



*Office of the City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer
Monthly Administrative Report
August 1, 2014*

The Police Department completed a busy July which entailed numerous special events that surrounded Blue Water Fest. Crowds appeared similar to years past but behavior of the participants was very good resulting in few arrests over the course of the festival. Due to the significant overtime strain of Blue Water Fest, Operation Covert was discontinued during the first two weeks of July. The program was re-initiated during the last half of the month, with 2 operations resulting in 9 arrests, 12 warrant attempts, 12 personal investigations and the confiscation of numerous drugs, cash and an Oldsmobile van for forfeiture.

Planned for August is the CAPURE 5k fundraiser (now part of the Color Craze Run August 1), Offshore Power Boat Races, National Night out (August 5th) and the Float Down (August 17th). National Night Out this year boasts over 12 block parties across the City bringing neighbors, police and community leaders together for the goal of taking back our streets from criminals. Also planned are five more Covert operations and the continued focus of the NET Unit on crime plaguing our neighborhoods.

The Fire Division provided support resources for the annual Blue Water Fest by staffing EMS utility vehicles in cooperation with Tri-Hospital EMS and an Engine to protect the fireworks launch zone. There was a personnel transfer and a promotion recognized with Captain Jeffery Tucker returning to suppression on shift and Captain Larry Warren assuming the role of Fire Marshal. Captain Mark Ford was promoted to the rank of Battalion Chief and continues his assignment of shift commander. Pre-planning of response to residential loft properties and the flow testing of hydrants and fire hose continue to be priorities in the department. Additionally, we will be staffing and doing event planning for the Offshore Powerboat Races, and the annual PH Float Down event. On July 28th and 29th, the department is conducting promotional testing to fill a vacant position of Lieutenant.

To date in the month of July, the Fire Division responded to 340 calls for service including the following building fires with extensive damage: 1112 Water Street-Electrical fire in attic and 2130 Parkdale Lane-Kitchen fire resulting from careless cooking.

The Code Enforcement Unit is into the peak of the enforcement season. Due to the lack of rain recently, there has been a slowing of tall grass complaints to some extent. We recently had an entire Administrative Hearings Bureau session devoted to paint compliance citations. The CEU also recently began to enforce the City ordinances in regards to the clearing and cleaning of alleyways in the city. Homeowners who live adjacent to their respective alleyways are responsible for keeping them clean and brush free. Following is a snapshot of the current activity in the CEU –Please note the compliance rate is now up to 73.1%

INSP. #	July 2014 Tickets Issued	2014 Open Compla ints	2014 Closed Compla ints	2014 Total Compla ints	Compli ance %
1	42	81	229	312	73.4
2	76	88	319	424	75.2
3	68	64	216	291	74.2
4	32	64	231	303	76.2
5	43	81	144	227	63.4
TOTALS	261	378	1,139	1,557	73.1

The Clerk's office continued their focus on preparing for the August 5 election. They trained over 60 election inspectors during the month during several training sessions. They have issued 877 absentee ballots to date, which is slightly higher than the final absentee ballots issued in a similar election four years ago. None of the regular races are contested so the four proposals may be increasing interest in the voting process. The prediction is for a 20% overall voter turnout. Hopefully our predictions are way off, but rest assured the office is ready for 100 voters or 20,000 voters.

The Clerk's office staff also provides various clerical responsibilities to the Beautification Commission as needed or requested. Due to a recent change in the officers serving, Sue Child attended their July meeting to discuss and offer assistance with better defining their yearly budget and to help improve their expense reimbursement procedure. A portion of this meeting was dedicated to the judging and subsequent notification of award recipients for the Year of the Year awards. The awards will be presented at the Council's August meeting.

It was interesting to learn that the Beautification's 9-member board is responsible for the coordination and planting of 24 flower beds throughout the City, which also includes the backbreaking task of weeding and maintaining the beds. This is truly a committed group of individuals and I have a newfound respect for their commitment of time and efforts to beautify our city.

The Clerk's office also processed two Going-Out-of-Business permits; one for Forever Green & Gifts and another for Wilton's TV & Appliance. The businesses will be missed. And, as previously notified, the taxicab licenses for American Diplomat have been revoked.

