



Office of the City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer
Monthly Administrative Report
May 2016

April began as the first full month of spring with the police department busy as expected with call volumes on the rise. The Police Department is gearing up for an expected busy summer by creating a new power shift that will place extra officers on the road during its busiest times of the day and help with five FMLA leaves in the patrol division alone. The power shift will help officers respond to calls for service and also be proactive while on patrol. Details are being worked out and the shift is set to begin in early May. The shift will be staffed with current PHPD officers that have been reassigned from other duties. The use of this power shift is expected to save thousands of potential overtime dollars that would be required to be utilized, instead lowering the amounts of shifts/hours that will need to be covered.

The Police Department has been hosting ALICE training, in coordination with the St. Clair County Sheriff's Office. Both agencies have completed the instructor level training and have jointly offered the training to various organizations throughout St. Clair County. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. The training prepares individuals to handle the threat of an Active Shooter. ALICE teaches individuals to participate in their own survival, while leading others to safety. Though no one can guarantee success in this type of situation, this new set of skills will greatly increase the odds of survival should anyone face this form of disaster. The latest group of attendees was City employees who received the training during the last week of April.

The Police Department continues to see a rise in drug use in the area, including marijuana. With the acceptance and readily availability of medical marijuana cards, marijuana demand is up. With an increase in demand brings those unscrupulous individuals that continue to violate the law and work outside the legal constraints. The Police Department recently responded to a tip of another illegal grow-op located in the 1000 block of 10th Avenue where officers found the illegal operation. The homeowner was arrested and 72 marijuana plants were confiscated. Four children under the age of seven were inside the residence at the time of the arrest. A CPS investigation is underway in regard to the well-being of the children. Calls for service in March 2016 increased 678 (+36.7%) from February 2016 and were virtually the same as March 2015 (-.9%).

The Fire Division has responded to 163 calls for service including fires. A room heating unit was damaged by fire at the Quality Inn Hotel on Hancock Street. Smoke damage was limited to the room of origin and there were no injuries. Radiant heat from a vehicle fire at 520-13th Street caused damage to the exterior of two homes. Discarded charcoal from a grill caused damage to the deck and exterior of a home at 3206 Poplar Street. A grass and leaf fire spread to the shed and garage at 1117 Gillett Street causing extensive damage to the structures. Damage was sustained to a vehicle that caught fire in a garage at 601-16th Street. No injuries were reported in any of these incidents.

Staff have begun spring maintenance of fire stations and preparations are being made to begin annual testing of fire hose. Our Department of Public Safety's rescue/response boat was launched and placed into mooring for the season in the Black River. The Department of Public Safety recognized the

promotion of Lieutenant Dale Minard to the rank of Captain to complete the reorganizational restructuring of the Fire Division.

The Fire Department has conducted 36 inspections of businesses to date. Fire Marshal Warren has conducted six fire drills at Port Huron School buildings and given approval to six sets of building plans for upcoming projects, including Baker College housing, Convention Center remodel, Speedway gas station expansion, DHL, Dollar Tree and 24th Street mini-mall. Hydrostatic testing of the fire suppression system at McLaren Hospital cancer center was also completed.

As of April 26, the Code Enforcement Unit had 197 new complaints opened. The Administrative Hearing Bureau heard nine cases this month. We moved forward hearing dates to accommodate the vacancy of our court processor/secretary who is off after knee surgery. The hearing with Lew Sabra of 2429 Maple Street (vacant lot) was cancelled as all the scrap had been removed. We are ecstatic Probate Court authorized the Public Guardians Office's to sell William Kidd's 1429 Bancroft Street home to the Port Huron Neighborhood Housing Corporation (PHNHC). This has been an issue for over eight years and the house is now scheduled for demolition. William Kidd was placed in an apartment in the City. The dangerous tree at 1815 Gillett Street was taken down by new owners as HUD sold the property before Forestry was able to take the tree down per court order.

Another meeting was held with Corporate Counsel regarding Barcume rentals and another with PHALA regarding future actions we are taking regarding excessive complaints/drug raids. We received nothing but support. We also are working on a way to allow their landlords access to PHPD records as another background check option to weed out undesirable tenants. A presentation was given to brand new homeowners through Habitat for Humanity on April 23, and all City employees were sent a PowerPoint encouraging blight reporting efforts. We also mailed out paint tickets and vouchers to homeowners who need a new coat of paint this year.

In May, we hope to obtain safe housing conditions for Lowell Arnot of 2120 Poplar Street. We are working with Corporate Counsel and Alonzo Thomas's attorney to reach a successful conclusion in reference to long-standing exterior roof/paint issues at 923 Beard Street, as well as working through the Probate Court process to attempt to purchase/sell Anthony America's home at 2373 Military Street since it has just sat vacant since he passed away.

The Clerk's office received General Code's legal analysis and review of our Code of Ordinances. Each department has received pertinent sections pertaining to their department that may need revisions. Once all departments have submitted their changes, we will then begin work on compiling the revisions into one final manuscript to submit to City Council and General Code this summer.

