
City Manager's Report

JULY 19, 2010

Administration & Finance

➤ Assessor's Office

Attended the Kalamazoo Assessors Association meeting accompanied by the City's GIS Specialist. Shared market information and discussed new law and guideline changes from State.

Sent cover letter and survey to all taxpayers of improved residential and commercial structures lying within the 100 year flood zone. The results will allow this department to better understand the market influences on these properties.

➤ Budget and Accounting

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) was finalized and transmitted to the State Treasury Department; as well as, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

Worked on updating Capital Project tracking for FY 2011 and beyond.

Completed Bond Sale for 2010 Capital Improvement program, awarded bid for 3.53%, which is less than the 4% assumed for budgeting purposes, saving \$10,000/year in interest cost.

➤ Treasury

All BS&A property-based applications and miscellaneous receivables are now available to the public.

Delinquent Special Assessments were "rolled" to 2010 summer tax bills as permitted under City Charter using the BS&A software's capability.

➤ Purchasing and Risk Management

Seven projects were put out for bid. Seven contracts over \$100,000 were recommended to City Commission for approval; 89 purchase orders were prepared.

Community Planning & Development

➤ Planning

At the June 10th meeting, the Planning Commission voted to recommend to the City Commission to adopt the 2010 Master Land Use Plan, to approve the Rickman House Local Historic District, the expansion of the Haymarket Historic District, and the elimination of the South Burdick Local Historic District. Five site plans were processed including a parking lot expansion for Thermo Fisher Scientific in the BTR Park, a building expansion for National Products on Crosstown Parkway, a new building for the Borgess Health and Fitness Center on Gull Road, a new outdoor customer area for the Firehouse Saloon on W. Michigan, and a new building for Gladshire Townhomes on Shire Lane.

➤ Zoning

At the June 10th Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, the applicants for both requests decided to postpone their respective public hearings until the July meeting. The Board did discuss and make recommendation to appoint Nicholas Boyd to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The City Commission approved this appointment on June 21st. The Board also recovered copies of the Michigan Municipal League's updated "Zoning Board of Appeals Handbook."

➤ Anti-Blight/Dangerous Buildings

Over the past year, much of the Anti-Blight Team activities have been in support of Phase I of the federally-funded Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP1). Twenty-six blighted and dangerous houses have been demolished with another 18 under contract and ten more out for bids. The depressed economy has allowed these demolitions to be completed for approximately one-half of the cost being experienced two years ago. Over the course of this demolition initiative, nearly \$250,000 will have been paid to small, local demolition contractors, helping to stimulate the local employment. Demolition of these 54 buildings will also end their long cycle of disinvestment, deterioration, and increasing blight. The negative effect of vacant and blighted homes on surrounding property values and the drain on City resources is being replaced by opportunities for expanded yards, open space, construction of garages, and perhaps new homes.

The City is also moving forward with complete rehabilitation of seven homes using NSP1 funds. These seven homes will feature entirely new roofs, siding, insulation, electrical, plumbing, heating, interior wall, ceiling and floor surfaces with a focus on modern floor plans and amenities, low-maintenance, and energy efficiency. The homes will be available for purchase with easy terms for low and moderate income households beginning later this year. The anticipated \$600,000 payments to small, local building contractors and their subcontractors will further stimulate our economy.

➤ **Building & Trades**

In the month of June 2010 there were 175 permits issued, and \$3,781,090 in construction valuation. These figures brought year-to-date permits to 1,063 and year-to-date construction valuation of \$13,038,706.

➤ **Neighborhood Development**

The City and the Kalamazoo County Land Bank Authority recently hosted a series of Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2) meetings in the Eastside, Edison, Fairmont, Stuart, and Vine neighborhoods. Neighborhood leaders engaged in thoughtful discussions with City and Land Bank staff regarding key target areas that would benefit from NSP2 investment. The Northside NSP2 meeting is likely to be scheduled for later this summer.

In late June, staff convened a Community Development Block Grant training for non-profit organizations receiving funding in Program Year 2010. Representatives from twenty organizations attended the 2.5 hour training to understand the program rules and regulations required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Economic Development

➤ **Riverfront Area**

Staff continues to work with People's Food Co-op regarding their proposed relocation to 507 Harrison Street. A draft term sheet was presented to the BRA Projects & Finance Committee in May.

The River's Edge branding effort is complete – including logo, banners and press release. A 1,500-piece marketing mailing will be sent to a targeted mailing list this week regarding the River's Edge site. Staff worked with Arcadia Commons West and LISC to ensure that River's Edge is included in an Arcadia Commons West housing study.

