

---

# City Manager's Report

AUGUST 16, 2010

---

## Administration & Finance

### ➤ Assessor

July Board of Review for taxes acted upon 129 real and personal parcels at their special session held on 7/20. Changes covered assessment years 2007-2010 and were limited to clerical errors, Principle Residence Exemptions, Hardship Exemptions and Amended Personal Property Statements.

Assessor Connie Darling and GIS Specialist Andrew Falkenberg taught three classes for the City's Code Administration Division on the use of the new Equalizer .Net Assessing Program.

### ➤ Budget and Accounting

The 2010 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report has been completed and is available on the City's website. Hard copies are available upon request.

### ➤ Pension Administration

The Annual Report has been completed and is available on the website.

Individual participant statements have been delivered to employees.

### ➤ Purchasing/Risk Management

In collaboration with City Departments bid documents were prepared and distributed through the City's website for seven purchasing projects. Contracts were prepared and awarded by City Commission for one capital improvement project and two term contracts.

The Division received the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award for the fourth consecutive year. This award is earned by meeting criteria demonstrating the Division's use of technology, innovation, productivity, and staff qualifications/professionalism.

Two separate bid projects were administered for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program's house rehabilitation program. Seven separate contracts were awarded for rehabilitation of qualifying houses at seven different addresses.

Purchasing staff are administering prevailing wages for ten construction contracts.

➤ Treasury

Renovations of the Treasury Office are nearly complete. This work should be completed by mid July. Final clean up of the office area will follow and be completed prior to the return of Treasury and Commercial Office staff on 8/9.

Summer tax bills were mailed 6/30. With the initial summer tax collections occurring while staff is located at Stockbridge, a message to taxpayers was included with the tax bills to advise them of the payment location if they planned to pay in person.

## **Community Planning & Development**

➤ Planning

At the 7/1 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission voted to recommend to the City Commission to approve a text amendment to the zoning ordinance for the Wind Energy regulations. The bicycle parking ordinance will be reviewed in September. Three site plans were processed including a new church use at 3016 Lovers Lane, improvements to Sherwood Park on Wallace Avenue, and for a vehicle and equipment sales business on Blaine Street.

➤ Housing

Three staff (2 housing inspectors and the seasonal inspector) took part in the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS) Broken Windows Project in Edison, Eastside and Northside on 7/19 and 7/20. KDPS already provided report of activity.

➤ Zoning

On 7/8, the Zoning Board of Appeals denied a use variance to utilize the dwelling at 931 E. Vine Street as a rooming house, which is not permitted in the Manufacturing Limited District. At that same meeting, the Board approved a dimensional variance for the construction of a detached garage at 131 S. Prairie Avenue. The garage proposed will be located 1.5 feet from the south side property line, where a three foot side yard setback is required in the Residential Single Dwelling District.

➤ Building & Trades

In the month of July, there were 202 permits issued and \$1,374,984 in construction valuation. These figures brought year-to-date permits to 1,330 representing year-to-date construction valuation of \$14,511,235.

➤ Neighborhood Development

In late July, staff finalized the obligation of \$1.7 million in Neighborhood Stabilization Program 1 funds (NSP1). NSP1 projects include the acquisition of over 50 foreclosed properties, the acquisition of 20 vacant parcels within the Marketplace Plat in Edison, the rehabilitation of seven houses, the demolition of over 50 blighted structures including an abandoned gas station, and the construction of a public parking lot. NSP1 projects are concentrated in the Eastside, Edison, and Northside Neighborhoods and are expected to be completed by the fall 2012.

## **Economic Development**

➤ Riverfront Area

Staff met with One Way Products to follow up on plans for them to acquire the western edge of 507 Harrison for future development. We are gathering further information and will meet again to discuss their interests.

Staff is working with the City Engineer regarding reconciliation of interests along Willard Street for a railway, the People's Food Co-op, One Way Products and the railroad.

A 1,500 postcard targeted mailing was sent out regarding the River's Edge site. There was a low response, due to the continued poor market.

➤ Brownfield Redevelopment

At its July board meeting, the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) approved a purchase and redevelopment agreement with the People's Food Co-operative of Kalamazoo for redevelopment of the BRA-owned property located at 507 Harrison Street. In addition, staff has been assisting the People's Food Co-op with their application process related to a potential Michigan Business Tax credit through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation for 12.5% of eligible activities; as well as, a BRA loan application process in an amount of \$100,000 for project-related costs. A site kick-off event was held on 7/29.

BRA also approved expenditures of up to \$530,000 for the relocation of public and private utilities and the construction of new ingress/egress for F.M. Envelope Company as part of the Performance Paper project.

➤ Economic Development

A PA 198 application from R. H. Cross Enterprises was approved by the City Commission on 7/6.

Design activities have been finalized for the vegetative roof replacement for City Hall, and approval of the design has been received from the State Historic Preservation Office. The project is scheduled to be let out for bid in early August.

The new chiller has been built, received, and placed atop City Hall for final connection, which is currently underway.

