

*NOT required to be reviewed prior to meetings.*

These materials are submitted for informational purposes only and may be read at your leisure.

**I. Staff Activity Reports**

**A. Cemetery Activity Report**

For period August 23 - September 8, 2021

**B. City Clerk's Activity Report**

**C. Community Development Activity Report**

**D. Department of Public Works Activity Report**

**E. Treasurer Activity Report**

**F. Water Department Activity Report**

**G. Wastewater Treatment Plant Activity Report**

**Sincerely,**

***Heather K. Grace***

**City Manager**

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**PREPARED BY:** KLAY WEAVER - SEXTON

**PREPARED ON:** SEPTEMBER 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**SUBJECT:** CEMETERY ACTIVITY REPORT – DATE OF AUGUST 23<sup>rd</sup> THRU SEPTEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

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**BACKGROUND:**

- Cemetery trash & in-town trash runs
- In-town mow list/parks
- Brush & bag runs
- Cemetery mowing & line trimming - 45 acres
- Blow off all cemetery roads
- 4 burials
- Raised manhole on North Redbud
- Picked up storm damage after storm went through
- Sold multiple spaces
- Pulled weeds @ entrances & middle of Vet Circle
- Mow/Line trim Veteran Circle
- Huge Tree fell in the north of cemetery on 9/8/2021
- Collected wood at 506 Days
- Put all bricks back on corner of main and front st
- Changed blades/ sharpen blades on mowers
- Fixed cemetery garage door on service barn
- Cut up two huge fallen limbs on “B Hill”
- Assisted with 2 water digs
- Trimmed all trees in section “1” & dumped at waste water
- Beautify commons area
- Trimmed fallen tree at 5<sup>th</sup> and Main
- Cattle gates into the Library
- Trimmed trees at 4<sup>th</sup> & Oak intersection
  
- Not an all inclusive list

**PREPARED BY:** Barbara Pitcher  
**PREPARED ON:** September 8, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** City Clerk's Activity Report

**BACKGROUND:**

*It should be noted that during this period, the Clerk was out of the offices for a total of 6 days for professional conferences and training noted later in this report.*

**City Meetings**

*In addition to participating in the meeting itself, time is spent scheduling, drafting/publishing the agenda, contributing supporting documentation, recording/creating/publishing minutes, creating/certifying/ publishing resolutions and ordinances, and proclamations, etc.*

Recording Secretary/Host for:

- 8/23/21 – City Commission Meeting
- 8/26/21 – Zoning Board of Appeals
- 8/30/21 – Special Meeting of the City Commission

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Resolution	1	28
• Ordinance	0	1
• Proclamation	0	1

**Communications**

*The Clerk monitors the City's Facebook account daily – throughout the day, including evenings and weekends – to address questions and comments, as necessary, and to identify relevant content to share with the community. Often, the Clerk creates graphics and content for both the website and social media.*

**Postings\***

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Bulletin Board	5	78
• Website	19	212
• Facebook		
○ Original Content	11	128
○ Shares w/ Additional Content	5	97
○ Shares w/o Additional Content	7	324

*\*Posted by the Clerk, only, as opposed to other staff*

**Public Comment/Inquiries**

*Almost every one of the incoming contact methods below require at least one follow-up email, phone call or conversation and often multiple.*

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Contact Us – Response/Routing	11	18
• Phone Inquiries	28	359
• Facebook Messages	10	95

• Email	1	67
• In Person	0	47

## FOIA Requests

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Open Requests	3	3
• Closed Requests	2	23

## Notary, Certification, Attestation, Oath of Office

The Clerk is one of two Notaries at City Hall. We notarize documents for the public at \$1.00 per signature. Additionally, the Clerk is responsible for certifying internal documents and oaths of office.

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Notary	4	33
• Certification		15
• Oath of Office		6

## Deputy Marihuana Permit Coordinator

The Clerk is one of the approvers in the marihuana permitting process and responsible for providing attestations for marihuana licensing. As of June 8, 2021, the Clerk assumed the role of Deputy Marihuana Permit Coordinator.

