



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

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In September, the Police Department began the trial of Judy Higley-Zuehlke who is charged with the death of John Allen. Allen was found dead in his home on February 3, 2014. The trial is expected to take two weeks. She faces charges of second-degree murder, lying to a peace officer in a violent crime investigation, concealing the death of an individual and tampering with evidence.

Training is underway on the major changeover in the Police Department's Record Management System (RMS). The training is expected to be completed by the end of September/beginning two weeks of October. The department is switching from Visionaire to CLEMIS which is expected to greatly enhance record keeping, report writing, criminal database searches and personnel efficiency while lowering costs to the City. Actual implementation of the RMS is scheduled to take place over the next few months.

Operation Covert finished its expenditure of funds with one last operation scheduled for September 27, 2014. The program has been highly successful and has resulted in direct proactive policing in the neighborhoods. Federal grant dollars have been approved for similar operations in 2015.

The police department joined with the City of Port Huron Recreation Department to sponsor the Color Run with proceeds going in part to the CAPTURE program. CAPTURE is also preparing for another major fundraiser held annually in October -- the CAPTURE spaghetti dinner. This year's event will be held on Tuesday, October 14, 2014 at the Seaway Terminal, 2336 Military from 4-8 pm. The event costs \$10 per person with proceeds going directly to the CAPTURE program.

Calls for service for August 2014 decreased by 5% from July, but increased 6% from August 2013. September numbers are not available at this time. Trends typically show calls for service increase during the warmer summer months, and decrease as the weather become cooler.

The fire department attended all fire drills conducted to date at each of the school buildings as part of new reporting requirements for fire, tornado and lock down safety drills and walked each of the buildings with school staff to verify compliance with applicable fire codes to assure the safety of all students and staff.

Calls for service since last month's report included two successful water rescues from the St. Clair River. On August 30<sup>th</sup>, a male who jumped in to swim in the area of the Thomas Edison Parkway was rescued by staff aboard the DPS-rescue craft when he became caught in the current and was unable to make it back to shore. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, crews responded to the aid of two fishermen in the area of the YMCA who were drifting in the

water while holding onto their 16 foot boat that had capsized. All three of the above victims were brought aboard Rescue Boat 1 and were transferred to EMS for evaluation of mild hypothermia. The department has responded to 282 calls for service to date in September including structure fires at the following addresses:

- 1817 Kern Street-A single family residence sustained damage when the furnace became overheated by electrical current during a storm.
- 607 Taylor Street-An apartment in a multiple family dwelling sustained damage to the kitchen area as a result of careless cooking.

Careless cooking continues to be a significant cause of residential fires. The fire inspection program continues with 21 inspections completed to date for September.

In September thus far, Code Enforcement has had 203 open complaints. This is a drop in number as people are starting to get the message and cold weather approaches. We backed off further assisting the elderly resident at 1304 White Street who has made it clear she no longer wants assistance. We created yard signs for Harrison Pointe Neighborhood Watch who has been cutting a few vacant lots in the City on their own. This saves the City money since we don't recoup a majority of the money we pay out to contractors to have the grass cut. Corporate Counsel aided us in approving our draft of the 2015 Contractor Contract and brought us a win on our first Circuit Court Appeal case against Todd Barcume in Judge Kelly's courtroom.

In October, most inspectors will start the seasonal transition to three days a week as the winter months approach. We will begin seeking orders to tow abandoned cars left in people's yards and work toward implementing an alley clean-up sponsored by Community Development. We will begin preparing hundreds of landscaping tickets/invoices in November, creating orders that reflect the contractor cost as well as the fines. We will be awaiting the resolution of a 2013 paint case at 1015 Court Street which is scheduled for an appeal in District Court. In addition, we are looking for a way to help out the community on Make a Difference Day, October 25<sup>th</sup>.

The City Clerk's office staff is responsible for the record keeping of cemetery records; however, our involvement is more than just entering the records. Burial services, sale of plots, receiving of footing orders and ordering of plaques are received through the Clerk's office and coordinated with cemetery personnel. Most people contact our office for cemetery-related questions. Last month, we received 19 burials service orders, sold 7 graves/niches and received over 31 footing orders. We receipted over \$16,000 in cemetery charges. Also, Pat Kingsbury has been helping us improve our electronic records by entering over 1,000 records previously kept on index cards.

The Election Commission also met regarding the election and we have since notified over 75 inspectors of their assignments. We have performed the required testing of our 12 tabulators for ballot and computer programming accuracy and will mail over 1,100 absentee ballots this week. Voter registration activities also included about 650 voters changing their address by either moving in, out of or from one address to another.

Other activities in the Clerk's office included the renewal of trash trucks and taxicabs, meeting with two individuals who want to set up kayak rental operations next year (adjacent to the new kayak launch and the other in the Riverside Boat Launch area). We also processed 16 requests for public records, 5 peddler licenses, 1 transient merchant license and 1 special liquor license event application.

The Department of Public Works (DPW) Administration met with Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) permit administration staff in Lansing, Michigan. Representatives of the Michigan Municipal League and two other communities were present at the meeting. The persons representing the communities expressed concerns regarding the proposed permit language. The proposed permit language includes new requirements regarding MDEQ oversight of the City's ongoing asset management plan and staffing at our facility. These requirements are very proscriptive and could result in significant costs to the City to implement as proposed.

We completed the final draft of the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) orphan well closure specifications and bidding documents. This document was submitted to the City's attorney for review and was approved for bidding. BWATC currently has the project advertised for bids.

Bob Clegg attended the St Clair County Solid Waste Management Planning Committee meeting. The committee is continuing the process to amend the County's Solid Waste Management Plan to allow the importation of solid waste from Lapeer County. Bob also represented the City at the St. Clair County Transportation Study Committee Meeting.

The DPW administrative staff worked with the rate consultant to provide information for water and sewer rate review.

The Michigan Municipal League asked for our input on Senate Bill 281 which would amend Public Act 51 to provide for additional funding for communities that own and operate movable bridges. We provided comments on this proposed legislation.

DPW Engineering staff continued working on various construction projects. The Nern Street Area contractor has completed the concrete work in the project area. The base course of asphalt on Nern Street and the streets to the south of Nern are paved. Base course of asphalt is planned for the last week of September for the street north of Nern Street. Lawn restoration on Nern Street and the streets south of Nern Street is continuing. Underground work is continuing on Stone Street between Washington and Lincoln. The Engineering staff held a preconstruction meeting for the Thomas Edison Drive and Sedgwick Street project. The milling and resurfacing of Thomas Edison Drive and Sedgwick Street is expected to be completed by the end of October. We conducted a public meeting with residents who live within the Northern Woods Phase I, Aspen Drive and Ramblewood construction areas. ADA sidewalk ramps are being removed and replaced in the Northern Woods Phase I areas. The contractor is also working on miscellaneous curb and gutter, along with grading of the roads. The Engineering staff also held a preconstruction meeting with Raymond Excavating, the contractor who was awarded the Pedestrian Bridge replacement project and they anticipate the bridge will be fabricated by the

end of October. The engineering staff worked on the design of improvements to Sanborn Street between Stone Street and Gratiot and Stone Street from Pine Grove to Thomas Edison Drive. Both of these projects will be partially funded with federal transportation grants. Staff also worked on the design of improvements to the MOC back deck project and the Riverside Drive project. The sidewalk contractor performed ADA ramp installations and utility cut repairs at various locations.

The DPW street maintenance crews completed crack sealing on Riverside Drive from Sanborn Street to Garfield Street along with Division Street from 10<sup>th</sup> Street to 24<sup>th</sup> Street. They are currently crack sealing on Gratiot Avenue at Elmwood heading toward State Street. Crews did routine alley grading and asphalt patching at various locations. Staff mowed several City-owned vacant lots that are not included in the City's annual mowing contract. The vendor delivered 4000 tons of salt, there is still 43 tons to receive and store. At MDOT's request, street crews completed repairs in the 2800 block of Electric Avenue. DPW crews cleared tree branches that were obstructing the view of stop signs on our roadways. Crews completed a limited amount of street sweeping.

DPW traffic control crews responded and replaced several storm damaged signs. Our electrician was called out for lightning damage to traffic signals as well as completing major street light work in the Sherman Woods area due to lightning damage. Crews fabricated several signs for the recreation and police departments for waterway related issues.

The motor vehicle pool staff stayed on schedule with their preventative maintenance list. They completed the yearly inspection of the trucks for winter snow removal. Technicians completed a major overhaul of the pins and bushings on the cemetery backhoe. Technicians completed outfitting one detective vehicle for service. Technicians have started installing snow tires on the police cruisers; three out of fourteen have been completed.

