



*Office of the City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer
Monthly Administrative Report
July 2015*

Heading full steam into the summer months, the Police Department has completed a few special events in June, and is gearing up for a busy July. On June 26th, the Police Department, along with the Michigan State Police and St. Clair County Sheriff's Office, policed the annual cruise night festivities. The event usually sees thousands of car enthusiasts visit the Northern portion of Port Huron and Fort Gratiot. This year's event was well attended but was calm with minimal issues. The following Sunday, June 28th, saw the annual Blue Water Half Marathon wind its way through City streets. The event requires several police officers to conduct traffic control at various intersections to ensure safe passage of participants across busy roadways.

June also saw the investigation of a brutal homicide which occurred in the 700 block of Court Street. The female victim was stabbed several times by her boyfriend with a kitchen knife. The suspect was apprehended with a few hours of the discovery of the victim. The case is currently scheduled for a preliminary examination in July. The suspect, Aaron Swift, has been charged with open murder in addition to other charges. Additionally, there was another stabbing / attempted murder on the same day, within hours of the first call. The victim and witnesses in that event have so far been un-cooperative with investigative efforts.

Call for Police service in May increased 4% from April 2015 and were virtually the same as calls in May 2014. Increases from April were noted in animal complaints (+103%), domestics (+35%) and narcotic investigations (+85%). Decreases were noted in Malicious Destruction of Vehicle (-81%) and accidents (-15%). Number are not available for June at the time of this report.

The DPS-Fire Division responded to ten (10) fires to date in the month of June. This includes the following building fires and two (2) vehicle fires:

- A fire damaged the awing at 310 Huron Ave from an apparent animal nest ignited by discarded smoking materials.
- Careless cooking caused damage to 2857 Riverside Dr. Discarded smoking materials into a plastic trash can caused slight damage inside 1123 Water St.
- A garage sustained extensive damage at 1123 Thompson Ave. ignited from embers from an outside fire.
- An apartment fire at 3129 Electric Ave caused extensive damage to the first floor kitchen area that appears to have been caused by a small appliance.
- A house at 1513 Howard Street sustained damage in the area of the breaker panel from an electrical fire believed to have been caused by thunderstorm.

- A fire that was intentionally set by a resident of 716-17th Passions Continuing Care Home caused moderate damage to a bathroom. Police arrested the male subject and charges are pending.
- Damage to cars involved in fires at 1218-15th St. and 3126 Electric Ave. was limited to both vehicles and no injuries were reported.

Beginning Monday, June 15th the DPS-Fire Division implemented a new Medical Response Protocol in cooperation with Tri-Hospital EMS that would limit the types of medical calls in which fire resources would respond. Such calls would be those of a life threatening nature such as cardiac or respiratory arrests, severe traumatic injuries or other medical issues commonly referred to as priority ones. Additionally, fire crews would be dispatched to calls by EMS for additional manpower to manage obese patients or to any call where additional medical intervention would affect positive patient outcome. Administration will be evaluating this response matrix to monitor the effects and ensure that resources are being utilized as directed. During this first three weeks since implementation the Fire Division responded to 8 medical calls compared to 75 for the same three week period last month.

Forty two fire inspections of businesses have been completed to date. Fire Marshal Warren has conducted a 50% completion inspection of the Holiday Inn project on Water Street and continues to work closely with the contractors at the Baker College Student Housing Project to complete placement of fire suppression components.

As of June 29th, the Code Enforcement Unit had 309 new complaints opened and collected \$2065 in outstanding debt owed this month. Sperry's was given until 09/24/15 to complete window/trim maintenance or replacement. Lt. Kuehn graduated from MSU School of Staff & Command and her staff checked to make sure the 7th Street Tunnel was clear of graffiti before the arrival of boat week next month. In July, Code Enforcement unit will move from the 4th floor and assimilate ourselves into the 3rd floor Planning Department. We will also begin working closer with Corporate Council on taking two properties (2530 Conner and 1429 Bancroft) to Circuit Court to garner compliance.

Following each election, the Bureau of Elections randomly selects a certain number of precincts throughout the state to conduct a post-election audit to ensure and reinforce important election related legal and procedural requirements are followed. For the May 2015 election, Precinct 1 (Holland Woods School) was selected to be audited. This involved a review of several key Election Day and pre- and post-election day processes. Some of the items reviewed included proper ballot box sealing, recording of seal numbers, proper testing and sealing of voting equipment, properly securing voter information on the computer (E-Pollbook), completion of applications to vote, certificates and forms signed correctly and many other items. Maintaining the integrity of elections is one of our most important responsibilities, and we are happy to report that no issues or deficiencies were found for work performed by either staff on pre- and post-election responsibilities or by the inspectors on Election Day.

On May 5th the Clerk's office attended Career Day at Woodrow Wilson Elementary. Our office did three presentations describing the duties and responsibilities in the Clerk's office and

held a mock election for the children to vote for their favorite snack. The mock election was a great success and taught the children how important it is to get out and vote.

