

CITY MANAGER REPORT

TO: Mayor Pat Humphrey & Clare City Commission
FROM: Jeremy Howard, City Manager
DATE: April 15, 2021
RE: City Manager's Report

For the Agenda of April 19, 2021

Lake Shamrock Dredging Project. As you know tonight the second major piece of equipment was on the agenda for your consideration. That means we now have the two main components of the project, the barge and the excavator in process. The job posting has closed and Luke and I are in the process of reviewing applications and will be scheduling interviews in the near future to fill the operator position. You may have seen if you were around the lake recently that there was a boat on the lake doing survey work. Our Engineer Tony Groves and his team are in the process of reconfirming all of the depths of the lake currently since the last survey was done in 2016. We are also getting close to having terms agreed upon for both the hauling of the spoils and the location of the disposal of them. You will see those brought to you when they are ready for your approval. We are still hopeful, barring any unforeseen circumstances, that we can begin dredging yet this year.

Verizon Cell Tower: We met with the Verizon representatives a week or so ago and now we are in the process of waiting to hear back from them as they begin their due diligence in relation to the site at city hall and do some preliminary environmental survey work and survey the entire lot to figure out what locations might work best. I will let you know how this process progresses, but just a reminder that this is likely a 2022 project for Verizon.

Sprint/T-Mobile Cell Tower on South Water Tower: Sprint/T-Mobile contacted the city recently to inform us that they will be doing some work on the South Water Tower where they currently have their equipment. The work will not change the current footprint or contract with them as they are just replacing their existing antennas that are in place now. Hopefully this will be beneficial and provide updated/better service to our residents who utilize their service.

Hiring Processes: At the last commission meeting you asked me to reach out to MML to try and start the process with them regarding the replacement of Steve Kingsbury as the City Finance Director. I reached out to Kathie Grinzinger at MML who runs their team and she got back to me this week to let me know they are unable to take on our search as they are currently overloaded with other executive level searches. This means we will either need to go out and try and find another company who does recruiting or we will need to look at doing a search using our internal resources. I know there are other companies out there that perform the same service, but we would likely need to bid that service out to find one. I would appreciate your thoughts tonight on what direction you would like me to pursue.

Tree Planting along Freeway/Witbeck: I recently reached out to MDOT in relation to highway noise along Witbeck Drive where it runs parallel with the freeway. In a past conversation with them they had said that they would be willing to purchase some evergreen trees to place along the freeway to help with noise reduction. Luke Potter met with Jason Potts from MDOT regarding the natural sound barrier along US-27/Witbeck Dr. and they have agreed on the purchasing of conifer trees. However, with the pandemic it has affected the tree farms as well. MDOT agreed on 100 trees, but Elm Creek could only source 48 at this time that we will buy and get reimbursed from the state. The remaining 52 will have to be purchased and planted in the fall prior to October. The trees will be planted on the east side of the fence of Witbeck Dr. in MDOT's ROW. The trees that will be planted will be approximately 3 feet in height and will be spruce species of some sort.

Joint Meeting with Planning Commission: The City Commission and Planning Commission still need to hold their annual meeting. I would like to do this sometime before the end of our current fiscal year. I would like to know if the City Commission has any preference if they would like to invite the Planning Commission to one of your upcoming meetings, join the Planning Commission at one of their upcoming meetings, or if you would like to schedule a special meeting specifically for this discussion on an off night.

City Buildings Open to Public: City offices have been closed to the public since November 18th in order to comply with the MDHHS orders that were issued. On Tuesday, April 20th we opened all city buildings other than City Hall to the public and then on Monday, April 26th we opened up City Hall to the public again. We have not had any issues with the public and they are still required to not enter if experiencing symptoms and they are required to wear and mask and social distance as required by MDHHS and MIOSHA. The orders still do require remote work when it is possible for workers to do so, so we do have a few employees who are doing some remote work and some in office work.

Attachments: None.