



# MEMORANDUM

## REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

July 17, 2023, at 7:00 PM

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**TO: City Council**

**FROM: Rich LaBombard, City Manager**

**SUBJECT: Department Report – July 2023**

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### **Assessor:**

**Residential Land Tables** – I have finished work on the residential land tables and will continue work on the Commercial & Industrial land tables in the fall.

**Preliminary Residential Study** – We received the preliminary residential two study from the County and I have sent in my contentions which have been accepted. The initial study showed an increase of 20 percent for next year. We are still catching up from the crazy sales period over the last couple of years and sales prices are still strong although not as many sales this year.

**Land Divisions** – I have a couple of land divisions to finalize and a new lot line adjustment that I just sent to the County for mapping and renumbering.

**Residential Sales Study** - I plan to begin work on residential sales studies to start establishing assessments for 2024 over the next couple of months.

Continuing work on many projects:

- Reappraisal using aerial maps – ongoing
- Processing incoming Property Transfer Affidavits
- Processing deeds monthly
- Processing monthly building permits

### **City Manager:**

**EGLE Order** – The Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy have sent letters out to permit holders who installed sandbags during the erosion event of 20-21 and are requiring the entire removal of sandbags. From another source I understand that EGLE is concerned about microplastics entering the water system. I've been in contact with our local representative about the extensive geotextile work done at Douglas Beach to support the bluff is required to be removed. I suspect removal of the geotextile tubes at Douglas Beach will have a negative effect on all the work done at the beach to protect the bluff.

**Douglas Grows** – In a report on MLive about statewide census population change, the northwest section of the lower peninsula experienced the majority of population growth in the state over the past two years even though the state’s population declined overall by 43,000 people. The City of Douglas’ population grew by 2.3 percent over an approximately two-year period. Saugatuck grew by 0.7 percent, Saugatuck Township grew by 2.6 percent, and Laketown Township grew by 3.7 percent.

**Root Beer Best** – Holland Sentinel “food critics”, set out to find the best hot dogs in the region as reported in the July 8<sup>th</sup> edition. They tested hot dogs from five local restaurants and Douglas’ own Root Beer Barrel ranked #1. The Donna Dog, loaded with mac and cheese and bacon was a savory delight to the taste testers. Great job Mick. Mick presented City Hall with a framed graphic of the Root Beer Barrel.

**Summer Tax Bills** – Tax bills have been sent out. If you haven’t received your bill, please contact the treasurer.

**Temporary Traffic Signs** – The Department of Public Works is working with the City Engineer and Give ‘em a break to plan out the temporary stop signs for the intersection of Wiley and Blue Star while MDOT bridge construction is underway. If all the material is available, the signs will be installed next week.

**Aquatic Treatment** – The next treatment of the Douglas Harbor for invasive aquatic species will be on July 19<sup>th</sup>. The treatment targets the invasive Eurasian milfoil.

**Interim City Clerk** – At Monday’s City Council meeting, I’m proposing to appoint Deputy City Clerk Laura Kasper as Interim City Clerk while a search is underway following the announcement of City Clerk Pam Aalderink’s retirement. Laura has been with the City almost a year and has worked closely with Pam to gain experience specific to the Douglas Community. Laura will do well in the role.

**Congratulations Pam** – July 28<sup>th</sup> will be City Clerk Pam Aalderink’s last day with the City. Pam was hired in 2008 as a part-time employee. As she worked her way up the municipal ranks, she became Deputy City Clerk and was appointed to her current position as City Clerk in 2019. Pam holds designations as a Certified Municipal Clerk and Certified Municipal Treasurer. Pam also earned a bachelor’s degree as a working student from Grand Valley State University and majored in Sociology. Pam has had an influence on the Douglas community. As a community minded citizen, Pam started Scary Beery Halloween in the Park, brought the Cincinnati Orchestra to Douglas, set up flu vaccination clinics, and started the Fill the Humvee for Christian Neighbor’s event, and other events still celebrated today. Congratulations on your retirement Pam. She has assured me that she will be available to help with elections.