DPW staff responded to two separate weather events this month which caused the mouth of the Black River Canal to close in because of being blocked by littoral sand. The City's dredging permit restricts activity from May 1st to July 31st to minimize impact to fish spawning and migration. A request for revision to this permit was processed by the Engineering staff and approved by MDEQ, allowing the City's contractor to clear the canal of this blockage by June 26th. On 29 June, the channel was again blocked by another storm, requiring a follow-up request to MDEQ.

The DPW Director completed a review of the file following a request for consideration that the traffic signal at the intersection of Elmwood and Stone Street be removed. The Director forwarded a memo outlining a confirmatory study, to be completed by the Engineering staff in August, which may result in removal of this signal.

The Michigan Department of Transportation has completed work on the plans for traffic signal modernization at the intersection of Military and Water Streets. The result of these plans is to permit left turning movements from southbound Military street onto eastbound Water Street. MDOT work is to proceed in the spring.

The Engineering staff continues to work on the design and processing of documents for the improvements to South Boulevard from Electric to 31st Street, 20th Street from Dove to Beard, Beers Street from Michigan to Glenwood and 10th Avenue from Garfield to Sanborn Street and Reid from Electric to 16th Street, East Quay parking lot, Elevators at the MOC and HVAC systems at the MOC.

The Engineering staff continues to assist the Recreation Department in processing contract bid documents for the improvements at Lakeside Park.

The MOC back deck project has the concrete completed. Restoration still needs to be completed. MOC staff continues to move walls around on the third floor.

The streets maintenance crews continue to perform the typical month to month duties including repairs of pot holes with cold patch at various locations, street sweeping, and crack sealing. Trip hazards and docks were repaired along the black river. Grass cutting is currently in progress at several locations.

The motor pool continued to perform the typical month to month duties including the preventative maintenance list, monthly bridge maintenance and completed outfitting a new patrol unit. Staff is in the process of doing a major repair on unit #246 and repairing street sweepers.

Traffic control crews repaired numerous damaged signs, fabricated several signs for various departments and installed a repaired light pole in Northern Woods Subdivision.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) experienced very heavy flows as a result of the early morning rain event on June 23rd. The WWTP recorded approximately two inches of

rain within a one hour period. This rain along with saturated soils from the wet spring caused the collection system to respond quickly (footing drain influence). This rain event required the use of the wet weather bypass piping which diverted flow around the primary clarifiers to the on-site storage tank (primary effluent reservoir) for later treatment. As a result, the WWTP was able to treat all the flow that entered the plant.

Utilities Services continued to perform the typical month to month tasks including water meter reading, sewer cleaning, catch basin cleaning and assistance to the Water Office for turn-ons and shutoffs for non-payment of water bills. In addition to these tasks, the crews repaired a couple of water main breaks and sanitary sewers. We received numerous phone calls following the rain event on June 23rd of water in basements. Staff responded to each location as calls came in. It is not believed at this time that the City's sanitary collection system caused any water to enter a basement. In most cases, it was caused by the footing drains not being able to handle the flow and/or improper waterproofing of the exterior basement walls.

The Water Filtration Plant (WFP) staff has been working with the consultant and contractor for the North Elevated Tank Painting project. The contractor has almost completed their work and should be finished within the next week. Once they are finished, WFP staff will begin the process of bringing the tank back into service.

During the month of June, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for the following positions: WWTP Operator, Parks Repair, and Utilities Repair for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and a Part-time Health & Safety Coordinator. We plan to have a part-time Health & Safety Coordinator in place before the end of the year to replace Dan Collins. Additionally, we have started the recruitment process for a new Planning Director, following the announcement of retirement from Kim Harmer.

We finished processing the background checks and drug screens for the bulk of our new seasonal employees who will be working primarily at our Recreation, Parks and the Cemetery Departments for the summer.

The H.R. Director met several times with eligible members of the Fire Department to answer questions and to finalize the Severance Incentive Agreements and MERS retirement paperwork. Four (4) Fire Fighters will be retiring August 1, 2015 and One (1) Fire Fighter will be retiring September 1, 2015.

We have been receiving several applications for the Director of Planning Position. The deadline to apply is July 27th. We have been in contact with a few other potential applicants and expect several more to apply within the next few weeks. The candidates looks like a good pool.

Upon approval of the agreement with Health Decisions Inc., we have been working on collecting required information from our employees and non-Medicare retirees in an effort to comply with the new mandatory IRS reporting requirements that is a provision under the Affordable Care Act. We will be working with our I.T. Department in the near future so that we can start transferring data to Health Decisions.

The Planning Department received word from the Washington D.C. HUD Office that we need to resubmit several sections of both the Section 108 and BEDI Grant Application for the Sperry's project. Some of the material is considered out of date since the original application in 2010. Staff continues to work with the developer's representative and HUD Representative to provide HUD with the financial documents and construction information they require. Planning Director met with the Detroit HUD Section 108 Rep this week to review materials and answer her questions regarding the project. We are receiving excellent cooperation from the Grand Rapids development team and hope to have clearance from HUD by September.

