Crestview and Aukamm's tree again next year.

### **Parking allocations**

Q: Regarding the parking lot in front of the Post Office on Clay:

**What is the official allocation ratio for parking spaces? Were parking spots allocated based on square footage of adjacent buildings? Or were they assigned based on traffic and public demand? Who is the official authority on if/how this is enforced?**

A: Parking spaces are allocated based on available space for parking lots. As we know, space is at a premium on Clay Kaserne, so we do not have additional space to put parking lots. Emergency Services is the enforcement agency and does a great job in enforcement with the manpower they have available.

Q: If a number of parking spaces are specifically allocated for use by Post Office patrons, it does not make sense for any of those spots to be occupied before 0900.

There are currently no effective deterrents or consequences for repeat offenders who park there all day and simply re-set their meters throughout the workday to avoid citations. **Where can the community petition and/or submit a request for the Post Office to set up removable chains on their allocated parking spots, that can be removed when their services open, and so that their patrons have places to park?**

A: The Garrison Commander agrees that it is a good idea to assess parking areas at select services that are disrupted by overnight and incorrect parked vehicles and has

recently made it a point to visit the postal services parking lot while he is in the area, to help enforce on-site violations, on a random basis. The garrison is also going to look into your suggestion further about the removable chains and we appreciate the idea. Additionally, as a reminder, the community can reach out directly to the commander's hotline with these types of suggestions.

### **Postal service scanning system**

**Q: When can the Post Office on Clay expect an upgrade to their scanner system, specifically for package pickup service?** Currently, there is a "paper" system that has to be visually checked/analyzed, which causes delays in processing but also errors (delivery to wrong person).

A: The post office is already utilizing the new scanner system, but only have a limited number of scanners available for use currently. The post office continues to try and receive more scanners, but currently does not have a timeline for approval or implementation.

### **Painting parking lines**

**Q: Is there a plan to repaint parking lines?** Specifically, on Hainerberg. It's getting very hard to park in the lines when the lines are nonexistent.

A: The paving projects that will be executed throughout 2024 will include re-painting parking lines throughout Hainerberg. The lines were not painted in 2023 due to shifted funding and project priority changes.

### **Additional gym on Hainerberg**

**Q: Can another gym be opened on Hainerberg housing area?** The fitness center on Clay is utilized more as a special events center that causes portions of the gym to get closed often.

A: We do not have the authorization or funding for an additional Fitness Center due to Wiesbaden being a medium size installation. With our current population, we are authorized 64,000 sq. ft. of fitness center space and our current gym is already oversized, providing 85,000 sq. ft of space. Because of this, the garrison does not anticipate receiving any more funding from Family MWR Headquarters (G-9) to cover additional staffing, equipment, or operational needs.

### **Vehicle Registration**

**Q: Are they doing anything to decrease the process time with vehicle registration or possibly bringing back the 2-person team on Clay Kaserne?** The wait line is backed up tremendously and the appointment line process only show 3 available

openings till February. Great for having a new building on North Clay but the timeframe went back to when vehicle registration was located on Mainz-Kastel.

Q: As mentioned earlier, I've been here over 15 years and I've never seen the vehicle registration backed up like this. There is a line at 0400 and the amount of troops and manpower being wasted waiting is unacceptable. **What is done to either add more staffing or leaning on available troops to ease the waiting times?** The next appointment times are in February approaching March as well, and at that rate, this is unacceptable as well.

A: Yes, the garrison has already implemented a lot of improvements we spoke about at the last town hall in October – including more equipment, additional augmented staff support, and implemented efficiencies to speed up training time for onboarded new staff.

### **Commissary stock and expansion**

Q: The amount of troops added to the Wiesbaden area has increased dramatically. **With that said, is there any plans on expanding the commissary or adding additional stock? Also, can there be a better system to whom comes into the commissary?** I understand you can shop on the economy, but for those who live on base and are without a vehicle, can only rely on the commissary.

A: The Garrison Commander and CSM both addressed this topic at the town hall back in May 2023. Plans to expand the commissary are unfortunately out of the Garrison's control. The Garrison does not have a say in how the shelves are stocked. Additionally, DECA is heavily dependent on what manufacturers decide to send overseas. DECA puts in order requests, however they have no control or influence over what or how much they receive.

