



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

In January, the Police Department welcomed its newest member to the force, Clinton Thom. Officer Thom started on January 5, 2015 and is currently in training. He is expected to be certified for solo patrol at the completion of his field training in early May 2015. The agency is now anticipating the retirement of a 25 year police veteran in April, 2015 and the selection process for this anticipated vacancy is currently underway.

The Police Department has received a final determination from the St. Clair County Prosecutor's Office in regard to the officer-involved shooting which took place in December 2014. A separate, independent investigation of the events surrounding the shooting was conducted by the Michigan State Police which was then submitted to the Prosecutor's Office for review. As a result of the investigation, Chief Prosecutor Mike Wendling rendered an opinion indicating the officers acted in self-defense. The suspect in the case has been charged with two counts of Assault with Intent to Murder, two counts of Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, Fleeing an Officer 3rd Degree and Violation of the Controlled Substance Act. Both PHPD officers involved in the incident are back to work.

Calls for service for December 2014 decreased by 4% from November 2014, and increased 7% from December 2013. Decreases from the prior month were seen largely in Breaking and Entering (-18%), Property Damage Accidents (-23%) and Narcotic Investigations (-10%). Increases were noted in Assaults (+32%) and Larcenies (+15%). January numbers are not available at this time.

The Police Department is gearing up for its annual February in-service training. The training consists of defensive tactics, firearms, legal updates, first aid, ethics, community relations, meth lab awareness and other job related items. Each officer attends 32 hours of training during the month. Other Police Department staff, including cadets and records personnel, attend several of the training components based on their job discipline. In addition, the Department has scheduled its 12th annual Citizens Police Academy to begin on Monday, February 2, 2015. The Academy allows participants to learn police related issues taught by officers and other experts in the field. The Academy meets once a week for 12 weeks.

The Fire Department has answered 255 calls for service to date including response to four (4) structure fires since last month's report. One occupant of a careless cooking fire at 1119 Washington Avenue was treated for smoke inhalation -- otherwise there were no injuries reported in the other fires which included: 3311-10th Avenue, 2429 Maple Street and 2866 Mason Avenue.

Training on the operation of the new county-wide Warning Information Notification System or WINS has begun with several members of various city departments learning how to send informative messages to those citizens who choose to subscribe to this system which provides

both emergency, as well as non-emergency messages, for events within our community ranging from weather warnings to special bulletins. For more information or to subscribe to messaging, please visit the WINS link on our City of Port Huron web page.

As we continue our pre-fire inspection program, 53 commercial inspections have been conducted to date for January. Future plans for this program include the offering of voluntary home fire safety inspections of residences within the City. Eighty-three children and 38 adults have participated in public education programs so far this month, receiving information and messages to keep their lives and property fire safe.

As of January 23rd, the Code Enforcement Unit had 61 new complaints opened. We presented a successful year in review to the City Council on January 12, 2015. Larry Jones of Landmark/Sperry's attended an Administrative Hearing on January 22nd and was given 60 more days to correct the matter. Larry explained he is seeking State Historic Commission approval to obtain tax credits and does not know when that will be approved. He added his company has put \$1.5 million in the building with City Flats putting in an additional \$900,000. Hearing Officer Hirt advised the outstanding fines need to be paid prior to his return on March 26th. Larry was angry he was told to pay the outstanding fine and AHO Hirt explained we have been waiting four years for the outside to look presentable. We also met with Corporate Counsel to discuss collections/garnishment procedures and sent out past due notices to those with outstanding debt owed to the City. On January 26, 2015, Lt. Marcy Kuehn will begin training at Michigan State University School of Staff and Command two weeks a month until graduation in June 2015. When she is in training, Inspector Cindi McPherson will be in charge of the day-to-day operations. In February, we will be working toward establishing a plan for collections as well as seeking single lot assessments approval from Council.

Items the Clerk's office worked on during the month of January included attending WINS notification system training, reviewing Traffic Control Orders, recodification of the Code Book work, converting paper records to electronic documents, updating old cemetery records, selling of dog licenses and designing new ID cards for employees and other appropriate licensees in a new ID software program.

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. Comments were provided to the consultant's 90 percent complete design drawings. URS submitted all of the final design documents to us on January 16, 2015. DeMaria sent the documents out for bid on January 18, 2015 and construction is scheduled to begin March of 2015.

The bids were opened by Blue Water Area Transportation Commission on January 7, 2015 for the orphan well closures in the south McMorran lot.

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 continued working on updates to the Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2015-2016.

Preliminary budgets were received from the Finance Department and distributed to the DPW Division Heads and Supervisors.