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Attestations		15
• Permitting Approvals		0

## Deputy Zoning Administrator/Deputy Project Director

As of June 8, 2021, the Clerk assumed the role of Deputy Zoning Administrator and Deputy Planning Director.

## Cemetery

Effective June 8, 2021, the Clerk has responsibility for processing cemetery deeds and maintaining records, as well as fielding/routing inquiries related to sale of graves, perpetual care fees, grounds maintenance and burials.

The Clerk attended the Michigan Association of Municipal Cemeteries Annual Conference August 17-19 in Traverse City. This was an opportunity to learn and network with clerks, sexton's and other staff who administer municipal cemeteries throughout Michigan. While conference content was not particularly relevant for our immediate needs, the sessions provided considerable information for us to consider for process and policy improvements in the future.

Pontem has been installed in the Sexton's office but is not fully operational at this time. The Sexton will continue to contact the Clerk to verify information until this is resolved.

	<u>As of 9/8/21</u>	<u>YTD</u>
• Phone Inquiries	2	22
• Email Inquiries – Response/Routing		10
• In-person Inquiries	1	6
• Internal Inquiries	5	11
• Deed – Initial Issue (#of Deeds/# of Spaces)*	4/7	22/38
• Deed – Transfer Paperwork		2

\*Deeds may include any number of grave spaces. While a single deed is produced for all spaces, the data input requires almost the identical information for each space. Therefore, a deed with 4 spaces is nearly the equivalent workload as producing 4 deeds rather than one.

It should be noted that the Deed – Initial Issues previously recorded had to be reprocessed, signed and notarized prior to mailing to deedholders due to an internal process issue limiting our secondary notary availability. The Clerk is a notary, but deeds require the

Clerk's signature to be notarized (this is also true of attestations for marihuana licensing). Two additional staff members are now in the process of becoming notaries to enable to secondary notary and additional flexibility in serving our public.

### Municode Meeting Management

All board members, agenda managers and contributors have been added to the Municode Meeting Management system. We have begun rolling out initial set-up and training information to certain staff members and boards.

### Municode Website

Municode has been working behind the scenes to transition all of our current website content to the new Municode website platform. We now have internal pages to review and will need to make some adjustments to the mega menu and content. Additional features we can begin to enhance or build include a park directory, project directory, business directory and property listing directory.

### Professional Development

In addition to attending the Michigan Association on Municipal Cemeteries Annual Conference, the Clerk also participated in the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks Free Education Day and Clerking 101 training in Frankenmuth, August 31-September 2. These sessions were extremely informative and included extensive discussion on the redistricting process which will impact the Clerk's workload in preparation for the 2022 elections. The Clerk was also able to gain additional insights to issues and processes core to the responsibilities of the Clerk's office. This was also an excellent opportunity to network and build relationships with fellow clerks and deputy clerks throughout Michigan.

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**PREPARED BY:** Mike Baker  
**PREPARED ON:** 9/9/21  
**SUBJECT:** DPW Briefing

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**BACKGROUND:**

Completed the mow list for code enforcement  
Helped water department with a water leak on Front and Main  
Helped the cemetery crew with brush from storms and a regular brush run  
Cut fallen branches off sidewalks all around town after storms  
Completed the mowing of city owned properties  
Ran 1 load of patch  
Total patched over some problem spots at the senior center  
Assisted with a water leak on Third St.  
We moved cattle gates from commons to library basement  
We are working on the Kubota ZD1211 replacing deck wheels and bearings in front wheels  
Meet with business owner at Buchanan Metal Forming to inform him of the possibility of closing the gravel end of Clark St  
We are working on changing all the lights at city hall to led  
We are beginning to get the baler ready for leaf season  
Replaced hoses on the sweeper  
Ran sweeper through town  
We completed multiple trash runs  
Fixed gator chains  
Moved the speed trailer  
Raised manhole on Redbud Trail north at Elizabeth  
Had BS&A training  
Picked up a new refrigerator for the dpw  
Worked on duck feeders  
Replaced bricks at Front and Main  
Replaced the battery in the cemetery truck

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**PREPARED BY:** Stephanie Powers

**PREPARED ON:** 9/8/2021

**SUBJECT:** AB

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**8/18/2021:**

- Staff meeting to address IT and counter procedures.