## **Clerk:**

**Welcome Corporate Technology** – The City of Douglas will be working with Corp Tech out of Ada, Michigan for all IT Services. On Tuesday, July 11, 2023, the onboarding process for IT Services began with an in-house visit from two techs. Equipment was reviewed and labeled, the server was identified and determined ok to begin the final implementation of the onboarding process. There is a 5-step plan that they will be following to get the city up and running. At this time all logins remain the same, no need to change anything until notified to do so.

**Last Staff Report** – This will be my final staff report as City Clerk for the City of Douglas. It has been a pleasure and honor to serve each of the residents of this great city and to work side by side with some of the finest co-workers. I am grateful. God Bless each of you.

**Congratulations Laura Kasper** – Laura Kasper will serve as the City interim Clerk, she has done a wonderful job getting to know her way around the charter, files, and election process. She is very excited to meet the community and will do a wonderful job in this position.

### Deputy Clerk:

**Clerk Master Academy** – This week I registered for the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks (MAMC) Master Academy which will take place in the Fall. This class is the follow-up to Clerking 101, which I completed last month. Main areas of focus included in the Academy agenda will be the recent legislative updates regarding election laws and early voting. This will be implemental to the upcoming busy election cycle. I am looking forward to the valuable information provided and I am thankful for the opportunity to attend.

**General Election** – The City’s next election will be on November 7, 2023. While this date may seem far away, preparations for the election have already started. The State of Michigan dates and deadlines for the General Election begin in July and continue even after Election Day. The first deadline for the City is July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 4:00pm and is for nominating petitions and Affidavits of Identity for candidates. There will be three non-partisan positions open for City Council for terms of two-years each. The petitions and Affidavits of Identity can be picked up at the Clerk’s office and must be returned before the July 25<sup>th</sup> 4:00 pm deadline.

**ACCA Meeting** – This week the Clerk and I will be attending the Allegan County Clerks Association meeting. One of the items on the agenda is a presentation by a representative from the Michigan Secretary of State office. There will also be updates from our County Clerk and Clerk Committees, as well as open discussion on a variety of Clerk-related topics. I am looking forward to representing our City and receiving important information from our neighboring Clerks.

**Congratulations Pam!** - I would like to congratulate City Clerk Pam Aalderink on her retirement. It has been a pleasure to serve Pam as Deputy Clerk and learn from her years of knowledge and experience. I am grateful for the guidance and training that City Clerk Aalderink has given me.

### Police Department:

	June	Fiscal Year	Y.T.D.
<u>Complaints Answered/Investigated:</u>	171	2,031	1,011
<u>Criminal Arrests/Filings:</u>			
Felony:	01	25	19
Misdemeanor:	07	48	29
<u>Warrant Arrests:</u>	00	09	05

Traffic Enforcement:

OWI/OUID/Impaired Driving Arrests:	02	12	07
OWI High Blood Alcohol Content:	01	04	02
OWI 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense:	00	01	00
Traffic Stops:	95	738	420
Civil Infraction:	33	112	89

Community Contacts:

Personal Contacts:	1,051	13,122	6,650
Business Contacts:	188	2,615	1,262
Property Security Checks:	706	11,853	5,381

Foot Patrol: (May) 1,620 Minutes (27 Hours & 0 Minutes)

Misdemeanor Charges: (June)

- Domestic Violence
- Driving While License Suspended
- Operating While Intoxicated High Blood Alcohol Content
- Open Intoxicants in a Motor Vehicle
- Operating While Intoxicated (2)
- Reckless Driving
- No Operator's License

Felony Charges: (June)

- Felonious Assault Strangulation

Activity Time on Follow Up Complaint Investigations: (June)

2,020 Minutes (33 Hrs. & 40 Minutes) Number of June Follow Up Investigations: 55

Investigation of Felony Cases:

Fraud involving \$8,000 Loss (23-0995):	On-Going Investigation.
Criminal Sexual Conduct (23-0768):	Open.
Larceny of Tow Dolly Trailer (23-0496):	Open.
Larceny of Floating Dock (23-0536):	Open.
Larceny (22-1742):	Open.
Larceny (22-1793):	Open.
Fraudulent Checks (22-1496):	Open.
Stolen Watercraft (#21-1420):	Open.
Robbery-Armed Huntington ATM (#20-1827).	Open.
Fraud (22-0091).	Open.
Fraud (22-0133).	Open.
Fraud (22-1261):	Open.