Staff is working with an adjacent business regarding the possible sale of a portion of property the BRA purchased from the railroad at 505 East North Street.

Staff participated in a Rotoact brainstorming session, as this organization of young professionals is considering a volunteer project to upgrade Verburg Park.

➤ Brownfield Redevelopment

The BRA applied for the acquisition of 419 Harrison (Future's Heating) from the County Land Bank.

Staff is working with the County Land Bank regarding the possibility of acquiring the JA Richards properties using NSP funds. A Letter of Understanding between the BRA and Land Bank will likely be necessary.

A work plan for the \$3.3 million Performance Paper grant was submitted to the EPA for their review. They will have 60 days to make comments and release funding to the Department of Natural Resources and Energy.

On June 17th, the BRA approved an extension to the Development Agreement for the Metropolitan Center Project (100 Block of East Michigan Avenue) until the end of August 2010.

Staff gave a tour of possible sites to an out-of-state developer interested in Low-Income Housing Tax Credit projects, including possible live-work space for artists.

➤ Economic Development

A City Commission public hearing has been scheduled regarding a PA 198 tax abatement application received from R. H. Cross Enterprises.

PA 198 tax abatement applications have been received from Mossberg Precision Diagnostics and Parker Hannifin Corporation.

Work continues on the City Hall Energy Optimization and Demonstration Project funded by Energy Efficiency and Community Block Grant funds. Design activities have been finalized for the vegetative roof replacement and submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office for their review and approval prior to sending the project out for bid. The new chiller has been built, received and placed atop City Hall for final connection, which is currently underway. RFPs were received for the City Hall window system evaluation and design on June 23rd. The internal selection team is evaluating those submittals and will meet to make a decision on which firm to work with for this activity.

Staff conducted business retention visits with 13 companies.

Staff responded to various information requests from six business prospects interested in starting or expanding a business in Kalamazoo.

Human Resources

- The 12th Annual Employee Appreciation Celebration will be held at:

Bronson Park
Wednesday, July 21, 2010
2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Employee Appreciation committee has decided to host an all employee Ice Cream Social. We also want to show our appreciation to those employees who work 2nd and 3rd shifts, so cookies will be delivered to those employees.

We will be honoring 135 employees with milestone anniversaries of 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 years of service with the City. This is a great opportunity to formally say thank you to all of our City employees.

Information Technology

- EDEN ERP Software Upgrade

On June 18th, staff upgraded the City's EDEN application software to the latest version 5 from Tyler Technologies. The EDEN application serves the City's Core Financials, Human Resources and Payroll processes. EDEN version 5 provides improved performance for end users, offers many new features and enhancements to module applications, and complies with the support agreement under the Tyler Technologies generation of products.

Parks & Recreation

- Grants/Fundraising

On June 23rd, Friends of Recreation participated in the Kalamazoo Community Foundation's Match Day event to raise money for the Municipal Recreation Endowment Fund. More than \$450,000 was raised for over 50 agencies participating in the event. The total raised for the Recreation endowment has yet to be reported.

Parks and Recreation received two grants from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation in the amount of \$30,000 and \$10,000 for the Summer Youth Employment Program.

➤ Parks

The Public was invited to view the master plans for Blanche Hull and Milham Parks, which were based on the results of the public input meetings that were previously held. Staff will be incorporating the plans into the Parks and Recreation Five-Year Master Plan, which will require a resolution by the City Commission. The agenda item will be forthcoming.

Construction began on the Fairmount Park Improvement Project with completion expected in September.

➤ Farmer's Market

Beginning in June, the Farmers' Market is open Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays from 7:00 am to 2:00 pm. These hours will continue through October.

➤ Recreation

Summer Recreation staff took part in training which includes the City's policies; as well as, workshops in art/crafts, sports/games, reading to children, and performing arts. Training was also provided by the Department of Human Services which centered on child abuse. Life EMS provided first aide tips and representatives from the Kalamazoo Public Schools Feeding program instructed the staff on how lunches work for the summer. In addition, two staff from each site were provided CPR training.

Site Supervisors for the Mini Camps met for training and to prepare for the staff orientation and start-up of the Mini Camps. Training topics covered a variety of management issues, review of field trips and special events and the expectations of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Kik Pool opened for swim teams and lap swim on June 7th. Open swim for the general public began on Thursday, June 17th.

