



CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY UPDATE

June 1, 2023

Please be advised that I will be out of the office tomorrow June 2, 2023.

I will be available by phone but out of the area.

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATES: We interviewed a candidate for the WWTP position this week. We will decide next week whether to take the next step in the application process with this candidate.

The part time officer may rejoin as a full-time officer. This will help cover shifts and allow for better coverage and additional training opportunities throughout the department.

GENERAL UPDATES

ATTORNEY: Attorney Nick Curcio will attend the Special Meeting on 7th at 2pm.

The Council will have the proposed contract available for review when Roxann returns from vacation and prepares the agenda and Council packets for distribution.

LEGAL: The City is being sued as part of the Mistrada civil case. The City is being represented by Plunkett and Cooney, as assigned by our insurance company. Discovery ends October 24th.

BUDGET & FEE SCHEDULE: As a reminder the newly approved budget and fee schedule do not go into effect until July 1.

SOUTH PARKING LOT: There was a 5-gallon bucket of oil/grease dropped on the new pavement. This caused the asphalt not to set correctly in that spot. The contractor will have to cut the spot out and fix it.

The Commission may want to consider whether it wants to pursue remedies for this issue.

CITY HALL ROOF The roofing is completed and we are waiting on the product manufacturer to inspect the roof for quality control and provide final approval.

CLARK AND LINDEN PROJECT: Neighbors to the Clark and Linden project have their fences on or believe their property lines to be affected by the new infrastructure going in at the site according to survey stakes used to outline the project area. Specifically, one neighbor built their fence on the City right of way over 15 years ago and now is facing having to take it down and move it to accommodate the addition of the sidewalk.

This neighbor feels the City should not install the sidewalk at all but inferred that if the City does decide to move forward, possibly compensate him for this loss and/or move his fence at the City's cost. He expressed that other neighbors feel they are losing property as they have always felt the City right of way to be their property and believe they should be compensated for a loss of property. This neighbor also expressed that he would like to take up a petition to not have sidewalks installed on that side of the road at all as the community's youth don't use the already available sidewalks, they use the streets.

Council may want to consider how they would like to respond to these requests.

VAN BUREN COUNTY LANDBANK AUTHORITY: The VBCLBA met last week and awarded the City a guaranteed grant to demolish the structure at 106 S Center. After the meeting, the VBCLBA Chair (Trisha Nesbitt, also the County Treasurer) emailed to say that 8% of the City's award would be allocated to the VBCLBA for administering the grant. This was not outlined in the request for proposals and the City had written into our proposal to use local administration of the grant as matching funds. I sought advice and input from Market Van Buren who is supporting the VBCLBA's application process and unfortunately, there is no way around this admin allocation. As such, the City will have \$37,260 available for the demolition and site remediation.

At that meeting, they also discussed 5 W Main. A lot of discussion centered around whether to repair or demolish the staircase. They asked if the City was more concerned about the blight or having it redeveloped sooner. I stated that the blight was an immediate concern. There was confusion about why- whether safety or blight concerns- I had emailed the Chair about the building and I clarified and stated that the City was only requesting to know *when* the work was going to be completed. They asked me if the building is dangerous. I told them I couldn't comment on that as I am not qualified. Ultimately, they decided to have the County review if it is safe and move forward to determine if they will repair or demo the stairs.

AMBULANCE SERVICES The municipalities interested in working with VBEMS met and have agreed to join the County contract for ambulance services upon individual community boards and commission approvals. Dennis Reynolds from VBEMS will be our immediate contact and he is working on hiring additional supervisors. The communities all agreed to publish a joint press release the last week on June as well as send notices with the Summer Tax Notices informing all citizens about the change in vendors and information about VBEMS' membership program. Our last day with Pride will be June 30, 2023. This has been confirmed with Pride via mail and email. The Council may need to schedule a special meeting to review and consider the VBEMS agreement.

LEAD AND COPPER LETTERS Commissioner Tibbs is concerned that the City has issued notices to residents encouraging them to run their water for 5 minutes if it has been sitting for a few hours. He would like to discuss affording credit to citizens for these types of issues. He states that in the past it has been practice to credit water bills for dripping. Under the current City Ordinances, this would not be allowed. The Council may want to consider amending their Water Use and their Sewer Use Ordinances with legal counsel.

WWTP: The WWTP had to order ferric this week. As I understand, this is generally an annual purchase and costs about \$7770. This fills up the newly installed ferric tanks which were just brought online.

The UV Room and Lights have been cleaned, the bulbs have been changed and the rack is online! The team turned on the bulbs for the 1st time last Sunday and turned off the sodium biphosphate and sodium hypophosphite so that all we are feeding is ferric. The team is trying to dial in the right level of UV and ferric to ensure proper levels of contaminants. We will work with Wightman to problem solve over the next month. We will need to purchase a winching system to managing the movement of the bulb system. This will be on the June 13th Council agenda. Based on documentation reviewed indicating that the City was warned last year four times to provide stricter oversight of the Industrial Pretreatment Program with AMHAWK with regards to compliance limits for discharges to the City's sewer system, we have issued AMHAWK a follow-up to the Notice of Violation issued 5/15/23 that included a requirement to comply within 7 days by submitting a plan to investigate the reasons for ongoing high phosphorus concentrations being discharged to the sewer (after 3 consecutive high tests this year); a statement of what AMHAWK believes they are discharging into their outfall and records showing proper sludge handling for the past year as well as reminders about legal remedies allowed under the Sewer and Sewer Use Ordinances. The Council may need to consider whether to seek legal remedies and whether to take action to ensure the safety of the City's water supply should AMHAWK not work to investigate and remedy these ongoing high concentrations of phosphorus being found in their permitted outfall.

DPW: Staff within the Public Works Department have been working incredibly hard to accommodate all of the contractors currently in town on City related projects in addition to routine maintenance and projects. We are mowing lawns after appropriate notices have been sent and charging those fees back to property owners through invoices and then through liens as necessary/appropriate. Danny is requesting to purchase an attachment (bushhog) for the mower that will allow better mowing of tough areas. This request will be on the June 13 Council agenda.