



The Village of Friendliness – Since 1870

This is the City Manager's week in review for the week of December 12, 2022.

State Rep. Joey Andrews – The mayor and mayor pro tem, along with other local elected officials, met with State Representative Joey Andrews this week. Mr. Andrews is meeting with communities in his district to understand what the needs of the communities are and seeking to understand how he can best be of service. His time and attention was much appreciated by all who participated in the meeting.

Film Scout – A location scout for a film called Holland, Michigan was in the area looking for locations for a movie currently under production in Nashville. I understand there are some notable actors starring in the film.
<https://www.hollandsentinel.com/story/entertainment/local/2022/06/17/report-amazon-studios-nicole-kidman-working-thriller-called-holland-michigan/7663847001/>

CVB Board Meeting – I attended the Convention and Visitor's Bureau Board meeting where the board received an update from each of four municipalities before reviewing their marketing efforts. In addition, the board discussed two grant opportunities. One would be in support of events to increase tourism particularly during the shoulder season, and one for local governments to apply for to fund projects that would meet the objectives of the CVB. I will work on a list of project ideas in the coming months while the CVB finalizes details about the grant application process.

Salary Study – Using data from the Michigan Municipal League, I studied four positions to check how the City's wages are in comparison with the salaries paid by other communities. While the data is valuable, not all communities participate in the study, so the results can be interpreted in various ways.

Credit Card Policy Training – A training session for employees assigned municipal credit cards was conducted. The training reviewed the policies and procedures for card holders and card users. All in attendance signed off acknowledging their participation. More training will be coming soon on the following topics (freedom of information, document retention, and non-discrimination and harassment).

Blue Star Trail Grant – The tri-communities have heard from MDOT that they are the recipient of a conditional commitment award in the amount of \$1.34 million to complete the construction of the Blue Star trail from Douglas to Saugatuck Township. The City of Saugatuck also announced they are the recipient of a \$300,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Development Project fund that will also be dedicated to the construction of the Blue Star Trail.

Roundabout – I learned that the survey and engineering work have started for a planned roundabout at the intersection of Blue Star Highway and Old Allegan Road. Construction is planned for 2025 using \$2.2 million of federal funds. Loathed or loved, the improvements to the intersection will reduce accidents.

Drinking Water Asset Management Grant – The City was informed that they are the recipient of the DWAM grant from EGLE in the amount of \$349,500. The City originally applied for \$425,000 and after refining the costs, EGLE lowered the amount of the award, but we're still very fortunate to receive as much as we did. The funds will be used

to field survey water service lines throughout the Douglas community. The information gathered will help us understand the true cost to replace lead or lead containing water service lines in the City. Another benefit is that we will gather sufficient information to use as a foundation for a water rate study.

Public Art – Another sculpture is proposed to be purchased and donated to the City of Douglas using private funds. I’m working with Maryjo Lemanski to follow the public art policy and the police department grounds have been identified as the best location for the installation. The public art policy provides guidance for the City to acquire and display artwork throughout the City on municipal property. A stainless-steel sculpture called “Pyramid” by artist Rado Kirov is intended to be acquired for the public art collection. Ms. Lemanski was instrumental in coordinating the procurement and installation of the Native American artist Jason Quigno sculpture called “Seven Grandfathers” at the History Center. The Quigno sculpture is owned by the City but displayed on History Center property by written agreement.

That is all I have for now. Have a wonderful weekend.

Rich LaBombard
City Manager