The Water Filtration Plant staff has begun to install the chemical feed monitor that was authorized for purchase at the August City Council meeting. Staff is also performing maintenance cleaning of the low lift intake wells. Proposals were reviewed for the replacement of north effluent valve at the Water Filtration Plant; however, the price submitted by all the contractors came in at a cost higher than expected so we have decided to put the project on hold at this time until funds can be identified. Staff is now working with Engineers to draft a request for proposal for consultant services for the painting of the north elevated water storage tank.

The Waste Water Treatment staff had a planning meeting to discuss various purchases and maintenance projects that are identified in the current budget. The Waste Water Treatment staff also has been working on maintenance repairs to the internal piping of the biosolids storage tanks.

The sewer collection crews continued with sewer cleaning and making repairs to failing catch basins. The Meter Technicians are working closely with the Water Office staff to install the new automated meter reading equipment. Those customers that have not had the automated meter reading equipment installed received a manual read charge on their bill. So far we have seen

approximately 30 percent of those customers with the manual read charge respond by scheduling an appointment to update their metering equipment

During the month of September, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for Police Officers, School Crossing Guards, and Seasonal & Temporary Laborers. All posted positions are part-time with the exception of Police Officers. We currently have two full-time openings for Police Officers that we expect to fill in the near future. In addition to accepting employment applications, September is always a busy month for processing separation paperwork for the employees that worked at the Recreation Department during the summer months.

Our Retirement Plan Specialist from ICMA Retirement Corporation (ICMA-RC) will be onsite September 29 & 30<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>. Appointments are available for employees that participate in the ICMA-RC to review their plan or for those that are thinking about enrolling. Additionally, employees are offered the opportunity to attend a Lunch & Learn session on September 30<sup>th</sup> or October 1<sup>st</sup>, titled "It's Not Too Late To Save". The Lunch & Learn will be presented by a Certified Financial Planner also from ICMA-RC. Retirement Specialists from ICMA-RC are typically onsite in the fall and spring of each year. Individual appointments are available for City employees that are enrolled in ICMA-RC.

Notices were sent out to all full-time employees to remind them about the City's policy on vacation and personal holiday accumulation / carryover since we are entering into the last quarter of 2014.

Health and safety training is ongoing. Training is conducted for new hires, for employees that change jobs or as a refresher course, when required. During the month of September we conducted respiratory training and forklift training for those employees that required it at the Water Filtration Plant and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The Planning Department held a neighborhood meeting and have begun the process for possible creation of a locally designated historic district for the River Park Neighborhood (Pine Grove Park to the north, Glenwood to the South, Pine Grove to the West and the St. Clair River to the East). A locally designated district will assist in preserving exterior architectural details and designs, assist in grant funding applications for exterior renovations and signage and will add to the growing sense of pride of the residents and property owners.

They also completed the material required for the SmartZone application to the State and anticipate starting the process to complete extension of SmartZone boundaries and procedures for joint LDFA as soon as official approval from the MEDC is received sometime in October. Staff met with State MEDC and MSHDA representatives to discuss several economic development projects that may emerge and explored grant resources.

The Community Development department is continuing with applications, inspections and homeowner meetings while implementing housing rehab programs, exterior paint programs and homeownership initiatives. They are prioritizing a property list from the County in preparation for a second public auction in late October. This would allow the City to use CDBG resources to

acquire 1-2 vacant homes in need of demolition and then offer the vacant lot to adjacent property owners as we have successfully done in the past. They are preparing promotional materials for upcoming winter programs, assisting Operation Transformation in preparations for "Make a Difference Day" annual clean up and prioritizing alley clean up projects for October completions.

Rental Certification employees inspected over 155 rental units and responded to 10 complaints, completed 2 court cases and offered rehabilitation assistance to 5 property owners.

The Inspection Department issued and monitored over 85 permits, completing site plan reviews for several large construction projects including Baker Student Housing for 17 units as well as preparing and inspecting potential code cases for October and November.

Now that fall is here the Parks and Recreation summer programs are over and we gear up for fall programs. September has brought about our Fall Open House to highlight our fall programs, closing of pools, and bath houses. This is the time we work on cleaning, regrouping and planning for the fall season. The kayak launch dedication was this month along with the Blue Water Young Professionals Bench and Bike Rack ribbon cutting ceremony. This is the time of year we start looking at applying for grants and start looking for money for the next season. As you know, we received our preliminary scoring for the DNR Lakeside project of 320 of 520 possible points. Nancy will be working on bringing up that score before final scoring in November.

In the cemetery, we start to finish footings before winter, work on winterizing areas and removing trees that are not healthy and hazardous to the cemetery. The cemetery performed 19 services in the month of September.

The Forestry crew has been busy with the clean up of downed trees and limbs/brush from the Labor Day wind storm along with five days of picking up brush along curb lines for our residents. They removed 10 large trees (trunk diameter greater than 36", several were 100 feet in height or more). These trees were so large they required us to hire a crane in order to remove several of the trees over houses that sustained roof damage from broken trees caused from the same storm. Brush season is upon us and we have already picked up 12 large brush/branch requests. This new program is working very well and helping to save costs to the city. The Parks crew continues in their mowing of all the 35 parks and many other miscellaneous City properties. They also are putting new safety surfaces at many parks. The Parks crew also continues to work on an inventory and assessment of each park so that in the spring we are aware of projects that need to be completed.

In September the Information Technology Depart replaced the desktop computers in the Police Records area which essentially completes the migration from Microsoft XP. We also began testing the communication options that will be required for the Police Departments move to CLEMIS.

During September, the Income Tax Division completed sending Proposed Assessments to employers with outstanding withholding issues. We began our annual compliance efforts

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The City Manager, Director of Finance and the DPW Director have held numerous meetings with the City Attorney to review the options for the water and sewer rate adjustments. The City Attorney has brought in a third party rate expert to review our rates and make recommendations. This report and a legal review will be presented at the next Council work session, which we expect to be held in middle to late October.

The Seaway East/West Neighborhood Watch held their meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and hosted the City Manager as their speaker. It was an excellent time to share what the City is working on and why, and to field questions and concerns from residents on their turf. They were supportive of the holistic approach to community and economic development the City is undertaking.

This past week a meeting was also held with Chuck Reid and his partners, the developers of the City Flats Hotel. It now appears that we will, in fact, be getting a City Flats in downtown Port Huron, with the hopes of being open by Boat Week 2015. However, the location of the proposed hotel is going to change. They are siting a new building also in the downtown. I cannot officially disclose that location now, but I am sure you can all take a good guess. They now have a second development for the Sperry's Building. They have submitted renderings and engineered drawings of the second development for the purpose of permitting to the Planning Department. The new development has a price tag of \$6,000,000. In total these two combined developments will be roughly around \$20,000,000 of investment into the downtown. We are hoping to have everything finalized in a week or so, with a public announcement. I have been asked to keep the details of the new development confidential.

Sincerely,



James R. Freed  
*City Manager*  
*Chief Administrative Officer*



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

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In October, the Police Department concluded the trial of Judy Higley-Zuehlke who is charged with the death of John Allen. Allen was found dead in his home on February 3, 2014. The trial took about two weeks to complete. She was found guilty on charges of second-degree murder, lying to a peace officer in a violent crime investigation, concealing the death of an individual and tampering with evidence.

The Department held its annual CAPTURE spaghetti dinner on October 14, 2014. The dinner is one of the major fundraisers for the CAPTURE secret witness hotline and once again was well attended and supported by the community. This year the Department served over 350 dinners and raised \$3500 in its effort. All monies raised go directly to CAPTURE and funds tips paid out to callers who offer information that leads to an arrest or solution of a crime.

Calls for service for September 2014 decreased by 8% from August 2014, but increased 9% from September 2013. Decreases from the prior month were seen in domestics (-27%), larcenies (-32%), narcotic complaints (-45%) and suspicious persons (-25%). October numbers are not available at this time. Trends typically show calls for service increase during the warmer summer months, and decrease as the weather becomes cooler.

The Department has increased its activity in the local schools, including a daily walk-thru by patrol officers, assistance with local lockdown drills and hosting procedural meetings with the PHASD's new Administration. The Port Huron Police Department continues to support the DARE program, and is the only Department in St. Clair County still maintaining this vital program. The program not only focuses on teaching our youth about drugs, alcohol and poor decisions, but also fosters a strong relationship between students and the Police.

