

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

August 12, 2016

ALLIED WASTE SERVICE

At the recent 'Alley Viability meeting' Matt Biolette of Allied commented that Big Rapids collected 3,200,000 pounds of garbage last year and an additional 600,000 pounds of recyclable materials. This represents a 17% rate which is above the national average of 14%. He also commented that recyclable markets are very soft and illustrated the difficulty indicating that bottled drinks now contain about ½ of the plastic material of yesteryear – but still require the same handling cost to recycle. This naturally cuts the financial return for selling plastic while keeping handling costs elevated...hence the need to subsidize recycling as a priority quality of life decision.

SCHOOL MEETINGS

The discussions continue with the school on the advisability of implementing a Recreational Authority for Big Rapids/Public Schools. Several meetings have been conducted to position the expectations of the two partners and some of the details under which the Authority would be operating. Discussions are very positive and will be helpful to guide future actions and directions if the program is implemented.

AIRPORT ADVISORY MEETING

It was a good year at the airport. Fuel sales were higher for both Jet A and 100 low lead fuel. Flight school training could be described as 'robust' for a small airport. More pilots also make for a positive future for the airport! Both the business and social side of airport activity was increased during this year.

PLAYSCAPE

In response to the Park Board's interest, the City employed a private inspection company to advise staff on the present condition of Playscape. The company visited the park and pronounced our facility in 'excellent condition'. Generally, after 20 years they reported that in most cases the wood was deteriorating. In our case however, maintenance by staff and with the help of the Ferris Hockey folks and others, annual inspection and maintenance/repair is scheduled. Staff were advised that the oldest wood playscapes in operation were approaching 30 years old.

HOLLAND PARK AND THE HOMETOWN HERO'S MEMORIAL

In addition to celebrating all branches of the military, the park has been approved to be a 'blue star' site. There are 88 of these in Michigan; which are located on a computer program; are visited often by military friends and family. The Big Rapids Garden Clubs initiated this designation and will be maintaining the park flower gardens.

DBA

Rex Schuberg has been elected President of the DBA for the upcoming year. Rex was a very positive leader several years ago and will return again to, with the City businesses and citizens, to make the downtown even more viable.

MAGNOLIA/IVES

The intersection of Magnolia and Ives has become very active since Ferris has connected the Student Center to this location and has closed Ferris Drive through campus. The additional traffic has encouraged citizens in the area to express their concern both to the City and University about the need for a control device. After much discussion and debate the City staff recommends the installation of a 4-way stop at that location. This traffic order will be on the agenda of the Commission for the upcoming meeting and will be ready to be installed before the fall semester begins.

MML DIVIDEND FOR LIABILITY AND PROPERTY

The MML insurance program, if claims are moderate, refund some of the premiums paid to their clients. The last several years have been good – as has this year. This week the City received a premium refund of \$20,828.

POLICE APPLICANTS

With the retirement of Director Andrea Nerbonne and promotion of new Director Jim Eddinger, a vacancy has been created in the police ranks. This week eleven officers were interviewed and four are being called back for a second time with the City. A selection will be made in the month of September when all the evaluation processes are completed.

PUBLIC SAFETY

In the past week, the Police Division responded to 64 calls for service. Nothing significant in nature occurred. On Friday, August 5th, investigators recovered a substantial amount of the money taken in the 5/3 bank robbery from July 20th. Investigators continue to work with the FBI and Norton Shores PD in relation to the robber, Anthony Loose. The United States Attorney General's Office has taken over the prosecution of this case.

The Fire Division responded to 18 calls for service over the past week.

Detective Brian Miller, Firefighters' Sean Wethington, Matt Kidd, Kidd's wife Kadee, Detective Tim Jacobs of the FSUDPS and Morley Firefighter Tyler Seaman, represented our local public safety departments in a 100-mile relay on Friday, into Saturday, last weekend. The Fred began in Cadillac and finished in Comstock Park. The race began at 10:00 pm Friday evening and ended around 3:30 pm on Saturday evening. The race was very challenging and rewarding for the participants.