Staff also prepared for the special election on May 3. We had an increase in absentee ballot requests and issued over 900 absentee ballots, an increase of over 100 compared to the last school bond proposal in 2011. We also visited Port Huron Northern and Port Huron High during several lunch hours to register eligible students to vote and added about 40 new voters. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk also attended training sponsored by the State in preparation for the November Presidential election.

With the retirement of the Administrative Secretary in the City Manager's office, the Clerk's office staff took over the responsibilities for the Spirit of Port Huron Awards and the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast. Responsibilities for the breakfast included reserving McMorran Lounge, coordinating

catering services, sending out over 100 invitations, arranging hotel accommodations for the speaker and working with Operation Transformation to ensure a successful event for 85 individuals. Staff also received 32 Spirit of Port Huron nominations with ten winners selected by the committee. Coordinating the recognitions and the awards ceremony will be our priority next month with the award ceremony scheduled for June 13 at 4:30 p.m. in the McMorran Lounge.

Lastly, congratulations are in order for Cyndee Jonseck who has successfully completed her third and final year of the Michigan Municipal Clerks Institute. The program is sponsored by our statewide clerk's association, in conjunction with Central Michigan University, and is specifically tailored to the responsibilities of the clerk's office. She has also been awarded the *Certified Michigan Municipal Clerk* designation, which is an honor granted a clerk who is dedicated to the profession and committed to operating the office with the highest level of integrity attained through educational perseverance.

The Information Technology Department was involved in a number of activities. Of note were processing the bulk of City Income Tax returns for the 2015 year and installing the network cabling needed for the new postage machine.

The DPW staff has continued the development of budget documents and recommendations for FY 2016-17, including construction projects, capital improvements and the operation and maintenance of plants, buildings and the utility infrastructure for the City. The draft Capital Improvement Plan for FY 2016-17 was also prepared and presented to City Council.

The engineering staff continues to work on the design and processing of contract documents for the improvements to the following:

- 20th Street from Dove to Beard
- Beers Street from Michigan to Glenwood
- Michigan Street from Beers to Glenwood
- Fort Street from Glenwood to Beers
- Reid Avenue from Electric to 16th
- North Boulevard from Electric to 32nd
- East Quay Parking Lot
- River Walk upgrades for Recreation
- River Street from Glenwood to just east of Stone

The electrical refurbishment work at the Carnegie Building is about two-thirds completed. The HVAC maintenance work and the roof work for the Carnegie building are scheduled to start in early May and to be completed by mid-June of 2016.

The East Quay parking lot refurbishment is scheduled to begin in mid-May. Teltow Contracting will be the contractor. The Glenwood road and utility improvement project is scheduled to begin on May 3. Raymond Excavating will be the contractor. The Beers/Michigan/Fort Street project is scheduled to begin in late-May. Murray Underground will be the contractor. Reid Avenue will have a Michigan Department of Transportation bid opening date of May 3. RAM Construction Services started work to refurbish the front deck of the MOC. They should be finished in early May.

Dredging in the Black River Marina does not appear to be required this year due to low sediment levels, but there are a few docks in need of minor repair. The ramps by ThumbCoast were installed in late April.

Torello dredged the mouth of the Black River Canal in late April. About 1,500 cubic yards of sand were deposited and spread on the four beach properties just south of the canal and about 2,700 cubic yards of sand were deposited and spread on the north end of Lakeside Beach. The Engineering Department has been attempting to secure construction easements from adjacent property owners to place and spread dredged sand on the private beaches from the canal down to Lakeside Beach. We have received signed easements from 9 of these 13 property owners.

The streets maintenance crews continue to perform the typical month-to-month duties. These include repairing potholes with cold patch at various locations and installed boat docks. There were five snow events that crews plowed and or salted. After each snow event the trucks were emptied of salt, washed and blades changed. Crews also cleaned and prepped the fascia stone from the front of the MOC walkway, removed snow fence from various locations, ran street sweepers when the weather permitted and setup lane tapers for utilities two times.

The motor pool continued to perform the typical month-to-month duties. These include the preventative maintenance list, completed repairs on all asphalt repair equipment and switched various equipment from winter mode to summer mode. Traffic control crews repaired several damaged signs and completed replacements of all the broken street lighting poles.

The City's annual concrete contractor, McKenzie, started sidewalk repairs in late April. Bridge tenders were also on duty from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily with few openings.

Utilities services continued to perform the typical month-to-month tasks. These tasks include water meter reading, sewer cleaning and assistance to the Water Office for turn-ons and shutoffs for non-payment of water bills. The new uniform vendor (Arrow Uniform) delivered the new uniforms April 18, and the transition from the previous vendor was successful. The Utilities Services Supervisor and Sewer Foremen attended a water distribution review class in preparation for their S-3 certification exam in May.

The Water Filtration Plant and engineering staff had a preconstruction meeting with the contractor for the south elevated tank painting project. The contractor is planning to start on May 22, and anticipates to be completed in four to six weeks.

The Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) staff recommended an applicant, who has since been hired for the WWTP Operator position as a result of an upcoming retirement on June 1. The new operator will begin May 9. WWTP and Public Works administrative staff also met internally with our consultant regarding the MDEQ's proposed NPDES permit language. In addition to meeting internally, the team had a meeting in Lansing with MDEQ staff to discuss the proposed language. The meeting was productive and City will be submitting revised language for MDEQ to review.

During the past month the Income Tax Division continued to focus primarily on the thousands of 2015 tax returns we have received so far. There is currently a four- to six-day lag on processing of both refund returns and tax due returns.

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 also completed work on the proposed budget and the City Manager delivered it to the City Council. We also cleaned and reorganized the mailroom in anticipation of the new postage machine approved by City Council being delivered.

The Assessing Division finished all reports to the City, County and State for the 2016 assessing year. The assessing database has been rolled over to begin work on the 2017 assessing year. Inconsistencies in the database master files have been analyzed and corrected. A lot of file maintenance was done because of the changeover of years, both physical files and computer files. We are also updating the sales history and entering it into our computer files. In addition, we have gone through the first steps of our State AMAR review (Audit of Michigan Assessment Requirements). We passed this portion of the process without any issues.

The Treasurer's Office and Water Office continue to be busy with collection of rental inspection fees, income tax payments and water payments. We also continue to perform the monthly accounting for BWATC. New customers signing up for emailing water bills has slowed down quite a bit. We estimate that we are currently saving approximately \$268 per month in postage costs.

During the month of April, the Human Resources Department continued to accept employment applications for our spring and summer job openings and extended the job posting for Lifeguards through May 6, 2016. Interviews were conducted for part-time Rental Inspectors. Clerical testing was conducted for the Administrative Assistant opening in the Finance Department, which is due to an upcoming retirement. Several meetings were also held with management during the month to discuss manpower, upcoming retirement vacancies and possible department reorganizations.

ALICE training was conducted by the Police Department during the week of April 25, 2016, for all City employees, as well as the 5th and 6th floor tenants of the MOC. The training consisted of a three-hour classroom session and a one-hour, hands-on training session that was conducted at each workplace location. This training was very well received by all employees. The Human Resources Department plans to send out a monthly email reminder to all City employees in reference to the ALICE concept.

A Creative Leadership seminar presented by Fred Pryor was held on April 20 at the Double Tree/Bluewater Convention Center. In attendance were 26 City supervisors and managers. Additional supervisor training is scheduled for May 4 and 5.

The Planning Department has been working on many projects throughout Port Huron including agreements for the Sperry's Project and façade grant program for the downtown. Community Development assisted three new homeowners with the purchase of properties in the City. The Blight Elimination Program moved forward with 30 completed to date and two in pre-demo phase. The Inspection Department issued 101 permits with a revenue of \$27,770. The inspectors also assisted with rental inspections and responded to over 12 complaints. Rental Certification inspectors inspected 147 units, responded to four complaints and certified 124 rental units this month. The Port Huron Neighborhood Housing Corporation is receiving bids for the renovation of 1203 Court Street.

April at the Parks and Recreation department is a time of much planning and getting ready for the much-awaited summer. The Parks and Recreation summer brochure just went out and we are in the

process of hiring all the employees for the summer. Cleveland Elementary Recreation Lab took place this month during spring break and was very successful with over 75 kids coming to camp that week. At this lab session, we did a program called Adventure Theatre where the children had an opportunity to experience public speaking, theatrical skills and gain confidence getting up in front of groups of people. On the last day of the program, each child was involved in one of the plays put on for their peers. The principal and teachers have let us know that the children are still talking about the plays and how they feel it was very successful.

Lakeside Cemetery staff performed 17 burials this month. Winter decorations have been removed from all sections and the roads are being prepped for the chloride treatment before Memorial Day. Mausoleum repairs were completed by National Restoration this month and the building looks much better and has experienced less leaking. Waterlines for section V (which is one of the newer sections) were ordered and we are working with utilities to have them installed in May. The chapel roof was leaking so temporary repairs were made until the roof was completely replaced.

The Parks Division is working on getting the parks ready for the summer season. Thanks to the "Make a Difference Grant" the gazebo at Lincoln Park was painted by neighbors and cement that was in disrepair has been replaced. Baseball and softball fields are being prepped for summer and for games that are being played by the college. The kayak launch was put in for the summer on the Black River. Many projects are being done at Lakeside as we prepare for the grand opening including a new volleyball court, new concession stand, Mr. Boardwalk for the sand and moving a booth from downtown for the police building. There has been a huge amount of people wanting to volunteer in parks. Ground work has started at Lincoln Park for the new equipment that is being installed thanks to grant monies from the Community Foundation. Parks crews have also been working on installing docks, repairing picnic tables and replacing slats on benches that need to be repaired. The cleanup day at the Sanborn Nature trail was a huge success with crews installing new wood chips on the trail alongside many volunteers. Banners and lights were changed downtown to get ready for summer. Arbor Day was a huge success at Woodrow Wilson and Crull schools. The forestry crew planted a tree at each school and did a demonstration of the equipment they use every day to care for our 25,000 trees in the city.

Sincerely,



James R. Freed

City Manager

Chief Administrative Officer