Request for Proposal were received for the City Hall window system evaluation and design, a bid award was made to Slocum Architects, and a design kick-off meeting was held on 7/14.

Staff is working with two possible Small Business Revolving Loan Fund applicants.

Staff conducted business retention visits with six companies.

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

## **Human Resources**

- No report for this month.

## **Information Technology**

- Staff upgraded the City's tape backup solution. This included upgrading the actual backup software; as well as, a new physical tape backup system. The new solution allows for more versatile, faster file, and system restorations. Faster backup completion times allowing for greater amounts of data to be captured on a nightly basis.

## **Parks & Recreation**

- Grants/Fundraising

On 7/23, Friends of Recreation participated in the Kalamazoo Community Foundation's Match Day event to raise money for the Kalamazoo Municipal Recreation Endowment Fund. The gifts to the Municipal Recreation Endowment Fund generated \$940 in matching dollars, which will be deposited into the spendable side of the endowed fund. A total of \$1,880 was raised for the endowment.

On 7/23, the Sunrise Rotary participated in the Kalamazoo Community Foundation's Match Day event to raise money for the Rose Park Veteran's Memorial Fund. The gifts to the Memorial Fund generated \$836.75 in matching dollars, which will be deposited into the spendable side of the endowed fund. A total of \$1,673.50 was raised for the endowment.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Friends of Recreation Golf Classic was held 7/16 at Eastern Hills Golf Course. Over 65 golfers participated in this year's event. We also had tremendous support from over 80 businesses that donated door prizes, auction items and hole sponsorships. The event was successful, bringing in over \$11,000 in revenue. A complete expense/revenue report will be made once all invoices for expenses have been received. The proceeds from the event will be used to help fund the Youth Development Center in 2011.

Parks and Recreation received a donation of \$10,000 from the Leon Beeghly Fund for this year's Summer Youth Employment Program. This money was made possible through the generosity of Ms. Lucile B. Patrick and the Kalamazoo Foundation.

➤ Parks

On 7/17, staff had a booth set up at the 2010 Woofstock event, held at the Arcadia Creek Festival Site. This event, which was sponsored by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals (SPCA), was held to raise funds for the SPCA of Southwest Michigan, to help fund rescue, rehabilitation and responsible adoption of homeless pets. Many vendors and businesses were present to advertise their products. Staff promoted the redevelopment and off-leash area for dogs being constructed at Fairmount Park.

The Fairmount Park Improvement project is under construction, with approximately 25% of the work being completed to date. The project is expected to be completed in September.

The Kalamazoo Sunshine Rotary has raised the necessary matching funds for the Rose Park Lighting project and construction documents can now be completed. The construction is expected to be completed by this fall.

Recent storms have caused quite a bit of storm damage in the parks and crews continue to clean up the debris.

The Kalamazoo Kings are more than half way through the season, with only 32 games remaining. Twelve of the remaining games will be played at Mayors' Riverfront Park.

➤ Farmer's Market

The Kalamazoo Farmers' Market continues to be busy and is approaching peak season, where many types of goods will be available for purchase.

➤ Recreation

Concerts in the Park were held every Sunday throughout the month of July, in Bronson Park at 4:00 pm. This is a partnership with the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo.

➤ Youth Program & Initiatives

The Future Chefs Program has been busy this month with a visit to Webster's Restaurant, where Chef Mathew Green provided a day of training in service etiquette and restaurant work. He covered serving tables and proper manners. After the training, participants and staff were treated to lunch. They also visited Food Dance Café, where they spent time with Chef Rob Hammond, who taught the group how to cook creatively and also served the group lunch.

The Future Chefs went to Abbott Farm in Otsego for instruction on earth-friendly packaging and what it means to have a family farmstead. The Abbott's raise goats and chickens; as well as, tend a full garden, bee hives and more. The Future Chefs made mozzarella cheese from scratch, learned about bees and saw honey extraction. They also learned about all of the products that the Abbott's make from their farm.

Two mini-camp sites went to the Nature Center for special programs. Upjohn, the Nature site, focused on prairies and the Oregon Trail. Douglass, the Water Wonderland site, learned on wetlands, streams and ecology. Both mini-camps visited the Butterfly Garden and House and the barn with young farm animals; as well as, walked the trails and saw exhibits at the Interpretive Center.

Magician Alan Kazam performed at Woods Lake Performing Arts Camp and provided six dates of instruction in magic with the youth on site.

The Writing Camp at the Winchell site completed the Book Arts Program for ages 9-12, with a special showing at their location in the Park Trades Building. They showed off their handmade paper and bound books. The books contained poetry and stories they wrote during the six week program. They also completed the Writing Together Program with a printed book of poetry.

The Nature camp site at Upjohn Park went to Binder Park Zoo for a day of fun with the animals.

Lee's Adventure Sports has provided six kayak lessons, free of charge, to both the Douglass Alternative Sports Camp and Indian Prairie Martial Arts camp sites. The lessons were held at Woods Lake this summer.

On 7/19, the Indian Prairie Martial Arts camp site was able to attend the movie Karate Kid at the Rave Theater. The Rave graciously started the movie at 10:00 am for this group only and offered the City a special price for the campers.