Sidewalk permits were authorized for MDOT regarding the intersection of Water and Military project. We issued letters of final acceptance for Water Filtration Plant isolation valve, WWTP Wet Weather Flow Management, River Street Marina Concrete Repairs, and North Service Center Security Fence projects. Staff attended a meeting of the St. Clair County Solid Waste Management Planning Committee. Lapeer County has requested St. Clair County accept solid waste from their county. St. Clair County must amend the Solid Waste Management Plan to

permit the importation of this solid waste. All plan amendments must be approved by 67% of the 32 municipalities in the County. The St. Clair County Planning Commission will be discussing this proposed action in late summer or early fall of 2014. If the Board of Commissioners approves the plan amendment in November of 2014, it may be presented to our City Council in December of 2014 or January of next year. We participated in a design and planning kickoff meeting with Blue Water Transit and its consultants. Staff met with the MDEQ to discuss the wording of the City of Port Huron waste water treatment plant's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. It is critical that the MDEQ recognizes that the City cannot complete its CSO control plan until the Blue Water Bridge Plaza project is complete.

Construction is complete and the following roads are open to traffic: Riverside Drive from Sanborn to Pine Grove and Sanborn from 10th Avenue to Stone Street. The Nern Area contractor has completed the installation of underground utilities in Nern Street and the streets to the south of Nern. The Contractor is currently installing curb and gutter and preparing roads for paving. Pamar Construction is planning to begin construction on Stone Street between Washington and Lincoln the third week of August. The City opened bids for the milling and resurfacing of Thomas Edison Drive and Sedgwick Street. We plan to take this contract to City Council for their consideration in August. City Council awarded a contract to James P. Contracting, Inc. to mill and resurface streets in the following areas: Northern Woods Phase I, Aspen Dr. Area, and Ramblewood. The contract documents are being processed. We opened bids for the reconstruction of Riverview: between 15th Street and 19th Street. The bids were 36% higher than anticipated. Staff contacted St. Clair County Road Commission (SCCRC) to discuss their bidding experience this season. In the recent months the Road Commission has seen bids that are 8% to 15% higher than anticipated. We plan to repackage this project and re-bid it this winter.

Asphalt crews completed over 110 tons of asphalt patching. The crack sealing crews were working on Joanne Court and a section of Riverside Drive. Our crews cleaned and repainted the tunnel under the Seventh Street Bridge. Crews began the second round of street sweeping. The staff also installed emergency road closures due to downed power lines.

Crews completed the installation of several no parking zones. We repaired numerous damaged and vandalized signs throughout the City. The crews closed streets and performed clean up activities for the Rotary Parade and Blue Water Fest activities. The staff will be reinstalling a pedestrian signal assembly at Garfield and Stone.

Staff outfitted one new patrol car. We experienced a major breakdown on the Elgin street sweeper. Our mechanics completed an in-house rebuild of the vacuum system. The mechanics performed scheduled preventative maintenance (P.M.) on many pieces of equipment. We have no backlog of equipment needing preventative maintenance.

The Water Treatment Plant staff investigated various flow monitoring equipment. The goal is to replace aging meters with upgraded equipment that will improve operating efficiencies and reduce operating costs at the plant. Our meter technicians are working to gain access to those locations that have not received the new automated meter reading equipment. This effort is paying off as many property owners are now allowing us access to install this equipment. The

sewer collection crews continued to perform sewer cleaning and repairing failing catch basins. The water distribution crews worked with vendors to provide safe drinking water for special events including Blue Water Fest, Sand Fest, and the Southside Music Festival. The water crews also work closely with the water office to coordinate monthly shut-offs.

The Human Resources Department is currently accepting employment applications for Police Officers, Police Cadets and School Crossing Guards. We currently have one Police Officer opening that we hope to fill in the near future.

Participation in the Retiree Drug Subsidy (RDS) Program is managed internally by the H.R. Department and is an ongoing process. This time of year is when we start a new application for fiscal year 2014/2015, request payment for 2013/2014, and reconcile our 2012/2013 application. This program is offered through Medicare and, since the City provides a prescription drug benefit for our retirees, we are able to participate in this program. Based on the prescription drug claims that are processed on behalf of our Medicare eligible retirees, the City receives a percentage of the cost we spend back through this plan. Since 2006, the total cost reimbursed to-date is over \$1,100,000. Our reimbursement for 2013/2014 will be reduced by 2% due to a mandatory reduction in Federal spending, but we still anticipate between \$70,000 and \$80,000 for 2013/2014 reimbursement. All reimbursement money received through the RDS plan is credited to the fringe benefit fund to help offset retiree healthcare costs.

