



Office of the City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer
Monthly Administrative Report
September, 2015

The month of August continues to be a very busy summer for the Police Department. On August 4th the Police Department again participated in the annual National Night Out festivities. Block parties took place across the City, many of which saw a very strong turnout. The strong showing and support from our residents truly show their interest in making Port Huron a safer place to live. Also in August, the City hosted the Offshore Power Boat Races and assisted in patrolling the unsanctioned but wildly popular St. Clair River float down event. Both events were well attended. The float down causes additional concerns to public safety officials by its very nature of fast moving water, alcohol and warm temperatures. Citizens along the water on occasion complain of trespassing and disorderly behavior. This year officers responded to several calls stemming from the float down, and ultimately made seven arrests as a result.

Continuing on in August with Operation Neighborhood Take-back, the Police Department was in full swing working the neighborhoods utilizing Federal Jag Grant funding to put dedicated officers directly into areas experiencing high crime problems. The operations have been very successful and the feedback being received from citizens has been positive.

Upcoming September events include the 911 ceremony to be held at the flag plaza on September 11th and the Law Enforcement Torch Run on September 12th. The Torch Run proceeds go directly to the Special Olympics. The run, beginning at 9am in front of the MOC building, is open to the public.

Call for service in July increased 4% from June 2015 and decreased 8% from July 2014. Increases from June 2015 were noted in domestics (+22%), assaults (+35%), disorderly persons (+77%) and malicious destruction of property (+43%). Decreases were noted in animal complaints (-13%) and neighbor problems (-27%). Numbers are not available for August at the time of this report.

The DPS-Fire Division responded to the following fires since last our last report. A resident at 1720 Military Street suffered smoke inhalation as a result of a fire caused by smoking while on home oxygen. Damage was limited to the floor and chair the occupant was sitting in. Fire crews responded to a small fire inside a vehicle in the 500 block of Union Street. A fire believed to have been intentionally set caused extensive damage to an apartment at 1916 Nern Street, #117, in the Delhut Housing complex. No injuries were reported and fire crews confined the fire to the apartment of origin and prevented further loss to the multi-family dwelling. Rewards are currently being offered for information that leads to a suspect(s) involved in the setting of this fire. A resident was rescued by a Police Department Sergeant from a fire in his home at 2923-26th Street. The fire was accidentally caused by combustibles too close to a lightbulb. The occupant attempted to extinguish the fire until he was unable to exit due to being overcome by smoke. He sustained burns to his back and legs and smoke inhalation. He was treated in hospitals in Port Huron and in Detroit prior to being released. The sergeant was treated for smoke inhalation and released later that day. Electrical cords in a basement used for a legal marijuana grow operation

caused a fire at 918 State Street. Damage was limited to the basement walls and contents around the area of fire origin.

The Fire Division recognized the promotion of Firefighter James Hayes to the rank of Lieutenant as we move forward with reorganization of the department upon the August 1st retirement of four staff. The Fire Division kept busy with special events this month including participating in the National Night Out festivities around the City, in addition to providing medical support boats and coordination of rescue assets for the international power boat races on Sunday, August 9th. The following Sunday, August 16th, saw several thousand participants in the annual float down. The Fire Division in coordination with the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guard vessels, Port Huron Police, and several assets from surrounding fire and marine law enforcement agencies, provided rescue stand-by and assistance during the event that lasted in excess of 9 hours. There were no drownings or catastrophic injuries at this year's event.

City Manager Freed, Chief Reaves and Operations Chief Mainguy concluded our meetings with City council to provide progress reports on the Fire Division. Meetings were also held by administration with Tri-Hospital EMS as well as Central Dispatch as we continue to evaluate and monitor the progress of our medical call response matrix.

Fire Marshal Warren has begun his annual inspection of schools throughout the City prior to the return of students. He also continues to monitor the progress of several projects around the community including Baker College Student Housing, the Holiday Inn Express and the expansion at McLaren Port Huron Hospital.

