

# MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

**March 18, 2016**

**HYETT PALMA**

The downtown meetings and planning dominated the week with the consultants circulating around the town from Tuesday until Friday. The report will be analyzed in the upcoming days to review the next steps to be taken to implement the good ideas and to keep the town in quality form.

## **INDUSTRIAL PRETREATMENT PLAN**

Tom Berdinski visited the wastewater plant on Thursday after reviewing the copy of the Industrial Pretreatment Ordinance which was presented to the Commission at the last retreat session. Tom had many comments on our initiative to help in its implementation. The DEQ is quite pleased with our efforts to keep the plant in top shape and to fairly handle the business and high strength customers in Big Rapids.

## **ROAD PLANNING**

Todd Richter of Fleis and VandenBrink assisted in the planning of grant requests for future specialized road projects. Street paving projects will be submitted for consideration in each of the various categories of MDOT project planning. Todd also is handling the engineering estimates for the Passport Grant being sent to the DNR for improvements to Mitchell Creek Park.

## **MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**

It has been 15 years since the City formally reviewed its property and liability insurance coverage. For numerous years we have been with the Michigan Municipal League. However, the MMRMA assists Mecosta County and has been very competitive in the marketplace and indicates that they have many grant projects that they support, which helps communities and their employees become safer in the workplace. It is the intention of the City to bid out this coverage to determine what the marketplace is currently offering.

## **RETIREMENT**

Denny Vandawater announced his retirement effective at the end of the month after 27 years of dedicated service. Denny has been the quite steady employee at wastewater with good ideas and effective work skills. Denny also assisted Green township in their distribution system. Thanks for a great career with the City!!

## **PROMOTION**

The City appointed Steve Cook to the position of Water Plant Assistant Superintendent. Steve will be working under Dave Cushway in the new management arrangement taking Carmen Johnson's spot running the plant from a personnel and production point of view. Welcome Steve!!

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Fire Division responded to 85 calls for service over the past week. One of these was an overdose death in Green Township.

The Police Division responded to 88 calls for service over the past week. There was nothing of significance to report.

## **PARK & RECREATION**

- This is the last week for Girls on the Run sign ups. Some practices have begun. The next few weeks will be data entry and shirt ordering for the 5 K in June.
- Preparing for the Touch A Truck event at the Community Expo on April 30. Many groups are interested in participating.
- Attended the Regional Bike and Pedestrian Committee at MDOT. Learning how Grand Rapids is expanding their program and updating ordinances to progress bike lanes and use in the City. May 4 is National Ride your bike to school day.
- Open Gym basketball has changed its location. Monday and Wednesday nights from 8 pm-10 pm at the Big Rapids Middle School gym.

## **PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES**

### **DIAL-A-RIDE –**

**186** Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

**476** Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

**867** (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (121) and Disabled (746) passengers of which 218 used the wheelchair lift to board

**79** 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

**NO Safe Riders – Due to Spring Break.** Free rides from local establishments to anyone in the community on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights 12:00am to 2:30am.

**NO Ferris Shuttle Bus – Due to Spring Break.** 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.

**1,636** Total Passengers

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

### **STREETS & PARKS –**

**Safety Topic: “On the Job, Off the Job”**

- Crackseal
- Cleaned drains
- Graded alleys and streets
- Cleaned brush at Win Kellum
- Installed steel roof on DPW pole barn
- Fixed manhole at alley entrance behind JC Penney's
- Repaired water stack at 218 Monroe Ave
- Hanging the Artworks Banners from their Banner Project throughout the downtown
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks
- Cleaned greens from pots downtown
- Put up tennis nets and volleyball net
- Putting garbage cans into parks
- Set out some picnic tables

### **MOTOR POOL –**

- Staff vehicles & Miscellaneous Equipment:
  - 105 dump truck, diagnosed cargo tarp system, replaced power control relay box
  - 222 truck, replaced driver's door pins and bushings
- Police Cars:
  - 402 replaced the catalytic converters under warranty
  - 409 serviced and programmed 3 keys and fobs
- Busses:
  - 901 - serviced and did a safety inspection, replaced parking brake cables, serpentine belt and tensioner
  - 904 - serviced and did a safety inspection, replaced the exhaust filter for lack of power.
  - 905 - diagnosed charging system, replaced alternator

- 908 - serviced and did a safety inspection
- 909 - replaced parking brake cables and adjusted

### **MAIN MAINTENANCE -**

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

### **WWTP:**

#### **Safety Topic: “Abrasive Wheel Grinder Safety”**

- Plant flow and loading are back up to normal levels, following Ferris Spring Break. During break, very high influent phosphorus concentrations were seen. Floor stripping and cleaning are suspected, and John Fribley is discussing possibilities with Ferris Staff.
- City Staff met with Tom Berdinski (DEQ) to discuss his review of our new Draft Sewer Use Ordinance document. A great discussion has resulted in several positive revisions.
- Tom also looked at our clarifier scum pits and shared in a discussion about filamentous growth problems. He agrees with our plan to chlorinate the scum pits, as needed.
- Biotech is on-site and currently mixing the contents of our storage tanks. Hauling and land application will begin shortly.
- John Fribley is completing the Permit-Required “Acute Effluent Toxicity Annual Report” for the Big Rapids WWTP, which will be submitted to the DEQ by the end of this month.
- Northwest Kent Mechanical has completed the retrofit of all 6 new valves in our Digester Building pipe gallery. “Pull-Chain” gear-reduction actuators were installed, replacing the incorrect “Tee-Handle” actuators that came with the new valves.
- A rebuilt Siemens motor was installed in Digester Blower #1. The removed motor will be sent out for bearing replacement, which is much cheaper than a total rebuild.
- The Grit Trolley submersible pump was removed and un-clogged. After re-installation, it is back in operation and being progressively lowered, to avoid clogging.
- The WWTP Annual Report is complete, and has been submitted to City Staff.
- Installation of a new SDC thickened-sludge Pressure Switch assembly is in-progress.
- Correspondence and documentation in progress, for off-site disposal of pressed sludge solids at the Water Plant. As soon as paperwork is complete, the pressed sludge will be disposed of at the Pierson, MI Landfill.
- A new Throttle Assembly has been ordered, for the 250 KW Well-Head Generator.

- Quotes have been received, and a contractor has been chosen, to increase the size of the natural gas pipe, between the DTE meter and the Cummins engine.
- A quote is in progress, for an electrical disconnect box, containing proper “cam-lock” connections, at the Well-Head generator.
- In an effort to minimize down-time and cost, coordination of 3 contractors is in progress for 3 separate generator upgrades: New, larger gas piping installation, Throttle Assembly installation, and Electrical Disconnect “cam-lock” installation.
- Working with George Reagan (Fleis & VandenBrink) on several ongoing Water Plant projects. We just found out that Big Rapids is one of several Michigan communities chosen for a DEQ “Audit” of distribution system piping.
- Congratulations to Steve Cook, who has been promoted to the position of Water Plant Assistant Superintendent. We look forward to working with Steve, in this new role.
- Congratulations to Denny Vandawater, who has announced his retirement, effective March 31st. Denny has been an integral member of Wastewater and Lift Station operations for 27.5 years, and will be greatly missed. He has been a tremendous resource of “institutional knowledge” regarding Plant Operation, Plant Infrastructure, and Collection System Lift Stations. Please thank Denny and wish him the best!

Stephen Sobers  
City Manager