Great Lakes Aquatics held their annual swim meet on June 18th through June 20th. Over 350 swimmers competed in this annual event. This event draws in people to the Community from as far away as Texas and Canada.

Parks and Recreation was a partner with the Douglass Community Association for the Celebrity Baseball game held on June 27th at Mayors' Riverfront Park. Several local celebrities came together and showed off their athletic abilities on the baseball field. Greg Jennings, Little John Flowers and TJ Duckett were on hand for this fundraising event for the Douglass Community Association.

Parks and Recreation is a partner with the Kalamazoo Arts Council for the Concerts in the Park series that began on June 6th. There are ten concerts planned for this summer in Bronson Park.

➤ Youth Program & Initiatives

Winchell Elementary Coed Flag Football team received the MEEMIC Insurance Sportsmanship Trophy for the 2010 elementary flag football season. The coach and principal were included in the pizza party that was given to the team as part of the trophy presentation. Winchell became the first team to go an entire season with a perfect sportsmanship score of 240 points.

The Babysitting Class, instructed by the American Red Cross, was held at the Youth Development Center with full attendance of 15 participants. All participants received their cards; including CPR, First Aide and their babysitting certificate, for completion of the class. They also received books and information to help them in their future business.

The Writing Together program, specific for youth ages 9-12, began at the Creative Writing Camp held at Winchell Elementary. This program is offered one day per week for six weeks, and is designed to improve literacy and expand creative expression. It is being taught by O'Neal Ollie and Teri Benton-Ollie. Winchell also has 9-12 year olds going to the Book Arts program at the Kalamazoo Book Arts Center located in the Park Trades Center, where they will attend twice a week for six weeks. Participants are creating a limited-edition handmade book. They also write poetry, make paper, use the letterpress and will bind the entire edition of books. The Book Arts Workshop will culminate with a reading and show of work by the students in the gallery at Kalamazoo Book Arts Center. Each child will receive a copy of the book they helped to create.

Indian Prairie Mini-Camp, which is the Martial Arts site this year, began training in Tae Kwan Do twice a week for six weeks at the new Gukumatz Martial Arts Training Center. They also started training with Charles Parker in Judo, which will be held for five days on the camp site.

Douglass Mini-Camp, which is the Alternative Sports site this year, began Tennis Lessons with Ryan Dorner and Ryan Williams at LaCrone Park. The lessons will be held once a week for six weeks. The 9-12 year olds began bowling lessons, which are held once a week for six weeks at Airway Lanes. Disc Golf and Kayaking also began with staff from Lee's Adventure Sports and will meet once a week for six weeks.

Winchell, Woods Lake, and Douglass Summer Mini-Camp sites participated in their first of three Summer Fun Days at Upjohn Park. Staff planned tag games, dodge ball, and group games for the afternoon. After lunch, the campers spent the rest of the day at Kik Pool.

The evening program at Rockwell Park started its nine-week session. The City will be offering transportation for youth from New Horizons and the Eastside Youth Center. The program offers sports and games, arts and crafts, Wet n' Wild Fridays, and tennis lessons on Wednesdays from Ryan Williams, who works at West Hills Tennis Club.

The Future Chefs attended their first field trip to the "Can Do Kitchen". The Dough Chicks, Denise and Kara, hosted the youth in this certified kitchen for rent. The Future Chefs learned the basics of baking chemistry, created their own pizza dough from scratch, baked and ate their pizza creations and enjoyed a visit from Lucy Bland, from Water Street Coffee Joint, who talked about food entrepreneurship. Other guest speakers for the program included Janet Graham of the Blue Tigers and Dr. Carrie Young, who is a farmer and seed scientist that presented on gardens and growing; as well as, donated tomato plants to everyone. Bill Woods, an editor with the Kalamazoo Gazette, visited on the first day and wrote an article for the newspaper.

The Youth Development Center (YDC) began its summer hours on June 14th, with teen nights now on Fridays from 7-11 pm. A Dance Club is underway at the YDC for the summer months, along with Fun in the Sun, which is a program where all the ping pong tables, pool tables, cards, board games etc. get moved outside for youth to use outdoors.

Public Safety

- KDPS hosted the 2nd Annual Male Youth Leadership Academy from June 20th through June 25th. 33 young men, ages 13-16, participated in the program.
- In order to address the continued increase in burglaries, Criminal Investigation Division case assignments were redesigned to implement a Burglary Unit. The two detectives assigned to this unit will review and evaluate all breaking and entering in order to identify trends.
- KDPS conducted its 2nd Annual Citizen's Leadership Academy on June 2nd and June 3rd. 18 community leaders participated and learned about the various aspects of Public Safety.
- During June, CPO's and KVET worked weekends in an attempt to conduct proactive patrols downtown for the various festivals (Greek Fest, etc.) KDPS also conducted directed patrols for curfew violations.
- 31 methamphetamine labs have been investigated by KVET year to date.