As of August 26th, the Code Enforcement Unit had 153 new complaints opened and collected \$2,055.00 in outstanding debt owed this month; \$290.00 of which was paid from collection efforts Tom Reilly pursued on our behalf. He was also given another \$2,161.85 in debt we were unable to process as Single Lot Assessments because of changes in ownership. The Administrative Hearing Bureau had 87 cases this month. On August 4th, Code Enforcement attended National Night Out and visited citizens at a dozen different block parties.

Code Enforcement finally had success at 2530 Conner Street after filing a Circuit Court motion against the land contract holder/owners for scrapping. The land contract holders took possession of the property, hauled off all the debris, planted grass, and added a gravel driveway. We sent Dunn Paper a letter asking for cooperation in improving their landscape/building. The letter was well received and they are providing us a six month maintenance plan addressing issues we presented to them. Audrey Coats of 1304 White Street went to Probate Court where she was granted a temporary guardian to help meet her needs. An inspection of her house has been scheduled. In September, we hope to have some progress in regards to William Kidd's home at 1429 Bancroft Street, as Adult Protective Services is now involved. We also hope to get a vacant blighted lot at 28th & Moak cleaned up by the County who owns it, as it is what our residents are forced to look at each day.

Beyond our normal day-to-day activities, the Clerk's office continued the task of inputting missing cemetery record information. We also worked on improving the maps and lists

used annually by volunteers to place American Flags on veteran graves prior to Memorial Day. We have also processed numerous FOIA requests from Phil Risner.

DPW staff responded to weather events (in August) which were threatening to close the mouth of the Black River Canal by sand. Using in-house labor and equipment, equipment operators worked to widen the mouth of the canal to ensure that it remained open to navigation.

DPW staff also began the process of repair and replacement of brick pedestrian crossings on Main Street (Huron) at Quay and Grand River. Members of the Streets division in Engineering trained this month to effect brick repair in the roadway, allowing this needed work to be completed using in house labor and equipment.

Engineering Staff continues to work on the design and processing of construction documents for the improvements to Glenwood from Pine Grove to Fort Street, 20th Street from Dove to Beard, Beers Street from Michigan to Glenwood, Michigan from Beers to Glenwood, Reid from Electric to 16th Street and the East Quay Parking Lot. Work also continued on estimates and documents for refurbishing of the front two elevators in the MOC building, the HVAC system in the MOC, the roof at the Carnegie Museum, the electrical system at the Carnegie Museum and for an HVAC maintenance contract at the Carnegie Museum.

The Engineering staff continued to assist the Recreation Department in processing contract bid documents for the improvements at Lakeside Park. Lakeside Park's splash pad shop drawings were reviewed. Construction is scheduled to start September 8, 2015. A preconstruction meeting for the construction of the concession stand and demolition of the existing concession stand were held.

The resurfacing contract for 10th Avenue from Garfield to Sanborn was started. Work started on the Hickory Area reconstruction project north of Sanborn. Work continues on the reconstruction project of Sanborn between Stone and Gratiot. Punch list items continue on the Nern Street CSO project and the Stone Street project from Pine Grove to McPherson. The MOC back deck project was completed.

The MOC staff continued working on the 4th floor to get it ready for the future tenants. One new parking space was created by resurfacing some concrete in the MOC garage. The bids to replace the carpet in room 408, ground floor lobby and the first floor lobby in the MOC building were processed.

The streets maintenance crews continue to perform the typical month to month duties. These include repairing pot holes with cold patch at various locations, street sweeping, crack sealing. Crews did road closures and cleanup activities related to the special events. Grass cutting is currently in progress at several locations. Brick paver repair is currently underway, as noted above.

The motor pool continued to perform the typical month to month duties. These include the preventative maintenance list, monthly bridge maintenance and repairing equipment. There were three major repairs on three vehicles that kept the mechanics busy.

Traffic control crews fabricated several signs for the recreation department and repaired several damaged signs. Crews also repaired and installed a light pole on Oak Hills Circle. The traffic signal at the intersection of Stone and Elmwood was re-timed to permit flashing operations overnight, from 7p.m. to 7a.m.

