



*Office of the City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer*  
*Monthly Administrative Report*  
*March 2017*

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The Police Department continues to see steady calls for service regarding drugs and drug use. As mentioned in previous reports, heroin use is very strong in the City, and first responders are frequently dealing with heroin overdoses and death investigations. Methamphetamine is another drug frequently utilized in the area, and the manufacturing of this drug by clandestine labs is an additional concern for police, fire and ems. The process to “cook” meth is dangerous, both in terms of inhalants as well as being highly flammable. The Police Department responded to three active labs in February, all of which require specialized staff and equipment to neutralize the components. To add to the complexity of these labs many times they are mobile whereas the suspects cook the meth in a vehicle or a backpack outside to avoid neighbors smelling the smells associated with the process. Two of the three labs investigated in February were mobile.

With the unseasonably warm weather in February, there was a large amount of motorcycles that were on the roadways. Unfortunately, this resulted in a double fatal motorcycle accident on February 19<sup>th</sup> around 10:05 p.m. when the two riders were headed home from the downtown area. The bike struck a curb propelling both riders violently to the ground. The female passenger was pronounced dead at the scene, the male driver died a few days later. Alcohol was likely a factor in the single vehicle crash.

The Police Department is gearing up for its first major special event of 2017, the St. Patrick’s Day Parade and pub crawl on Saturday, March 11, 2017. Over the years, this event has varied from moderate crowds in attendance to very large crowds that have corresponded with occasional warm weather in March. The Police Department will have officers at the parade as well as extra officers working the pub crawl/downtown area.

Police calls for service in January decreased slightly (1993) from December 2016 (2042).

To date in the month of January, the Fire Division responded to 193 medical emergencies, 37 fire calls for service, and received 92 miscellaneous calls which included false alarms, downed power lines, unauthorized burning, and related public assistance. Included in the fire calls were a vehicle fire at 2131 Elk Street that destroyed a minivan and damaged the siding on the adjoining house caused from a mechanical failure. 1215 Myrtle Street where a female occupant received severe burns to her back and upper body when her clothing accidentally caught fire from what appears to have been paint fumes ignited by a candle. 1317 - 6<sup>th</sup> Street where a suspicious fire destroyed a vehicle and melted the siding on the house and remains under investigation. A female occupant at 1716 Griswold Street was treated for smoke inhalation when a stove burner was accidentally turned on and melted a toaster sitting on the range. Fire crews rescued a wheelchair bound resident at 2905 - 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue who was unable to escape a fire that caused extensive smoke and heat damage inside the apartment. The cause of this fire remains under investigation. The occupant was transported to a local hospital for treatment of smoke inhalation.

Fire department statistics for 2016 were compiled and submitted for publication in the Department of Public Safety annual report. Fiscal year 2017/2018 budget appropriation requests were

submitted for the Fire Division. The Fire Division also began a smoke detector installation project in cooperation with the American Red Cross as part of their Home Fire Safety Campaign grant program. Residents may receive up to three smoke alarms for their house or apartment and fire crews will install these devices. Arrangements can be made by calling the fire administration office at (810) 984-9750 Ext 2.

Fire Marshal Warren completed the final inspection of the second floor of the Sperry's movie house and forty-eight fire inspections of businesses have been completed to date for the month of February.

As of February 27, 2017, the Code Enforcement Unit had 185 new complaints opened and the Administrative Hearing Bureau heard 30 cases. \$990 in payments were collected this month and another \$21,295.52 were declared as single-lot special assessments. Code Enforcement staff continued to assist zoning by having police officers write parking tickets for parking on the front lawn and inspectors received many calls about soft sided canopy/tent type structures. Fix-it tickets issued. In Service Training regarding CPR, First Aid, Meth, and Ethics was attended by all Code Enforcement staff. Three court appearances were made related to public guardianship of an elderly resident. The units goals and annual report contribution was submitted.

Chief Reaves and Lt. Kuehn met with landlord Don Palecki demanding more cooperation regarding his rental units and lack of screening tenants. They also met with City Manager Freed, David Haynes and Corporate Counsel related to problems with landlord Jay Folske's rental properties and Paul Frazer's nuisance home at 1815 - 9<sup>th</sup> Street. In March, staff will move forward with a plan to address landlords Palecki and Folske as well as the potential padlock of 1815 - 9<sup>th</sup> Street. A Code Enforcement / leadership presentation is scheduled at Port Huron Northern High School.

The Clerk's office continued with record management activities this month by completing the scanning in of over 1,000 current Traffic Control Orders and maps into the database created by the I.T. Department. This work has greatly improved employee's immediate access and retrieval of up-to-date information. Staff also finished inputting missing cemetery records for Block H, which is one of the largest blocks within the cemetery. For the agenda management program, templates to create the agenda and minutes for Historic District, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, were designed to resemble how the program is used for City Council meetings. Access to these agendas and minutes will also be available from the same web portal as City Council thereby improving access to City records for residents.

