



Office of the City Manager/Chief Administrative Officer
Monthly Administrative Report
October, 2015

September concludes a very busy summer for the Police Department. On September 11th, the Police Department hosted the remembrance ceremony at the flag plaza in honor of the many lives lost. Law enforcement and civilians from around the area, including Canada, came together to remember those that died that fateful day. The Department also hosted the annual Torch Run 5k race on September 12th. Runners from all over the area joined Law Enforcement to participate in this worthy cause. Funds raised from the event support Michigan's Special Olympics, and this year the event raised nearly \$4,000. The actual torch made an appearance this year here in Port Huron, as the event's torch crew chose Port Huron as one of its stops on its tour of Michigan.

September saw the conclusion of the Neighborhood Takeback Operation. The operation, funded by federal grant dollars, puts police officers directly into neighborhoods that have been identified as high crime areas. The multi-facet operations involved both uniformed and undercover officers working jointly in those identified hotspots. Numbers from the details are being tallied but the efforts were highly successful. Dozens of arrests, citations and warnings were issued during the details on crimes ranging from drug sales to assaultive crimes. Many warrants were also served during the operation resulting in multiple arrests of outstanding misdemeanor and felony wanted persons.

The Police Department continues to see a rise in the use of and production of meth in the City. Meth labs are very volatile and fumes from the chemicals are extremely hazardous to first responders. In an effort to respond more efficiently to these cases, the Police Department has trained two investigators in meth lab investigation and cleanup/container procedures. The State of Michigan, also recognizing the upswing in meth production, has enacted a container program which provides materials to safely contain meth components for safe transportation. The Police Department is in line to get a State grant funded trailer to haul the containers to the predetermined location where the hazmat materials will be placed until proper disposal can occur. The trailer should be received sometime this fall. Prior to this training police had to contact specially trained hazmat people from the Michigan State Police and wait for their arrival on scene for assistance, sometimes being several hours or days, depending on their availability.

Overall calls for service in August decreased 12% from July 2015 and decreased 12% from August 2014. Increases from July 2015 were noted in animal complaints (+7%) and malicious destruction of property (+21%). Decreases were noted in assaults (-18%), disorderly persons (-14%), domestics (-10%) and suspicious complaints (-16%). Numbers are not available for September at the time of this report.

The DPS-Fire Division responded to the following fires since last our last report. Damage was contained to a dryer at 2322-10th Street when the appliance caught fire due to a rodent nest and buildup of lint in the venting. A garage and collectors vehicle at 1421 Oak Street sustained damage from a fire caused by a malfunctioning ventilation fan. Fire crews responded to a large brush fire in the area of the CN rail tunnel. The fire began in a wooded area off 10th street and

quickly spread west until fire crews were able to extinguish it. The fire burned an approximate two acre area with no damage to any buildings or injuries reported.

Fire fighter Charles Logan retired effective September 1st. Firefighter Logan was the last of 5 staff to accept the incentive retirement package. The Fire Division recognized the promotion of Lieutenant Chris Shattuck to the rank of Captain as we continue to reorganize the command structure across all three shifts. Members of the Fire Division participated in the annual service of remembrance held on September 11th.

Operations Chief Mainguy and Chief Reaves have begun meetings with the executive board of the Fire Union to evaluate possible changes to future vacation scheduling to reduce overtime necessary to sustain the current operation of all three (3) stations with ten (10) daily staff. The Fire Division's response to emergency medical calls continues to be monitored and evaluated. The division responded to 58 EMS calls from September 1st to September 28th compared to 259 for the same period in 2014, a 77.6% reduction.

Crews continue to make inspections of commercial businesses and evaluate responses by pre-planning tactics with 37 such inspections completed to date for September. The Baker College student housing complex has been completed and Fire Marshal Warren has completed his inspection and has approved occupancy.

