

Good Afternoon Everyone,

In an effort to be more communicative and open about happenings at City Hall, the City Manager's Friday memos will now be placed on the City's web page for the public to read and become more informed. Friday memos have been a great tool to communicate with City Council, recognize City staff, and keep everyone informed about issues the City Manager is working on, but it's now going public. Here's a recap of key items City Hall has been working on:

**Halloween Parade:** I attended the Adult Halloween Parade and in spite of the bad weather, it was a good time. I took the time to see how the parade was set up prior to the event and was happy to see how quickly everything was cleaned up.

**Holiday Lighting:** I met with members of the lighting committee and the DPW Director to go over the upcoming holiday season setup. It's good for me to hear about the process, ask questions, and understand staff involvement in the process. It's good for me to look at how these activities work from a fresh perspective and give constructive feedback. The lighting committee hopes to have the trees installed and decorated by November 21<sup>st</sup>. Garland, wreaths, and banners will also be installed at that time. We hope to be able to extend the holiday décor further west on Center Street down to the Root Beer Barrel.

**Election:** The election has been big news in Douglas for the past few weeks. Several news channels have approached the City for interviews or comments about the write in candidates. The City Clerk has been taking the lead on the discussion about the election process.

**Public Accuracy Test:** The City clerk held a public accuracy test of the election equipment this week in preparation for the November 5th election and the test was good.

**MCACA MiniGrant:** The City has been awarded a Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs grant in support of the Downtown Development Authority's goal of bringing live performances to downtown Douglas during the summer. The grant amount was for \$4,000 and will have to be matched with in-kind contributions from the City in the form of staff support, accounting, and DPW staff time.

**Director's Meeting:** Tuesday the City Manager and Department Heads had their regularly scheduled Director's meeting. I generally follow the same format: Discuss items from past council meeting, discuss items for the next council meeting agenda, round table discussion, and project updates.

**BS&A Software:** On Thursday, the City Planner sat through a demonstration of BS&A community development software. The City already uses BS&A software for accounting and we are able to add modules to our software. The community development software would make the City Planner more efficient with site plan reviews, code enforcement, and notices. We will also be looking at adding the cash receipting module and the timesheet module in the future. I've used most of these software packages in other municipalities and BS&A really does provide a good product that can make the municipal operation more uniform and efficient.

**Root Beer Barrel:** We are working with the Friends of the Root Beer Barrel on the winterizing process. We've heard that wrapping the barrel will protect the finish and we are looking at options. It's in our best interest to protect the structure to minimize long term maintenance costs.

**Council Chamber Cameras:** New cameras and recorders were installed in the Council Chambers this week. The old equipment was unreliable and of very poor quality. The new equipment will also provide another camera angle for speakers to be videotaped. The old setup was only one camera and would record the back of the speaker's head. Once we get the recording process nailed down, we will post those videos on-line.

**Active Shooter Training:** Corporal Warsen attended an active shooter training this week. I hope to have her look over municipal buildings and provide some feedback based on what she learned and perhaps provide a presentation to City Council in the near future.

**Playground:** The Playground Committee met this week. They continue to raise funds to replace the playground equipment at Schultz Park and Beery Field—both public parks. They have already received a donation from the Cousins Foundation for \$15,000.

**Tri-Community Manager's Meeting:** I attended what we are calling the Tri-Community Manager's meeting this Tuesday. I met with Kirk from Saugatuck, Griffin from the Township, and Daryl from Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water. The main topic of discussion was the project master list I've been developing for the City of Douglas and talking about understanding each municipalities capacity to execute the number of priorities given our staffing resources. I also presented a priority model that I've developed which helps me determine where to allocate staff resources when there are competing priorities. While this is only our second meeting, once we get more established and functioning better, we plan to invite more community leaders to join us. Our next topic of discussion will be about public utilities.

**Felker Subdivision Utilities:** On the topic of utilities, I met with our City Engineer, City Planner, and a resident in the Felkers neighborhood who has owned property for quite some time and has been planning to construct a home in Felkers. We presented her with a solution that will permit her to connect to public utilities if she can obtain the proper environmental permits.

**Allegan County Leadership Conference:** On Wednesday I attended an all day leadership conference hosted by Allegan County. This year's topic was all about economic development. I was very impressed with the line-up of speakers. We had a speaker from Perrigo Drugs, Gun Lake Tribe Investments, United Way, Housing Next, Michigan Agri-Business Association, and Lakeshore Advantage. I picked up on multiple themes about housing shortages, consumer choices driving new markets, availability of workforce, and cost of living.

**Lakeshore Drive Contingency Planning:** On Thursday, I sat in on a conversation about erosion along Lakeshore Drive in the township and emergency planning in the event that erosion effects the ability to get emergency services into the residential areas. The township is working with Allegan County Emergency Management to develop a contingency and communication plan.

**Tree Board Meeting:** Friday I attended a tree board meeting. We reviewed a list of dead / dying trees, site distance issues, and tree trimming need for trees located within the right-of-way. Next steps will be to develop an approved right-of-way tree list for the City, develop a clear vision standard, and develop a right-of-way permit for tree planning to ensure the appropriate trees are planted in the right-of-way—away from underground and overhead utilities.

**Walk About:** I've been attempting to walk around town and meet residents and merchants as time permits. Generally, I make an attempt on Friday's to take a walk and meet and greet residents and business owners. Today I met the owners of the new pet boutique and the owners of Center Stage Salon.

**66<sup>th</sup> Street:** I spoke today with a resident on 66<sup>th</sup> Street in reference to the City owned property. There continues to be concerns about drainage, but overall the residents are pleased that we are being open and communicative with them. In response to the drainage concerns, I've scheduled a meeting with the City Engineer and the residents on 11-6-19 at the site.

**Council Meeting:** The next City Council meeting will be held on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.. New business on the agenda is ChargePoint car charging station at Beery Field, speed study presentation by the engineer, lead and copper service line inventory agreement, and repayment of DDA overpayments.

**Events:** Saugatuck Brewery is holding their annual Barrel Aged Bootleg Bash from 1:00 – 4:00 on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

That's all I have for this week.

Rich LaBombard  
City Manager