Out of Jurisdiction Responses: (June)

Saugatuck Township:

- 23-951: Back up Sheriff's Office on the search of vehicle.

Laketown Township:

- 23-858: Emergency Road Hazard on I-196 @ 41 mm/Vehicle stopped in the passing lane. No other LE available. Officer Dyer pushed vehicle off to side of highway and cleared.
- 23-947: Assist Sheriff's Office and State Police with a fatal traffic crash on I-196 @ 43 mm. Exit 41 for traffic control.

Fillmore Township:

- 23-974: Back up the Sheriff's Office on a possible Breaking & Entering of an occupied home.

Ganges Township:

- 23-865: Back up the Sheriff's Office on a trespassing/disorderly arrest.

Total Out of Jurisdiction Responses for June: 05  
Total Complaints Handled within Douglas City for June: 166

Noteworthy Incidents: (June)

**23-0899:** On Sunday June 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:31 A.M. Officer Brown was traveling northbound on Blue Star Highway near Wiley Road when he observed a vehicle traveling on the shoulder with no taillights. After initiating a traffic stop it was determined that the driver was operating while intoxicated. The driver was arrested and lodged at the Allegan Jail.

**23-0917:** On Friday June 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:07 A.M. Officer Dyer was conducting stationary radar on Blue Star Highway near the South City Limits. A vehicle headed southbound left the road and nearly ran into Officer Dyer's patrol vehicle. Officer Dyer initiated a traffic stop on the vehicle and the driver was found to be operating while intoxicated. The driver was arrested and lodged at the Allegan Jail.

**23-0924:** On Saturday June 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:59 A.M. Corporal Warsen was working the Town Crier Race and was dispatched to the 0 Block of N Blue Star Highway in reference to a domestic assault that was witnessed by a passerby. While on scene it was determined that the male half assaulted the female by strangulation. The male was arrested and lodged at the Allegan Jail on charges of Felonious Assault Strangulation and Domestic Violence.

**23-0961:** On Friday June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:50 A.M. Officer Dyer was conducting stationary radar northbound on Blue Star Highway at Union Street when he observed a vehicle at a high rate of speed over the Kalamazoo River Bridge. Officer Dyer conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and after investigation the driver was arrested and lodged at the Allegan Jail for operating while intoxicated.

**23-0995:** On Wednesday June 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:05 P.M. Officer Reyes was dispatched to a Fraud Complaint that occurred on Monday June 26<sup>th</sup> in the 400 Block of East Summer Grove. The Suspects contacted the Victim by telephone and fraudulently posed as an attorney for the Victim's Grandson needing Bond Money for a fatal traffic crash indicating that the Judge had imposed a gag order. One of the Suspects arrived as a "courier" hours later and obtained \$8,000 Dollars in cash from the Victim. This case is an active and on-going investigation and likely relates to similar frauds in Ionia, Kent, and Ottawa Counties.

**23-1011:** On June 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:07 P.M. Officer Dyer was dispatched to a domestic assault in the 800 block of Campbell Road. While on scene it was determined that the suspect was autistic and Officer Dyer determined it was best to remove the suspect from the home for safety to a hotel for the evening. The report is under review by the Allegan County Prosecutor's Office.

The Department also responded to the following types of calls during June:

Larceny Complaints, Fraud Complaints, Disorderly Person, Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Situation, Medical Emergencies, Trespassing Complaint, Harassment Complaints, Sex Offender Registrations, Personal Protection Order Violation, Peace Officer Complaints, Animal/Conservation Complaints, Reckless Driving Complaint, Property Damage Vehicle Crash Complaints, Illegal Burn Complaint, Fireworks Complaints, Watercraft Complaint, Animal Welfare Complaint, Welfare Checks, Motorist Assists, Business/Residential Alarms, Fire Alarm, Assist to STFD on a Fire Call, Noise Complaints, Open Door Complaints, Road Hazard Complaints, Parking Complaints, Lost/Found Property Complaints, Neighbor Disputes, Child Abuse Complaint, Ordinance Violation Complaint, and General Public Assists/Non-Criminal Complaints.

### June Events:

Staffing for security at the Pride Festival Events.

Staffing for the Town Crier Race.