DPW Engineering staff continued working on various construction projects. The engineering staff continues working on the design of improvements to Sanborn Street between Stone Street and Gratiot Avenue and Stone Street from Pine Grove to Thomas Edison Drive. Both of these projects will be funded partially with federal transportation grants. Bids were opened for the Washington Street reconstruction project between 10th Avenue and Stone Street. This project will be funded partially with millage money. Bids were opened on January 13, 2015 and work is expected to start in the spring of 2015. The design of the Hickory Area reconstruction project and Riverview from 15th Avenue to 19th Avenue's bid was opened January 20, 2015. This project is expected to begin in the spring utilizing street millage money. Bid documents were sent to Sanctum Contracting for the MOC back deck project. Council approved the project on January 12, 2015. Engineering staff continues to final out the Sanborn project from 10th Avenue to Stone with the MDOT. Engineering staff is assisting the Recreation Department in writing and reviewing an RFP for the splash pad and new restroom and concession facilities at Lakeside Park. Engineering staff is putting together documents for the annual concrete project and putting together documents for replacing sections of odor control duct work at the WWTP.

The street maintenance crews put down approximately 12 tons of cold patch at various locations. The salt crews were out on 13 snow occasions, putting down a total of 1540 tons of salt and 630 gallons of calcium chloride. Street crews provided traffic control measures for Chilly Fest.

The motor vehicle pool crew continued helping MDOT with the raising and lowering of the Military Street Bridge for MDOT's maintenance project. Crews also assisted with blight piles (trash). The motor vehicle pool had no major breakdowns, maintained the preventative maintenance list, outfitted a new plow truck for the recreation department and assisted streets in the operation of snow removal equipment.

Traffic control crews responded to numerous accident damaged signs and assisted in the operation of snow removal equipment. The plotter was sent out for repair and returned so we were able to work on completing several signs

The water distribution staff repaired two water main breaks and continues to assist the Water Office with water shutoffs and turn-on's. The sewer collection staff performed routine maintenance activities and investigated a couple sewer backup complaints. Staff has also been working with Port Huron Township DPW staff to install water meter reading equipment for those properties in the township that the City serves directly in accordance with filtered water service agreement.

The Water Filtration Plant (WFP) staff has been working with the consultant for the North Elevated Tank and miscellaneous pipe painting project to develop plans and specifications for bidding documents. It is anticipated that these documents will be completed within the next month or so.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) staff continued working with the manufacturer of the fine bubble aeration equipment. The manufacturer has replaced the defective stainless steel hardware within tank number three. Once the WWTP can take tank number two out of service, the manufacturer will be back to replace any defective hardware within that tank. As stated in last month's report, this is outside of the warranty period but the manufacturer is standing behind their product and replacing any defective hardware at no cost to the City. WWTP and Engineering staff has met with the consultant working on the Primary Clarifier project to discuss with the consultants the potential scope of the project. They also had a kickoff meeting with the recently selected consultant to discuss the Gratiot Avenue pump station rehabilitation project. The consultant has begun their evaluation of the pump station.

During the month of January, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for part-time Cashiers and recently posted a full-time job opening for a Staff Accountant.

A profile was developed for the City Engineer/DPW Director position for recruitment purposes by working with the Michigan Municipal League (MML) staff. The advertising and actual recruitment process began on January 23, 2015 through MML. The League will accept applications through February 20, 2015.

Several meetings were held during the month to discuss potential upcoming retirement vacancies with various Department Heads and the Finance Department. This is an ongoing process in which we look for opportunities to combine positions and/or duties where possible. All open positions are carefully evaluated prior to filling them. We continue to look for opportunities to reduce manpower through attrition.

January marks the month in which the Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses (MIOSHA Form 300A) is posted at each City location in which our employees work. This summary identifies how many recordable injuries or illnesses our employees incurred during the previous calendar year and how many lost work days and/or restricted work days employees incurred for that location. This is a MIOSHA requirement and the summaries must be posted from February 1 through April 30th for the previous calendar year.

The Planning Department finalized amendments to the Water Street Hotel Project Brownfield. City Council will be asked to review and approve after a public hearing on February 23rd. They will be completing the details for amending boundaries of the new SmartZone that Council approved in September. Those amendments will be completed in February and March, with final approvals from the State expected in May. The SmartZone will allow for our existing Local Development Finance zone and Industrial Park to be marketed by the State (and the City) as a Technology Park in order to expand the investment and employment opportunities for our

community. They are also working with private investors regarding expansion plans for local restaurant and the relocation of the Community Foundation Office downtown. Planning also worked with the Finance Department and private developer to secure repayment of \$ 1.1 million of 1986 HoDAG funds for use in housing related projects.

The Community Development Division has been preparing reports and documents for the CDBG Annual Action Plan and the required 5 year Consolidated Plan. Staff has been busy reviewing the Community Survey for the Consolidated Plan. There were over 200 respondents to the online survey. Preliminary design of CDBG programs and annual review of Federal and State changes to regulations that may impact program procedures is underway.

The Inspection Division has been updating property files and building plans in storage to complete a final master list and permanent storage needs. Staff are cross-referencing paper blueprints with pdf discs that are now required at time of issuance of Certificate of Occupancy as part of the goal to reduce storage needs and yet maintain specific building plans as required by State Law. They are also updating and expanding BS&A software uses for property and permit information.

