

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

October 28, 2016

WATER WELL FIELD WORK STARTED

The contract to secure the well field and cap old monitoring wells has begun. Fencing is first to be followed in a couple weeks followed by the well work. This is an important part of the DEQ's latest plant inspection review.

DOWNTOWN FESTIVAL

The 2016 Downtown Big Rapids Fall Festival starts Friday, October 28, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. with the annual Chili Cook-off. This event will be in the City Hall parking lot.

Saturday, October 29, 2016 starts with a parade at 10:30 a.m. After the parade, there will be Trunk or Treat, kid's games, inflatable playground and a climbing wall. Celebrity Pumpkin Roll starts at 11:30 a.m. Festival ends at 1:00 p.m.

SIGNAGE

The downtown is also augmenting its signage on Perry Street noting the 'Historic Downtown'. The present sign there will be 'upgraded' to fly three banners on poles behind the present sign. They will have the 'look' of the banners on the pergola in Pocket Park. Look for this quite dramatic eye-catcher coming in the next couple weeks.

LEAF PICKUP

Warm weather has encouraged leaves to hang on later in the fall calendar season. Now rain and snow is compressing the leaves and hindering the pickup process. The City will be starting Monday with the leaf pickup and will work diligently to complete the process before 'real' winter sets in.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Long time mainstay at the Department of Public Safety, Nancy Haight, has submitted her paperwork to retire. Nancy started with the City as a 'Parking Enforcement Officer' in 1978, before taking on the secretarial role in the Department. She has served over six Department administrators and seen many changes – including the construction of the new Public Safety Building on Michigan Avenue and the conversion of the individual Police and Fire Departments in the Public Safety Division. The City thanks Nancy for her significant service and consistency over many years of loyal effort.

The department will undergo changes with Nancy's retirement including her front office and personnel change. In addition to this search, DPS is looking to fill a fire vacancy and two police positions. Efforts and testing is underway to find replacement in all areas.

USER CHARGE

Steve Sobers, Aaron Kuhn and Mark Gifford spent the afternoon with township supervisors Bob Baldwin and Bill Stanek to speed progress on the wastewater contract update which expires in 2017. A template for a new contract was discussed and a formal update of the language (from 1978) is being drafted for review by the three agencies and their staff. It is hoped that this extra effort will result in a cooperative contract working for all in the next several months.

HEALTH CARE RENEWAL

The City's Health care coverage is always a major project at the end of each year. The City has adopted the 'State hardcap' approach to Health care costs and so will see a 3.3% increase in budgeted costs. The actual coverage has been quoted to rise an average of 7.9%. The difference in increases will be covered by employees as they make their choices in the level of health coverage they desire.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY ALLEY

The Alley just west of the DPS complex has experienced storm drainage issues for years. Roger Schneidt has taken on the challenge of finding a solution to the 'water in the basement' and floors of businesses in the area. Thanks Roger!

PUBLIC SAFETY

In the past week, the Police Division responded to 81 calls for service. There was nothing significant in nature to report, with a good number of these complaints being accident related.

In the past week, the Fire Division responded to 27 calls for service. They did respond to several roll-over accidents over the course of the last week.

PARKS & RECREATION

- The free walking program will be starting November 1st. People can walk the Big Rapids Middle School hallways Monday – Thursday from 4pm-8pm. Please sign up at the recreation office before participating.
- Pickleball will begin next Tuesday indoors at Brookside Elementary from 4pm-6pm.
- Coed Volleyball sign ups begin next week as with the deadline being January 6, 2017.
- Friday, October 28 is the last day for park and recreation surveys to be taken for the Master Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

DIAL-A-RIDE

191 Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

374 Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

705 (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (118) and Disabled (587) passengers of which 212 used the wheelchair lift to board

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

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

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

1,898 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 – Thurs. and 7:30 am – 2:00 pm on Friday.

3,256 Total Passengers

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

STREETS

Safety Topic: “Preventing Headaches”

- Filling stump holes and laying black dirt
- Assisted Wastewater Plant with cleaning manholes
- Picked up cones & signs from street projects
- Dug out patch in parking lot south of City Hall and on Catherine Street, blacktopped both patches
- Assisted with alley in 400 block of S. Stewart; raised manhole and hauled material away
- Prepared Magnolia Street for blacktop
- Took Tuba Bach banners down
- Cleaned drains
- Picked up limbs
- Added gravel to leaf pit drive
- Milled a patch on South Street
- Put up Farmers Market signs
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins

PARKS

- Worked on trail for Clay Cliffs near Brookside Court
- Hauled picnic tables from Win Kellum
- Assisted street department on Magnolia Street
- Mowed & weed whipped
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks
- Cleaning public restrooms in parks and at City Hall

MOTOR POOL

- Staff vehicles & miscellaneous equipment:
 - 103, serviced
 - 104, serviced, repaired underbody cylinder and tail gate cylinder
 - 106, serviced
 - 107, serviced and repaired mud flap mounts.
 - Serviced 5 pickup plows
 - Big water tank and trailer-winterized
 - Serviced 2 trash pumps
 - 306, tractor, serviced and repaired some wiring
 - 317 forklift, did a tune-up
 - 323, valve turner, cleaned out water tank and winterized
- Police & Fire Vehicles:
 - 401, serviced and did a 4-wheel brake job, replaced rear wheel bearing and 3 motor mounts
 - 404, diagnoses airbag lite, replaced passenger seat pretensioners
 - 412, staff car, replaced rear wheel bearing and coolant temp sensor

MAIN MAINTENANCE

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

WATER PLANT

Safety topic: “How to Conduct a Safety Tailboard”

- Performed Lab QA/QC tests.
- Cleaned Lab and washed all windows at the plant.
- Performed monthly plant maintenance.
- Mowed lawn at the plant.
- Lubed all heat pump motors at the plant.
- Ran customer sample tests.
- Calibrated turbidimeter.
- Cleaned R.O. unit.

Stephen Sobers
City Manager