Planning Meeting for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks/Laser Event with traffic planning.

Participate with STFD at Douglas Elementary School with “Water Fun Day”.

### June Staff Training:

Evidence/Property Room Management Training (1 Officer).

Intoxilyzer Training (2 Officers).

## **Planning and Zoning:**

**Zoning Permits** – Since June 19<sup>th</sup>, we have processed between 5-8 zoning permits for various projects including water and sewer connections, lot line adjustments, and interior renovation work.

**Site Visits** – I visited larger project sites such as Swingbridge and Westshore, as well as individual homes and businesses for concerns or questions.

**Meetings** – I have continued to hold meetings with residents, which have been a mix of preliminary meetings regarding building projects and clarifications regarding ongoing projects such as Swingbridge, Westshore, and Center Collective.

**Plan Requests** – I’ve continued to field plan requests regarding the West Shore Development, while waiting for revisions to be submitted before re-noticing for the public hearing

**Ordinance Amendments** – Two ordinance amendments have gone before the Planning Commission this past Thursday (Sign Ordinance and Special Use Ground Floor Residential), and we’re putting together a list of items to clean up or clarify going forward.

**Enforcements** – I’m currently in the process of contacting a number of residents and businesses who are in violation of the ordinances’ standards, ranging from tall grass to lack of zoning permits.

**Projects in Progress** – There are a number of projects in progress including Westshore, Forest Gate, Center Collective, and 200 W. Center. The status of each project is as follows:

- *Westshore*
  - o Currently we are waiting on revisions from BDR to be submitted regarding a number of items pertaining to the PUD section of the Zoning Ordinance as well as Ordinance 03-2012 (The original PUD Ordinance for Westshore).
  - o In addition, we are compiling a history of events in the timeline of the project, including elements from the original PUD for the property in 2007, titles West Shore Cottages.
- *Forest Gate*
  - o Planning and Zoning has been in touch with the developer and have been communicating regarding the conditions set down by the Planning Commission at their April meeting. So far, the developer is making progress toward completing those conditions prior to their next appearance at City Council.
- *Center Collective*
  - o We are waiting on the applicant to follow through on the conditions set by the Planning Commission, namely acceptance of drainage design by the Allegan County Drain Commission and the determination of a construction timeline that shows the sequence of construction.
  - o In addition, there is still question regarding the vacation of the Pleasant St. ROW that needs to be resolved before this item can come before City Council.
- *200 W Center St.*
  - o There has not been any movement on this project as of late, but it is likely we will see some after the most recent Planning Commission meeting this past Thursday regarding amendments to Section 26.13 Ground Floor Residential of the Zoning Ordinance.

## **Project Management:**

**Planning and Zoning Assistance** – Assist the Planning and Zoning Department with processes, applications, and current projects. Fulfilled the requirements of a public hearing notice for the Amendment to the Sign Ordinance and Special Land Use for Planning Commission. Arranged and published the Planning Commission agenda packet.

**EGLE Grant** – The City has been reimbursed for the work completed at the Police Department and the grant is now complete.

**AED Equipment** – Worked in conjunction with the Fire District to select and order AED equipment for City Hall, the Police Department, and DPW. AED equipment with special exterior cabinets will also be installed at various parks.

**Wayfinding** – Continue to work with Praise Sign Company to implement our wayfinding signage throughout the City.

**DPW** – Assist with ordering supplies, permit requirements, and updating list of various DPW items.



**Road Work** – All budgeted projects are completed for FY 22/23. FY 23/24 will be crack sealing, which will take place in the spring.

**333 Blue Star Highway** – Project is complete with the final invoice remaining.

**Manage Douglas Marina Slips** – Continue to manage the slips at Douglas Marina and make sure all slip holders have filed the appropriate paperwork. A two (2) year lottery for 2024 & 2025 will be going out last summer/early fall.

**66<sup>th</sup> Street Request for Proposal** – Drafted an RFP for the disposal of surplus real property. An ordinance will need to be adopted in conjunction with the RFP. The RFP is currently in review by the City Manager but will need attorney review as well. The ordinance will be on the agenda for the second reading on July 17.

**Branding** – When time allows, I have been working on merchandise and branding of the City's new logo. The City is proposing new hats, shirts, etc.

