



**To:** City Council

**From:** Rich LaBombard  
City Manager

**Date:** May 15, 2023

**Subject:** Monthly Department Activity Report  
May 2023

### **Assessor:**

**Audit** – As I mentioned last month, we are being audited by the State for the third cycle of the new audit system. I have submitted all of the requested information and my appointment with the auditor is scheduled for May 30. I feel confident with my submission and will be interested to see how it has been received. I would imagine we will have results by the end of June. Stay tuned.

**Land Tables** – I continue to work on City lot land tables and so far, I am happy with how that project is going. I feel that the changes being made will be a positive factor in achieving better and more equitable assessments.

**Preliminary Residential Sales Study** - I have done a preliminary residential sales study for the upcoming 2024 assessments and looks like we will see another healthy increase for the upcoming year.

Continuing work on many projects:

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

### **City Manager:**

**MDOT Bridge Work** – I learned this week that MDOT realigned the schedule for bridge work, and they will be starting work at exit 41 in June and expect to wrap up that project by the end of August. Exit 36 work will start after exit 41 is completed and they anticipate work there to continue until mid-November. The City has some upcoming road work projects that have been moved up in schedule to not create conflict with detoured traffic.

The detour route exit 41 is:



The detour route for exit 36 is:



**Blue Star Drain and Sidewalk Project** – Work is well underway for the drain and sidewalk project near the Dunes resort. The best news we received is that the water main located below the work will not have to be lowered to avoid a conflict with the new drainage structure. We anticipate that will shave a week off the project.

**Planning and Zoning Administrator** – The City staff welcomed Mr. Joe Blair as the new Planning and Zoning Administrator on Monday. Joe started his first day with introductions and a tour of the City. During his first week, Joe rotated between departments to learn about roles and responsibilities. He spent time with the City Manager, interim Planning and Zoning Administrator and the Chair of the Planning Commission. Thursday, he attended his first meeting of the Planning Commission.

**DPW Supervisor** – Congratulations to Greg Salinas on his promotion to DPW Supervisor to fill the role vacated by Ricky Zoet when he was promoted to Director of Public Works. Greg has been an employee of Douglas Department of Public Works for almost five years. Three internal candidates applied for the position. The city received no applications from the public.

**Budget** – The budget preparation is in the final stages and will be presented to City Council in the next budget workshop. The City is required to adopt the budget by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year after a formal budget hearing.

**Fire Board** – The Saugatuck District Fire Board will be holding a joint meeting with all three municipalities on Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 at the Fire Hall. This is a public meeting to discuss the fire budget.

**Renaming Point Pleasant** – Douglas Marina is the intended new name for Point Pleasant Marina after a City Council discussion on May 1. The renaming of the marina was to reinforce that the marina is a public marina owned by the City of Douglas. City Council plans to take official action through resolution for the renaming at the next City Council meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Branding** - I spent some time this week reviewing the notes about the new Douglas logo in preparation for a newspaper article describing the development process of rebranding the City.

**Beach Cleanup** – Jars Cannabis gathered together a group of volunteers and cleaned up debris along Douglas Beach and Oval Beach the week of May 8<sup>th</sup>. The Jars community engagement coordinator reported they collected, “7 full bags of trash, 3 tires, a broken surfboard, 2 broken chairs and a ton of evasive mustard garlic!” Thank you volunteers!



## **Clerk:**

**Physical Home Addressing Within the City** - The City Clerk's office has been working for over a year to remedy the unexplained address issues which occurred following the redistricting process. There have been a number of residents who found their physical home addresses switched from the City of Douglas to the City of Fennville or Saugatuck. The Clerk has contacted the Board of Elections, the United States Post Office, State and Federal Representatives, and the County Clerk. We are no further along with the answer as to who or why these changes occurred. Our office made a request to meet with all agencies at one time to discuss these changes.

The Clerks office received a complaint recently from a resident who stated she has a physical City of Douglas address, was assigned a zip code which placed her in the City of Fennville, and the ramifications of this move have made her unable to get a free Post Office Box (because she has a Fennville zip code). Also affected was her ability to file taxes online, receive UPS deliveries, and so forth. As the City Clerk, I would like to personally thank this resident for sending my office this information, because without it I believe we would not be as far in the search for an answer.

If there are residents who are experiencing a comparable situation, the Clerk's office would appreciate receiving a letter explaining how you have been affected.

**TRAINING** - The Clerk has been training the Deputy Clerk on issuing insurance claims, onboarding new employees, when and why the Title vi paperwork is filed with the State of Michigan, and of course diligently watching all election news that comes from the State.

