



## **City of the Village of Douglas Administration Review Week of February 19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

**415 Wiley Road:** At the Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, City Council Workshop, the City administration was directed to resubmit public requests for proposals/bids for both the rehabilitation of the building, and options should the City demolish the property and build a new facility on the site.

**Housing Stock:** The City administration participated in a meeting this week with individuals from around the region, to discuss the need for affordable housing stock throughout Allegan County. It is estimated that 6000 homes/apartments are needed over the next five years to meet the current demand. The Douglas City Council is discussing opportunities for affordable, attainable, and workforce housing on the City's 17-acres off Wiley Road. This could become an opportunity for our community to participate in the housing shortage in the future.

**Taft Law:** At this week's City Council meeting, the Council approved to continue working with Taft Law (environmental attorneys) to identify those responsible for contaminating the 200 Blue Star property. It is our hope that a settlement can be reached that will aid the City with our goal to clean the property up and make room for future development.

**Capital Improvements:** Please tune into the last Council meeting where you can hear presentations by the City's engineering firm, Prein & Newhof, about the state of our roads and water system, and the need to make critical investments in both areas. The meetings can be accessed by visiting the City's website at - <https://douglas-mi.municodemeetings.com/>

**Water Charges:** As part of our ongoing commitment to providing residents and businesses with reliable and high-quality water services, the City Council approved a water rate increase in November of 2023, which were reflected in the February 2024 water bills. This increase will continue to be an annual increase. Why did the City have to raise rates?

1. **Aging Infrastructure:** Much of our water infrastructure is aging, and regular maintenance and upgrades are essential to ensure the continued functionality and safety of the system.
2. **Population Growth:** The increase in population has led to a higher demand for water services, necessitating the expansion and enhancement of our current infrastructure to meet this growing need.
3. **Environmental Compliance:** There are evolving environmental regulations that mandate improvements to our water treatment and distribution systems. Meeting these standards

is essential not only for regulatory compliance but also for the well-being of our community.

4. Rationale for Capital Improvement Charges: Implementing capital improvement charges on water bills is a fair and transparent way to generate the necessary funds for these vital projects. Here are some key reasons to consider this approach:
  - a. User-Pay Principle: Charging residents and businesses for capital improvements ensures that those who directly benefit from the enhanced water infrastructure contribute to the costs associated with these improvements.
  - b. Dedicated Funding Source: Establishing a separate line item on water bills for capital improvement charges creates a dedicated funding source, earmarked specifically for infrastructure projects. This ensures that funds are allocated appropriately and transparently.
  - c. Long-Term Financial Stability: By implementing these charges, we can create a sustainable financial model that enables us to plan and execute long-term capital improvement projects without relying solely on unpredictable budget allocations.

The water increases should have been implemented incrementally, decades ago so that the City had the funding necessary to continuously make improvements to the system. These capital improvement charges on water bills are a necessary and critical step to secure the future of our water infrastructure and maintain the high level of service our residents and businesses expect. We must also ensure that we remain in compliance with state regulations.

### **Job Opening:**

Deputy Clerk – Level 1/Office Assistant

Full-Time Starting Salary \$19.00 per hour

The City of the Village of Douglas is seeking a full-time person to serve as Deputy Clerk – Level 1/Office Assistant. This is an administrative office position, provides assistance to department heads and the City Manager. In the absence of the City Clerk, the individual will be responsible for fulfilling the City Clerk functions presently prescribed in applicable State, City Charter, and City Ordinances. This person is the first contact with the public whether via phone or in person and handles clerical/administrative functions, including Planning and Zoning, Treasurer, Clerk, Assessor, Department of Public Works, and City Manager. As Deputy Clerk this individual will assist the City Clerk with elections, training election inspectors, and any employees assigned to help with Clerk functions. The candidate should be a positive problem solver with excellent communication and computer skills. Associated degree or higher preferred. For a complete list of essential job functions and requirements, visit [www.douglasmi.gov](http://www.douglasmi.gov).

Interested parties can submit their resume to Laura Kasper, Douglas City Clerk, by March 7, 2024, or until the position is filled. Please call 269-857-1438 ext. 106 with questions.

Physical Address: 86 W Center St., Douglas, MI 49406

Mailing Address: PO Box 757, Douglas, MI 49406

Email Address: [clerk@douglasmi.gov](mailto:clerk@douglasmi.gov)

**Early Voting:**

Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Last day to vote early at City Hall from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Election Day:**

Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. at City Hall

**Upcoming City Meetings:**

Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Downtown Development Authority Meeting @ 2:00 p.m. at City Hall

**City of the Village of Douglas City Council:**

Cathy North, Mayor

Randy Walker, Mayor Pro-Tem

Neal Seabert, Councilmember

Jerry Donovan, Councilmember

John O'Malley, Councilmember

Greg Freeman, Councilmember

Fran Ray, Councilmember

**City of the Village of Douglas Contact Information:**

Website: <https://douglasmi.gov/>

City Hall: 269-857-1438

Police Department Non-Emergency: 269-857-4339

Saugatuck Township Fire District Non-Emergency: 269-857-3000

Department of Public Works: 269-857-2763

Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water Authority: 269-857-2709

Saugatuck-Douglas District Library: 269-857-8241

\*For emergencies, please call 911\*