In the Rental Division, all annual operating fee bills are being processed for mailing in early February. Approximately 5,700 bills will be mailed out with a due date of mid-April. Final letters are being sent the last week of January to seven rental property owners regarding 13 properties that were issued citations and have not responded to earlier correspondences or paid the tickets in full. The letter will be issued by the city attorney and will provide 10 days to make full payment or Rental Certificate(s) will be voided and a court hearing will be scheduled.

Winter is here and the recreation department is trying hard to keep our residents busy with activities both inside and outside. The winter programs are in full swing. Our new sample fitness classes, sock wars, and snowman building contest have been really popular. The ice rink is in the process of being constructed at Palmer Park by a special event group that is doing a 3-on-3 hockey tournament. It is getting a lot of use by the neighborhood kids while organizers are getting it ready for the tournament. There is also lots of planning going on for cabin fever on Fridays at the Recreation Department that parents love. Another program coordinators are working on for summer is collaboration with the Police Department and community development called Neighborhood Time 2 Play. This program will give children in high-risk neighborhoods positive activities in the summer.

In the cemetery we have buried 16 loved ones this month. Frost is 8 inches to 2 feet, depending on the area in the cemetery, but the new frost remover purchased last year has saved money and makes winter operations much more efficient. The new Cemetery Facebook page is a great way to get information to people interested in cemetery information and has 40 “likes” on it.

Parks and Forestry have removed 12 trees this month and worked in 10 areas trimming. They continue to work on picnic and park bench refurbishing in the shop to have them ready for the spring. Staff has also been busy with parking lots, crosswalks, bus stops and turn-outs removing snow and salting ice.

The Information Technology Department prepared W-2 statements and 1099-Misc's for both the City and the Blue Water Transportation Authority as well as annual 1099-G forms for the Income Tax Department.

During January, the Income Tax Division sent final assessments on compliance work where no protest was filed and resolved issues where written protests were filed. They mailed 1099's for refunds to our taxpayers and also mailed other year-end tax forms. They also began processing 2014 tax returns that were filed.

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 completed this month including the processing and distribution of W-2's to all of our employees, as well as the processing and mailing of 1099's to our vendors. We have also prepared and submitted the Metro Act Report and the Marina DNR Report to the State of Michigan.

The Assessing Division is finalizing all lot splits and combinations prior to the preparation of assessment changes. Permits are also being finalized in order to be reflected in assessment changes. The listing of proposed Board of Review members for 2015 was finalized and submitted to the City Council for approval. Personal property statements are being completed and returned, so they are beginning to review those.

The Treasurer's Office and Water Office continues to be extremely busy. In addition to continuing to collect winter property taxes and performing the monthly accounting for BWATC, they continue to have far more than the usual amount of customer calls and inquiries regarding the transition from quarterly to monthly water billing. Also, they have been working closely with the I.T. Department, Accounting Division and our banking partners in regards to the on-line, next day payments. If everything goes well, we should be able to begin accepting those payments sometime in late February or March.

The City Manager, County Administrator and Marysville City Manager made an advance trip to Sarnia to meet with their Mayor and City Manager. This trip is a precursor to a future Economic Development and Trade summit Mayor Repp and Chairman of the County Board, Jeff Bohm, will be making within the next few months.

One of the conclusions that we were better able to put numbers behind with the economic study done as part of the MDOT Plaza settlement was the amount of Canadian dollars that flow into Port Huron. Our shops, restaurants and hotels benefit greatly from our friendship with our Canadian partners.

Back in the 70's, 80's and 90's our relationship with Canada was more open and robust. We recognize that 9/11 changed security procedures and made it more difficult to cross. However, that should have encouraged us to bolster our efforts and communication with our friends across the river even more.

One of the small but important things the Mayor of Sarnia mentioned was that the Times Herald doesn't deliver over there anymore. This is problematic because they relied heavily on getting the coupons and sales circulars from our shops and restaurants. Something we have begun to communicate to the Times Herald leadership.

We believe there is lots of room for growth and communication with Canada. First, it will be good to get the diplomatic channels flowing again and Mayors Repp and Bradley will be good at that. We are hopeful a council exchange day with Sarnia will be possible as well. We have faced a lot of the same challenges and we believe there is much we can learn from what they have done.

This past week the City Manager attended the Michigan Local Government Management Association's Winter Institute. Several classes on redevelopment, economic development, and several other policy issues were attended. A few meetings with site selection agencies who were also there were held. Port Huron has great opportunity for new developments in our industrial park, but these agencies need to know we exist and have room first.

The City Manager has also been having final discussions with Automation Ally regarding the partnership agreement required by law for the SmartZone development. Council can expect that agreement to be presented at the first meeting in February. We want to ensure that the new cost can be paid from the additional capture and that it is sustainable. We also want to be clear as to level of services the City can expect from Automation Ally.

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