

MANAGER'S NEWSLETTER

MARCH 3, 2017

INDUSTRY VISITS

Annual visits to businesses in the City's Industrial Park began this week. Jim Sandy, Mecosta County Development Corporation, organizes the visits and includes the City Manager, Bill Kratz from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Jon Eppley from Michigan Works, Jennifer Heinzman from the Chamber and Steve Locke from the Mecosta Osceola Intermediate School District. Close contact with the community's industry leaders is vital to the success of Big Rapids and Mecosta County.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Considerable effort has been taken to draft a 6-year Capital Improvement Plan for the City. The plan is available on the City's website <http://www.cityofbr.org>. The City Commission is having a public hearing on March 6th, at 7:00 p.m., to hear input on the plan. The State requires municipalities to have a 6-year plan to be eligible for grants.

REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES (RRC)

The State has implemented RRC as another eligibility requirement for State grants.

RRC "certifies communities that integrate transparency, predictability and efficiency into their daily development practices. The RRC certification is a formal recognition that a community has a vision for the future and the fundamental practices in place to get there.

To be vibrant and competitive, Michigan communities must be ready for development. This involves planning for new investment and re-investment, identifying assets and opportunities, and focusing limited resources. Certified Redevelopment Ready Communities® encourage business attraction and retention, offer superior customer service, and have a streamlined development approval process making pertinent information available around-the clock for anyone around the world to view."

City staff has completed the required self-evaluation forms to be considered for compliance with this program.

COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The library celebrated the birthday of Dr. Seuss (Theodor **Seuss** Geisel) on Wednesday morning at Preschool Storytime, with refreshments. His books are on display and ready for checkout in the Children's Room.

The Grand Opening of the Big Rapids Community Seed Library was a great success with Ben Cohen as noted speaker. The Seed Library is open for library card holders to check out vegetable, flower and herb seeds.

On Monday, March 6th, Session I of the Google Cardboard Virtual Reality “Show and Tell” takes place at 3:30 PM. Bring your smartphone to use with a Google Cardboard 3D viewer and go for a virtual reality tour of some exotic and national locations.

March is “National Reading Month” – we are encouraging Big Rapids Community Library patrons and the public to enjoy a good book, new or old, in print or in digital format. The library has all forms of “books” to check out, even in digital format.

Next week at Preschool Storytime (on Monday and Wednesday), there will be “guest readers” from the community. Our guests will be the storytellers and share tales with the kids and parents, not just Mr. Howard.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- In the past week, the Police Division responded to 78 calls for service. There was nothing significant in nature to report.
- In the past week, the Fire Division responded to 17 calls for service.
- On Tuesday and Wednesday, the Fire Division had joint training with BR Township involving Consumers Energy and wildfires.
- On Thursday, Director Eddinger announced the department's plans to begin using social media, such as Facebook and Twitter to communicate with the community.
- Early Wednesday morning Deputy Jason Wieber of the Mecosta County Sheriff Office lost his battle with brain cancer. His funeral is taking place on Saturday, March 4th at 1 p.m. at Trinity Fellowship Evangelical Free Church in Big Rapids. May he rest in peace.

PARK AND RECREATION

- Received a grant from the Meceola Children’s Council in the amount of \$1,300 to benefit the Girls on the Run program.
- Met with Spectrum Health to discuss this year’s partnership with the Farmers’ Market—will provide bus rides and fruit/vegetable vouchers to those in need.
- Met with Shoe Sensation to discuss potential partnership to offer discounted shoes for Girls on the Run.

PUBLIC WORKS ACTIVITIES

DIAL-A-RIDE

207 Adult Riders - (\$2.00 Fare)

345 Children Riders - (\$1.00 Fare)

762 (\$1.00 Fare) - Seniors (130) and Disabled (724) passengers of which 191 used the wheelchair lift to board

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

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

53 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.

2,184 Ferris Shuttle Bus – Free rides to anyone on Campus, The new route has eight stops on campus-

East Campus Mailbox, Lot 28, Allied Health, Campus Community Center, Lot 4, Rock Cafe', Arts and Science, 7:30 am -7:00 pm

3,667 Total Passengers

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

DPW: STREETS

- Filled potholes
- Repaired charging station
- Changed banners downtown
- Cleaned drains
- Repaired stop sign at Venlo Drive
- Repaired drive on Mecosta Ave
- Repaired water patches
- Sanded and salted streets
- Checked and jetted sewers per normal daily and call ins

DPW: PARKS

- Picked up trash downtown and in parks
- Cleaned and maintained City Hall public restroom
- Painting barrels for the parks
- Painted sign posts for disc golf

MAIN MAINTENANCE

- MISS Digs

WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Safety topic: "Texting and Working Don't Mix"

- Checked generators.
- Ran customer samples.
- Mopped and buffed main hallway and lab floors.
- Recalibrated chlorine analyzers at plant and State Street booster station.
- Worked with Layne to finalize our well update project.
- Worked with Integrated Controls to replace our pressure transducer for our plant inlet flow pressure.
- Performed cathodic protection checks.
- Continued painting project in the High Service Pump Room here at the plant.

Mark Gifford
City Manager