The week of October 5-11<sup>th</sup> was Fire Prevention week, with this year's theme of "Smoke Detectors Save Lives-Test Yours Daily". Through various station tours, safety talks and school visits, the DPS-Fire Division provided safety messages to over 800 children and 187 adults this month. The Fire Division partnered with the Detroit Red Wings and the Comerica Cares Foundation to receive 130 smoke alarms to be distributed free of charge to city residents in need.

There have been 288 calls for service to date. There were two substantial fires on October 14<sup>th</sup> that saw the scrap contents in a commercial trailer destroyed at the HP Pelzer plant located at 2415-Dove, and a single family residence heavily damaged at 2725-16<sup>th</sup> Avenue later in the overnight hours.

There were no injuries to any civilians at either incident; however a firefighter did sustain a minor burn at the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue fire while initially searching for two occupants believed to have been still inside.

Several fire hydrants are being tested by fire crews to gather data relevant to rated water flows, thus providing important statistical data used to develop efficient and effective pre-plans as well the ability to readily access this information when requested by project developers to satisfy insurance and fire suppression sprinkler engineering requirements. Our assurance of a fire safe community continues with our aggressive approach to public education and commercial fire inspections with 27 inspections completed this month.

In October thus far, we've had 132 open complaints. Part-time Inspectors have continued to reduce their hours/days of the week as the workload decreases with the changes in the season. Citizens, landlords, and/or tenants took care of abandoned autos on their own and we didn't have to tow any this month. We provided Community Development with grading/gravel request for certain alleys. They are in the process of fixing these alleys with grant money. We have begun preparing for over 200 landscaping tickets after sending letters to violators. These letters indicate violators can pay invoices in lieu of appearing and their case will be dismissed. A 2013 paint case against 1015 Court Street was closed after they complied with 99% completion after taking the owner to District Court and AHB.

After four years of non-compliance with broken/missing windows and unpainted trim, Sperry's was given until mid-October to show us concrete plans, new windows were arriving, or they were to paint/repair the existing windows by mid-November. We all received training on how to handle encounters with dogs. On October 14, members of the unit participated in the CAPTURE Spaghetti Dinner and on October 25<sup>th</sup> (Make a Difference Day) members of our unit volunteered their time picking up trash and raking leaves in the Olde Town District in conjunction with Blue Water churches and Operation Transformation.

We also reached out to the United Methodist Men's group of 828 Lapeer on behalf of two disabled citizens in need. The Men's group had offered their services to paint and fix small issues on area homes. In November, we will adjudicate over 200 grass violations and create a collections plan when violators do not pay. We have reached out to the City of Ypsilanti to see how they capture monthly/yearly statistics since they use BS&A much like we do. St. Clair County Community College had been asked if art students would be willing to create a logo for us, we hope to see their work in November/December.

The Clerk's office has been in election preparation mode for the month of October. They have processed over 1,500 absentee ballot requests, which is about 1% more (or about 200 voters) than four years ago. In 2010, the year the new Charter was adopted by the voters, we had a 27% turnout (or 5,648 voters) at the precincts on Election Day. We are expecting about the same this year.

The St. Clair County Parks Commission is proposing to construct wetlands along the St. Clair River adjacent to the newly constructed Desmond Landing recreational trail. The City of Port Huron has a permitted storm water outlet near the proposed wetland site. The Department of Public Works (DPW) Administration has reviewed a request from the St. Clair County Parks Commission to divert storm water flow into a proposed wetland area. Department staff prepared proposed language that would spell out the terms of an agreement between the County Parks Commission and the City of Port Huron to provide for this diversion of City storm water flow.

Engineering reviewed the bids received by the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) for orphan well closure in the south McMorran Lot. This project will be rebid in the future.

The Department of Public Works staff coordinated a meeting with representatives of the St. Clair County Road Commission, Port Huron Township, the Planning Department, and the contractor who is constructing the Holiday Inn Express on the Water Street Marina site. This is an effort to keep all the agencies involved moving with the developer.

The DPW administrative staff reviewed the rate consultant report to assure it provided accurate facts about the existing system and services.

The DPW Director chaired the Michigan Municipal League's Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting in Lansing.

The DPW staff has met with representatives of Blue Water Area Transit and its consultant URS to review the proposed design of McMorran Boulevard, Superior Mall, and the South McMorran Parking Lot. We provided copies of the City of Port Huron design specifications, detail drawings, and comments to the consultant's preliminary design drawings. The designer is scheduled to provide updated design drawings and specifications for our staff review by October 27, 2014. City staff is scheduled to provide our comments by November 12, 2014. URS will submit all of the final design documents to DeMaria for bidding. The proposed bid opening for the project is December 2, 2014 with construction commencing in March of 2015.

The DPW administrative and engineering staff met with the new Director of the Blue Water Center for Independent Living (BWCIL) regarding the status of the City's ADA ramp installation program. The BWCIL Director congratulated the City and its staff on the quality of the work we have done in this area. The director recommended that the City and his agency now put forth efforts to inform the community about the success of our efforts.

DPW Engineering staff continued working on various construction projects. The Nern Street Area contractor has completed base course of asphalt and lawn restoration in the Nern Street is ongoing. The final paving of all streets in the Nern Area Project area will be completed in the spring. Underground work is completed on Stone Street between Washington and Lincoln. The contractor completed pavement removal and concrete installation for the Thomas Edison Drive and Sedgwick Street project. The contractor has completed street improvements in the Northern Woods Phase I, Aspen Drive and Ramblewood construction areas. We met with Raymond Excavating and representative of the Blue Water Transit to coordinate services for residents that will be impacted by the Krafft Road Pedestrian Bridge replacement project. Blue Water Transit will distribute fliers to bus riders, and residents of the residential communities along Krafft Road. The contractor is scheduled to begin this work the first week of November. The engineering staff worked on the design of improvements to Sanborn Street between Stone Street and Gratiot and Stone Street from Pine Grove to Thomas Edison Drive. Both of these projects will be funded partially with federal transportation grants. Staff also worked on the design of improvements to the MOC back deck project and the Riverside Drive project.

The DPW street maintenance crews completed crack sealing on Minnie Street from 10th Street to 24th Street. They are currently crack sealing on 17<sup>th</sup> Street from Bancroft Street to Oak Street. Crews performed routine alley grading and asphalt patching at various locations. Staff mowed several City-owned vacant lots that are not included in the City's annual mowing contract. Street crews cleared leaves from the storm drains around the City. DPW crews completed barricading and lane closures for other City operations. The crews also provided traffic control measures for Port Huron High School's homecoming parade. Crews performed trenching and installed a scupper at the end of Elmwood Street to direct water to the river.

DPW traffic control crews replaced several accident damaged signs. Our electrician was called out for lightning damage to major street lights along Thomas Edison Parkway. The electrician responded to emergency repair requests on the MDOT owned Military Street Bridge. Crews fabricated several signs to replace age-faded signs.

The motor vehicle pool staff stayed on schedule with their preventative maintenance list. They repaired several vehicles that had issues that were identified during the yearly inspection of the snow removal equipment. The new utilities backhoe was put into service. No major breakdown of equipment occurred this month. Technicians continued outfitting the second detective vehicle for service. Technicians continue installing snow tires on the police cruisers.

The water distribution staff completed water main flushing along with the first and second round of hydrant winterization. They also assisted the City's contractor with the 20-inch water main tie-in on Kearney Street, repaired two fire hydrants, repaired a leaking valve, and shut off seasonal water accounts.

The Water Filtration Plant staff installed additional security cameras. The installation of these cameras completes the security camera system as recommended in the vulnerability assessment. Because of the cost, the installation of this system was implemented over multiple years. Staff and the Engineering Department completed the request for proposal for consultant services for the painting of north elevated water storage tank. The proposals are due back to the City for review on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

The City's contractor completed the biosolids storage tanks level sensor project at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. This project replaced the existing sensor equipment which had exceeded its design life and was not properly working. Staff also worked with the Engineering Department to complete a request for proposal for consultant services for design of the Gratiot Avenue sanitary pump station rehabilitation. These proposals were sent out on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and are due back to the City for review on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

During the month of October, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for School Crossing Guards, Seasonal Laborers and for the Records Supervisor for the Police Department. All posted positions are part-time with the exception of the Records Supervisor, which is a full-time position and this vacancy is due to the upcoming retirement of the Records Supervisor.

October marks the month in which we are required to mail out the annual creditable coverage letters to all of our retirees and employees. Additionally, other federally required notices were sent to our retirees and our employees due primarily to healthcare reform, include Notice of Privacy Practices, Notice on New Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage and BCBS Summary of Benefits and Coverage.