Health & Safety training is ongoing particularly for our Streets, Utilities, Parks, Forestry, Cemetery and Recreation employees. All new City employees receive a general safety orientation as well. During the month of June we completed non-CDL drug and alcohol training for all non-CDL drivers as part of a program agreed to through contract negotiations. All employees belonging to the Utility Workers Unions (DPW, Parks & Recreation and Supervisory Group) now participate in a Random Drug & Alcohol Program, effective July 1, 2014.

HR staff enjoyed visiting with a group of youth volunteers that were in Port Huron as part of a mission trip. They were painting and caulking a home on Minnie Street, as part of a project that was organized by Kim Harmer. It was interesting to learn where they were from and hear what chores were on their agenda for the day. We thanked them for their help in one of our neighborhoods and dropped off some refreshments that I'm sure they appreciated since it was a very hot day.

The Planning Department met with Dan Casey of the EDA and representatives from Troy and Southfield regarding the potential creation of a Michigan SMART Zone within our existing Industrial Park to create/attract technology sector. Anticipate formal requests in September for consideration. Staff also met with two neighborhood representatives from Court Street/Union Street neighborhood to discuss neighborhood redevelopment plans. Limited funds are available for temporary street design initiatives, alley restorations, continued rehab grants and incentives for homeownership. They will meet in September to begin programs. They also secured a vacant lot from the county at Court/8th for a potential neighborhood garden. They are awaiting amendments from a developer for additional site work under the approved Brownfield Plan at the Water Street Hotel/Marina project and will need to postpone the public hearing scheduled for August 11th Council meeting to the September meeting.

The Inspection Division reviewed and did site visits of construction projects: Fueling Station at Kroger, Renovation of 26,500 square feet at Marwood Manor and the County Convention Center. They also reviewed potential code cases and filed "Blighted Property Notifications" anticipating 4-5 demolitions this fall as funding becomes available.

The Rental Certification Division did conversion amendments from the Main Frame to BS&A software for billing procedures which is now complete after a two year effort by staff and the IT Department. Late fees on annual bills have now been assessed and we are working on a system to collect outstanding civil infractions (tickets), tracking non-payment, and revoking rental certifications if necessary.

The Community Development Division processed 30 of the 100 paint vouchers issued to date. Each voucher is good for 4 free gallons of exterior paint. They also processed eight housing rehab grants and 5 down payment assistance grants. They are in the process of identifying 8-10 alleys for restoration in the early fall. Restoration includes re-grading and new stone. This is done in partnership with Code Enforcement Officers and Neighborhood Associations. They have reviewed and mapped potential county tax foreclosure properties for a second auction if grant funds are available. Properties are acquired, demolition of structures, split or sold to adjacent property owners or used for public purposes. They also completed a two day Environmental Review with HUD representatives.

This month has brought much fun through the Recreation Department. With over 350 enrolled in swim lessons in the second session and so many kids swimming every day, it has been a great season. There has also been a ton of a participation in our FREE movies in the parks, sports programs, Kids Days Out to Play, Summer Day Camp and summer education enrichment classes as kids get ready to head back to school. The Recreation Department has also, in partnership with the Port Huron Area School District, served hundreds of breakfasts and lunches every day for children in our community at six different locations.

On August 1st we will hold our second annual Color Craze in cooperation with the Port Huron Police Department. We have approximately 600 runners this year. With this year's proceeds going to Give New Life to Lakeside Beach and the CAPTURE program, we are very thankful for all the community support.

Next week starts Rockin' the Rivers at Kiefer Park. It is so exciting to provide this great community event for the 5th year. Rockin' the Rivers is something you don't want to miss with FREE music on the water every Thursday in August at 6:00 p.m. It will be a year you don't want to miss. Come have one of the famous Ernie burgers or just enjoy the family activities. There is something for everyone.

