

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

January 22, 2016

LEAD

In light of the recent issues in Flint, a comment about Big Rapids water is in order. A Readability report on drinking water is required every three years by the DEQ. The entire report is on the City Web site, which documents the chemistry of the water produced by the Water plant. Thirty samples are taken at various points in the distribution system and are analyzed by an independent lab. These results indicate that the City system is not in violation of lead levels in the water. In fact, a 0.0 parts per billion level was detected as part of the 2014 testing protocol. Had as many as 5 parts per billion been found the result would require 'action' on the part of the City to notify and educate individuals in the home at that single site. Generally, changing out an old faucet or plumbing connection remedies the situation. In 2014, one site received such notice. The City of Big Rapids does feed a poly phosphate to sequester the contaminants and coat the pipes so that even this minor level of lead would be rendered non-threatening to the health of that home.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Capital Improvement review is in full swing. Items are due this week and the Planning Commission will be reviewing them in two weeks. Review of these items is the first step in the 2016/17 Budget process.

FERRIS IMPROVEMENTS

Students have expressed the strong desire to have some dormitory living on the North Side of campus. In response, in the general former location of Masselink Hall, the University is considering constructing some new dormitory quarters. This decision, if implemented, would also relocate the campus drive in that area and connect Cedar Drive in front of the Auto Mechanic training center to create additional space for the dorm.

AFSCME DUAL LICENSING DISCUSSION

The discussion with AFSCME continues concerning a new leadership template for the Utilities division. Progress continues and a follow-up meeting has also been scheduled for this upcoming Monday.

BIG RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION

Mark Sochocki is planning a new affordable home ownership program for the acreage the Big Rapids Housing Commission owns on Mechanic Street. The application is due in October, but much writing is needed including support from the City and other agencies.

If funded, this program would start the development of the nearly 50 acres owned by the Commission and would be the first development in Big Rapids in many years.

POLICE INTERVIEWS

Police testing and interviews have been completed for the two vacancies. The next phase in the hiring process are scheduled 'ride alongs' with present officers before background checks and employment offers are made. It is hoped that decisions will be completed and the first officer start in March.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Police Division responded to 70 calls for service over the past week. This past week, members of the department helped interview potential new employees on the oral board for the open officer positions we are looking to fill.

The Fire Division responded to 15 Medical calls including a Cardiac Arrest in Grant Township. We also responded to 2 fire alarms, a small structure fire in Barton Township and assisted Big Rapids township on a small structure fire.

PARK & RECREATION

- The ice rink has opened. A grand opening is scheduled for next Wednesday, January 27 from 5:30 pm-6:30 pm. There will be hot chocolate and raffles for the kids. We hope you can make it.
- Coed Volleyball season begins this Sunday.
- Girls on the Run training is scheduled for next Saturday. We hope to see many new faces.
- Attended the DNR grant workshop in Grand Rapids. We hope to apply for a Passport Grant which will assist with finishing Mitchell Creek Park's Master Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

DIAL-A-RIDE –

251 Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

358 Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

707 (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (89) and Disabled (618) passengers of which 174 used the wheelchair lift to board

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

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

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

3,357 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, 7:30 am - 7:00 pm

4,806 Total Passengers

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

STREETS & PARKS –

Safety Topic: “Don’t get burned”

- Thawed a frozen fire hydrant, corner of Sheridan St and West Ave
- Sanded & salted streets, sidewalks, parking lots, alleys & Airport
- Cleaned Airport with blower
- Hauled snow from parking lots
- Picking up Christmas trees
- Filled potholes
- Replacing street name signs
- Fixed door lock at City Hall
- Finished hauling items and setting up at Ice Rink
- Water Plant staff reading meters
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks

MOTOR POOL –

- Staff vehicles & Miscellaneous Equipment:
 - 217 - fabricated lockable ladder rack for the top of truck
 - 101 - replaced rear tire for a broken rim
 - 106 - replaced rear brake chamber and brake light lens
 - replaced 6 sets of underbody blades
 - Front plows, replaced 3 different sets of hydraulic hoses, 1 cylinder and welded up a frame
- Busses:
 - 901 - repaired coolant leak
 - 903 - replaced rear brakes and 4 rear tires
 - 904 - did a grease service, replaced rear heater cooling fans.
 - 905 - replaced wipers
 - 906 - diagnosed coolant problem, delivered to dealer for warranty work

- 908 - diagnosed lack of power, replaced plugged exhaust filter and reprogrammed computer
- 909 - did a grease service

MAIN MAINTENANCE -

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

Stephen Sobers
City Manager