

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

February 5, 2016

BORTH PROPERTY

The City closed on the purchase of 21 acres of the Borth Property on Thursday. This land will be added to the Clay Cliffs park to provide complete access to the hills located in that nature preserve. In the future there could be some sledding hills developed and even a home or two if the City wishes to recover some of the purchase price of the acquisition. Perhaps as much as 6-8 acres could be developed for home sites with the remaining land. This will be a great addition to the City Park system.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mark Sweppenheiser and Aaron Kuhn led the discussion on the 2016/2017 Capital Improvement Program for the City. Most funds have adequate money for another year of service purchases for the Community. The General Fund continues to be marginal and struggles to maintain the support needed for long term viability.

FARMER'S MARKET

The Fair Food Network supplies a 'Double Up\$' program that allows customers to purchase fresh vegetables. The Big Rapids market has done a great job tying into this and other food programs, with the City serving as the fiduciary for the program. The 2015 Market report for the Network lists Big Rapids as one of the larger markets in the State distributing over \$11,739 dollars for needy purchasers. 367 transactions were handled during the year, including 69 new customers who entered and took advantage of the fresh fruit and vegetable program.

DUAL LICENSE

The AFSCME Union and Administration are trying to look into the future to prepare for potential automation of a water facility near the airport. This could result in substantially fewer labor needs to treat the water coming from the wells already there. Should that happen in the 2020s, there would be a need to 'convert' some of the present water operators to the wastewater side. Since it takes several years to fulfill both the testing and experience needs for utility operator's licenses, is not too early to start now. Together we have put together a proposal that could work if accepted by the union vote.

MINIMUM WAGE

Increasing minimum wage is projected to have a \$5,000 impact on the operation of the Fairman Pool this upcoming season. As the wage continues to rise over the next two years as well, this is a serious burden to carry for this amenity that already operates on a

deficit. Discussions will need to take place as the budget is being prepared concerning increasing revenue to assist with this cost.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Police Division responded to 77 calls for service over the past week. An unarmed robbery occurred in the 600 block of S. Michigan late Thursday evening. The suspect was known to the victim. Officers are attempting to contact him for an interview. Last weekend potential candidates rode with officers as part of the hiring process. Based on these and other factors, a few will be asked back for follow up interviews with Director Andrea Nerbonne.

The Fire Division responded to 17 calls for service over the past week.

PARK & RECREATION

Girls on the Run had their first coaches training this past weekend. This year, there will be ten Girls on the Run teams at the following schools: Brookside Elementary, Riverview Elementary, St. Peter's, St. Mary's, CCA, Weidman Elementary, Barryton Elementary, Mecosta Elementary, GT Norman and Trinity Elementary, St. Michael's. There will also be three Girls on Track teams at the following schools: Big Rapids Middle School, CCA, and Chippewa Middle School. Many thanks to the coaches that volunteer their time to make this program successful. Attached is the flyer for the program, which has been passed out at all schools.

Attended the Capital Improvement Project meeting for Public Works.

Attended the County Commission Board Meeting.

The Daddy Daughter Dance is Friday, February 5th at the Big Rapids Middle School.

CODE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

Violations:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| (3) Blight | (1) Disabled Vehicles |
| (2) Furniture | (8) Parking |
| (8) Signs | |

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

DIAL-A-RIDE –

240 Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

288 Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

753 (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (90) and Disabled (653) passengers of which 152 used the wheelchair lift to board

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

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

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

2,992 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

4,458 Total Passengers

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

STREETS & PARKS –

Safety Topic: “My Back is Killing Me”

- Plowed, sanded & salted streets, sidewalks, parking lots, alleys & Airport
- Filled potholes
- Cutting brush in alleys
- Used ice blades on gravel streets & alleys
- Replaced street name signs
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks

MOTOR POOL –

- Staff vehicles & Miscellaneous Equipment:
 - 318 sewer jet - replaced throttle cable
 - 319 tractor - repaired power steering hydraulic cylinder
 - 211 pickup truck - serviced, replaced all 4 tires and water pump
 - Replaced 7 sets of under body blades on plow trucks
- Busses:
 - 901 - replaced the serpentine belt
 - 904 - serviced and did a safety inspection, serviced transmission and wheelchair lift
 - 905 - did a grease service
 - 906 - delivered bus to dealership in GR for warranty work
 - 908 - serviced wheelchair lift

MAIN MAINTENANCE -

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

WWTP -

Safety Topic: “Arc Flash Safety”

- Mic Joynt and John Wright attended a Control Valve and Metering Pump class.
- Worked with Fleis & VandenBrink to review upcoming Plant needs, and finalize a list of necessary Capital Improvement Projects.
- 12 Wastewater CIP’s were written, submitted and then presented to the CIP Committee.
- Northwest Kent Mechanical diagnosed and replaced a faulty motor starter on the Blower Building rooftop furnace.
- Fabrication and assembly work continues, with a “Cherry Picker” lift, to be used for Digester motor lifting, removal and replacement.
- Following our last group discussion, draft modifications to Sewer Use Ordinance Chapter 52 have been completed by Eric Williams. A new review meeting will be necessary.
- Scheduled maintenance and load testing of the Plant Back-up Generator is complete. A shut-down and fault code revealed the need to replace the original 6 year-old batteries.
- Consumers Energy worked on-site with us, to collect baseline operational data on our Spencer Aeration Blowers, and Kaeser Digester Blowers.
- Windemuller has finished their portion of the wiring, which will operate 4 new Automatic Air Valves. Jay Norris is beginning work on necessary SCADA control logic.
- A successful start-up of the Automatic Air Valves has taken place. Staff assisted from Fleis & VandenBrink, Northwest Kent Mechanical, Integrated Controls, and Rotork.
- Conversation with Don Popma, of Biotech Agronomics, regarding current storage tank levels, Spring hauling and land-application plans.
- Received 4000 Gallons of Ferric Chloride from Kemira.

Stephen Sobers
City Manager