**Drinking Water Asset Management Grant (DWAM)** – Continue to meet with City Engineers to discuss next steps on inspections for lead service lines, training on the GIS application, and establishing reports. The DPW will inspect the service lines that enter the residence. City Engineers will bid out the work for inspections at the curb stop. Notifications have been sent to those randomly selected for verification.

**Sidewalk Repairs** – Established sidewalk repair priorities throughout downtown. Quotes are being sought to see how many can get done within the budget.

## **Public Works Department:**

**Downtown** – Branches hanging lower than eight feet have been trimmed above the new sidewalk from City Hall to Blue Star Highway. Weeds and grass down Center Street curb and gutter have been removed and cleaned up. Trimming and mowing have taken place at the dead end of Wall Street at the request of a resident and for better visibility to the fire hydrant between the end of Wall Street and Douglas Harbor Village East.

**Major and Local Roads** – Dirt and gravel that had washed onto Washington Street, Wades Bayou Drive, and Water Street after the last rain event were cleaned off with our ride on Billy Goat blower.

**Douglas Marina** – Improvements at the marina continue. The DEBTS crew is providing most of the labor to install landscape pavers around the fountain and DPW staff is working on laying bricks to complete a sidewalk on the south side of the house. Newly seeded grass areas continue to be watered.

**Building and Grounds** – Railing that were repaired behind City Hall last fall have now been painted and the garage door opener to the basement that quit working was repaired. Parking lots behind EPC and Respite were cleaned up with the ride on blower.

**Parks** – Trees with water bags continue to be watered at Schultz Park and Wades Bayou. Larger trees at both locations have been trimmed up to approximately eight feet high for ease of mowing and aesthetics.

**Brush** – Brush pick up continues while leaf pick up is complete until October.

**Beach Bathroom** – New grass seed on the north side continues to be watered.

**Equipment** – Tractors and mowers that Council approved have arrived (minus the snowplows) and have already been put to use mowing at Wiley barn, 200 Blue Star Highway, Schutlz Park, and Union Launch. Trimble GIS equipment has come in, staff is excited to receive the training and get started.

**Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM)** – DPW personnel have been working on water service line verification, by knocking on doors, locating where the water is coming in, and documenting size of line, type of material, and that the meter is up to code.

**Traffic Safety** - DPW has been working with Prein&Newhof and the Police Chief for an engineered plan to make Wiley Road and Blue Star Highway a temporary four way stop throughout MDOT construction.

## **Treasurer:**

**Taxes** – Tax bills hit mailboxes this month and tax payments have started coming in.

- The Summer tax bills the City sends out contain amounts due to the City, State, County, Schools, and ISD.
- The winter tax bills contain amounts due to County, School, Library, Fire district, Transit Authority, and any special assessments. The City keeps 23 to 33 cents of each tax dollar collected, depending on Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) status. The remainder is distributed to the other governments and authorities.

**Useful Links** - The City encourages people to sign up for our tax autopay program. Forms and further information can be found at [tinyurl.com/DouglasTaxAutoPay](http://tinyurl.com/DouglasTaxAutoPay). Look up your balance and payment information anytime at [bsaonline.com/?uid=484](http://bsaonline.com/?uid=484).

**MERS** – The City received the annual actuarial valuation as of December 31, 2022. The valuation stated the City's pension is 95 percent funded down from 97 percent funded in the prior year. This decrease in funding status was primarily related to investment returns in 2022.

**Audit** – The fiscal year has come to an end. Preliminary revenue and expense numbers are being reviewed and additional accruals and minor adjustments are still being made. I have started compiling information for the audit, and making sure items are recorded in the proper fiscal year. This year I will be preparing the financial statements for the auditors as well as preparing schedules to help the audit go smoother. As a result, the City will have lower audit fees. Very few governments have the staff expertise necessary to prepare their own financial statements. The audit is scheduled to occur in October and the auditors will be at City Hall for 2-3 days. The audit must be submitted to the State by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Cash Balances** – The City's cash balances were down from last month. This was primarily related to the payment for the last few capital purchases, aquatic weed treatment, and lead service replacement work.

**City Revenues and Expenses** – Revenues and expenditures were generally consistent with where we would expect for this point of the year.