Open Enrollment packets were distributed to all active employees that offer employee participation in the following: Flexible Spending Plan (Medical & Dependent Care), Voluntary Term Life Insurance (Employee & Dependents) and Special Enrollment for the Extension of Dependent Coverage to Age 26 for those dependents previously missed during enrollment. Open enrollment runs through November 30, 2014.

Our United Way/American Red Cross employee campaigns were kicked off during the month of October. Each employee is asked annually to participate in our fundraising efforts for the United Way and/or the American Red Cross. Packets were sent out to all employees as well as our retirees asking for their help.

The Planning Department assisted several property owners with requests to rezone their residential properties in order to accommodate insurance or refinancing requirements. Recent locations included properties off of Lapeer Avenue. We also received requests from two dozen property owners in the Harrison Pointe Neighborhood to consider rezoning their neighborhood from R-1 (single and two family dwellings) to R (single family). Staff has been busy creating a mailing list of all property owners (700+) and sending out proper notifications of a public hearing that will be held at the Planning Commission Meeting on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Council will receive the request for consideration at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Port Huron received an invitation to complete a plan for the use of limited funding to demolish dangerous structures through the MSHDA Blight Elimination Program. Plans are due November 24<sup>th</sup> and require a partnership with a non-profit housing organization. There are several layers of requirements which (unfortunately) may hamper our ability to use the funds in our normal quick and efficient manner – but we will pursue the program and accomplish as much as possible with the limitations that are in place.

The Inspection Division issued over 100 permits in October and responded to several complaints regarding zoning ordinance violations, lack of permits or similar issues. Our Inspection Clerk, Cathy Tache retires on October 31<sup>st</sup> after 17 years. Cathy has provided wonderful, friendly service to our community and will be sorely missed. The Inspection Clerk position will be considered a part-time position (for now) and Ms. Jordan Pickelhaupt will be the new friendly face at our counter!

Rental Certification Division inspected over 160 units this month and responded to rental complaints from both tenants and landlords. Bob Cowdry, a part-time rental inspector left his position to accept a full time master plumber position with a private company. We will not fill his part-time position at this time.

The Community Development Division provided grant funds to three elderly residents in order to place new roofs on their homes this month before winter arrives, has provided grant funds and

assistance for exterior renovations at 1012 State Street and three new exterior renovation projects in the Mansfield Park neighborhood. Our staff and CDBG funds were involved in the Make a Difference Day event on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Grant funds allowed Jeff's Rubbish Service to haul roughly 15 tons of garbage set out on that day, Belle Tire picked up over 350 tires and our Forestry Division picked up several loads of brush and yard waste. A big "thank you" to Rev. and Mrs. Seppo from Operation Transformation and their volunteers for organizing and implementing this program in the Olde Town area.

The Recreation Department was very busy getting ready for the Halloween Stroll this month. The Halloween Stroll had 1250 children and their parents at Sanborn park. We had 33 non-profit organizations that came that day to hand out candy and we were very appreciative to Eastern Michigan Bank for sponsoring this event. The City of Marysville also partnered with us and donated staff and monies toward the event. It proved to be a great collaboration between the two communities. The Recreation Department also received a grant to attend the NRPA Recreation Conference this month. Many great ideas came from this conference and many new grant opportunities that the department plans on exploring to help with the Lakeside Park project.

The cemetery performed 13 cremation burials and 5 full burials in the month of October. This month was also our fall foundation pour. The staff dug and poured 43 footings (foundations) for head stones. As we prepare for winter, the entire water system was winterized. Fall also brings a time of fall clean up and MANY leaves. Our department has also been very grateful for the work of the community service workers. They have worked many weekends in October and will blow leaves the first three weekends of November.

Arborist skills training and certification was performed for all parks, forestry, and cemetery personnel. The staff removed all seasonal beach fences and scaled back permanent fences to allow for easier shoreline access at Lighthouse, Lakeside, Holland and Kraft Road beaches. Forestry crews have been busy working on the DTE tree grant and have planted 22 trees at the cemetery and seven trees at Lakeside and Allied Veterans Cemetery and involved in the Tree Celebration Program. Winterization of the water systems have been done at River St. Marina, Fort St. Marina, and Military/ Water St. park. Crews continue to mow and remove leaves at 65 different locations including parks, traffic islands, parking lots, and ball diamonds.

During this month the IT Department began the rollout of Office 2013. They also continued to work with the Water Office to prepare for the transition to monthly billing.

During October, the Income Tax Division continued their annual compliance efforts using the information received from the State of Michigan last month. This included sending letters to potential non-filers and those that may have underreported income. Additionally, annual returns were due from those taxpayers who filed an extension for tax year 2013.

The Accounting Division spent a large portion of their time during October involved with the year-end audit. The audit team from Plante Moran was here for the last week of

October. They also took care of their typical monthly work such as posting journal entries, updating various spreadsheets, balancing accounts, etc.

The Assessing Division conducted field inspections and verified reported sales for our sales study. The sales study is ongoing and will be used in determining 2015 assessments. They updated property files with deeds, sales history, etc.

The Treasurer's Office continued to be busy with the collection of water bills and property taxes this month. They began posting past due notices for delinquent personal property taxes and dealt with customer calls and inquiries as needed. They did the monthly accounting for BWATC and continued to work on some of their year-end reports.

The Water Office billed out over 3,000 accounts and sent past due and shut off notices to over 900 accounts. Two hundred fifty accounts were posted for shut-off with 67 accounts finally being shut off for non-payment. They finalized our transition plan to move from quarterly to monthly billing which included collaborating with BSA software and the I.T. department.

The City Manager spoke in length at the October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) about the need to have the Authority begin shifting its priorities and focus back to the development plan adopted in its formation. This plan focuses less on promotion and chamber-like activities, and more so on infrastructure and asset development.

Our concern is that there are several million dollars of capital needs in the downtown such as streets, parking lots and lighting that will need to be addressed in the coming years. These projects, as specifically noted in the development plan, need to be the focus of the DDA.

Over the coming months we will work to educate the DDA on what its role is and what tools are available to them. Most, if not all current members, have not actually seen a copy of the development plan adopted.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



The City Manager held a joint lunch between leadership at the Chamber of Commerce and Main St. Currently, Main St has a budget of about \$100k annually with the City paying more than half of their revenue. After reviewing their budget, expenses and operations it has become evident that they are duplicating many of the same functions the Chamber currently does, in addition to paying their own cost for utilities, phone, internet, office supplies, etc.

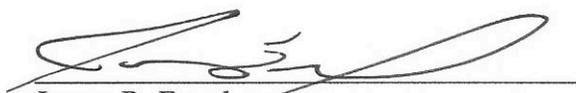
The City Manager, Main St leadership and the Chamber director believe these two organizations could combine, share office space and staff and reduce expenses greatly, also reducing the need to the current continued level of City funding. We will continue to explore this possible partnership over the next few months. If this comes to fruition it would allow Main St more time to focus on Blue Water Festival and other events.

The MEDC was in town to meet with the City Manager and the developers of Sperrys and the National Bank building to discuss possible plans and any possible role for the MEDC. They were impressed with both sites and the possibilities of redevelopment. We are hopeful that more details can be provided. We know that negotiations in regards to possible property sale of National Bank are well underway.

On October 25<sup>th</sup> the City Manager delivered the keynote address for the annual NAACP Freedom Fund dinner. About 350 people were in attendance. The speech focused on finances, public safety, education, parks and rec and infrastructure. Also discussed were future partnerships with faith-based organizations such as Operation Transformation and SONS Ministries.

The City Manager also addressed a crowd of about 140 volunteers at Make a Difference day in The Olde Town section of the City that same morning. He thanked the volunteers for their efforts and dedication to the City.

Sincerely,



James R. Freed  
*City Manager*  
*Chief Administrative Officer*



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

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In November, the Police Department completed the hiring process for Police Officer and selected two local residents, Travis Reed and Daniel Stocker, as new Officers. Both have begun their field training and are expected to be certified for solo patrol in late March 2015. A third recruit will be selected in December to fill another vacancy. The vacancies were created with the unexpected loss of three Police Officers that resigned recently for employment elsewhere. The Police Department also saw the retirement of Records Supervisor Shelley Pavlinak. Taking Shelley's place will be Jill Emery, the former Police Chief Secretary. Sherri Reynolds has been selected to replace Jill as the Chief's secretary and she began employment on November 24, 2014. The Department wrapped up the special events for the year with the Santa Parade on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

Calls for service for October 2014 increased by 9% from September 2014, and increased 11% from October 2013. Increases from the prior month were seen in Assaults (+32%), breaking and entering (+8%), Malicious Destruction of Property (+69%) and suspicious persons/vehicle (+17%). November numbers are not available at this time. The Department went public with a gambling/conspiracy investigation in November where four search warrants were served simultaneously within the St. Clair County area. The PHPD NET team was the central law enforcement agency involved in this investigation. As the holidays approach, the Police Department is reminding citizens to be mindful of home invasions and larcenies. It is typical for this time of year to see an increase of theft reports due to opportunistic criminals looking for items in vehicles or homes that can be easily taken and sold for cash.