As of September 25th, the Code Enforcement Unit had 147 new complaints opened although part-time inspectors are beginning to reduce their hours as fall approaches. We collected \$905 in outstanding debt owed this month, \$100 of which was paid from collection efforts Tom Reilly pursued on our behalf. The Administrative Hearing Bureau heard 70 cases and Dunn Paper made great strides in improving the exterior of their property/lots. An inspection of 1304 White Street revealed it was a candidate for demolition and the owner's public guardian began working with Community Development to utilize available grant funds for purchase. We worked with DHS to assist William Kidd at 1429 Bancroft, but didn't get much farther ahead. However, we are now working with Mr. Kidd's son in the hopes that he can retain guardianship to meet his father's needs. St. Clair County cleaned up the construction debris off the vacant lot at 28th & Moak Streets, which was cut it back off the sidewalk so it looks presentable. With the help of POAM, we improved a porch (stained, new mailbox, welcome mat, flowers) of an elderly resident at 1925 7th Street who was in the hospital having surgery. After receiving a complaint about MPRI (Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative) homes in residential neighborhoods, we will investigate to see if there are possible zoning violations come October.

In the month of September, the City Clerk's office processed close to 800 voter registration record changes and 26 FOIA requests (17 of which were from Phil Risner). We mailed the annual renewal letters to trash truck and taxicab companies.

For cemetery division responsibilities, we received 17 burial service orders, sold 9 cemetery plots, coordinated paperwork for 68 headstone foundation orders (to be installed in October) and receipted over \$17,000 in funds during the month of September. We also continued to transfer records listed on index cards into the cemetery database.

The Clerk's office also assisted the Beautification Commission with the clerical work involved with the Commission's annual Tree Recognition Program, which will be held at the start of their regular meeting on October 8th at 7 p.m. in Conference Room 101. This recognition program allows private citizens to have a tree planted on City property in memory of or in recognition of a loved one or dear friend. A permanent plaque listing the names of the individuals recognized or remembered hangs in the hallway outside the Clerk's office.

DPW staff completed the refurbishment of the rear deck of the MOC and opened it for use for MOC occupants. New paint and carpet upgrades were made to the entrance foyer on the first floor, the elevators, the fourth floor conference room (Rm 408), and in the police lobby. Preparations were completed to the new EDA Suite on the fourth floor to allow them to occupy the building starting in October. One new parking space was created for the EDA by resurfacing some of the concrete in the MOC garage. Sod was placed on the MOC deck plaza.

The Engineering Staff continues to work on the design and processing of documents for the improvements to 20th Street from Dove to Beard, Glenwood from Pine Grove to Fort Street, Beers Street from Michigan to Glenwood, Michigan from Beers to Glenwood, Fort from Glenwood to Beers, Reid From Electric to 16th Street, North Blvd from Electric to 32nd, East Quay Parking Lot, refurbishing the front two elevators in the MOC building, the chiller system in the MOC, the front deck of the MOC, the roof at the Carnegie Museum, the electrical system at the Carnegie Museum and an HVAC maintenance contract at the Carnegie Museum.

The Lakeside Beach restrooms and concession stand were demolished. The Engineering staff continues to assist the Recreation Department in processing contract bid documents for the improvements at Lakeside Park. Lakeside Park's splash pad shop drawings were reviewed. Construction is scheduled to start October 12th. The Engineering Department continues to monitor the progress for the Blue Water Transit project. They are scheduled for completion in October.

The resurfacing contract for 10th Avenue from Garfield to Sanborn was finished. Work continues on the Hickory Area reconstruction project north of Sanborn. Work was started on Riverview from 15th to 19th Avenue. Work was finished on the reconstruction project of Sanborn between Stone and Gratiot. Punch list items continue on the Nern Street CSO project and the Stone Street Project from Pine Grove to McPherson. The South Blvd construction project was started. Thomas Edison Parkway, Prospect and Michigan by the Pine Grove Park project was initiated, with work scheduled for completion by October 16th.

The streets maintenance crews continue to perform the typical month to month duties. These include repairing pot holes with cold patch at various locations, street sweeping, and crack sealing. Crews applied chloride to the roads in Lakeside cemetery and removed the fence around the lot at 10th and Water Streets. The crews installed top soil and sod at the MOC and also skim coated and repaired cement floor in the MOC garage. Grass cutting is currently in progress at several locations. Brick paver repair project was finished and the ADA ramps all through the downtown area were cleaned. Crews formed, poured, and finished a dozen cement pads for the Parks Department.