## **Deputy Clerk:**

**Clerks Meeting** - The West Michigan Regional Clerks Association (WMRCA) is holding a workshop event this week at the Ottawa County Building in West Olive. This Spring workshop will feature a guest speaker that will discuss de-escalation tactics and managing stress in the Clerks Department, which will be very useful during election time. There will also be a presentation from the Ottawa County Clerk, Justin Roebuck. This presentation will include discussion of important election updates and information regarding the Proposal 2 passage. This workshop event will be attended by Clerks from all around West Michigan. The City Clerk and I are looking forward to attending.

**Training With The City Clerk** - Continued training with the Clerk on meeting procedures, minutes, resolutions, and ordinances. The City Clerk has provided me with a variety of information and procedural outlines, which are especially useful. In addition, I have been studying Robert's Rules of Order alongside the Open Meetings Act, and the By-Laws for each group. I have attended some of our City's Board and Commission meetings and have conducted some as well. This has been helpful for me with understanding the entire meetings process. In addition to the meetings, the Clerk has been training me on the various responsibilities of our department.

## **Police Department:**

	April	Fiscal Year	Y.T.D.
<u>Complaints Answered/Investigated:</u>	160	1,662	642
<u>Criminal Arrests/Filings:</u>			
Felony:	06	24	18
Misdemeanor:	05	34	15
<u>Warrant Arrests:</u>	01	08	04
<u>Traffic Enforcement:</u>			
OWI/OUID/Impaired Driving Arrests:	01	09	04
OWI High Blood Alcohol Content:	00	03	01
OWI 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense:	00	01	00
Traffic Stops:	82	560	242
Civil Infraction:	16	404	37
<u>Community Contacts:</u>			
Personal Contacts:	959	10,648	4,176
Business Contacts:	212	2,141	788
Property Security Checks:	920	9,968	3,497
<u>Foot Patrol:</u> (April)			
1,627 Minutes ( 24 Hours & 7 Minutes.)			

Felony Cases: (April)

Assault, Resist, Obstruct an Officer. (x2)  
Assault with a Weapon.  
Domestic Violence.  
Aggravated Stalking.  
Operating While Intoxicated

Misdemeanor Charges: (April)

Larceny over \$200.  
Domestic Violence.  
Operate while Intoxicated.  
Driving on Suspended License.  
Improper Use of Registration Plates.

Activity Time on Follow Up Complaint Investigations: (April)

1,440 Minutes ( 24 Hrs. & 0 Minutes)  
Number of March Follow Up Investigations: 51

Investigation of Felony Cases:

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: (April)

Saugatuck Township:

- 23-0527: Priority 1 medical/Patient not conscious.
- 23-0593: Request to back up Sheriff's Office on Alarm/Building Search.
- 23-0606: Back up Sheriff's Office on an OWI arrest.

Saugatuck City:

- 23-0489: Requested back up of Sheriff's Office on suspicious situation.

Ganges Township

- 23-0548: Closest LE to PI Crash/Turned over to Sheriff's Office.

Total Out of Jurisdiction Responses for April: 05

Total Complaints Handled within Douglas City for April: 155

Noteworthy Incidents: (April)

23-0484: On Saturday April 1<sup>st</sup> at 12:02pm Officer Reyes was dispatched to the 100 block of South Bluestar Highway for 2 suspects in a heated argument inside a business. One of the suspects left the

scene prior to Officer Reyes' arrival. Investigation showed that there had been no assault and no further action was needed.

23-0494: On Monday April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:38am Officer Brown was dispatched to an unwanted guest in a residence that was reported as out of control and possibly suicidal in the 300 block of South Bluestar. The caller was requesting officer's assistance inside the residence and the suspect was barricading the door of the residence. Officers were able to make entry into the residence and took the suspect into custody. The suspect was medically cleared and then lodged at the Allegan Jail for resisting and obstructing a police officer.

23-0508: On Wednesday April 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:15pm Officer Brown was called to respond to the 200 block of St. Peters Drive for a suspect that was stealing items from a boat in storage. The suspect was arrested for Larceny and lodged at the Allegan Jail.

23-0509: On Wednesday April 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:27pm Officer Brown was dispatched to Bluestar Highway near Main Street to investigate a single vehicle traffic crash. Upon investigation it was determined that the driver was intoxicated and upon being told that he was under arrest the suspect actively resisted and obstructed Officer Brown. Officer Brown worked to subdue the suspect and was verbally assisted by area residents who along with Officer Brown attempted to convince the suspect to comply. Officer Brown was eventually assisted by a Sheriff's Unit and a Unit from Ottawa County both responding from the Holland Area and the suspect was taken into custody. The suspect was lodged at the Allegan Jail for Resisting and Obstructing an Officer and Operating while Intoxicated.

