

What a great and busy few weeks it's been! I have the following updates for Council:

- I had a wonderful conversation with Ron Sefcik, Hartford Township Supervisor and Chairperson of our joint Fire Board. The Fire Board has been very busy recently with accomplishments and projects as follows:
 - The books for the Fire Board have been completely reformatted to meet the accounting standards set by the State of Michigan. They have also hired Peter Stanislawski to handle bookkeeping.
 - A new auditing firm has been hired, Siegfried Crandall PC, which will begin their audit at the end of August.
 - They are working with an attorney to become an official 501c3. This will help the Fire Department receive various grants for services.
 - A new Tax ID number has been received for the Fire Board.
- We will be adjusting City Hall's hours on a temporary basis next week. At the time of this report, we have one last piece of the puzzle to make sure the hours best suit the needs of the City, but by the time we have our meeting we will have the final plan to present to Council.
- I have been working to understand the requirements of the Police Department's Reserve program. We should have a resolution soon for the concerns that were raised by the previous City Manager. Again, at the time of writing this report, I do not have all of the necessary information, but I am meeting with our insurance company on 8/25/23 to ensure we have all of the facts and necessary information to formalize policy and ensure our compliance with State Statutes.
- We are continuing with the hiring process for the Deputy Clerk. After much discussion and research, I am proposing that ALL part-time City Employees (not temporary employees) receive sick, vacation, personal and holiday pay. We will not be offering retirement, disability, life insurance or health insurance at this time. Any changes to that process will fall to the full-time City Manager once they are employed. The City of Hartford will likely always have to employ part-time employees. To be clear, there is a distinction between temporary employees (those hired for a specific period of time or limited term purpose) and part-time employees (those hired to perform a job indefinitely). The City's need for part-time employees, it's important to provide a reasonable wage and benefit package to bring them in as a part of the team and not be treated as temporary employees. The benefits for the City are numerous and the cost is far less than repeatedly hiring, training, and re-hiring. For those employees covered by Union Agreements, this will have to be agreed upon with a Letter of Understanding. Revisions to the Employee Handbook will be brought to the September meeting for Council's final approval. I would appreciate a consensus opinion at this time to ensure we are heading down the correct path.
- We are working on determining the best avenue for the City in regards to a contract with a long term Building Official. Council approved an interim appointment already, but a full agreement is needed with the Building Official and all inspectors that work for the City. We are working with the City's attorney to prepare these agreements. We will work to have a proposal for a direction for the future at the next Board meeting.

- I've drafted a procedure for the City to use moving forward with any hiring that needs to be done as well as draft documents to be used in conjunction. This will assist in standardizing the hiring, advertising, interview, selection, and hiring process within the City.
- Danny and I met with Mickey from Wightman on 8/18/23 to go over the current and upcoming projects that Wightman is working on for the City. The meeting was very helpful for me to gain additional insight into the projects and what we need moving forward.
- We have been approved for a bullet proof vest grant. This will assist in the purchase of three vests for our police department to replace poorly fitting or expired vests.
- The City Hall roof is leaking AGAIN. Prior to the meeting I should have details as to the proposed next steps to repair the damages and ensure the project is appropriately completed.
- The wage study for City employees is still underway. MML's 2023/24 wage and salary survey results are now available. The City Clerk and Treasurer are completing job analysis to assist as well. It's important that we compensate our employees appropriately and ensure their work/life balance is maintained.
- We are actively interviewing police officer candidates.
- Following discussion with Danny it's come to my attention that Danny and one other employee have the necessary licensure to drive our plow trucks. We will be working to get two other employees trained and obtain their class B CDL prior to winter.
- The attorney has drafted an update to the City's Fire Code Ordinance using standardized nationally recognized language. The draft has been sent to the Fire Board chairperson for review so it can be presented to Council.
- The City received a streetscape grant that was utilized to re-pave the parking lot. In addition to the paving, the grant scope includes removal of overgrown trees, removal of planters, the purchase of park benches and planters, replacement of trash cans and replacement of broken sidewalks. The grant has been extended for completion by June of 2024. I will be working to gain better understanding of what portions are complete and what is needed still as well as the best fit for all departments within the City for maintenance of what is purchased.
- The City of Hartford is one of 40 communities that will have the opportunity to apply for a SPARK grant within the next two months. SPARK grants are meant to help communities create, renovate, and redevelop public recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. As we have one public park within the City, the grant will have to meet the needs and guidelines of that location. Please provide me with information about what you would like to see happen and how you'd like to proceed. The Village of Lawrence is also going for a SPARK grant and had several public meetings to discuss options. I think that was wise but would be very time consuming. If we want to do something similar, I'll need quite a bit of support from Council to make it work.