Public Services

- Customer Services staff continues to work with new contractor for curb lawn and private property nuisance violations. Staff is also overseeing the mowing of a number of City properties which were taken over by the County in April.
- Staff continues to monitor the monthly 2010 Brush Collection program (May through October) which is picked up in coordination with bulk trash. Due to recent storms, this collection has become very popular. Weekly recycling collection continues as well.
- Customer Services staff is continuing to track collections on private properties whether they were reported by Buildings, Public Services staff, or residents identifying referral dates, collection dates, and processed invoices.
- Slocum Architects was selected from the pre-qualified architects to prepare a design to rehabilitate the exterior windows and replace the interior storm windows. A "kick-off" meeting with the architect was held on July 14th.
- The 2010 crack sealing program is complete. Field Services staff is coordinating with Engineering and Public Safety for both the 2010 Street Program and Broken Windows Program. The first Broken Windows clean up for 2010 is complete.
- Environmental Services Staff provided the new Kalamazoo River Watershed Council and the Kalamazoo River Clean-up Coalition a copy of an email from the City to the U.S. EPA that contained an additional proposed remedy (Stabilization with Containment) for consideration in the Feasibility Study for the Allied Paper site.
- The Operator/Maintainer program is being applied to Wastewater and Water employees with near identical applications. Both groups have embraced this change and we are starting to see applicable improvements in employee utilization, and less overtime. Two more employees are finishing up their initial 90 day cross training. There is one more employee that has opted into the program and will start cross training in maintenance early next month.
- General Contractor Tetra Tech was approved at the May 17th City Commission meeting. For what? Allied Mechanical contract approved \$7.3 million? A pre-construction meeting was held on June 11th. The Contractor's Project schedule is expected the week of July 5th. Options include aeration, loading, and enhanced phosphorus removal improvements. Actual on-site construction will start September 1st with access hatches to aerations tanks possibly being installed prior to.
- The NPDES application was submitted prior to the April 4th deadline. Jeff Fischer of the MDNRE has been assigned the permit renewal. He noted that the permit application was complete. EPA has still not made a decision on continuing and the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) cooperative agreement for phosphorus as of

July 1st. The City's permit draft is being held until EPA makes their decision on the TMDL. MDNRE submitted the local TMDL implementation committee for the 2010 Water Conservationist award from the Michigan United Conservation Club. The committee was selected for their many efforts to improve the Kalamazoo River and its tributaries.

- The trailway bridge project over Portage Creek at Rose Veterans Memorial Park is essentially complete. The contractor is finalizing some landscaping and site cleanup work. Despite claims of ownership of the Willard Street right-of-way by Norfolk Southern Railroad, City records show only the block between Porter and Walbridge as having been vacated. Engineering will call on the railroad to verify their claim or accede to the installation of a non-motorized trail on the north portion excepting the confirmed vacation.

Transportation

- Ridership

Fixed route ridership for the month of May totaled 175,331 passengers, or a loss of 34,830 rides (-16.5%) under May of 2009. Year to date fixed route ridership totals 1,078,155, or -13.8% under the same timeframe last year. May's demand/response service, Metro County Connect, increased by 418 rides to 10,149 passengers, a 4.3% increase.

- Diesel Fuel

Our last purchase of diesel fuel was on June 18th, for 18,000 gallons at \$2.3242 per gallon. The average cost year-to-date is now \$2.2463 per gallon versus our budgeted amount of \$2.80. Through June 18th, we have expended \$404,342 on diesel fuel.

- Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA)

Following an internal review of our consultant's routing and service recommendations, the Transportation Department is working with the KCTA in hosting a series of jurisdictional meetings to share information on the COA recommendations. The KCTA has scheduled meetings with the City of Parchment, Oshtemo Township, Kalamazoo Township, Comstock Township, the City of Portage and the Portage Chamber of Commerce in order to gather input regarding fixed route service changes recommended for those jurisdictions. The KCTA will then act on the COA recommendations at its August 26th meeting in accordance with the service agreement KCTA has with the City of Kalamazoo and the Transit Authority Board (TAB). The formal recommendations will be included in the Department's Operating and Capital Budget proposal for 2011.