23-0543: On Thursday April 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:31am Corporal Warsen was dispatched to a Domestic in Progress in the 100 block of West Center Street. After arrival and incident investigation the suspect was arrested for Domestic Violence and lodged at the Allegan Jail. An additional charge of Assault with a Weapon was authorized after review by the Allegan County Prosecutor's Office.

23-0565: On Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:22pm Officer Brown conducted a traffic stop on Ferry Street near Fremont Street and after investigation a suspect was found to be Unlawfully in possession of a Concealed Pistol. Charges were authorized for Felony Concealed Weapon on the suspect.

23-0592: On Thursday April 20<sup>th</sup> at 3:35pm Officer Reyes was dispatched to the 200 block of St. Peters Drive for an employee who was making threats to supervisors and co-workers after becoming irate while on another jobsite. Officer Reyes stayed on scene to investigate and to allow all employees to leave for the day. Additionally I assisted on Friday April 21<sup>st</sup> as the business re-opened and the employee was terminated. I contacted the suspect and he was given a trespass notice for multiple properties. Corporal Warsen and Officer Reyes handled additional harassment complaints involving the suspect electronically contacting other individuals familiar with supervisors in the company. The incident reports have been forwarded to the Allegan County Prosecutor's Office for review.

23-0595: On Friday April 21<sup>st</sup> at 12:13am Officer Brown was investigating suspicious vehicle activity and pedestrian activity in the 00 block of Wilderness Ridge Drive which lead to three juvenile suspects being cited for Possession of Marijuana and then being turned over to their parents.

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

Larceny Complaints, Malicious Destruction of Property Complaint, Fraud Complaints, Disorderly Person, Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Situation, Medical Emergencies, Trespassing Complaint, Harassment Complaints, Personal Protection Order Complaints, Peace Officer Complaints, Animal/Conservation Complaints, Property Damage Vehicle Crash Complaints, Welfare Checks, Motorist Assists, Business/Residential Alarms, Bank Alarm, Fire Alarm, Assist to STFD on a Fire Call, Open Door Complaints, Road Hazard Complaints, Parking Complaints, Lost/Found Property Complaints, and General Public Assists/Non-Criminal Complaints.

#### Events: (April)

Easter Parade Planning and Staffing.

Douglas Elementary School to instruct Safe Kids Classroom Training with STFD.

Planning meeting for Town Crier Race.

#### Staff Training: (April)

One Officer attended mandatory Intoxilyzer breath testing training.

One Officer attended mandatory Active Violence Training.

### **Planning and Zoning:**

- Began organizing workspace to take inventory of plans and projects pending
- Toured the City to become more familiar with the Douglas area
- Received emails and in-person information regarding questions and began researching to respond to citizen inquiries
- Met with Planning Commission Chair for introductions
- Read through procedures for Planning Commission
- Reviewed the Planning Commission packet for Thursday, May 11
- Meet with Planning/Zoning Admin consultant, Tricia to identify current methods of interaction and prepare for a smooth transition

### **Project Management:**

**Planning and Zoning Assistance** – Met with Joe Blair, the new Planning and Zoning Administrator, to review the processes, applications, current projects, and other onboarding topics. Assisted with a tour of the City to help familiarize Joe with the current projects and provide an overview of the City as a whole. Arranged and published the Planning Commission agenda packet.

**EGLE Grant** – This spring I was awarded a zero match Community Energy Management Grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). The contractors have started work at the Police Department with heating and cooling finishing up last week and lighting starting this week.

**Permit Applications** – Continue to improve and recreate outdated forms for Planning and Zoning needs. Update the fees according to the new schedule of fees and add an online payment link. Created a new rezoning application and I'm in the process of doing a major revamp of the planned unit development application with Williams & Works.

**FY 22-23 & FY 23-24** – Scheduling of various capital improvement projects. Updated the master project list with rankings received by City Council. Scheduled a directors meeting to review those rankings.

**Pyramid Sculpture** – Discussed with MaryJo the dedication of the sculpture and installation. Once installed, the dedication will be scheduled for Memorial Day after the parade at approximately 10:30am.



**Wayfinding** – Worked extensively on the wayfinding request for proposal. Designs, locations, and content have been decided and the RFP has been noticed. Five vendors have requested proposals. Questions have been addressed and the proposals will be read in public on May 25 @ 2:00 pm.

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

**Road Work** – Continue to address schedule changes due to the scheduled MDOT work on exit 36 overpass. Mill and overlay will start mid-May, as well as chip and fog seal projects.

**333 Blue Star Highway** – Continue to monitor the progress of the drain and sidewalk project along 333 Blue Star Highway.

**Manage Point Pleasant Slip** – Continue to manage the slips at Point Pleasant and make sure all slip holders have filed the appropriate paperwork. Submitted a tree removal application to remove one tree that is dead on the property. DPW will schedule the work.