Community Development Division continues to offer housing rehabilitation programs and home buyer assistance programs as the housing market and summer season heats up. Deeds for the tax foreclosed properties under the Blight Elimination Program have been received and demolition bids are being developed in partnership with the Port Huron Neighborhood Housing Corporation. A joint project with PHNHC includes the restoration of a home on Military Street that will highlight original architectural details and repurpose items from demolition projects. Upon completion the home will be sold to a first time buyer and will eliminate what has been an eyesore on that block.

The Inspection Division issued 115 permits and responded to a number of complaints. Plan reviews for Port Huron McLaren Hospital expansion are underway, as well as building plans for several additions/renovations including updates to the kitchen at the Baker College Culinary Institute.

The Rental Certification Division inspected and issued 123 certificates and responded to several complaints. The Inspectors were also busy with updates to the BS&A system and clearing open exterior complaints that could not be addressed during the winter months.

It is the season for Parks and Recreation to be in full swing. The recreation department started all their programming and things are going well. Over 500 people walk every Tuesday for Walk Michigan. We are feeding hundreds of kids a week with the Meet Up and Eat Up breakfast/lunch program. Our six locations in the Port Huron Area Schools are busting at the seams. Our two swim teams at Sanborn Pool have 60 kids each and swim lessons have over 100 kids signed up for this session. Our weekly movies have also brought out many families for free entertainment at Kiefer Park. More than 20 sports programs bring many children to the recreation center every week.

The parks department is in full swing for grass cutting season for our 28 pieces of property that we cut and trim each week. Irrigation systems are up and running in all parks along with the flower beds. Parkway is about 85 percent running (we still have a few problems but are working on them). This month's crew have spread wood chips in various parks under playscapes and swings sets, which provides a safe area for a child to fall and help keep them safe from injury! Project parks program has been working on one park at a time. This month volunteers worked on painting the gazebo in Pine Grove Park and painting at Palmer Park.

We have also supplied many garden clubs, who take care of the many flower beds around the City, with wood chips, and picked up all the yard waste bags from the cleaning of the flower

beds. These are looking great! Park's crew are also installing signs for the Blue Way group and have installed a sign by the kayak launch for the kayak loop around the City. The sign is part of the blue way trail and we are preparing to install another eight signs for them as well. A lot of repairs are being done on playground equipment to make the play structures safe.

Also we are currently working with the friends of St. Clair River on clearing a flower bed down by Acheson's for a butterfly garden. They received a grant to do this. We removed all the old landscaping and old weed barriers from the flower area so they could reestablish the bed. The forestry crew has encountered some major storms, and this has required us to come in for some major tree clean-up including trees over roads, in driveways, on a fence, and even on a car. The forestry crew has been great about responding and coming in, understanding the need for a quick response, to make things safe for the public.

In the cemetery, 23 services have been done this month. The crew has been working hard to make sites conform to the rules. The cemetery is looking good! Although some are not happy with the removal of their non-conforming items, it has made the cemetery look clean. Community service has also been very helpful on the weekends with storm clean up and the consistent need for weed whipping by the grave stones. The next task the seasonal workers and crews will be working on is the trimming of shrubs. They have already started on the tree at the entrance and it has made a big difference.

The Information Technology Department work with the Police Department to prepare a recommendation for purchase of CLEMIS speciation Mobile Computer Terminals (MCTs). We also prepared approximately 13,000 Property Tax Bills for the summer collection.

During June the Income Tax Division finished processing all annual tax returns that have been filed to date. We sent out initial correspondence on any potential withholding problems. We also sent out initial correspondence to employers who have not filed the required informational returns. In addition, we began our annual non-filer compliance process, based on tax information we received from the State of Michigan.

The Accounting Division continued to perform the typical month to month duties. These include processing payroll, expense checks and other usual monthly work such as posting journal entries, updating various spreadsheets, balancing accounts, etc. We have been working on the reconciliations for our various property tax accounts in order to balance 2014 before the 2015 tax bills get mailed.

The Assessing Division has begun a process of verifying all assessing information for 20 percent of City properties. This program will ultimately take five years to complete. During that time, we will re-measure all buildings and structures as well as documenting other information including fences, sheds, sidewalks, pools and patios. This month we have performed this physical documentation to 230 properties. During June, we have also been working with our attorney on Michigan Tax Tribunal appeals and entering historical deeds into our computer software.

The Treasurer's Office and Water Office continue to be busy with collection of income tax payments and water payments. We also continue to perform the monthly accounting for BWATC. During the month of June, we balanced the tax roll, updated codes for mortgage companies, updated special assessments such as OPRA and NEZ that needed to be added to tax bills, and maintained the coding for the special bills. This will allow the tax bills to be mailed out in late June, which is our historical practice.

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