**8/19/2021:**

- Completed my second disbursement of collected tax revenue in the amount of \$2,572,013.08 to various government entities.
- Processed various Buchanan Township monies due.
- Conference with Rhonda, Heather and BS&A regarding the pooled bank accounts.

**8/20/2021:**

- Completed and submitted my Activity Briefing.
- Helped at front desk

**8/23/2021:**

- Started Monday with correcting bank transfer errors made on Friday. Money was transferred from the Honor Cash Management account to various funds before realizing that the money was in the Cash Management account at TCF Bank. 😞
- Ordered the correct checks for the pooled account at Honor Credit Union.
- Prepared Treasurer's report with the new reports from BS&A with help from Devin.
- Verified with Devin the Revenue and Expenditure reports by fund that Heather requested.
- Answered various tax questions.
- Discussed "best practice" for cash handling procedures. The Clerk/Cashier receipts all money, the treasurer will prepare the deposit and PD will take the deposit to the bank. The Treasurer will reconcile the bank accounts.
- Discussed the Accounts Payable procedures with Marcia and Devin of BS&A.
- Looked over the checks and check register.
- Contacted Rhonda from Plante Moran regarding the reconciled bank account information for Audrey.
- Responded to Adam from Invoice Cloud with the new bank account number for processing and the Fiserv form that needs to be completed.
- Attended the City Commission Meeting.

**8/24/2021:**

- Started Tuesday with introductions to the new hires: Jill Mondschein, Clerk/Cashier, Emma Lysy, seasonal administrator and Britni Wall, Administrative Assistant. Contacted county for logins to BS&A Tax, confirmed new hire packets were completed, discussions on emails, scanning, keys for the front door and set up in shop clock are pending or in process.
- Sent by Priority Mail September Oxidation Ditch Bond Payment to Capital One Funding.
- Communicated with Audrey of BS&A and Rhonda of Plante Moran on information needed.

- Discussed the new bank deposit process with Chief Ganus.
- Discussed AP procedures and changes in our processes due to the BS&A conversion with Marcia and Heather.
- Confirmed the City's membership and 2022 calendar order with Sarah Gault of the Buchanan District Library. She will be invoicing us directly for payment.
- Prepared the daily bank deposit. Informed the bank that the Police Department would be dropping of the deposits.
- Called Magic Wrighter enquiring if capabilities for payroll direct deposit has been set up.
- Spoke with Charla regarding the Fiserv Form for Invoice Cloud. I should be finalizing this process tomorrow.
- Worked on journalizing and posting daily cash receipts in the new system. Need to practice deposit creation in the new system and keep up with banking.

#### **8/25/2021:**

- Started Wednesday with phone calls and emails to Honor & Magic Wrighter in order to complete the prenote process for the first payroll through Honor Credit Union and BS&A. A variety of issues has caused this process to have some major time constraints but we just might have pulled it off. We'll know Monday.
- Participated in BS&A training for journalizing, deposit creation, miscellaneous receivables, user set up and timesheet submission.
- Worked on banking.
- Discussed the cash handling process at the counter and further training needed by the new employees. Concerned with communicating the importance of their roles and how imperative it is that the receipted money is counted back correctly and the proper procedures are being followed.

#### **8/26/2021:**

- Started Thursday by checking in with our Clerk/Cashiers. It has been brought to my attention that we need to go over cash handling as some experience in that area is lacking. BS&A logins for the new employees have been created. The Bookkeeper will be adding the to Shop Clock during the onboarding process.
- Attended Miscellaneous Receivables training with Marcia and Audrey.
- Took the call for the Utility Billing data conversion to BS&A. Renee is ready for this and it's taking place this morning.
- Working on banking.
- Attend BS&A budget training with Heather.

#### **8/27/2021:**

- Started Friday with BS&A training with Audrey. We revisited daily journal posting, deposit creation and budgeting.
- Reviewed Reports, report templates and what department reports are needed.
- Spent the afternoon with Rhonda from Plante Moran. We discussed the pooled accounts. Reviewed the investment reconciliations and how to complete them. Reviewed the budget to actual spreadsheet. Discussed IFT reporting. Started compiling data for the audit. Pulled the Act 51 Distribution report and the Berrien County Revenue Sharing report.