**Buoy Installation** – Contacted the new owner of Boat Lifts Unlimited to discuss buoy installation and staging at Wades Bayou.

**Spark Grant** – Round 2 of the Spark Grant is open. I plan to review the open application and submit the Schultz Park playground project.

**Water Service Line** – With budget still left for lead water service line replacements, I have added 4-8 more residents to get their lead water service lines replaced. Some are in coordination with road projects, but most will require no road disruptions.

**66<sup>th</sup> Street Request for Proposal** – Drafting 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.

## **Public Works Department:**

**Downtown** – With the help of the DEBTS crew, leaves and old mulch in the bumps-outs were raked and then vacuumed up with our vac trailer. Weekly mowing of the grass bump-outs down Center Street has also begun.

**Building and Grounds** – Behind City Hall erosion control, made with field stone, was installed behind City Hall to prevent more dirt and mulch from washing over and through the retaining wall when heavy rains overwhelm the roof gutters. In front of City Hall, bricks were rearranged to complement the recently planted Magnolia tree and the old landscape edging was replaced with new. Weed prevention was applied and mulch shoveled and raked in place.

**Street Sign Maintenance** – A DPW staff member called for Miss Digs along both sides of Ferry Street from Blue Star Highway to Campbell Road and along both sides of Center Street from Blue Star Highway to Lakeshore Drive. Once utilities were marked, eight new speed limit signs were installed.

**Budgeting** – On April 17, during a budget workshop, the DPW team presented to City Council their final draft of equipment requests for the 23/24 FY budget.

**Buoys** - Buoys were prepped and set out/staged at Wades Bayou for a contractor to set in the water (date unknown at this time).



**Schultz Boat Launch** – Once the proper work permit arrived, the DPW crew installed a new culvert under the west drive that leads to the boat launch. The old steel culvert was broken and collapsing.

**Pickle Ball Courts** – Mulch was staged near the courts by the DPW crew and was then placed throughout by the pickleball club members.

**Parks** – At the dog park, one inch stone was bucketed over the fence in the entrance area, the DPW crew then raked the piles to the low/heavily traveled areas.

**Brush** – Leaves will continue to be picked up through May 16<sup>th</sup> on the east side of Blue Star Highway and until May 23<sup>rd</sup> on the west side of Blue Star Highway. Leaves will not be scheduled for pick up again until October. Brush continues on (see brush schedule for dates).

**Beach Bathroom** – DPW crews leveled and seeded grass on all sides of the new sidewalk that was installed this spring.

**Equipment** – The DPW plow truck was brought back to the dealer for recall work and has since been picked up.

**Misc.** – The DPW Director is continuing to work on employee reviews and will have them all completed by May 12th.

## **Treasurer:**

**Taxes** – The 2022 tax year is now closed and complete after going through the settlement process with the County. The 2023 tax year is getting ready to begin. The City Assessor determines the value of the property as of December 31 (tax day) of each year. Since the adoption of Proposal A in 1994, properties have two values: the assessed value (AV) and the taxable value (TV). Taxes are calculated by multiplying the TV by the millage rate. Proposal A established the Principal Residence Exemption (PRE) that entitles homeowners who live in their home an exemption from paying the 18 mills of school operating millage. Proposal A was also designed to limit the growth in property taxes by the lower of Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 5% each year until ownership in the property was transferred.

The City issues tax bills in two installments in July and December. Tax bills for the summer tax collection are considered due and payable on July 1. 1% interest will be added on September 15th and at the start of each month thereafter on unpaid amounts. Tax bills for the winter tax collection are considered due and payable on December 1st. A 3% penalty will be added on unpaid amounts on February 15th. Unpaid summer and winter taxes can be paid to the City through February 28th. On March 1st, all unpaid taxes from the previous tax year are returned as delinquent to the Allegan County Treasurer who will continue to bill delinquent taxes including a collection fee and interest.

**Budget** – Budget budget budget. It's a flurry activity for the treasurer and the rest of City staff as we wrap up the final workshops and quotes. The pieces are starting to fall in place and the budget is starting to get solidified for presentation and public hearing on June 5th. If all goes according to plan the budget will be adopted on June 5th, but that is just the start of the process for the treasurer's office as it will have to be constantly monitored throughout the year.

**Certification** – At the end of April I attended the MMTA conference. We went over topics such as the tax collection, budgeting, investing, active shooter, first amendment auditors, and many others. This was my third year attending the three-year program. We had a graduation, and I earned my Michigan Certified Professional Treasurer (MiCPT) certification.

**Cash Balances** – The City’s cash balances remained consistent with last month. This was primarily related to the payment of standard bills being offset by receipt of the 2022 tax settlement.

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