The Fire Department has completed attending each of the fire drills conducted at the schools located within the City for the fall scheduling period. We will resume this activity in the spring with the next round of drills. Feedback from school administrators was positive and they were grateful to receive suggestions for improving the safety of their respective buildings. There were 25 calls for service in November including building fires at the following locations:

- 512-11th Street. House sustained extensive damage to rear exterior due to unattended gas grill that was used on back porch.
- 2114 Cypress St. Damage sustained to a single family rental home due to fire discovered in a bedroom while occupants were inside house. Cause remains under investigation.
- 1213 Wall St. Two adult males were rescued by fire crews from an upstairs rear bedroom through a window and down a ladder after a fire broke out in the front bedroom causing them to be trapped by heat and smoke. Fire was caused by a faulty electric lamp. Victims were treated and released from local hospitals after treatment for smoke inhalation.
- 733 Union Street. Fire crews were called to a two-story house with heavy smoke showing and were forced to evacuate the structure due to deteriorating conditions from an advancing fire in the attic space above them. Extinguishment completed by crews from the exterior of the building until safe to re-enter, cause is undetermined at this time. No injuries to occupant, one firefighter sustained a knee injury.

Inspections of 21 commercial businesses have been completed for November.

In November thus far, we've had 73 new complaints opened. Part-time Inspectors are continuing to reduce their hours/days of the week as the workload decreases with winter approaching. We had about 150 landscaping tickets go through the AHB as we held them until the season ended. The rest of the cases (about 35) took care of the invoice/fine and their cases were closed. Sperry's failed to schedule local/state historic preservation meetings or obtain a building permit for windows in the time specified. They were sent notice to appear at a December 11th AHB Hearing. We have submitted two garnishment cases to Corporate Counsel to see if this collection practice will work as a way to collect outstanding debt owed to the City as an option other than single lot assessments.

Lt. Kuehn and Inspector Pat Cogley met with Port Huron Area Landlord Association representatives which went very well. We listened to their frustrations, much of which was lessened with our explanations. They requested that we thank people who do take care of their property. We could not address their anger towards raised water rates, Kathleen McCready's request for an overlay district (which would not allow additional rentals) and the need to create a vicious dog ordinance, which was beyond the scope of Code Enforcement.

In December, we plan to create a statistics page to show the success of the blight fix-it tickets and begin putting a year-end presentation together for City Council. We also hope to see SC4 student's artwork regarding a Code Enforcement logo within the next month.

The Clerk's office began the month with the November 4 election. Voter turnout was 32.62% (or 6,880 out of 21,094 registered voters). The numbers were low; however the inspectors did an outstanding job processing the steady stream of voters all day. We have also been working on preparing an RFP for the codification of the code book; reviewing a program to store and retrieve electronic documents in the cloud thus reducing search and retrieval time while providing an extra backup in cases of disaster; and we have been moving Traffic Control Orders from the mainframe to Excel. We have also been helping Beautification Commission members with understanding and improving their expense reports and planning for future needs. Also, a current member of the Sister City Commission is attempting to bring the commission back to meeting on a regular basis. We will assist them with this endeavor and plan to attend their next meeting on December 2.

The St. Clair County Parks Commission is proposing to construct wetlands along the St. Clair River adjacent to the newly constructed Desmond Landing recreational trail. The City of Port Huron has a permitted storm water outlet near the proposed wetland site. The Department of Public Works (DPW) Administration has reviewed a revised set of design drawings for the diversion of storm water flow into a proposed wetland area. We have provided review comments expressing concerns with the proposed design. We are also working with the MDEQ to determine how these proposed designs would affect the City's Stormwater NPDES permit. We will continue to work with all parties to find the best solution for this project. Department staff will revise the proposed language that would spell out the terms of an agreement between the County Parks and the City of Port Huron to provide for this diversion of City storm water flow.

We finalized revised bid documents with the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) for orphan well closures in the south McMorran lot. We scheduled a pre-bid meeting at the MOC for December 17, 2014 and bid opening January 7, 2015.

The Department of Public Works staff coordinated a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Stone Street Project.

The DPW Director submitted a quarterly Governmental Affairs article for publication in the Michigan Chapter of the American Public Works Association's *Great Lakes Reporter* magazine.

The DPW staff has met with representatives of Blue Water Area Transit and its consultant URS to review the proposed design of McMorran Boulevard, Superior Mall, and the South McMorran Parking Lot. We provided comments to the consultant's fifty percent complete design drawings. URS will submit all of the final design documents to DeMaria for bidding. The proposed bid opening for the project is December 2, 2014 with construction commencing in March of 2015.

The DPW administrative and engineering staff began to work on estimates for capital improvement projects for the Downtown Development Authority.

At the request of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the DPW Director provided a copy of the poster that was used at the St. Clair River Symposium. This poster provides summary information on the pollution removal successes of the Combined Sewer Overflow Program. The MDEQ plans to use this information in its effort to delist the St. Clair River as an Area of Concern. This effort is very important to the Blue Water Area. The delisting of the St. Clair River will show the public how successful our efforts have been to keep our local waterways clean.

DPW Engineering staff continued working on various construction projects. The Nern Street Area contractor is continuing the lawn restoration in the Nern Street area. The final paving of all streets in the Nern Area Project area will be completed in the spring. The Stone and Kearney Street contractor completed asphalt paving, concrete sidewalks and driveways and is continuing lawn restoration and final cleanup. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. The contractor completed the asphalt paving and lawn restoration for the Thomas Edison Drive and Sedgwick Street project. The contractor has completed lawn restoration and cleanup in the Northern Woods Phase I, Aspen Drive and Ramblewood construction areas. Raymond Excavating completed the Pedestrian Bridge replacement project on Krafft Road. The engineering staff continues working on the design of improvements to Sanborn Street between Stone Street and Gratiot and Stone Street from Pine Grove to Thomas Edison Drive. Both of these projects will be funded partially with federal transportation grants. Engineering staff is working on the design of Washington Street reconstruction between 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Stone Street. This project will be funded partially with millage money. The design of the Riverview Area rehabilitation is ongoing and is expected to begin in the spring utilizing street millage money. Staff advertised the MOC back deck project. Engineering staff is preparing a report for the Blue Water Center of Independent Living on the ADA ramps that were completed in fiscal year 2013-2014.

The DPW street maintenance crews are currently crack sealing on 21st Street. Crews performed routine alley grading and asphalt patching at various locations. In addition, crews worked on about 20 alleys for the Community Development department which included adding rock, grading, and clearing trees and brush. Staff completed the final mowing of several City-owned vacant lots that are not included in the City's annual mowing contract. Street crews cleared leaves from the storm drains around the City. DPW crews salted the bridge sidewalks and decks on two occasions. The crews also provided traffic control measures for the Santa Parade in downtown.

DPW traffic control crews removed unused pedestrian signals at Stone Street and Glenwood Avenue. Our electrician was called out for repair to street light wiring along Thomas Edison Parkway. The electrician responded and repaired several wind damaged traffic control devices. Crews also completed all the railroad crossing issues that were reported by MDOT inspectors.

The motor vehicle pool staff stayed on schedule with their preventative maintenance list and all snow removal equipment has been inspected and is ready for use. They repaired two vehicles that had major breakdown issues. Technicians outfitted a detective vehicle for service

The water distribution staff completed the third and final round of hydrant winterization and also assisted the Water Office with shutoffs and turn-on's. Also, staff removed water metering equipment from various locations that are scheduled for demolition. The sewer collection staff investigated multiple sewer complaints, performed dye-testing of a few downtown properties to confirm their connection to the City's sanitary sewer system, and also replaced a concrete flow channel inside a sanitary manhole.

The Water Filtration Plant (WFP) staff completed the installation and calibration of the chemical feed monitor and is in the process of monitoring the results to establish a baseline. Staff is also in the process of installing a new raw chlorine meter and also has begun researching the appropriate replacement of the turbidity meters for each of the 10 filters. Recent rulings by the MDEQ will have an effect on what type of turbidity meter can be installed. The cost for the replacement of these meters is identified in the current budget. After further research and trial of equipment, a recommendation will be forwarded to City Council for approval. WFP and the Engineering staff completed the review of the proposal for consultant services for the painting of the north elevated water storage tank. An agreement for these services will be forthcoming to Council for their approval.