The motor pool continued to perform the typical month to month duties. These include the preventative maintenance list, monthly bridge maintenance and repairing equipment. There were three major repairs on three vehicles that kept the mechanics busy. One was a total rebuild of an underbody scraper, complete brake job as well as several repairs to the sludge hauling equipment.

Traffic control crews fabricated and installed several signs for the recreation department and repaired several damaged signs. Crews also installed crosswalk and stop bar in the Cleveland school area.

Utilities Services continued to perform the typical month to month tasks. These tasks include 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 two MDOT catch basins on Electric Avenue. One was between North Boulevard and South Boulevard and the other was near Lakewood Avenue. These repairs are in accordance with the annual maintenance agreement between the City and the State of Michigan. As part of the McLaren Hospital Elk Street parking lot project, staff abandoned one block of water main within vacated Poplar Street that no longer served a purpose. Because of its age and condition, it would have been a risk to leave it under their new parking lot. In addition to abandoning the water main within their project site, McLaren's contractor abandoned two blocks of storm and sanitary sewer which also no longer served a purpose. These would have also been a risk to their new parking lot.

The Water Filtration Plant (WFP) staff has met with BSB Communications to discuss the replacement of the telephone system recently awarded at the September 14th council meeting. They plan on completing the installation of the new system on Thursday, October 1st. Also staff is investigating the screen on the south water intake as it has begun to malfunction. The extent of the problem will not be known until they schedule an inspection of the south raw water well.

The Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Engineering staff met with a consultant to begin discussion on the alum and polymer pump replacement project that is included in the current budget. Based on our chemical feed rate and newer technology, there is the possibility of reducing the size of the pumps. The smaller pumps would be less expensive and more efficient which potentially could reduce the chemical usage resulting in a cost savings as well. Dee Cramer, Inc. completed the fabrication and installation of the sections of odor control ductwork leading into each of the four thickener tanks. They were awarded the project at the April 27th council meeting. Sanctum Contracting, Inc. completed the brick repair project this month which was awarded at the May 26th council meeting. There was a slight delay because the bricks at the WWTP are not a common size and are a special order. Sanctum, at no additional cost to the City, paid additional money to have the brick molds changed so that the bricks could be shipped sooner.

During the month of September, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for Police Officers and the Accounts Payable Clerk. Testing and interviews will take place during the month of October for the Accounts Payable Clerk position.

David Haynes accepted the Planning Director position and officially started with the City on Monday, September 28th. A transition plan is in place as Kim Harmer's last day is Friday, October 2nd.

An interview and job offer was extended to a candidate to replace Dan Collins for the part-time Health & Safety/Training Coordinator position. The transition period will start in October.

Our Retirement Plan Specialist from ICMA Retirement Corporation (ICMA-RC) is normally onsite in the spring and fall of each year. Although this is a voluntary benefit option that we offer our employees, the Retirement Plan Specialist is available by appointment to meet with City employees that participate or that are interested in participating to review their individual accounts. The Plan Specialist was available during the week of September 21st and met with City employees at various City work locations.

Participating in the Retiree Drug Subsidy (RDS) Program is managed internally by the H.R. Department and is an ongoing process. This time of year is when we start a new application for fiscal 2015/2016, request payment for 2014/2015 and reconcile our 2013/2014 application. This program is offered through Medicare and since the City provides a prescription drug benefit for our retirees we are able to participate in this program. Based on the prescription drug claims that are processed on behalf of our Medicare eligible retirees the City receives a percentage of the cost we spend back through this plan. Since 2006, the total cost reimbursed to-date is over \$1,200,000. Our reimbursement for 2014/2015 is \$99,967.44. All reimbursement money received through the RDS plan is credited to the fringe benefit fund to help offset retiree healthcare costs.

Every three (3) years we are required to complete and submit an EEO-4 report. This report was submitted at the end of September as well as the annual completion and submission of the Title VI Sub-Recipient Annual Certification form.