All mini-camps were able to participate in Fun Days at Upjohn Park. During the fun days, campers are placed in age-appropriate groups and participate in games that the staff has organized for them. Each age group is involved in dodge ball games, tag games, and scooter games. All the groups ate lunch together and then went to Kik pool in the afternoon.

Plays in the Parks, an extension of the Act Out program that introduces youth to theatre and acting, completed four performances of "Beauty is a Beast." The performances were held at Frays Park, Bronson Park, Mayors' Riverfront Park and the Youth Development Center, with the final performance to be presented at Studio 246 during the September Art Hop. Fourteen youth, ages 7-14, performed and created their own costumes and props for the plays.

The July Art Hop took place on 7/9, at the Youth Development Center, with art by campers from the summer mini-camps and the Art Time program. Work was presented in a variety of media that represented the theme of indigenous peoples and ancient cultures. These items included handmade paper with youth names done in hieroglyphics, a giant paper mache' Viking Boat, a simulated cave with cave paintings, ceramic wind chimes and door hangers made with leaf prints. Twenty five people were in attendance.

On 7/17, local youth skateboarders who utilize the Upjohn Skate Park took a field trip to Holland, to test their skills on another Skate Park. The trip is designed for local skaters, who may not have access to visiting other skate parks; an opportunity to experience the thrill of skating at different parks.

Miranda's Park Party was held on 7/22 at Upjohn Park with over 4,000 visitors. The party provided free lunch, ice cream, carnival rides and great prizes for kids and families. Public Safety played an important role in providing the opportunity to meet and greet the officers; as well as, tour a fire truck, police car, and bomb squad truck. Life Ambulance provided a unit for people to walk through.

The Hershey Track & Field State Meet was held on 7/9 at Holt High School in Holt Michigan. Over ten area youths, ages 9-12, participated in the standing long jump and 4 x 100 meter relay race. A complete list of names and events may be obtained at the Parks & Recreation Department.

## **Public Safety**

- Staff held the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Broken Windows/Blight Operation. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase, crews targeted three additional neighborhoods and 34 streets were targeted, 54 junk autos were tagged, 52 code enforcement violations were located along with 30 housing code violations.
- Criminal Investigation Division has been aggressively working to solve the recent homicide in the Edison neighborhood. Detectives have been canvassing the area, reviewing videos and talking to witnesses. The suspect has been identified and

arrested for the murder and shooting of two people. Dallas McDade was arraigned on 7 counts including open murder. Our goal is to continue to provide thorough and efficient service to the victim and their family.

- Patrol is conducting numerous directed patrols in the Edison area due to neighborhood complaints. Several arrests, citations, and citizen contacts are made daily as a result of the directed patrols.
- 33 methamphetamine labs have been investigated by KVET year to date.

## **Public Services**

- Nuisance violations oversight continues along with special clean up projects, (Building Blocks, Broken Windows, YOU).
- Monthly brush collection program continues in coordination with bulk trash collection and weekly recycling.
- Crack sealing program is complete. Coordinating with Engineering and Public Safety for 2010 Street Program and Broken Windows Program. First broken windows clean up is complete.
- Staff is working on a draft letter to the new EPA Region 5 Administrator regarding the Allied Paper Site, noting the City's involvement and various remedy alternatives.
- The first Secondary Aeration monthly construction meeting for the removal of phosphorus was held on 8/10. The General Contractor has begun to order equipment for the project and construction is set to start the first week in September. Construction options include aeration, loading, and enhanced phosphorus removal improvements. Electrical work for equipment and the hatches to aerations tanks may be installed prior to 9/1.
- Gate valves are being exercised in front of 2010 construction projects. Gates are also being exercised generally in the northside neighborhoods.
- The evening of 7/26, Public Safety Chief Jeff Hadley was informed via the Kalamazoo County Sheriff that a major crude oil spill had occurred near Marshall in Calhoun County. Over the next several days, the magnitude of approximately 1,000,000 gallons of crude oil spilled into the Kalamazoo River was assessed. Public Services staff took immediate steps to alleviate impacts on City of Kalamazoo infrastructure by shutting down Well Pump Station #39 on the south side of Morrow Lake. While current impacts are still being assessed, it appears that no appreciable amounts of oil have reached beyond Morrow Dam. Staff continues to monitor the situation closely to ensure clean up activities alleviate any potential impacts on City infrastructure.

## Transportation

### ➤ Ridership

Fixed route ridership for the month of June totaled 179,874 passengers, or a loss of 24,273 rides (-11.89%) under June of 2009. Year to date fixed route ridership totals 1,258,029, or -13.52% under the same timeframe last year. June's demand/response service, Metro County Connect, decreased by 79 rides to 10,146 passengers, a -0.77% decrease.

### ➤ Diesel Fuel

Our last purchase of diesel fuel was on July 29, for 18,000 gallons at \$2.1645 per gallon. The average cost year-to-date is now \$2.23 per gallon versus our budgeted amount of \$2.80.