The Wastewater Treatment staff performed the bi-annual cleaning of the three lime storage tanks. One of the two odor control towers were removed from service to facilitate the cleaning of the packing media. One of the pumps at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street sanitary pump station was removed as it was not operational. The pump was sent to Electrical Motor Services of Port Huron for an evaluation and any necessary repair. Land Application program has been shut down for this calendar year.

During the month of November, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for School Crossing Guards and Temporary Laborers. These posted positions are for part-time openings.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Employee Wellness Fair was held on Wednesday, November 5<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup> in the Municipal Office Center, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Training Room. All full-time and year-round part-time employees were invited to participate. Port Huron Hospital Industrial Health personnel were on site to conduct Healthy Heart Screenings (blood pressure and cholesterol checks) as well as administer flu shots. Additionally, we had representatives from the YMCA, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan / Brown & Brown, and Chef Jim from the Galley Café were available to speak with our employees about exercise, eating healthier and help with completing the online Blue Cross Health Assessment. We had 68 participants this year compared to 56 in 2013. Drawings were held for various gift cards for those that participated in the Wellness Fair. We have completed our fundraising efforts for the United Way and American Red Cross campaigns and both campaigns are showing a slight increase in employee contributions from last year. Our employees are always very generous in helping individuals that are less fortunate than they are. We were entered into the United Way “Early Bird” drawing and the City of Port Huron was selected for the 4<sup>th</sup> place prize from participating employers/businesses. The drawing was held yesterday and Jeff McIntyre from DPW/Streets Division was the winner of a \$100 Visa gift card.

Last month, the Planning Division coordinated an agreement with Baker College, Orion Construction and the Port Huron Museum of Arts and History regarding excavation of the site of the future Baker Student Housing. The excavated soils will be removed and located on the Baker site on Lapeer Avenue. Dr. Richard Stamps and Dr. Richardson (SC4) will conduct a review of soils and look for any artifacts. Any artifacts found will become the property of the City/Museum. The excavation will only accommodate a crawl space and will not be more than four feet deep.

Review of site plans for the transit station at McMorran South Parking Lot is underway. Construction is anticipated in the spring/summer.

A request for rezoning from R-1 (single and two family dwellings) to R (single family, owner-occupied) of Harrison Pointe neighborhood has been received. The Planning Commission will review and hold a public hearing on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We are in the process of completing a new application packet to be used for requests of Brownfield designations. Application will require economic development and job creation criteria as a factor.

Rental inspections continue and include over 120 inspections, including responding to complaints. One of three part-time inspectors has left to accept a full time position out of town. There are no plans to replace the inspector at this time as trade inspectors will pick up additional rental inspections during the winter months. Our Chief Inspector met with the Eastern Michigan Landlord Association at an evening meeting to give a presentation and update on the Rental Certification program.

Inspectors in the Inspection Division handled over 80 permits and reviewed several large scale building plans. Four code cases were prepared for demolition requests to City Council and an

additional five are under review with preliminary notifications sent out. Inspections have been completed and potential work agreements drawn up for property owners.

In the Community Development Division, grant funds were used to re-grade and stone 18 alleys in neighborhoods as part of the “Pride in Port Huron” campaign. Four new families became homeowners because of the Urban Pioneer Program, three homes received rehabilitation grants, and one elderly homeowner was assisted. Sidewalks were replaced along Harker Street as part of the Mansfield Park neighborhood project.

In November, the Recreation Department was busy running fall programming and preparing our winter brochure that is sent to over 3,000 participants as well as flyers that are sent to every student in Port Huron Area Schools. We have also been in the process of working on a new partnership/cooperation with the Port Huron Area School District on afterschool programming in the schools. The schools will use Title I funding they have available and we will use grant funding to help provide students with fun and educational programming after school. Our first pilot school will be Cleveland Elementary and we look forward to expanding this partnership and helping our schools in the City of Port Huron.

The “Adopt a Soldier” program for the holidays has been a huge success with over 200 socks being sold. People buy a Christmas sock for \$2.00 (to cover our shipping cost) and then participants fill them with items for the soldiers and we will send them to the troop we have adopted. We also have a time the first week of December where families can come to the Recreation Department and make cards to send with the box as well.

The scoring for our Lakeside Beach DNR grant has come back. The City of Port Huron has scored very well. Our project scored with the top amount of points out of over 150 projects. We are very hopeful that the City will receive this grant but the official vote of the Michigan DNR Trust Fund board will be in Lansing on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

In the cemetery, nine services were done in the month on November. Staff has been busy preparing for the winter and removing leaves. The community service participants also helped with leaf removal in the cemetery three weekends in a row. The forestry department cut down and put up the Christmas tree for downtown Port Huron. They also spent a lot of time cleaning up from the storm after Halloween and this past wind storm that took place last week. The Parks Department is in the middle of leaf pick up in all the parks and will be doing maintenance to the parks before the snow hits the ground. They also removed the kayak launch from 7<sup>th</sup> Street early in the month and created the winter removal process for this new addition to the parks assets.

The Information Technology Department continued to work with the Water Office on the December launch of monthly billing. It also began the deployment of the Cash Management System.

During November, the Income Tax Division continued our annual compliance efforts. All identified taxpayers have now been sent initial letters and we began sending follow up

correspondence and issuing proposed assessments. We prepared the final version of our 2014 tax forms.

The Accounting Division spent a large portion of their time during November involved with the year-end audit. We finished all of the EVIP documents so they can be submitted to the State by the December 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. We also took care of our typical monthly work such as posting journal entries, updating various spreadsheets, balancing accounts, etc.

The Assessing Division completed the residential sales study and the commercial appraisal study. The industrial appraisal study is still in progress. We are also canvassing for personal property that should be reported and hasn't been.

The Treasurer's Office continued the normal collection of water bills and property taxes this month. We continued posting past due notices for delinquent personal property taxes. We dealt with customer calls and inquiries as needed. We did the monthly accounting for BWATC.

The Water Office mailed out over 12,000 water bills as we began our transition to monthly billing. We received over 500 calls during the first three days after the first monthly bills went out, spending over 24 hours on the phone explaining the transition to our customers. We continued to receive calls after that; however we did not track the volume. 185 accounts were posted for shut-off with 37 accounts finally being shut off for non-payment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James R. Freed', written over a horizontal line.

James R. Freed

*City Manager*

*Chief Administrative Officer*



*Office of the City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer  
Monthly Administrative Report  
January 2015*

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In December, the Police Department made a conditional offer of employment to Clinton Thom of Leonard, Michigan. Thom graduated from Oakland Police Academy mid-December and is a recent graduate of the Port Huron Police Department's Citizen's Police Academy. Thom is expected to begin training January 5, 2015 and his position will bring the Department up to full strength. We anticipate another long-term officer possibly retiring early in the New Year. We will begin the process of filling that opening upon notification of retirement intent.

The Police Department is undergoing an internal review regarding the Officer Involved Shooting of a suspect that attempted to run over two officers during a traffic stop. The review is procedural internal process that takes a detailed look at the incident and, if necessary, makes recommendations for equipment changes, training needs, and/or procedural changes. The incident is also under review by the Michigan State Police. Preliminary information indicates that the officers' actions were appropriate to protect their lives.

The Department has noted an increase in robberies recently (Metro PCS, Lighthouse Party Store, Marathon Station, Admiral Station) and theft from vehicles which is indicative to the time of year. The increase, in part, is attributed to offenders looking for quick cash and/or saleable items around the holidays. Officers are reminding residents to be mindful of their surroundings, lock their car doors and to not leave valuables in sight in their vehicles.

Calls for service for November 2014 decreased by 17% from October 2014, and increased 8% from November 2013. Decreases from the prior month were seen largely in Assaults (-42%), animal complaints (-33%) and Domestic Assaults (-10%). December numbers are not available at this time.

The Fire Department has answered 205 calls for service to date including response to six (6) structure fires since last month's report. There were no reported injuries to citizens in any of these fires and none of them were directly related to the season. Several were caused by electrical malfunctions and the most recent garage fire at 2845-11<sup>th</sup> Avenue was a result of primary power lines falling onto the roof of the garage. Fire crews were delayed in suppressing the fire until DTE could cut power to the lines. Crews were able to remove an automobile from the garage prior to involvement in fire, preventing damage to a 1995 show quality Ford Mustang.