The Planning Department completed the necessary documents, reviews and releases to create an escrow account for the \$1,000,000 BEDI Grant funds from the HUD Washington D.C. Office. The funds will be held until the required Section 108 Loan documents can be finalized with HUD and subsequent development agreements provided to Council for their approval. It is anticipated that the 108 documents will be completed by the end of October which will make the additional \$1,500,000 loan funding available for the renovations at the Sperry site. During the last week of September, the department welcomed new Planning Director, Mr. David Haynes and staff is looking forward to working with him.

Community Development Division continues to assist new homeowners with the purchase of their first home and processed several applications for housing renovations.

The long awaited clean-up of the intersection at Varney/Water/10th Streets in the Harrison Pointe neighborhood was awarded CDBG funds and the project should begin within a month. Four more structures were acquired for demolition under the Blight Elimination Program and 12 structures are undergoing demolition during the next 30 days.

The Inspection Division issued 103 new permits and are currently overseeing additional construction at the McLaren Hospital expansion project and the electrical finishes at the Water Street Hotel. A new Checkers hamburger drive thru within the Colonial Shopping Center is also under permit review.

The Rental Certification Division 272 rental inspections and responded to several rental complaints from tenants. The department is experiencing a heavy volume of inspections and most inspections are booked through November.

In Parks and Recreation, September brought the completion of a crazy but fun summer. Day camp ended right after Labor Day and was a very profitable licensed daycare for the summer at Palmer Park. It also brought the end of the beach season. As we put this year to a close at the beaches we did talk too many of the residents by Lakeside, Holland Beach and the canal to help with issues they incurred with the increased amount of people using the beach this season. We will work hard to implement these ideas next season. Demolition of the Lakeside Building was completed in September and we look for the contractor on the building to mobilize the construction site by October 12th. Our fall brochure and open house was this month and fall programs begin in October.

In Parks, summer baseball has ended but fall ball has started so we continue to maintain the fields for the fall ball season. Parks crews also installed all the Blue Ways signs on the parkway and the new art work there as well. They are also working on completing Knox basketball court refurbishing and Gratiot Park. Public meetings have also been conducted in with residents near Lincoln and Knox Parks due to funders showing interest in these two parks. These meetings are to see what residents would like to see in their parks either now or in the future. Make a Difference Day will also ask for anyone to volunteer to help Lincoln and Knox Parks with painting and landscape work on October 24th. Forestry continues to work on many tree reports. They also have been working in the cemetery to remove many trees that need removal. Forestry has started and will continue to plant trees for the tree grant and memorial tree program.

Cemetery had 15 services this month. Crews continue to trim tree and remove overgrown bushes. Mausoleum repair contract has been signed and work is to start by the end of October. Roads in the cemetery were graded and stone put down in low areas. October 1st is the final day for footing orders for the fall so crews will be pouring them in early October.

The Information Technology Department was involved in a number of activities. Of note were: Upgraded the network equipment to improve police communication in support of the Clemis Implementation; provided year-to-date payroll information to validate Affordable Care Act Reporting requirements; prepared 4th floor telephone infrastructure in advance of EDA move-in; assisted with the audit by providing requested supporting documentation.

During August the Income Tax Division has again been mainly focused on our annual compliance efforts using information received from the State of Michigan. We should finish up with proposed assessments early next month. With one of our three people off on disability leave since early July, progress has been slower this year than normal.

The Accounting Division spent a large portion of their time during September involved with the year-end audit. The audit team from Plante Moran was here for much of the month of September working on the audit of all City funds, including the McMorran Authority. We have worked with the auditors throughout the month to get them any and all information they have requested. Also, we worked to update our spreadsheets for the various construction projects having activity during the year. This includes working with the Engineering Division in order to properly allocate the project costs to various funds, such as Streets, Water and Wastewater. In addition, we 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.

The Assessing Division continued the process of verifying all assessing information for 20 percent of City properties (representing the first year of a five year process) and we are nearly complete with this year's portion of the process. We have also continued logging historical information into our BS&A software which is an on-going process. We are working on the 2015 IFT reports due to the State on October 15th.

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 September, we were able to box up lesser needed files to put into storage. We have been promoting the email option for billing. We currently have about 330 accounts participating. We had 431 delinquent accounts shut off (105 more than were shut off last month).

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



James R. Freed

City Manager

Chief Administrative Officer