Tuesday and Thursday this past week, members of the department presented to the first class of the Citizen Police Academy. Those presenting were Sergeant Liz West (history of the department), Officer David Flore (requirements to be a law enforcement officer and the FTO process), Retired Director Kevin Courtney (the history of the new building), Detective Brian Miller

(policing in a college town), Director Jim Eddinger (future goals of the department) and Officer Ryan Myers (being a police officer). The class continues next week on Tuesday and Thursday.

PARKS & RECREATION

- The Holland Park Veteran's Memorial dedication was held on Saturday, August 6 and the Garden Club held a Blue Star By-Way dedication on Wednesday, August 10.
- Attended the school board meeting to discuss Recreation Authority.
- Two new water aerobics instructors will begin working in the fall. Kathleen Lucas and Alexa Bryant will be the instructors for the fall and winter sessions.
- The Long family has been working towards a kid's manual for Clay Cliffs park and we look forward to the new booklet they will be promoting, which will encourage children to explore Clay Cliffs.
- Attended the Park and Recreation board meeting.
- The City picnic is next Thursday, August 19.

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

STREETS –

Safety Topic: "Hand Safety"

- Blacktop patch on Madison
- Crackseal done by contractor on Chestnut St to dead end, Lilac St, Chestnut St from River St. to Willow St, Oak St from Warren Ave to Willow St, Elm St from State St to River St.
- Set out cones for Veteran's Memorial event
- Swept downtown
- Trimmed alley and chipping brush west of Marion Ave and Bridge St
- Dug up water main and insulated it on 700 Chestnut St
- Cleaned up brush and wood by Riverwalk bridge
- Painted parking lots and crosswalks
- Trimmed brush away from Stop signs
- Seeded were sanitary sewer was repaired
- Setting up and preparing to paint Hemlock Park pavilion ceiling
- Repairing water stacks on West Ave
- Set out cones for Blue Star Highway event at Holland Park
- Putting out Farmers Market signs
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins
- Filled potholes
- Assisted with the sanitary sewer repair in the drainage ditch off Cherry St
- Assisted with moving voting machines to and from locations

MOTOR POOL –

- Staff vehicles & Miscellaneous Equipment:
 - 107 Dump truck, repaired tail gate latch assembly
 - 203 Pickup truck, repaired trailer wiring harness and connector
 - 226 Pickup truck, serviced and checked brakes
 - 302 Wheeled Loader, serviced and diagnosed noise-washed engine and radiator area, and repaired cooling fan shroud

- 303 Wheeled Loader, replaced leaky hydraulic line.
 - 311 Big air compressor, serviced
 - 318 Sewer jet, serviced
 - 554 Wing mower, replaced deck wing pins and bushings
 - 584 Front mower, service call, lifted mower with loader to put on trailer, returned to shop and replaced steering arm
- Police & Fire Vehicles:
 - 404 police car, replaced battery
 - 413 staff car, diagnosed and repaired air conditioning system
 - Busses:
 - 903 Bus, did a grease service and replaced shocks on wheel chair lift
 - 904 Bus, serviced and did a safety inspection, replaced 4 rear tires, replaced 2 micro switches and adjusted wheelchair lift.
 - 908 Bus replaced the wheel chair lift assembly

PARKS –

- Spraying for bees
- Put up corn banner
- Cleaned up parking lot behind Shooters
- Watering & maintaining flowers (baskets, pots, flowerbeds)
- Mowing & weed whipping
- Picked up trash downtown and in parks
- Cleaning public restrooms in Parks and at City Hall
- Prepping ball fields for games

MAIN MAINTENANCE -

- MISS Digs
- Miscellaneous reads

WATER PLANT –

Safety topic: “Know What’s Below: Call 811 Before You Dig”

- Calibrated chlorine analyzer at State Street booster station.
- Ran required samples for Northend Riverside Park well, after pump was repaired.
- Mowed lawns at Water Plant and Well House locations.
- Continued training Jim and Earl.
- Started the ERA proficiency tests in the Lab.

Stephen Sobers
City Manager