



The Village of Friendliness – Since 1870

This is the City Manager's week in review for the week of March 6, 2023.

Blue Star Bridge Navigation Lighting – The design is completed for the Blue Star Bridge navigation lighting project being coordinated among the three communities of Douglas, Saugatuck, and Saugatuck Township. The bids are being advertised and we anticipate the selected bidder will go to the Douglas City Council on April 17th for acceptance. The Saugatuck City Council and Saugatuck Township Board will have to accept the bid as well before the project can be officially awarded. Once awarded, the contractor will provide us all a schedule to complete the work.

Budget Workshop #1 – Staff and City Council met to go over the first of at least four budget workshops to start the capital budget planning for the next fiscal year. This week's workshop focused on utility projects and public infrastructure. The feedback received by City Council will be incorporated into a project ranking system at the end of the workshops with the highest priority projects receiving funds allocated to complete. We've used this process for the last several years and it seems to work well for the City Council and staff to have organized discussions.

City Council Meeting – The regular meeting of the City Council was on Monday evening and City Council approved the following items:

- Community Pride Event for June 3rd-4th
- 12th Annual Lakeshore Harvest Bike Ride for September 16th
- Erin Go Bark People and Pet Parade for March 18th
- 22-23 Mill and Overlay Road Projects for \$137,383 -
 - Pave portions of East Wiley Road to Schultz Park Drive
 - Pave East South Street from Main Street to Water Street
 - Pave Randolph Street from Spring Street to Water Street
- Prioritized list of Water Street solutions to address speeding and safety concerns
- Baker Tilly Water Rate Study for \$10,500 to be reimbursed by a grant fund

Gateway Signage – This week I met with a gentleman interested in working with the DDA on a solution for the gateway signage located at Blue Star Highway and Center Streets. The gateway sign may need some modification to incorporate more design elements to direct visitors to the downtown. The DDA is working on relocating the sign out of the public right of way.

Employee Healthcare – The City's benefit provider met with City staff about healthcare options for the upcoming fiscal year. Every year at this time, staff meet to learn about new products and pricing for benefits. City staff are investigating the opportunity to get into a healthcare pool made up of municipalities and school districts to help reduce the cost of employee benefits.

Interviews – This week we held interviews for candidates who applied for the Director of Public Works position as well as the Planning and Zoning Administrator positions.

Blue Star Trail Meeting – The Blue Star Trail engineering firm C2AE held a meeting this week to go over initial conversations about design of the trail extension starting in Douglas and extending into Saugatuck Township.

Planning Commission – The PC met this week and discussed revisions to the sign ordinance and bylaws. They also directed staff to engage consultants to complete a traffic study review and review of an environmental study for the Forest Gate project. The next Planning Commission meeting is on April 20th.

Community Energy Management Grant – Staff was successful in their application to EGLE for an energy grant to make improvements to the HVAC and interior and exterior lighting at the Police Department. The grant in the amount of \$19,650 requires no match.

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

Rich LaBombard
City Manager