A grant application was submitted by the Fire Department to the Federal Emergency Management Agencies-Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for the replacement of a Fire Pumper apparatus at a cost of \$425,000 as well as replacement of breathing apparatus worn by fire fighters and also the replacement of hydraulic extrication tools totaling \$323,060. The City of Port Huron would receive 90% federal funding with a 10% match of local funds. We were able to secure letters of support for this grant application from Congresswoman Candice Miller. If successful, this grant would allow for replacement of critical equipment not currently sustainable due to budgetary limitations.

So far this month, 35 fire inspections have been completed in commercial occupancies within our city. Adding this figure to our cumulative totals for the year-198 pre fire inspections have been conducted which continues our goal of bringing each location into a two (2) year inspection cycle.

On December 19<sup>th</sup>, the Code Enforcement Unit had 111 new complaints opened. We attended legal update training by Corporate Counsel this month related to private property access. We also won our second appeal in Circuit Court against Mr. Phillip Risner. We were able to finally get an appearance from Sperry's at the AHB Hearing where they were ordered to present a plan to show progress towards trim work and window replacement. Immediately afterwards, Larry Jones finally applied for a City of Port Huron Historic District Commission meeting. If the application is approved, it will occur on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015 providing he has all the window specifications at that time. We also were able to get William Kidd to appear at an AHB with a goal of repairing his roof or demolishing it if it is too far gone. Mr. Gerald Grattan eventually cleaned up his yard despite several malicious emails sent to the Chief from his father, Michigan Militia Officer Douglas Grattan.

In January, we will have received feedback on our two garnishment cases submitted to Corporate Counsel to see if this collection practice will work as a way to collect outstanding debt owed to the City as an option other than single lot assessments. We will also prepare a year-end review of the Code Enforcement Unit's progress.

This month, the Clerk's office began selling dog licenses on behalf of St. Clair County. The County reimburses the City \$1.50 for each license sold and 77 licenses were issued in December. We also continued with the transfer of the Traffic Control Order records to Excel. We are reviewing over 1,000 traffic orders to ensure the information was properly transferred. We also worked on finalizing the RFP for the codification of the code book and plan to send the document to appropriate vendors later this month.

The St. Clair County Parks Commission is proposing to construct wetlands along the St. Clair River adjacent to the newly constructed Desmond Landing recreational trail. The City of Port Huron has a storm water outlet near the proposed wetland site. St Clair County's engineering consultant has incorporated into their plans DPW Administration's review comments and provided an approvable design for the diversion of storm water flow into a proposed wetland area. We will continue working with the MDEQ to determine how this proposed project would affect the City's Stormwater NPDES permit. Department staff has revised the proposed language that would spell out the terms of an agreement between the County Parks Department and the City of Port Huron to provide for this diversion of City storm water flow. The County Parks Director has approved our proposed agreement language.

We finalized revised bid documents with the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission (BWATC) for orphan well closures in the south McMorran lot. We conducted a pre-bid meeting at the MOC and the bid opening is scheduled for January 7, 2015.

The DPW Director met with staff and the press regarding his upcoming retirement and updated his job description for national advertising.

The DPW staff has met with representatives of URS to review the proposed design of McMorran Boulevard, Superior Mall, and the South McMorran parking lot. We provided comments to the consultant's seventy percent complete design drawings. URS will submit all of the final design documents to us by January 5, 2015. URS is scheduled to submit final documents to DeMaria for bidding by January 16, 2015 and construction is scheduled to begin March of 2015.

The DPW administrative and engineering staff continued to work on estimates for capital improvement projects for the Downtown Development Authority.

At the request of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) the DPW Director and staff commented on the interpretive sign that will be posted in Kiefer Park to explain the shoreline habitat improvements that were completed by the EPA this fall.

DPW Director began work on updates to the Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2014-2015.

DPW Administrative staff met with Marcotte Disposal to discuss the billing of the new St. Clair County tipping fee.

DPW Engineering staff continued working on various construction projects. The Stone and Kearney Street contractor completed lawn restoration and punch list items for the project. The engineering staff continues working on the design of improvements to Sanborn Street between Stone Street and Gratiot and Stone Street from Pine Grove to Thomas Edison Drive, both of these projects will be funded partially with federal transportation grants. The Engineering staff is working on the design of Washington Street reconstruction between 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Stone Street this project will be funded partially with millage money. This project's bid will be opened on January 13, 2015 and is expected to start in the spring of 2015. The design of the Hickory Area reconstruction project is ongoing and the project's bid is expected to be opened January 20, 2015. This project is expected to begin in the spring utilizing street millage money. Bids were opened for the MOC back deck project. Sanctum Contracting was the low bidder and a resolution requesting approval of the contract will be presented to Council on January 12, 2015. Engineering staff submitted the report for the Blue Water Center of Independent Living on the ADA ramps that were completed in fiscal year 2013-2014. We have one more report to submit to the BWCIL for the consent decree concerning the ADA ramps.

The DPW street maintenance crews put down approximately 10 tons of cold patch at various locations. Crews were able to perform routine alley grading because of the warm weather. Street crews provided traffic control measures for watermain breaks, bridge inspections and New Year's Eve party downtown.

DPW traffic control crews responded to several damaged signs due to inclement weather. The electrician had to respond to several traffic signal issues caused by wind damage. Crews also completed the installation of signs to comply with updated traffic control orders. The City had to retain bridge tenders longer this season to facilitate the Corp of Engineers' dredging operations on the Black River.

The motor vehicle pool staff was slightly behind schedule on their preventative maintenance list because of short staff due to vacations and illness. Our mechanics performed repairs and maintenance on the drawbridges to support the longer season caused by the dredging operations. Technicians outfitted a new police cruiser for service.

The water distribution staff repaired two water main breaks and assisted the Water Office with water shutoffs and turn-on's. The sewer collection staff performed routine maintenance activities and investigated a few sewer backup complaints. They cleaned and inspected a 36-inch sanitary interceptor sewer near the St. Clair County Parks Commission proposed wetlands. This inspection determined that the proposed wetlands is not in conflict with the City's sanitary sewer and we also located three buried manholes which since have been exposed and adjusted accordingly. The sewer collection foreman also assembled the 2014 Operations and Maintenance Report for submittal to the MDEQ.

The Water Filtration plant (WFP) staff continued monitoring the chemical feed monitor to establish a baseline for the proper feed rate. They have also begun to work with the approved vendor and the City's IT staff to upgrade the software for the WFP operation system (this contract was approved at the November 24<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting). It is anticipated that this upgrade will be completed within the next two months. WFP and Engineering staff also reviewed and provided comments on a conceptual site plan from the United States Coast Guard for improvements to the Hollyhock mooring facility.

The Wastewater Treatment plant (WWTP) staff has been working with the manufacturer of the fine bubble aeration equipment which was installed a few years back within the three aeration tanks. This manufacturer previously replaced defective stainless steel hardware within aeration tank number one. Staff has observed similar conditions in tanks two and three. It is the intent of the manufacturer at this time to replace this hardware within the two remaining tanks in the next month. Even though this is outside of the warranty period, the manufacturer is standing behind their product and replacing any defective hardware at no cost to the City. Since replacing the hardware in aeration tank number one, there have been no further hardware issues observed. The consultant working on the arc flash report has begun the task of data collection by physically inspecting and gathering equipment/wire data in preparation for the electrical analysis and report. WWTP and Engineering staff also reviewed proposals for professional engineering services for pump station and metering equipment upgrades for the upcoming years. A resolution for the recommended engineering firm for City Council's consideration will be forthcoming.

During the month of December, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for School Crossing Guards, Temporary Laborers and Custodians. These posted positions are for part-time openings.

Medical Incentive payments were issued in December to employees and retirees that elect not to participate in our healthcare program because they have dual medical coverage with their spouse. Employees and retirees that participate in the Medical Incentive Program receive a credit of \$250 per month in lieu of healthcare coverage and the special payment is issued in December of each

year. This plan reduces overlapping of medical coverage and helps lower the City's healthcare costs. We have approximately 40 employees/retirees that participate annually in this program.

Every year, the City adopts a Christmas Family through the Professional Counseling Center. This year's family consisted of a mom and four children ages 12, 7, 6 and 6-months. Throughout the year, City employees donated close to \$800 from casual Fridays and special casual days. Our volunteer shoppers, along with other employees' donations, were able to obtain most everything from the "Wish List" like coats, boots, toys, games and items for the family. In addition we were able to provide a \$250 Kroger gift card. The coordinator from the Professional Counseling Center sent us a thank you on behalf of the adopted family.