The cemetery has performed 22 services this month. The crew continues to remove and enforce items that are not conforming to the cemetery rules. With the new enforcement of these rules, cemetery staff has been very busy with both people complaining of the new enforcement and people happy with the new look of the cemetery. In September it is our plan to have the first

Friends of Lakeside Cemetery meeting. It is the hope that this group will help us in suggestions and assistance with future projects in the cemetery.

The Parks and Forestry Division works hard every day keeping the parks cut and looking good. Forestry has been busy with trimming and storm tree removal with over 24 trees taken down in July. Parks crews prepped and maintained ball diamonds for three very large tournaments in July. One of the tournaments was a state tournament that brought many players and spectators to Port Huron.

The kayak launch will be arriving the second week of August and, if all goes according to schedule, will be installed by the third week in August. On August 20, Port Huron Parks and Recreation will be on the DNR grant board agenda to present to the DNR board about Lakeside Beach grant. The grantees will be announced in October and until then we will continue to work on our fundraising efforts for this project.

The Information Technology Department was involved in a number of activities. We continued development of Cemetery Application with Clerk's Office. We completed geolocating of all grave sites in Lakeside Cemetery and Allied Veteran's Cemetery and added a mapping feature to the City web site Cemetery Search page.

We began work with the Streets Department on a prototype of a sign inventory application for all road signs and traffic control devices.

We are evaluating options to improve network connectivity with Bancroft Street Site to support new RoadSoft/GBA application. As part of that, we have received fiber proposals from Comcast and AT&T and are investigating higher speed wireless options.

We completed changes to payroll system required by July 1st changes to account for sick time and medical leave.

During July the Income Tax Division finished the process of reconciling returns that had errors in withholding amounts. We also sent notices to any companies that have not filed the required employee withholding information or have not remitted the full amount withheld. We completed sending initial notices to current year tax return filers where issues remain outstanding. We also requested information from the State of Michigan that will allow us to begin our annual compliance efforts.

The Accounting Division completed and paid the special one percent payroll to employees during July. We updated our list of automatic monthly accounting entries for the new fiscal year. These entries include budget transfers, administrative charges and automatic wage splits for those salaried employees whose wages are charged to more than one fund or activity.

The Assessing Office held the Board of Review for July. This resulted in over twenty residences being taken off the tax rolls as a result of them being owned by disabled veterans. The Treasury Office began the process of refunding these taxes for 2013. The City's portion will be over \$15,000.

The Director of Finance and Controller provided assistance as needed to the City Manager as he completed his initial baseline assessment of City finances. The Director of Finance performed an initial analysis of trends in water usage for the year ended June 30, 2014.

The City Manager has been meeting with the developers of City Flats Hotel and the Sperry's building to discuss the progress of these projects. We are hopeful that the final financial components of these projects fall into place in the coming weeks. It now appears the developers are exploring a joint venture that would include the old National Bank building as well. These discussions are ongoing and we will send out an electronic briefing to the Council when new information is available.

This past month City Manager also attended the Michigan Local Government Management Association training sessions in Bay City. The classes focused on financial planning, brownfield developments and economic development. It was also a great networking time with fellow managers from around the State.

The City Manager also hosted several meetings with MDOT and various department heads regarding the Bridge Plaza Project. It appears MDOT is now anticipating some form of funding within the next few fiscal years. Discussion also took place on property MDOT may not need and the possible redevelopment of those vacant properties. Nothing is set in stone yet, but it does appear some property could become opportunities for new development.

Finance Director Ed Brennan and the City Manager also held a roundtable discussion with the Times Herald Editorial Board to discuss the City's financial headwinds and a general overview of our operations. The discussion consisted of the same presentation made to Council in July. We felt it was important to ensure that they had the facts, as sometimes their editorial page can be lacking them.

The City Manager and Department heads are working to develop a Ten Point Plan of Action for the Council to review in August. This plan will be a blueprint for the next three years of City government, focusing on the goals already adopted by the Mayor and Council. We hope to package these goals in an easy to read report and plan. We will email a rough draft when completed and before it is presented at the August Council meeting.

Sincerely,



James R. Freed
City Manager
Chief Administrative Officer