Utilities Services continued to perform the typical month to month tasks. These tasks include water meter reading, sewer cleaning, catch basin cleaning and assistance to the Water Office for turn-ons and shutoffs for non-payment of water bills. In addition to these tasks, the crews repaired the two MDOT catch basins on Pine Grove Avenue and one MDOT catch basin on Electric Avenue. These repairs are in accordance with the annual maintenance agreement between the City and State of Michigan. Staff investigated a complaint of a storm sewer outfall at the foot of Holland Avenue. With the current lake level, the outfall is blocked with sand. We are investigating a permanent solution to the problem. The water distribution staff was also busy assisting contractors with shutdowns as a result of new water main installation.

The Water Filtration Plant (WFP) worked with the City's concrete contractor to replace a section of pavement at the loading dock where the water haulers fill up. The previous pavement section began to fail and needed to be replaced. The WFP Superintendent attended a lab examiners meeting in Lansing to update water plants that conduct F-4 licensing practical lab exams for the MDEQ. The City received two proposals for the north effluent valve replacement project. A recommendation for this project will be forthcoming at an upcoming City Council meeting.

The Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Engineering staff met with the contractors for the Gratiot Avenue pump station project that was awarded at the June 8th City Council meeting. Based on lead time of equipment, the contractor intends to start in October. Staff also met with its consultants to discuss and plan for upcoming projects that are included in the 2015-2016 budget. The WWTP Superintendent attended MDEQ training in Lansing on the MDEQ's new web based reporting system for WWTP operations. The City received a bid for the secondary clarifier #3 repair/realignment project. A recommendation for this project will be forthcoming at an upcoming City Council meeting.

During the month of August, the Human Resources Department accepted employment applications for part-time Seasonal & Temporary Laborers and Police Cadets.

Interviews were held for the Planning Director position. A conditional offer was made pending a full background check, pre-employment physical & drug screen. We expect to have an announcement within a week and will work on a transition plan as Kim Harmer plans to retire November 1, 2015.

We continue to collect the required information from our employees and non-Medicare retirees in an effort to comply with the new mandatory IRS reporting requirements that is a provision under the Affordable Care Act. We continue to work with our I.T. Department in preparation to start transferring data to Health Decisions, Inc. The first file was transferred this week by the I.T. Department.

The H.R. Director coordinated on-site E.A.P./Crisis counseling at the Sanborn Pool for all Lifeguard staff on 8-6-15.

In recognition of a job well done throughout the year an Ice Cream Social was planned for August 26, 2015, for all City employees. The Schwan's truck visited the worksites throughout the day. All employees were welcome to enjoy a free ice cream treat.

The Planning Department continues to work with Washington HUD staff to finalize details for the Sperry project's BEDI and Section 108 Loan. HUD's internal review panel met mid-August and is making recommendation to the loan panel that HUD proceed with the project. The developers and HUD staff continue to supply each other with financial information, proformas and documents necessary to draft preliminary agreements. It is anticipated that final notifications will be in place by late October/mid-November.

We have been busy with projects such as a request for an OPRA/Brownfield for the City Flats site, McLaren Hospital expansion schedules, projects downtown and potential new investments while beginning the process for a smooth transition to a new Planning Director the first of October.

Community Development helped five new homeowners move into the City and nine additional families are awaiting approval on their mortgages from the Urban Pioneer Program! There are several housing renovation projects underway and 14 more are pending documentation or work bids. Staff is getting ready to authorize improvements to the dead end area of Varney Street as part of the final projects in the Harrison Pointe neighborhood. Concrete will be removed, grass planted, and landscaping and signage will be installed soon. A second sign will be installed next summer as a location is verified. So far, more than 50 properties have been assisted in the neighborhood.

The Blight Elimination Program is moving forward and the City has secured 11 additional properties this month for demolition. The summer weather has allowed for exterior painting and sidewalk replacements as needed through our program.

The Inspection Department issued 99 permits with a revenue of \$23,000. Most projects included maintenance and minor upgrades, but also the interior remodeling of several office buildings. The inspectors also assisted with rental inspections and responded to over 20 complaints. They also responded to three structure fires and are coordinating several potential code cases for demolition this fall.

Our two part-time rental inspectors inspected 198 units, responded to 12 complaints and certified 176 rental units this month.

