

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

September 23, 2016

WORKING ON PROJECTS

Big Rapids Township Library relationship. Bill Stanek has suggested that the voter support of the Library, which occurred in the last election, be divided between the two libraries in the township. Morton/Erickson will get 8.08% and Big Rapids 91.98% based on population. Eric Williams is preparing a template agreement for the City, Library Board and Township to sign.

Gary Gerber is working his way through the renovation of the old Pioneer office on State Street to become a headquarters for Social Security. The Planning Commission and the ZBA are both reviewing the plans for design requirements. Gary has also applied for 'Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Abatement' which is being discussed with the Tax Abatement Committee previously established by the City Commission to review and recommend action on these requests.

Recreation Authority: The City and schools are working on language for the Recreation Authority board before submitting the issue before both boards for approval. The second draft recommendation is being circulated. The City and schools are being invited to Lansing during the first week of October to participate in a ceremonial signing of this legislation by Governor Snyder.

Water mains: The DEQ has questioned the status of the City and Ferris concerning mains that service both entities but are independently maintained. The DEQ is requiring that some formal contractual language exist which spells out the policies, practices, water quality tests and system upgrades, etc. which should be transparent between the two systems. Templates of updates of a contract are circulating between the City, Ferris and DEQ.

MOUNT PLEASANT

Twelve department directors from Mount Pleasant visited Big Rapids to exchange practices and management strategies relevant in the two communities. This exchange completes the visit Big Rapids took to Mount Pleasant last year, which was very productive. Thanks to Roger Schneidt and Heather Bowman for their leadership in linking the agenda for the day.

FOUNDATION FUNDS SWEDE HILL PARK

The Mecosta Community Foundation has an account for Swede Hill Park improvements. During the recent Baldwin Bridge construction, Riverwalk was extended under the bridge to connect the walk to Swede Hill Park in a safe and more accommodating manner. This improvement, including security cameras, has been completed for \$61,000. The request for reimbursement has been submitted.

AIRPORT ENGINEERS

Mead & Hunt have done an exceptional job guiding the engineering needs at Roben Hood Airport. Their contract expires this year, necessitating rebidding this service. Ads have been run, interviews conducted and once again the administration recommends the employment of Mead & Hunt. MDOT/AERO has approved both the advertising and bidding process. Approval of the engineers will be presented to the City Commission at an upcoming meeting.

FIRE CONTRACT

Miles Cameron served as mediator for the final discussions on the Fire Union contract. After a several hour session, the contract has been completed for the 'negotiation phase'. The next step is review and acceptance by the City Commission and bargaining unit.

TREES

Through the Muskegon Watershed, Heather Bowman applied for a 'Reforestation' grant and successfully was awarded the planting of 300 two-inch caliper trees to be located in Clay Cliffs Nature Preserve. We are grateful for this grant as it complements the Clay Cliffs Master Plan. This is a really major project! Thanks Heather.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Fire Division responded to 25 calls for service over the past week. There nothing of significance to report in these calls.

The Police Division responded to 109 calls for service over the past week. Of note was an attempted arson early today. This was a result of a dispute between a couple parties, where one male came back after the fact and threw a Molotov cocktail at the trailer. He has not been located. Charges will be sought. A female companion who was present has been arrested.

A conditional offer of employment has been extended to Eric Winsor for the open police officer position. His background will begin in the next couple of weeks.

CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Violations:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (4) Blight | (1) Disabled Vehicles |
| (3) Furniture | (4) Garbage & Rubbish |
| (10) Grass & Weeds | (24) Parking |
| (2) Permits | (1) Property Maintenance |
| (1) Sidewalks / Streets | (20) Signs |
| (1) Swimming Pools | (1) Uninhabitable Dwellings |
| (7) Yard Waste | |

PARKS & RECREATION

The Leathers Playground assessment was received this week. Playscape is in good condition and with steady maintenance, the structure should be with the park for many more years.

Water aerobics will begin on Wednesday next week rather than Monday, due to the pool being refilled and the water temp not being ready.

BRCTA afterschool tennis began this week.

The community pool remarcite project is almost complete. The pool is expected to be emptied on October 7.

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

DIAL-A-RIDE –

162 Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

280 Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

738 (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (137) and Disabled (601) passengers of which 167 used the wheelchair lift to board

94 Free Riders - Aides that ride with disabled passengers and children 4 and under with an adult

38 No Shows - A person who calls for a ride and when we go to pick up and they are not there for ride

33 Safe Riders – Free rides from local establishments to anyone in the community on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights 12:00am to 2:30am.

1,405 Ferris Shuttle Bus – Free rides to anyone on Campus, The new route has nine stops on campus- Lot 28, Allied Health, Campus Community Center, Sports Complex, Lot 4, Rock Cafe, Recreation Center, University Center, Arts and Science, 7:30am -7:00pm Mon – Thur and 7:30 am – 2:00 pm on Friday.

2,750 Total Passengers

426 Out of City Riders - Anyone we pick up or drop off outside the Big Rapids City Limits

STREETS –

- Repaired catch basin on Milton St.
- Cleaned up stumps at Library, black dirt added
- Picked up items from Relay for Life event
- Cleaned up back yard
- Repaired outside yard light at Garage
- Dug out curb on Rust Ave and driveway entrances
- Trimmed a tree at Bergelin house; dug out stumps on south side of house

- Took hanging baskets down
- Cleaned drains
- Removed 2 small planters from behind Shooters in parking lot
- Picked up lights for City Hall
- Hauled bike racks to Northend Riverside Park
- Farmers Market signs
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins

PARKS –

- Watering & maintaining flowers (baskets, pots, flowerbeds)
- Mowing & weed whipping
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks
- Cleaning public restrooms in Parks and at City Hall
- Prepping Hemlock ball field for games

MAIN MAINTENANCE -

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

WATER PLANT –

Safety Topic: “Keep Trouble Out and Let Help In With Access Control”

- Assisted Wastewater staff with lawn care at the Wastewater Plant.
- Worked with Konecranes to perform our annual hoist inspections.
- Performed weekly generator checks.
- Polished floors in main hallway and in the Lab at the water plant

Stephen Sobers
City Manager