### **Additional Food services at Mainz Kastel**

Q: **When will additional services be added to Mainz Kastel?** With the large and growing amount of personnel working at the location, all we have is a gas station with one rack of items that's open for 4 hours a day, and an overpriced food truck. **With the lack of parking on Clay and continual bus disruptions from striking drivers, why can't we get a larger AAFES troop store footprint at MK and a food court option (that was once there)?**

A: "The District," which was the dining facility on Mainz Kastel, closed on Nov. 9 and our new food truck contractor has been operational as of Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>. MWR did this to ensure as little service downtime as possible. The "Imbiss" food truck will continue service until

facility renovations and setup can be completed. The renovations are being phased with the intent to open the serving counter and seating area first before Christmas and then the rest of the facility after the new year. DPW still needs to do some additions before we can expand hot menu items.

### **Spouse staffing and volunteer positions**

Q: Military spouses often support base school communities by helping fill the critical roles of substitute teachers. **Would USAG Wiesbaden consider a similar approach to offices and departments with low staffing that offer crucial services?** Other bases have similar "on call/sub" positions for spouses.

Appointments for offices such as ID cards, passports, vehicle registration, etc. can be limited and some have months long waitlists. There's also inclement weather, labor strikes (for applicable positions), and staff emergencies to account for.

A growing community population combined with shorter hours of operation, double Federal holidays (US & German), training closures, inability of staff to answer phones while with a customer, and appointment availability issues warrant, at minimum, a review of staffing and retention. Training and hiring local spouses as temporary support/substitutes would help reduce strain on vital services and establish a system to prevent backed up resources.

A: Public Affairs spoke with DHR Workforce Development – They think this is a good idea, but to be aware that a lot of directorate positions have strict requirements etc. The garrison will work with directors to look within their staffing and duties to see if any volunteer or temporary spouse positions could be accommodated.

### **Shuttle bus service**

Q: The **bus service** offered on and between posts is a very minimal service. Doesn't run often and the schedules are not accurate. My children have tried multiple times to use the bus & report it doesn't show up. Additionally, it doesn't run on weekends. I assume this question has been asked many times before - **is there any thought to improve service & expand the frequency of service?** In its current state I wonder how many people ride the bus per day.

A: The Shuttle Bus Service operates between and on the Installations to provide Soldiers and DA Civilians transportation between their residence and their workplace. The current schedule was implemented on 04DEC2023 and is a revision to the previous schedule that was implemented 05JUN2023. This new schedule now includes the North Clay Administration Building (NCAB) being visited once when the bus enters Clay Kaserne, and a second time before the bus departs Clay Kaserne.

The arrival of the Shuttle Bus at the various stops can be affected by many factors such as weather, traffic, construction, labor union strikes and sickness of bus drivers.

Since the majority of Soldiers and DA Civilians in the Wiesbaden area work Monday-Friday, a weekend schedule is not implemented at this time. Increasing the frequency is currently being discussed at this time; but factors such as funding, vehicles and manpower need to be studied, considered, and approved before possible changes could be finalized.

Our current ridership numbers average ~32K passengers per year.

### **Schools; inclement weather emergency plans**

Q: What is the emergency plan for the area schools in case of severe weather when the children cannot reach their homes and are stuck at school because parents cannot reach them? Who determines when school closes early?

Q: Why is the Garrison not informing the school community in real time/directly when school bus transportation is cancelled? If schools are the "middlemen" between Garrison, School Transportation, and parents... but don't always relay the info in a timely manner, why not implement a direct emergency communication texting system for these and similar situations?

A: The process involves multi parties' input:

- Inclement weather increases or we are tracking a weather forecast. Reports come in of concerns, road conditions, snow, ice, safety.
- Principals, STO provide recommendations based on what they're seeing, hearing on the ground.
- Follow up questions, collect info, assess.
- Commander makes call for delay, cancellation, or normal hours.
- Notify and execute.

Way forward and next steps:

- Streamlining timeliness of call and notification via all parties on real time chat platform.
- There will be a Jan. 11 Bus driver meeting/training.
- Followed by a Jan. 17 Garrison Command and DoDEA meeting, re school weather response.