The Engineering staff continued to work on the design and development of contract documents for the improvements to the following:

- River Walk upgrades (for the Recreation Dept.);
- Rehabilitation of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge;
- Vanderburg- 10<sup>th</sup> Street to Military Street reconstruction, water main and sanitary sewer;
- Moak Street – Avondale to Electric with water main;
- Lakeview – Gratiot to the west end, reconstruction with water main;
- Pleasant – Sedgwick to Prospect;

- Roselawn Area resurfacing;
- Sewer lining contract.

MDOT opened bids for the River Street project on February 3, 2017. Boddy Construction Company was the low bid and will be starting early in the spring of 2017.

Engineering Staff received notice that the grant application thru MDOT to resurface Lapeer Avenue from 13<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> Street was not approved. The reason for the disapproval appears to be a change to the county generated PASER rating which was applied to the road. This rating issue has since been resolved. The City of Port Huron will resubmit this application.

Bids were opened for the Black River Canal Dredging and Torello was the low bidder. Bids were opened for the Downtown Black River Dredging and Dean Marine and Excavating was the apparent low bidder. Bids were opened for the annual contract for sidewalk replacement and Connin was the low bidder. These items will be brought to Council for approval in March.

Engineering Staff continues to work with Otis Elevator on shop drawings and approvals for the elevator refurbishment project at the MOC building. Otis plans to mobilize in April 2017 and to complete the project within approximately five months.

The streets maintenance crews continue to perform the typical month to month duties. These duties include the repair of pot holes with cold patch at various locations and shoveling and salting the sidewalks on the bridges. Staff also plowed and salted during four snow events. After each snow event, the trucks were emptied of salt, washed, blades changed and prepped for the next snow. Crews placed radar trailers for a week and set up lane tapers for Utilities and Forestry.

The motor vehicle crew went through all the bio solids equipment and prepared them for the upcoming season. They also put a patrol unit into service and with a slowdown in the weather, the preventative maintenance list is back up to date.

The traffic section fabricated several signs for updated traffic control orders and did follow up repairs to several signs that were hit in January. They also responded to several power outages due to high winds

The Utilities Services staff and administrative staff completed the budget and Capital Improvement Plan requests for fiscal year 2017-18. The sewer crew investigated multiple sewer backup complaints. The water crew also made repairs to water main breaks as well as replacing a broken mainline valve that was identified during one of the main breaks. Staff also attending a meeting to discuss the splash pad at Knox Field. Water and sewer crews will be installing the sewer and water lead to service the splash pad during the month of March.

The Water Filtration Plant (WFP) staff and administrative staff completed the budget and Capital Improvement Plan requests for fiscal year 2017-18. WFP staff continued with the installation of the turbidity meters which were approved for purchase at the September 12, 2017, City Council meeting. A mandatory pre-bid meeting for the 2016-17 WFP miscellaneous pipe painting project was held as well as a bid opening. A recommendation to City Council will be forthcoming in the

month of March. A request for proposal for the next multiyear engineering services contract for water storage tank and other miscellaneous painting requirements was received and approved by City Council at the second February meeting.

The Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) staff and administrative staff completed the budget and Capital Improvement Plan requests for fiscal year 2017-18. The WWTP Superintendent position was previously advertised and two internal candidates were interviewed. The interview process resulted in the promotion of one of the employees and the process to fill her vacancy has begun. The following projects have their bid documents completed and have been advertised:

1. Roof Replacement at the Solids Handling Building
2. Roof Replacement at the Primary Treatment Building
3. Odor Control Ductwork Replacement at the Thickener Building
4. Maintenance Shop Floor Replacement

The bid opening for the above projects will all take place in the month of March with recommendations to City Council to follow.

During the month of February, the Human Resources Department started accepting employment applications for Police Officers and part-time Police Cadets. All of the seasonal/summer part-time positions have been posted and will be posted until April 14, 2017.

Interviews were conducted for the WWTP Superintendent as staff prepared to fill the vacancy for Randy Studaker's upcoming retirement. Dianna Seifert will replace Randy when he retires August 1, 2017. The recruitment for the Residuals Specialist (Solids Operation Supervisor at the WWTP) will begin in the near future to back-fill for Dianna Seifert.

The budget was prepared and submitted to Finance for the Human Resources Department and the Health & Safety Division.

Preliminary discussions were had about future healthcare options as an ongoing effort to help reduce the City's unfunded healthcare liabilities as well as conversation around the necessary concessions needed in regard to the unfunded pension liabilities.

Other than the normal day-to-day operations, the Planning Department prepared documents for the special use permit for a boat storage facility at 1008 Third Street to be presented to the Planning Commission. Planning staff worked with a developer, and a representative from the State, in regards to tax abatements for a project. The Master Plan continues to be underway with public hearings being set at both the City Council and Planning Commission level. A Master Plan workshop also occurred during the month. Planning staff has been diligently working on transitional housing in the City. Looking for options to regulate and track through zoning ordinance changes, etc. The budgets for Planning, Inspection, Rental and Community Development were completed.

