

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

January 8, 2016

BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

With the warm weather, Toebe Construction has made the decision to continue building without a winter shutdown. This should ease the schedule problems that are a result of technical and delivery issues.

316 LOCUST

316 is a non-conforming rental unit which burned over the Christmas holidays. Neighborhood Services and the Fire Division are working with the owner on this house. Insurance monies will be sent to both the owner and the City for assurance of future compliance. The home, since it was more than 50% destroyed, will need to meet zoning requirements when rebuilt.

SNOW

The recent snow created problems with the downtown removal activity. As a result, the DBA and City have been working on both better communication channels and written policies on snow removal plans. These understandings will be very helpful in the future.

FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

Festival of the Arts booklets have been delivered and will be distributed to the community in advance of this year's event. The books look very good, and the events lined up look even better!!!

PART-TIME POLICE OFFICERS

While Jason Jakobowski has taken a teaching job for Criminal Justice, he expressed a desire to maintain his credential and activity within the department. Since the City has the opening ability to have part-time service officers, Jason will continue to be a part of the Public Safety family in a new part-time role.

NEW EMPLOYEE

The new employee in the Assessing/Income Tax office is Tom Paul. Tom is working on his accounting masters at Grand Valley. He has a background in assessing and will be assisting Gail with that activity as well as Paul in income tax. Stop by and welcome him to the City work staff!!

LIBRARY

Thanks to the Big Rapids Township Board for voting to put a .2 mil levy on the ballot for the Community Library. As townships make up the majority of the users of the library, this is a welcome partnership expression. We will be providing whatever information is permitted to assist in educating for this vote in August.

The Rotary Club and Friends of the Library jointly purchased a new wall hung touchscreen presentation computer. This device will assist in the Literacy room to teach English and conduct meetings when material needs to be displayed for the participants in the meeting.

DUAL LICENSING

Staff continues to work with the AFSCME unit on appropriate ways to merge the license requirements for both water and wastewater. Very positive discussion has been completed.

SMART METERS

Working with Big Rapids Township, Tim Boerma and Bob Halstead have installed meters in all but a few locations. Thanks to the township for their support of this conversion and the time that this will save in reading meters.

DEER CULL

DNR officials conducted a cull again this year with the assistance of the Department of Public Safety and Neighborhood Service staff. Four deer were removed from the heard on Thursday.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Over the past two weeks, the Police Division responded to 106 calls for service. Of significance was a call on Christmas day. A woman reported hearing a power saw outside her apartment. She went outside to find a taller, larger build, black male under her Pontiac minivan. When confronted he hopped in the passenger seat of a black sedan backed in, next to her vehicle. The driver was a larger black male also. They drove off, but not before she got the plate. It came back on a 2005 Cadillac to a 24-year-old male out of Grand Rapids, who is 6'2", 300 pounds. I can find no ties to the area he would have. I did find a brother(?), a 23-year-old, 6'3", 265 pounds. It appears they lived with one another in Grand Rapids. I had Grand Rapids Police Department check the residence, and it has been demolished. All three have larcenies on their records and are from the Detroit area. Grand Rapids Police Department has had no contact with any of them in a year. The investigation continues.

Officer Jason Jakubowski's last day as a full-time officer was January 1st. He has taken a job teaching law enforcement at the Montcalm ISD Career Center. He will continue on with the City as a part-time employee.

The Fire Division responded to 16 medicals and 2 fire incidents in the past week. On December 30th the Fire Division responded to a structure fire on Locust St. in a multiple occupancy house. Fire Division assisted by Big Rapids Township Fire Department performed a rescue of a tenant from the second floor window by ladder since she was unable to get out on her own due to the fire. On January 3rd Fire Division responded to a barn fire in Green Township involving a livestock barn. The fire was able to be contained prior to losing the original barn structure. The Fire Division conducted training on Wednesday night which involved firefighter safety, and search/ rescue.

CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Violations:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) Animals | (2) Blight |
| (3) Disabled Vehicles | (2) Furniture |
| (2) Garbage & Rubbish | (6) Parking |
| (15) Poly-cart Placement | (1) Sidewalks / Streets |
| (10) Signs | (3) Uninhabitable Dwellings |

PARK & RECREATION

Coed Volleyball's deadline is Friday, January 7, 2016. Scrimmages begin January 17 and the regular season begins January 24.

The Ice Rink at Hemlock Park was filled this week. Many are anxious for the rink to freeze over completely for skating.

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

DIAL-A-RIDE –

236 Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

83 Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

1099 (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (137) and Disabled (962) passengers of which 241 used the wheelchair lift to board

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

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

0 Safe Riders – Ferris on Christmas break, no shuttle until January 14, 2016. Free rides from local establishments to anyone in the community on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights 12:00am to 2:30am.

0 Ferris Shuttle Bus – Ferris on Christmas break, no shuttle services until January 11, 2016. 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

1,548 Total Passengers

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

STREETS & PARKS –

Safety Topic: “Lessening your cancer risks in the work place”

- Cleaning drains
- Chipped brush left behind by Consumers clearing work
- Trimmed brush in alley of 600 block of Ives
- Assisted hydrant testing
- Repaired watermain break on Clark Street
- Plowed snow – Airport, alleys, streets, sidewalks, parking lots
- Set out and picked up barricades for New Year’s Eve ball drop event
- Cleaned up and removed snow from downtown
- Picking up Christmas trees
- Hauling snow from parking lots
- Filled potholes
- Sanded and salted streets, sidewalks, alleys, parking lots, Airport
- Cleaned up snow dump area
- Set up the Ice Rink
- Removed 2 large hanging limbs from trees
- Removed downtown Christmas tree
- Fixed the benches at the Bandshell
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks

MOTOR POOL –

- Staff vehicles & Miscellaneous Equipment:
 - 103 - dump truck, repaired exhaust pipe shield
 - 207 - Utility Van, serviced
 - 211 - pickup truck, replaced heater duct actuator and diagnosed coolant leak
- Busses:
 - 901 - serviced and did a safety inspection, serviced the wheel chair lift and the transmission

- 905 - serviced and did a safety inspection, serviced the wheel chair lift and replaced rear brakes.
- 908 - repaired wiring to the 2-way radio and a dome light. Repaired passenger door for water leaking in
- Police & Fire Vehicles:
 - 403 - service call to replace head light
 - 404 - picked up from Cedar Springs after warranty work was completed. Serviced and checked brakes.
 - 407 - serviced
 - 408 - serviced and performed a transmission service

MAIN MAINTENANCE -

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

WWTP –

Safety Topic: “Play it Safe Coming and Going”

- Congratulations Troy McDonald and Sadie Maly, for passing the Wastewater “D” Exam.
- Sadie completed her internship with the City on December 30. She is now in the process of moving to Minot, North Dakota, where her husband is stationed in the Air Force.
- Waiting to receive the motor from Kaeser Blower #2, that was sent out for rewind and rebuild. It will be installed in Kaeser Blower #1, which has a noisy front motor bearing.
- The East screw pump continues to work well, following major repairs.
- The re-located SDC thickened sludge pump continues to work very well.
- The thickened sludge discharge pressure switch failed and a replacement is on order.
- Windemuller Electric is now installing hundreds of feet of wire throughout the aeration basin area, which will operate 4 new automatic air valves.
- Northwest Kent Mechanical has finished installation of hand-operated weir drop gates on aeration basins #3 and #4. Both of these basins are now back in service.
- Aeration basins #1 and #2 are now coming out of service, for weir drop gate installation.
- Before moving on to basins #1 and #2, Northwest Kent is finishing gate installation at both splitter box outfall locations.
- The Blower Building roof replacement project has been temporarily halted. Water damage resulted from inadequate protection during construction.

Damaged portions of the new roof will be removed and replaced under Fleis & VandenBrink supervision.

- The 2015 Storm Water Annual Report has been completed and submitted to the DEQ.
- Jay Norris continues to work on SCADA hardware and software updates. Wireless tablets and 2 of the 5 Touchscreens are updated and functional.

Stephen Sobers
City Manager