



The Village of Friendliness – Since 1870

This is the City Manager's week in review for the week of February 27, 2023.

DDA Meeting – The rescheduled meeting of the Downtown Development Authority was held on Wednesday and the following are business items:

- Reviewed the Draft TIF plan and reviewed the approval process
- Reviewed budget priorities for FY 23-24
- Approved an amended agreement with Chips Groundcover to provide holiday lighting and made a recommendation to City Council to support the lighting.

Dredging Funds – The biggest news of the week is the announcement from Representative Huizenga's office that the effort lead by the three communities of Saugatuck Township, Saugatuck, and Douglas was successful in securing \$895,000 to dredge the Kalamazoo River channel. The Army Corps of Engineers will use the funds to secure a contractor to complete the work in the spring once the appropriate environmental window is identified to protect spawning fish. Wednesday, the three local municipal managers met with representatives of Huizenga's office on site to talk about emergency dredging of the channel. By chance, the Army Corps of Engineers contacted a representative during our meeting and offered up the funds to complete the dredging. Fortunate coincidences do happen. However, securing federal funds in the future will not be guaranteed and the Corps is looking at the type of harbors it will maintain. The dramatic siltation of the channel highlights a funding need independent of the federal government to maintain the waterway. The managers will begin to discuss revenue generating opportunities to fund future maintenance needs.

Budget Workshops – Staff have been working on getting budget workshops developed for the next fiscal year. The first budget workshop with City Council will be on March 6 at 6:00 pm.

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

Rich LaBombard
City Manager

Huizenga Helps Secure Much Needed Dredging Funds for Saugatuck, Douglas

Washington, March 1, 2023

Today, Congressman Bill Huizenga (MI-04) announced his office helped secure \$895,000 in critical funding from the Army Corps of Engineers to ensure Saugatuck will be properly dredged for the upcoming summer season. The Army Corps of Engineers publicly released their [updated FY2023 operations and maintenance work plan](#) yesterday.

“Harbors and rivers serve as major sources of economic activity for the communities along the Lakeshore,” **said Congressman Bill Huizenga.** “I am happy to share that the communities of Saugatuck and Douglas will have the resources needed to dredge the harbor and portions of the Kalamazoo River. This will help the summer tourism season reach its full potential while also strengthening the local small business economy for residents and visitors to enjoy! I want to thank the Corps for continuing their productive relationship to ensure priorities along the Great Lakes are met.”

“The Saugatuck harbor area is one of the premier boating areas in the Great Lakes and we’re grateful for the quick action taken by Congressman Huizenga’s office with the Army Corps of Engineers,” **said Saugatuck City Manager Ryan Heise.**

“Today’s news also demonstrates the strong and growing cooperation within the tri-community area of Saugatuck, Saugatuck Township, and Douglas, along with our partners in Allegan County. By working together we will continue to preserve our waters and protect this important economic driver of our communities.”

“Losing direct access to Lake Michigan would have been devastating for the Saugatuck/Douglas seasonal economy. When our office was made aware that unusually heavy soil deposits in the River Mouth posed a serious safety hazard for boats traveling through the Channel, we immediately sounded the alarm bells. Through the cooperative efforts our local communities and fast response from our federal representatives, Summer 2023 will be saved here in Saugatuck/Douglas,” **said Daniel DeFranco, Saugatuck Township Manager.**

Congressman Huizenga has been a bipartisan leader in holding the federal government accountable to lakeshore communities for its promises regarding harbor dredging. Huizenga has also been a leader in the bipartisan effort to fully restore the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. In 2020, Huizenga helped increase the percentage of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund dollars that go to the Great Lakes. The funding for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund is paid by shippers utilizing ports on the Great Lakes and across our nation’s coasts.