New employee, Katie Wahls, started in the Community Development department during the month. Much time was spent training her in all aspects of her position. Community Development

was able to assist four new homeowners with the purchase of properties in the City through the Urban Pioneer Program. Two new applications were taken for façade grants and one rental rehabilitation application was taken. Community Development staff worked on the Annual Action Plan publishing notices, sending mailings, and having public hearings as required by HUD.

The Inspection Department issued 87 permits with a revenue of \$63,708. Two sets of plans were received for building plan and site plan review. Inspection staff prepared three applications for Zoning Board of Appeals. Variances were being requested for a proposed dance studio at 1535 Whipple Street, a new sign at 828 Lapeer Avenue, and a tutoring center at 1927 – 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Two properties, 303 Court Street and 227 Huron Avenue, were prepared to go in front of the Historic District Commission to obtain approval to replace windows at each.

The Rental Certification Department completed 219 inspections and certified 138 rental units. The Inspectors and clerical staff responded to nine rental complaints. One item was prepared for the Rental Board of Appeals. The applicant was looking for hardship exemption at 802 Edison Boulevard. Rental billing was also completed in February. 2,906 rental bills were printed, sorted and mailed out to owners of record.

February has been a month full of classes and special events for the Recreation Department. Staff hosted the annual Daddy Daughter event at McMorran in the beginning of the month. The event saw around 150 participants in attendance this year. The night included a DJ for the dance party, a selfie and photo booth, and crafts and cookie decorating stations. Four Cabin Fever Friday events have occurred and included themed nights with fun crafts and crazy activities to go along with the themes. Each night kids enjoyed the activities along with pizza and a movie on the big screen.

Parks and Recreation has had several after school classes going on as well including Kid's Cake Decorating, Paper Marble Coasters, My Little Van Gough, Play with the Pros, Little Ninjas and Power Karate. Dance classes have been busy preparing for the end of their season by practicing for the March recital. Camp Palmer, the day camp, opened for registrations at the beginning of the month and is full for the summer. Plans are underway for summer and summer jobs have been posted online and application are being accepted.

The cemetery had 12 total services with seven being full burials and five being cremains services. The new Kubota RTV was purchased and put into service. Staff has completed a vacant plot search of section H resulting in the addition of many sellable graves added for future use. Staff also continues to prepare for the upcoming season by maintaining equipment and doing repairs.

McMorran had eight Prowler games this month with several promotions around "Frozen February". A "Dueling Tribute" concert featuring Bob Segar and Bruce Springsteen was well attended. A partnership with the Port Huron Museum featured a celebration of Thomas Edison's birthday with two showings of "Young Thomas Edison". Werth Production celebrated Valentine's Day in the Lounge with two nights of dinner theatre. Town Hall on February 13<sup>th</sup> featured Kevin Lacz, a former Navy seal, with many one day tickets sold. WNFA rented the facility for a "Casting Crowns" concert featuring two other bands. Port Huron Figure Skating Club had a 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. show on Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>. Blue Water Women and retirement parties were held in the lounge and High School Hockey completed their season this month.

Due to the mild weather, Forestry staff has been working on tree reports called in by residents. Emergency removals were also completed. In the neighborhood of Huron, Rawlins and Glenwood, the crew was also back to zoning and was able to clear a complete neighborhood of tree work. They also brought a loader back to shop, and cleaned up the back area of brush, and pushed up piles.

Trash has been heavier than normal in the parks and the parkway for this time of year. Parks Crews have continued normal winter operations, salting and plowing as needed. All holiday banners and snowflakes downtown have been removed and pub crawl banners and Saint Patrick day decorations have been installed. Staff cleaned up graffiti on the parkway, and removed a sign from the park to be repaired due to vandalism.

Parks crews also cleaned parking lots downtown and parks from trash covered by snow from the winter. A quick inspection of park equipment found a broken swing that needed to be repaired. Fire pits were delivered to downtown and to the stadium for an outdoor hockey event. All the old garbage cans from Krafft Road and Lighthouse beaches and were removed and replaced with new ones and the picnic tables at Palmer Park have been removed and replaced.

The Information Technology Department was involved in a number of activities. Of note were printing the assessment change notices, upgrading firewall software, and creating initial worksheets as part of the budget process.

During the past month, the Income Tax Division shifted to primarily focusing on 2016 tax returns being filed. In addition, as time permits, staff is reconciling tax withheld with the informational returns filed.

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. Staff spent a considerable amount of time cleaning out the back room and getting ready to move records needing to be stored to the water plant. They also began our analysis of the budget worksheets. This is a process that will continue into the month of April.

The Assessing Division has finalized all assessments, lot splits, and combinations. Assessment change notices have been mailed out. The Board of Review has been scheduled for the second week of March. Personal property statements have been finalized and recorded. Assessment rolls have been completed and the required reports have been prepared.

The Treasurer's Office and Water Office continue to be busy with collection of water payments and especially tax payments, this being the last month before delinquent taxes are turned over to the County. We also continue to perform the monthly accounting for BWATC.

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*