#### **8/30/2021:**

- Started Monday with adding up the Selge bid numbers for the Special Meeting to choose a bidder.



- Verified that the prenotes went through Honor.
- Forwarded all signed documents including a voided check to Invoice Cloud by way of a Smartsheet upload. This is the next step in the City's enrollment with Invoice Cloud. They will be processing our credit card and online payments.
- Helped Marcia and Devin with various payroll issues like ordered checks, the prenote and enrollment in our payroll tax accounts so that Marcia will be able to pay the payroll taxes inhouse.
- Gave some of the new hires their logins for BS&A. Requested logins for BS&A Tax.
- Listened to training at the front desk. Discussed using Google Docs for communication. Discussed the Y drive and who needs access. Posed the question when would the employees I oversee like to have a morning huddle. At least one or two mornings a month.
- Prepared paperwork and reports for Heather for the Special Meeting to choose a bidder for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street sewer project.
- Attended the Special Meeting. Selge was the winning bid.

### 8/31/2021:

- Payroll processing and authentication, file upload.
- I wouldn't say I'm an ACH expert yet, but I'm headed there. Made some real miracles happen in order to process payroll in the new system and made sure everyone was paid. Our work continues. 😊

### 9/1/2021:

- Utility bills were taken to the post office for bulk mailing. Went to the Buchanan Post Office to deposit postage to our account. Paid for the annual 1<sup>st</sup> Class pre-sort fee. The City's paperwork was outdated. Requested and received an updated form. The Clerk/Cashier delivered it to the Niles Post Office.
- BS&A created a customized report in a format requested by Paul Bristol for the USDA. I was able to supply him with two formats for his information.
- Corresponded with various vendors regarding invoices.
- Processed property tax payments.
- Banking.

### 9/2/2021:

- Started Thursday with a payroll overview. The first payroll in BS&A has been processed and completed. Deduction checks for fringe benefits have been printed or paid electronically. We will see tomorrow how well we converted from ADP.
- Responded to a request from Paul Bristol for a balance sheet with water and sewer separated. BS&A was able to create a custom report. This has been emailed to Paul Bristol. BS&A recommends contacting our auditors about fund 501. It's not set up correctly, making it difficult to pull information for just water and sewer. Assets and Revenue are combined while expenses are separated. This could be better.
- Spoke with Adam of Invoice Cloud. Went over our documents and made corrections. Paperwork is ready for City Manager to sign.
- Banking
- Answered utility billing questions.
- Processed property tax payments.

### 9/3/2021:

- Started Friday with Rhonda from Plante Moran. We examined various treasurer's reports and the preparation of these reports for the City Commission Meetings. I printed various finance reports

requested by Rhonda to tie out the numbers for the upcoming audit and to verify the conversion to BS&A.

- Went over various state reports with Rhonda that have due dates and deadlines. The amount of time needed to prepare said reports and proper procedures for filing.
- Since it was the Clerk/Cashier's last day, much discussion was needed regarding the front counter operations and how to handle many issues that confront that area like staffing, the correct way to receipt money and various reporting needed to close the day.

#### 9/6/2021:

- Closed for Labor Day. The weather was beautiful. 😊

#### 9/7/2021:

- Started Tuesday with needed signatures from Heather. Completed the revised New Division form from Invoice Cloud twice. City Manager and Treasurer both signed the Public Act 51, Section 18j Annual Certification of Employee-related Conditions and emailed completed form to Laura Loomis.
- Printed a necessary report for Evan Smith of Dial-A-Ride. Heather will need his numbers to sign the new contract with the City of Niles.
- The City Manager and Treasurer finally opened and closed the Safe Deposit Box held at TCF Bank. Heather took pictures of the contents. A rubber band, paperclips, a pair of scissors, a map of the city's boundaries and a code to crack the Mosler Safe and paperwork pertaining to the safe. It felt like we were on a real treasure hunt 😊
- Sent Heather the balance sheet reports for fund 501 that were sent to Paul Bristol for the USDA.
- Helped our Administrative Assistant, Britni look for office supplies and answered her questions.
- Kept an eye on the counter to assist with any issues that might come up with the new personnel. It's going well considering.
- Discussed the BS&A Assessor Module with Mindy, the Assessor and giving read only rights to counter personnel so they may answer questions regarding parcels.
- Compiled a list of various IT issues Custom Computers needs to address at City Hall; the timesheets module, the assessor database is in test, should it be changed, access to the y-drive and access for the auditors. We need another location more secure than the y-drive for payroll documents.
- Responded to property tax enquiries.
- Requested logins for personnel to access BS&A tax.
- Processed invoice and emailed a ytd transaction report for Buchanan Tree Friends.

