

Interim City Manager Update

March 25, 2024

It's been another great and interesting month at the City! We've welcomed Nicol as the new City Manager and she's doing a great job getting acclimated to all of the different projects going on and all of the duties that go along with the position. She's hit the ground running!

A resident with a concern about personal safety and how the situation was addressed by the Police Department and I spoke multiple times over the last month. The Police Department handled the situation properly and was waiting on information from the resident in order to file a complaint. Unfortunately, there was some misunderstanding between the resident and the Police Department in the receiving of the information. I verified that the emails the resident reported sending were not received by the Police Department. After multiple conversations, we were able to obtain the necessary information, file the complaint, and address the situation appropriately. While the misunderstanding was being sorted out, the Police Department ensured that the resident was assisted as much as possible with increased patrols around the residence, which the resident noticed and appreciated.

MML Renewal – Our insurance renewal through MML has come in. The 2023/2024 insurance rate was \$45,944 and 2024/2025 renewal is \$48,945. The increase is due to increased property values, payroll and vehicles. The good news is the annual dividend is \$3,945, which brings the renewal cost down to \$45,000. This is a wonderful renewal in the world of insurance right now.

Surf Internet has submitted a METRO Act permit to the City to install fiber internet through a majority of the City. The necessary information, insurance and payment has been submitted by Surf Internet. City staff has had multiple meetings with Surf Internet on how the installation will progress. Our current concerns are how our Department of Public Works employees will be able to keep up with normal duties as well as marking utilities ahead of construction. Surf Internet has been very understanding of these concerns and will work with our DPW to plan accordingly. We have 45 days from the submission of the permit to approve it and are working within that time frame to accomplish what we need to do.

106 South Center building demo. We were notified at the beginning of March that an additional preliminary environmental study will be necessary prior to beginning the demolition of 106 S. Center or we will not be reimbursed through the land bank grant. We were able to piggy back on the County's bid through Fishbeck to get the study completed ASAP. We are hoping to have an update on the time line prior to the March 25 meeting, but do not have it at the time of preparing this update. We've also received communication from Consumers Energy that they have the information they need to remove the utilities from the building and property. While we haven't gotten a solid date from them, we are encouraged that there is positive movement forward.

Spring Break Event. The Spring Break event being planned with the Police Department and other community partners is going well. The event is currently planned for Friday, April 5 beginning at 10am. We have a GREAT amount of interest from our community partners and are working to have a "touch a truck" type event with police cars, public works equipment, Sheriff's Posse horses, fire trucks and more. In addition, we will be organizing a 3 on 3 basketball tournament and free throw contest in which our public servants participate, coach, and referee the games. The event should be a great time for all.

Additional details are coming soon. Advertising and a news release will hopefully be prepared and moving along before the March 25 meeting.

We've received communications about the SPARK grant submission. As usual with any grant submission the requested funds from ALL of the communities total more than the available grant funds. We were asked to break down the estimated work into priority and individual project costs and submitted them as requested, within a VERY tight time frame. A huge thank you to Mickey Bitner at Wightman, Nicol, and RoxAnn for pulling all of that together to keep us in the running! We should be hearing back on grant award very soon, hopefully by the March 25 meeting.

City Attorney, Nick Curcio submitted a request for summary judgement in the case against a prior police officer whom the City paid to go through the police academy. The judge judged in our favor and has awarded the City the entire \$7,140. We are now in the process of getting judgement on proposed payment plans with the former employee.

The Streetscape grant that the City received is required to be completed by May 31, 2024. City staff has been working to get plans together to complete the work necessary to finalize the grant. An overall plan has been submitted and we are now gathering quotes to complete the work. The work will include installing new landscaping in eight areas throughout the City. We will remove the existing planters and grind the stumps in the prior locations. Then 21 planters of varying heights will replace the planters in groups of three. The new plan is beautiful and will satisfy the grant requirements. The final part will be ensuring that the estimates fit within the City's budget. We hope to have additional details to share at the April meeting.