The Planning Department met with representatives from MDOT and discussed the procedure required for using the mitigation funds that were set aside to defray costs for required updates to the City's Master Plan. The City is required by law to review its master plan every five years and update the goals, land use maps and related ordinances as deemed necessary. It is anticipated that updated drafts will be completed in April/May for the Planning Commission's recommendation to City Council.

Work has begun on finalizing the expanded SmartZone that Council approved several months ago. We have still not received the written agreement from the State; however, we have been given permission to start the formal amendments to our documents in anticipation of the agreement being sent to the City shortly. The final approvals on the SmartZone will allow the City and the State to market Port Huron as a high tech research and development area. The Planning Department has also worked with several developers and investors regarding potential Brownfield Plans and similar incentive programs for business expansions in hopes that the new year will result in additional investment in Port Huron.

They have also been in contact with Washington D.C. representatives regarding the BEDI Grant and Section 108 Loan Program that was originally awarded to the Sperry development in August, 2010. They have agreed to review the new developer's proposal and anticipated financial resources and will then determine if the project would still meet the criteria of the original offer. We don't anticipate any decisions until the end of February. We have received approved building plans for a 12-plex theatre and restaurant at the site.

The Community Development Division is also working on a required five year plan. The "Consolidated Plan" is required by HUD every five years and establishes goals and action items that can be incorporated into the Annual Action Plan for the use of CDBG funds, and various grant applications (such as the Blight Elimination Grant). A survey has been set up on the City's website to gain information from investors and residents regarding housing and neighborhood issues. The questions are general in nature, multiple choice and established by HUD. In January and February, the office will have several items on the Council agenda and a public hearing to review programs that serve the neighborhoods, home repairs for the elderly, low-moderate income owners and those that hope to purchase their first home this year.

The Rental Certification Division is also in the process of updating information available on the website regarding inspection guides for the tenant and property owner, registering rentals and

collection of rental fees. The inspectors completed over 100 inspections and responded to rental complaints this month.

The Inspection Division issued permits for several new construction projects, including the 17 unit student housing facility owned and operated by Baker College. Inspection also responded to several fires and is working with property owners and insurance companies to remove the structures or arrange for repairs as soon as possible. The division is working closely with Community Development to identify several potential code cases that may qualify for the new Blight Elimination Program (subject to the very tight restrictions that MSHDA has imposed on the program).

December brought many good things to the Parks and Recreation Department. The department received several grants at the end of the year. Department of Natural Resources awarded us \$295,000 for Lakeside Park and \$45,000 to aid in signage along Black River Walk and an ADA accessible parking lot for the kayak launch. A private donation in the amount of \$40,000 was given by the Stebbins Family for the splash pad and they also challenged the community with another \$43,000 that they will match in funds until March 2015. From this challenge, people have been sending in donations and we have already received \$3,100 in donations for the project. A group of youth from the recreation center also submitted a grant to get our basketball courts resurfaced. They were awarded the grant! They were really excited. The winter brochure was released in December with many things for the whole family to participate in. Planning for the Cleveland Recreation Lab has been in full swing and there have been many meetings with the Port Huron Area School District to help in providing educational recreation opportunities for the children in our schools.

The cemetery had 11 services in December and participated with Lisa Fountain from Allied Veterans Council with the Wreaths Across America program for our veterans area of Lakeside Cemetery. Wreaths were unloaded and organized for them to be placed on veterans' graves by Boy Scouts and other various groups.

Community service helped a lot this month and blew leaves in the cemetery for the first three weekends in December. They were able to help us complete all sections and we are definitely ahead for this coming spring!

If you look on Facebook, Lakeside Cemetery now has a page. The cemetery staff created a Facebook page for Lakeside Cemetery to help promote, answer questions, and keep the public informed. Information about the present and past history can also be found on this page.

The I.T. Department was involved in a number of activities. Of note were: preparing monthly water billing for all customers for the first time. They also completed year-end accounting and payroll activities, including a number of one-time payment activities. They also installed a new network firewall.

During December, the Income Tax Division continued our annual compliance efforts, including a focus on larger amounts that may be owed. We are also attempting to clean up any open items from the 2013 tax year before December 31.

The majority of the duties performed by the Accounting Division are typically similar from month to month. These include processing payroll, expense checks and other typical monthly work such as posting journal entries, updating various spreadsheets, balancing accounts, etc. Several annual items were filed this month including the Single Audit, Act 51 Report, Qualifying Statement and the Form F-65 Report. Special projects accomplished this month include streamlining our report for our CDBG and HOME programs and a reorganization of our office supplies inventory.

The Assessing Division completed the canvassing for personal property and statements were mailed out this month. The Board of Review met on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Preliminary assessments have been adjusted and approved by the County Equalization Department. Permits, combinations and lot splits are still in progress and should be completed in January.

The Treasurer's Office and Water Office have been extremely busy during December. In addition to collecting winter property taxes and performing the monthly accounting for BWATC, we have been immersed in the transition from quarterly to monthly water billing. We dealt with customer calls and inquiries as needed, although the volume has increased greatly this month due to the ongoing transition. Because of this, we have not been able to tabulate our monthly statistics as usual but we hope to have time to do this next month.



A meeting was held between Main Street, Port Huron Festivals, Inc., and various City departments. The meeting focused on the various events held throughout the year such as Chilly Fest, Blue Water Fest and Boat Races. The discussion took place about what is or could be the most sustainable model to ensure these events have consistent leadership and funding. Perhaps a director of all the events needs to be in place? Is Main Street doing a good job and if so, should we bolster their efforts? It's a discussion that has needed to take place because too often the events are like a yo yo: up and down. We need to get serious about what is the best model. The group will be meeting monthly going forward to develop a plan.

The City Manager has been in initial stages of discussions with department heads regarding budget development schedule, expectations and process. The Council will be getting a Goal Setting Work Session packet that includes a list of proposed goals with a list that individual council members will set, then we will merge those lists for review at the goal setting Council Work Session. The City Manager and Department Heads are hoping that the Mayor and Council can give them 5-10 specific goals for the year. They will not be the only things we focus on this year, but they should represent the direction the Mayor and Council want us to go. This is a time for the Mayor and Council to provide the Administration with direction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James R. Freed', written over a horizontal line.

James R. Freed  
*City Manager*  
*Chief Administrative Officer*

the City Manager, Mayor and Councilmember Ruiz to discuss what these developments will look like. The Mayor has asked Councilmember Ruiz to participate in these discussions. The results of these discussions will be brought back to the full Council for review and consideration. We expect this process to take at least six months.

The City Manager, Director of Finance and the DPW Director have held numerous meetings with the City Attorney to review the options for the water and sewer rate adjustments. The City Attorney has brought in a third party rate expert to review our rates and make recommendations. This report and a legal review will be presented at the next Council work session, which we expect to be held in middle to late October.

The Seaway East/West Neighborhood Watch held their meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup> and hosted the City Manager as their speaker. It was an excellent time to share what the City is working on and why, and to field questions and concerns from residents on their turf. They were supportive of the holistic approach to community and economic development the City is undertaking.

This past week a meeting was also held with Chuck Reid and his partners, the developers of the City Flats Hotel. It now appears that we will, in fact, be getting a City Flats in downtown Port Huron, with the hopes of being open by Boat Week 2015. However, the location of the proposed hotel is going to change. They are siting a new building also in the downtown. I cannot officially disclose that location now, but I am sure you can all take a good guess. They now have a second development for the Sperry's Building. They have submitted renderings and engineered drawings of the second development for the purpose of permitting to the Planning Department. The new development has a price tag of \$6,000,000. In total these two combined developments will be roughly around \$20,000,000 of investment into the downtown. We are hoping to have everything finalized in a week or so, with a public announcement. I have been asked to keep the details of the new development confidential.

Sincerely,



James R. Freed

*City Manager*

*Chief Administrative Officer*





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Another meeting was held with museum officials regarding the cost reduction plan we are working to develop. In your Council packet for the first meeting in January you will find a resolution authorizing the sale of all or any items the City may currently have ownership over. This is not a fundraising tool, but necessary to clean out junk or useless inventory. Currently, the Museum houses thousands of items that were donated over the years, most holding little or no value. The Museum would like to begin "cleaning house" and getting rid of the junk that serves no purpose. They will then have a better idea of how much space they actually need to operate.

There are discussions taking place about whether or not they even want to stay in the building. Would the community be better suited with a museum focusing less on displays and exhibits and focusing more on sites like the Lightship, Hospital and Depot? These are honest questions that need to be discussed. Perhaps a new partnership with the County? We are pleased with the direction in which our efforts are going, and hope to have a long-term solution presented to Council in late spring.

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