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**PREPARED BY:** Scott Desenberg

**PREPARED ON:** 8-21-21

**SUBJECT:** Water Dept. Activity Briefing

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**OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS WE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE FOLLOWING TASKS:**

1. Miss-Digs have finally started to slow down after an extremely busy spring and summer. We are now seeing 1-2 requests per day during the week, and fewer on the weekends.
2. I have completed the MOR for the month of August.
3. Notified customers of leaks on Post, Ryneerson, McCumber, Lake, Main, Terre Coupe, N. Detroit, W. Roe, Ryneerson, E. Front, and Fulton.
4. I have ordered door cards specific to performing cross connection inspections as well as pipe inspections for our CDSMI for EGLE.
5. Terry and I spent significant time on 8-19 and 8-31 exercising hydrant valves, we have now completed 72/271 hydrant isolation valves.
6. On Sunday, 8-22 we were called in along with DPW and Cemetery to address the hydrant isolation valve that had the very slight leak on the corner of Front and Main. We declared a boil order, depressurized the water mains in a 5-block area, and excavated. We restored water service that night, but had to depressurize the following night as well. We were able to restore water service for good at around 10:00 Tuesday morning after working all night, and replace the hydrant on Thursday. Also we were able to lift the boil order for the now 6-block area on Thursday. The cost of this repair was well over \$6000 in parts alone.
7. We received training on the new BS&A software and were able to complete our most recent payroll using the program.
8. On Sunday, 8-29-21 we were called in along with DPW and Cemetery to repair a water leak on W. Third St. between McCumber and Miller. It ended up being something none of us had ever seen before, as a copper water service had bonded itself to an abandoned iron gas main. The water service began leaking into the gas main, pressurizing it. Fortunately, the leak was showing itself near to the service that need fixed and we were able to locate and repair it.
9. We worked with Hickok Plumbing on questions about the plumbing at 500 E. Third St.
10. I have been working with City Manager Grace and Kate Thrush from EGLE regarding our first DWAM Grant reimbursement form.
11. We have performed all of our regular bacteriological sampling, PM's, shut-offs, turn-ons, a couple meter changes, e-mails, generator cycles, activity briefings, morning checks, leak checks, and the other assorted items that come up on a day-to-day basis.

Scott Desenberg, O.I.C.

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**PREPARED BY:** Bill Housand  
**PREPARED ON:** 9/7/2021  
**SUBJECT:** WWTP Activity Briefing

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**BACKGROUND:**

## **Wastewater Dept. Activity Briefing**

**9/7/2021**

Over the last three weeks the following tasks were completed by Wastewater Department staff:

- Oil was changed in the both trucks and they were washed.
- The dissolved oxygen probes in the oxidation ditches were both cleaned and put back into service.
- Beds 3 and 6 were poured with approximately 15,000 gallons of sludge.
- The force main that was used to feed the aeration tanks in the old plant, was flushed out as part of the continuing process of idling things down the hill.
- Silt fence from the construction project was removed from multiple areas and those areas were then mowed or line trimmed. Cleanup from the project will likely be ongoing well into next year.
- Clean polymer barrels were hauled to the DPW upper barn.
- Electrical service was installed from the new plant to the headworks building. Since the new plant start-up, we have been operating on two independent services. One in the old plant and one in the new plant. This connection also means we now have a generator backup for the entire plant again. Our part of the connection process required us to divert flow to parts of the old plant multiple times so that the electrical connections could be made with the power off. Once the plant was back up and running, we then ran the diverted flow back through the new plant.
- Oil was drained from the rotating assemblies that were just removed from the headworks effluent pumps. New impellers and bearings will be ordered for the rotating assemblies, so that they can be rebuilt and stored as spares.
- All of the fire extinguishers in the old plant were either recertified or replaced as needed. The extinguishers in the new plant are all brand new, so we should be completely up to date on extinguishers now.
- Final results were received from the August WET test analysis. This analysis actually quantifies the toxicity of our effluent by placing minnows and water fleas in containers of our effluent and tracking mortality rates. This was the fourth and final WET test required by our current discharge permit. It was also the first WET test performed on effluent from our new plant. The results for this round of WET test were actually the best I've ever seen, with zero mortality over a four-day period. A final report of the WET test analysis was submitted to EGLE on August 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Our annual lab equipment qualification was performed by DR Lab Services on August 27<sup>th</sup>. This is required by EGLE to maintain State certification of our lab for the wastewater analysis of BOD, TSS, pH, DO, nutrients and Fecal Coliform.
- A check valve assembly was rebuilt on headworks pump 2 and some threaded studs were replaced on the headworks pump 1 check valve. The items rebuilt or replaced were wear parts that had been in

consistent use for over seven years and showed signs of wear during the recent replacement of the rotating assemblies.

- A storage rack was purchased and assembled to store the spare parts for the equipment in the new plant.
- A backsplash was installed around a sink in the new building. The sink is used for sampling and the backsplash should help clean any materials that splash out from sink.
- The septage receiving unit was installed and a yard hydrant was put in for cleanup of the septage receiving area. In addition to this, a box has been mounted and anchored next to the driveway for the septic haulers to drop of their septage delivery tickets. The only Items left for us to start receiving septage are a couple of sections of new grating around the receiving station.
- A few contacts were made as part of the IPP development, including some returned information from completed inspections and a sewer use survey from a business that had been overlooked to this point.
- Copper sampling was performed at four sites throughout the collection system.
- A signal booster was installed at Glaser Lift Station. Over time the signal strength of the telemetry unit had diminished to the point of causing communication outages with the station. After working with the telemetry provider, the assumption was that this was caused by the increasing height of the surrounding trees. The signal booster seems to have corrected issue.
- Weeds were sprayed and trimmed at the lift stations.
- Pumps were pulled at Glaser, Millpond and Crescent View lift stations to remove rags.
- The digester in the old plant is being slowly drained and vented in preparation for winter. This is another item that will save a significant amount energy if it doesn't need to be heated throughout the colder months.
- The trailer generator was used at Crescent View lift station during a power outage on August 29<sup>th</sup>. The outage was caused by a tree that fell during a thunderstorm.
- Approximately 70 tons of sludge were hauled to the landfill for final disposal.
- The tops were cut off of the remaining dewatering bags in beds 2,4 and 5. The dewatering bags are made out of braided nylon and measure 30' in diameter by 75' long. They weigh around 400 lbs. when they're dry and that goes up quite a bit when they're wet. So, they are quite a handful to remove.
- Oil changes were completed on the upper and lower gear reducers of the vortex grit separator.
- As the new plant project is winding down, we have been working with all of the contractors to finish up and develop a final punch list. At this point, the contractors are all over the place in terms of being done. Electrical and mechanical are pretty much all done, with just a few items to finish up. The dirt and building crews have a few more items to button up. And the fence and metal fabricators have the most to work on or fix.
- So far, the new plant has been fantastic to operate. With just a few minor exceptions the treatment process and equipment has worked perfectly. Our first two months of treatment has shown noted improvements in treatment efficiencies and ease of use. With this in mind we have went back to a three-person operation, with our fourth operator taking a position at the DPW. We will likely be busy over the next year cleaning up from the project and idling the old plant, but to this point everything seems on track with what we thought we would see. It will be interesting to see how much money we will be able to save on energy and maintenance once everything stabilizes.
- In addition to the items listed above and daily operation of the lab and plant, 107 preventative maintenance work orders were performed. PM work orders can be as simple as checking fluid levels or greasing equipment, but they can also entail major maintenance tasks that take hours or even days to complete. Most of these items aren't listed in the briefings because of how often they are performed.