The month of August was very busy and went very quickly for the Parks and Recreation department. This month brought thousands to the River Front for Rockin the Rivers. Even though the night air was chilly, we still managed to have quite a crowd every night. The staff and all volunteers that make this event possible are amazing. August also saw summer school and fun factory at five schools. This program in conjunction with the Port Huron Schools was very

successful and kept children involved in positive recreation activities every afternoon all summer. Day camp is still going strong and will accommodate over 60 working parents that need childcare until school starts. Also this month brought the first mother and daughter kayak trip which had 25 mothers and their daughters that paddled the Black River and enjoyed dinner at the Zebra after.

The Lakeside Beach project will start on September 8th and demolition of the building will be on September 14th and 15th. We are so excited to see this project start! Letters did go out to residents in the area to make them aware of the construction.

Project Parks has been a great success this summer. Six parks were spruced up this summer and we look forward to doing this program again next year. The parks crew also installed new sponsored grills at Knox Field thanks to sponsorship efforts of Councilman Alfonso. Also at Lakeside, they installed all new garbage cans on the beach because of the increased traffic.

The railing at the Lincoln Park turnout was repaired and painted and looks great now and reduces the possibility of liability to the City.

For the Make Difference grant, the Gannet Foundation chose Lincoln Park to be spruced up. On that day, we will also be facilitating another group of volunteers at Knox Park and a donation of \$5,000 was made. It is so amazing to see the community come together to do great things in our parks system. Anyone who would like to help on this day can sign up.

In forestry, we hired a new tree trimmer who is highly experienced and a tremendous asset to the City with the line clearance certifications he holds. The new stump grinder has been a real asset offering better service, grinding stumps more quickly, and providing ground restoration all in one visit. The Forestry crew completed over 20 tree reports this month and did a great job doing removal and trimming on many trees and bushes at the MOC, cemetery, parking lot behind Alpine Cycles, McMorran and property along Tamarack and Aspen.

The cemetery has busy with 19 services this month. Staff has also been busy working on removing many bushes and overgrown shrubs. Dead trees are being removed and the trimming of many others are being done to continue to make the cemetery look better. All the trees along the canal have been trimmed and wood chips placed around them. Staff has also been working to repair bronze markers on the back of stones in the cemetery. Roads were graded by the streets department and chloride put down to improve the roads in time for the Labor Day holiday.

Two main accomplishments in I.T. for the month of August where the installation of a new main network switch for the Ground Floor (Police Department) network, and the initial deployment of a new City web site intended to be easier for citizens to locate the services they wish and that will function better on a mobile device.

During August, the Income Tax Division has mainly focused on our annual compliance efforts using information received from the State of Michigan. We completed sending initial letters to all identified taxpayers and have begun issuing proposed assessments to those taxpayers who have failed to respond. We also sent follow-up correspondence and proposed assessments to employers who have unresolved withholding issues.

The Accounting Division continued to perform the typical month to month duties. These include processing payroll, expense checks and other usual monthly work such as posting journal entries, updating various spreadsheets, balancing accounts, etc. We also completed numerous adjustments in anticipation of the year-end audit. These included various inventory accounts, receivables, accounts and contracts payable as well as accrued payroll. We also began updating our spreadsheets for the various construction projects having activity during the year. This includes working with the Engineering Division in order to properly allocate the project costs to various funds, such as Streets, Water and Wastewater.

The Assessing Division continued the process of verifying all assessing information for 20 percent of City properties (representing the first year of a five year process). During August, we have also continued reviewing land values throughout the City to verify the values have been properly updated. We have also continued logging historical information into our BS&A software which is an on-going process.

The Treasurer's Office and Water Office continue to be busy with collection of income tax payments and water payments. We also continue to perform the monthly accounting for BWATC. During the month of August, we collected over \$1.4 million in property taxes. However, it should be noted that approximately two-thirds of that amount is collected for other taxing entities such as the State, County, School District and RESA. We have been promoting the email option for billing. There are currently 250 accounts participating. There were 326 delinquent accounts shut off in August (125 less than were shut off in July).

Sincerely,



James R. Freed
City Manager
Chief Administrative Officer