



CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY UPDATE April 28, 2023

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATES

HPD: Chief Prince and I interviewed a candidate for a Full Time Officer. He has a good background and solid training record. He is also interviewing in Kalamazoo and Three Rivers. We are checking his background and hope to make a decision early next week.

I have not received any new interest in the Code Enforcement position.

DPW: Beginning Monday, we will have a full roster at the DPW again! This is great news, just in time for brush pick-up. Steven Pena started on Monday as a full-time employee with DPW.

WWTP: We interviewed 2 candidates for the WWTP laborer position. We will be 2nd interviewing one candidate on Monday at the WWTP and determining if we want to move forward with his application. He has a construction background and advanced education with an interest in learning how to become the operator over the next few years.

CLERK'S OFFICE: Alora Gatties will start on Monday, May 1 as the new part time Deputy Clerk. She is a Hartford native, graduating from KVCC this May. She will work between 10-2 or 11-3 most days.

GENERAL UPDATES

TRUTH IN TAXATION SPECIAL MEETING MAY 5 AT 2PM The City has officially been notified that we will have to hold the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing as we will be rolling up this year. As such we will be having the Special Meeting on May 5th at 2pm. It will be important to have a quorum.

MAY 9TH COUNCIL MEETING Please be advised that there are already 22 items for the Council Agenda for May 9th. Roxann is working to have the Council Agenda and Packets out by Tuesday of next week so that there is more time to review. 13 items are items that the Council has seen at least once before.

baker tilly will be attending to discuss the Water Rate Study with the Council in advance of the funding application to the State for the Lead Service Line Replacement and the Public Hearings for Utility Rate Adjustments as outlined in last year's application and commitment for the Sewer bonds. Additionally, we will be recommending setting the Public Hearing for the application for the Lead Service Line Replacement and related Water Infrastructure Projects as part of this process.

In addition to other items, the Council will also be asked to discuss several policies, the proposed budget, requesting budget adjustments and reviewing the investment reports for the quarter. The Council will also need to form a committee to review the Legal Services RFP responses.

CINCO de MAYO FESTIVAL The Cinco de Mayo Festival is next weekend. The event will kickoff with a concert at Ely Park Friday evening at 7pm. Beginning Saturday there will be food and drink vendors, street vendors, folkloric dancing, jalapeno eating contest, and much, much more. Here is link to the article published in the Tri-City Record: <https://www.tricityrecord.com/post/cinco-de-mayo-festival-happening-in-hartford-the-story-behind-the-celebration>

AMBULANCE SERVICES Notice will be issued today to Pride Care that the City will be terminating the agreement effective May 26, 2023. I provided an outline of contract breeches and mailed the letter via certified mail to the address listed in contract under Notices as well as to the address listed in the contract as the physical location.

I received a forwarded email from Dr. Dommer at Bronson that stated:

As an update, I am moving a proposal to expand VBEMS coverage to our discussed areas through the appropriate channels/committees. The proforma is positive and the preliminary discussions with executive stakeholders are good. This week, the entire Bronson Board of Directors and many of the executives are at a retreat but Dennis and I will be presenting our proposal as soon as possible. I understand there is a time sensitive component, especially with Hartford. Please understand we are moving this through the Bronson bureaucracy as quickly as possible. Don't hesitate to contact me with questions.

LARGE ITEM PICK UP Large item pickup occurred on 4/27/23. A good number of residents participated. Unfortunately, not as many as in year's past. There was only 1 mattress remaining after the event, that had to be reminded to remove the item.

ELY PARK Restrooms will be open Monday and stay open for the season.

SPARK GRANT The City has been named as 1 of only 39 communities Statewide as eligible for a MDNR Spark Grant (parks and recreation). This is an amazing opportunity as it is a match-free grant that can range from \$100,000-\$1 million. Marcy from Southwest Michigan Planning Commission and Mickey Bittner from Wightman have both stated what an incredible opportunity this is for Hartford and have offered to provide assistance. The City has to control the property, it has to be a park and the idea is that should an event like COVID happen again, that people could use the area for outdoor recreation.

I have asked Mickey to put together a rough plan to install a ground-level fountain with a lighting system that would provide a water feature that could be enjoyed in the warmer months and a lightshow that anyone could enjoy year-round. Danny and I talked over appropriate locations in Ely Park and discussed the portions with the original deed restriction.

For example:

<https://aquatix.playlsi.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/special-effects-spray.jpg>

<https://dev.landscapearchitect.com/landscape-product/fountains-splash-pads/waterworks-international-inc/waterworks-international-inc>

<https://image.made-in-china.com/202f0j00KdPiZVACPjD/Floor-Dry-Ground-Music-Dance-Ground-Water-Fountain.jpg>

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/bf/06/5b/bf065b6bc0e91fb5c1f4fb846580e7a1.jpg>

MARIJUANA REGULATION: The RFP for Marijuana Vendors has been released. As a reminder, this is required under the MRTMA Initiated Law 1 of 2018 (<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Initiated-Law-1-of-2018.pdf>) Section 333.27959.4 License to operate a marihuana establishment; application; qualifications; issuance; disclosure. Which states:

If a municipality limits the number of marihuana establishments that may be licensed in the municipality pursuant to section 6 of this act and that limit prevents the department from issuing a state license to all applicants who meet the requirements of subsection 3 of this section, the municipality shall decide among competing applications by a competitive process intended to select applicants who are best suited to operate in compliance with this act within the municipality.

