



## CITY MANAGER'S REPORT February 27 2023

### **TRAINING:**

City Manager attended training with the Michigan Municipal Executives. I attended sessions pertinent to the City of Hartford, including those that covered hiring and training police; collective bargaining; understanding waste water treatment plant operations; Commission/manager relations; etc. It was a very worthwhile training where I made many contacts with other managers and officials.

### **WIGHTMAN INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES:**

See attached- I met with Mickey Bitner who provided me with a project-by-project update of the work they are actively supporting. I also met with all of the Wightman project managers/engineers assigned to each project to get additional details about specific projects.

### **CITY HALL ROOF PROJECT:**

After researching some details about the project in Yemi's files and emails, I spoke with the contractor, Tichenor Inc., out of Battle Creek. Yemi asked that the contractor store the materials, which were purchased last year, at their facility, for safe keeping over the winter. There was an email that the work that had been done prior to inclement weather, should prevent leaks, however, the contractor, stated when we spoke that this did not include the entire roof, only those places they had sealed. As the email did not state this, we agreed to negotiate the leak work once the roof was complete. The contractor did say we would be first on the roster once the weather was ready.

### **WWTP:**

Toured WWTP with staff and Wightman engineer. Noted many issues stemming from a lack of overall ongoing maintenance. Spoke with staff about immediate tasks that needed to be done, including fixing broken doors, installing new lights where temporary lights were being used, fixing existing hazards, cleaning up clutter, cleaning the laboratory, and maintaining the grounds. Staff are providing a weekly update on work and efforts to fix the property up. I met with Wightman engineers to discuss the current upgrades and ongoing upkeep of the plant itself to get an understanding of upcoming needs for the plant.

I met with our contracted WWTP operator, who remarked that he is very open to working with us to get someone onboard and trained to be our new operator or continue acting as our operator. He seems very educated and capable of handling our needs with the plant and EGLE. I will be working closely with him to ensure ongoing compliance with our permits.

After speaking with both Wightman and our WWTP operator, I believe that we can use the UV lights. The WWTP Operator is working with EGLE to see if we could be a pilot site for a new process that would allow us to use the UV lights after applying a new chemical process called Neo Water FX300. This process would allow the WWTP Operator to avoid ferric stains on the UV bulbs. This process is expected to be approved by EGLE for trial this spring or early summer. If this doesn't work, I will recommend that we work with Wightman to apply their prescribed treatment of the UV process. Wightman has made the offer that if we try their process according to their prescription, and it doesn't work, they will refund the City the cost of UV lights.

## **DPW**

I toured the DPW facility with staff and learned about our equipment and shop. This facility is packed tight with equipment and replacement fixtures. Staff was advised to start clearing out space where clutter had been accumulating. I spoke with Justin about DPW taking on some of the outsourced work that the City has been contracting out and he felt we could take it on without any issue; this includes putting up Christmas lights at City Hall among other tasks.

## **IRP:**

I toured the IRP with staff. This is a remarkable facility. It is beautifully kept- the only issue being some water retained on the floor due to ground sloping issues. Staff indicated that we will need to rebuild well 5- this will cost roughly \$25,000. Additionally, within the next few years, the control panel will need upgrading and other wells will need rebuilding as well.

The City has a relationship with Wightman and Baker Tilly who are creating a Capital Improvement Plan as part of our Drinking Water Asset Management Grant to understand the need for upcoming improvements to the system and the need to consider rate adjustments to ensure the viability of our infrastructure as well as State mandates. We will need to discuss water rate increases as part of the upcoming budget process so that we are well prepared for the Lead Service Line Replacement Project which is currently estimated at \$6.5 mil. That said, the State has classified us as a severely overburden community which, in past years, has afforded communities similar to Hartford, large grants to help with these huge, incredibly important infrastructure projects.

## **HARTFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Mike Prince was named Chief prior to Yemi's retirement. This is allowed under the City Charter. In some communities appointments of Department Heads are recommended by the City Manager and then approved by the City Commission, this process is not outlined in the Charter or Code of Ordinances. We are working on getting Chief Prince signed up as a member with the Michigan Association of Police Chiefs and then to the new Chiefs training offered by the Association which is offered twice a year.

The Ordinance Officer resigned. A posting has been issued and we are looking for a replacement at this time. We are also looking for a part-time officer and have posted the Lieutenant position internally.

The new police cruiser has arrived and the one in the shop has been returned. Chief Prince has been having the new cruiser outfitted with the necessary equipment to make it road ready. The cruiser just returned from the shop will still need body work, but that is still being scheduled. The Bangor cruiser was returned with our appreciation.

## **ATTORNEY UPDATE**

I met with Harold Schuitmaker on several issues, including the Interlocal Fire Agreement with Hartford Township, the neighbor dispute occurring at Main/Marion, human resources issues, collective bargaining and general City issues. Mr. Schuitmaker does not work on labor issues so after discussion with and input from Mr. Schuitmaker, we will be contracting with Kotz, Sangster, Wysocki for these services.

Mr. Schuitmaker is working with the Township attorney to create an Interlocal Fire Agreement that both communities are willing to agree upon, as after the Commission met in January and approved the proposed

Interlocal Agreement, there were requested changes. As such, it was suggested and agreed upon that the attorneys work on the agreement until all parties are satisfied.

### **DDA**

The DDA met this month and reviewed the South Parking Lot project and requested an update on the 1 & 5 Main Project on hold with the Van Buren County Landbank. To date the DDA has contributed \$12,000 to the S. Parking Lot Project as part of the City's overall \$64,500 match requirement. Updates include the repaving of the S. Parking Lot, removal of the trees along Main Street; removal of the planters along Main Steet; replacement of trees along Main Street; new building address numbers for Main Street. Minutes from the meeting are attached.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Planning Commission will meet again in April due to no active business and vacations of Commission members. Plans for this year will include a comprehensive review and update of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

### **215 SHEPHARD AND 106 SOUTH CENTER STREET - FIRES**

These buildings became a blight problem after they burned down recently. The Building Inspector has issued a Condemnation order on both homes. The home at 215 Shephard is becoming unstable. We are taking proactive measures to take the structure down and will have to lien the property in an effort to recoup costs associated with these community safety measures. I have a meeting with the Landbank and hope to gain some knowledge of available blight elimination programs available to Hartford.