BUDGET & FEE SCHEDULE: I am available to discuss the proposed budget if anyone would want to come in and go over it together. We still need to meet as a Fee Schedule Committee before the budget hearing and consideration to approve the budget. I have prepared a detailed memo that reviews the City's costs associated with most items. This will be available to the Fee Schedule Committee at the meeting and then be issued to the full Council.

RESERVE OFFICER INSURANCE: I spoke with the insurance provider for Coloma and Covert this week- Berends, Hendricks, Stuit out of Grandville, MI. Many communities have been reaching out to consider their options with regards to Reserve Troops. BHS does offer insurance through the Michigan Township Participating Plan which is offered to municipalities (not just townships) in Michigan. They do offer liability insurance that covers the municipalities and their reserve programs, however, under Michigan State law, they cannot offer liability insurance that covers the actual reserve officer. So, if the reserve officer on duty, would, for example, shoot someone, That said, the reserve officer would likely be eligible for their own insurance through a provider like the NRA at a cost that they, themselves would have to bear.

They will be providing a Memo to Council offering guidance about insurance, should the Council wish to consider seeking alternatives to their current policy.

I also posed the issue to the MML's City Manager Email Listserv and communities, including Coldwater and the Village of Millford, have stated that this is the reason they have disbanded their reserve troops.

DDA: The DDA met this week and approved their budget for the upcoming Fiscal Year. They also agreed to seek expert advice on the Tax Increment Financing Act, the Tax Increment Financing Plan and the Downtown Development Plan from experts at the MML and/or MEDC.

No one on the current Board has ever had training on what is involved in being a DDA or a DDA Board Member and several members have been on the DDA Board for over 15 years.

PLANNING COMMISSION: As a reminder, there will be a 2nd reading and consideration to approve the updated Planning Commission Ordinance at the May 22, 2023 Council Meeting, as mentioned in the detailed Memo I provided at the last Council Meeting.

I am recommending this occur so that the Planning Commission can recommend Bylaws and then the Council can appoint a new member of the Planning Commission as outlined in the Michigan Planning (2008) and Zoning (2006) Enabling Acts. Again, while guidance received states that this likely does not affect the day-to-day work of the Planning Commission, the City should take proactive steps to bring their Ordinances into compliance.

SOUTH PARKING LOT: Excellent progress is being made on the South Parking lot upgrades. Today the contractor is completing the milling of the asphalt and expects to pour new asphalt next week.

BRUSH PILE: I spoke with Best Way to determine if they could accept the materials from the City's current brush pile as it sits. They consider our pile to be "trash" and explained that it would be very costly to the City to have Best Way take care of the situation as it sits right now- see attached photos.

Long-term, Best Way's Landfill in Watervliet can provide the City with passes to the Landfill for our residents and then charge the City for any Landfill passes used. They cost \$29.88/yard plus 15% fuel surcharge.

Best Way also stated that the City is more than welcome to collect brush and bring it to their composting site in Watervliet as it is collected for disposal. This would cost the City \$29.88/yard plus 15% fuel surcharge, but this is cheaper than having Best Way come to us to pick it up.

Best Way introduced me to Fred at Cornelius Farms and both entities came to the WWTP today to see the pile and offer advice and input. Best Way said it would be impractical for the City to contract with them to manage the pile. However, Cornelius Farms owns a composting facility in Paw Paw that is approved by EGLE and is interested in working with the City on our current and long-term needs. I met with the owner today and he is working up the following proposals for me:

1. Cost to remediate the current pile as it sits today- this would involve bringing in a tub grinder for a roughly a week and then hauling the product out
2. Cost to manage the brush pick up on a recurring basis- this would involve the City continuing to pick up as currently happens and having Cornelius Farms' crew come out and haul off the product at a specified interval.
3. Cost to haul WWTP sludge. It was previously thought that there was only one (1) provider of WWTP sludge hauling in Michigan. When I met with Cornelius Farms today, he asked about the City's WWTP sludge and wondered if he could offer a price to haul our sludge. As I mentioned recently, the sludge handling is over \$24,000/year. It will be interesting to see what Cornelius Farms has to offer.

SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY (SMCAA) SMCAA is offering a variety of services in Hartford (and Van Buren County. Please see the attached flyer or visit their website (<https://www.smcaa.com/programs>)

Programs include:

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| 1. Weatherization | 5. Home Repair/Rehab |
| 2. Utility Assistance | 6. Crisis Response |
| 3. Rent/Mortgage Assistance | 7. Economic Security |
| 4. Supportive Housing | 8. Food Assistance |