



# Memorandum

Office of the City Manager

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Atchison and Albion City Council  
**FROM:** Darwin D. P. McClary, City Manager  
**DATE:** April 6, 2020  
**RE:** **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

## COVID-19 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

We are encouraging citizens to be vigilant but calm during the current coronavirus (Covid-19) public health emergency and to make every effort to protect themselves and family members, especially those who are members of high risk groups, during this outbreak. We strongly encourage citizens to engage in social distancing whenever possible. We are also asking that citizens take necessary precautions to avoid spreading the virus if they believe they have been exposed to the virus or are exhibiting symptoms by self-isolating. The US government, State of Michigan, and Calhoun County Health Department are providing frequent information and communications on the latest details of the virus, and the city is monitoring those communications closely.

The city has been following its emergency operations support plan in making necessary preparations to address this emergency. While the city operates under the Calhoun county emergency operations plan and emergency management staff, Chief Kipp is acting as the city's Emergency Management Liaison and has been advising the Mayor, city staff, and me on latest news and actions for the city to take in response to the emergency. Chief Kipp is also managing all public information from the city. The city is working as much as possible to coordinate its actions with those of Albion College, school districts, Calhoun county, other regional agencies, and the State of Michigan.

## STATUS OF CITY STAFFING

- Assistant City Manager/HR Coordinator – offer made; finalizing employment agreement
- Public Utilities Superintendent – offer made; finalizing employment agreement
- Public Works Superintendent – offer made; finalizing employment agreement
- Public Services Director – position advertised; no applications received; extending deadline and expanding outreach; new deadline is April 17
- Public Safety Officers (4) – conditional offers made; physical examinations delayed for 3 candidates due to coronavirus

- Code Enforcement Officer – position advertisement closed March 20; 5 applications received; director reviewing applications and preparing to hold remote interviews; physicals on hold until May
- Chief WWTP Operator and Public Works Foreman positions open due to promotions; postings to be done this week
- Sewer Collection Assistant/WWTP Operator, Meter Reader, Maintenance Worker-Parks and Maintenance Worker-WWTP positions opening soon due to pending retirements

Internal promotions and lateral transfers could result in openings in other positions.

#### ISSUES WITH CITY CELL PHONES

As council should be aware, some time ago, the city established a program that allowed city employees to “piggyback” on the city’s mobile phone contract with Verizon to receive better rates for personal cell phones. The city subsequently experienced problems with collecting on outstanding personal cell phone charges from some employees. When I assumed the duties of City Manager, I discontinued this program and required all employees to seek their own personal cell phone accounts effective December 31, as well as reimburse the city for outstanding bills. The city has set up reasonable payment arrangements with employees, and substantial progress has been achieved. I expect the outstanding balances to be paid in full within the next few months.

#### NONESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES WORK TASKS

##### Building/Planning/Code Enforcement

The department is performing essential inspections, permit reviews, and code enforcement in the office and through SafeBuilt. Director is attending management team meetings and remote training and monitoring COVID-19 information.

##### Finance and Treasury

Employees are reporting to work on staggered schedules. Performing income tax, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and payroll tasks, responding to phone messages and email, working with the auditors remotely to complete the 2019 audit, and tracking all COVID-19 related expenses for possible reimbursement. Director and Deputy attending management team meetings and remote training and monitoring COVID-19 information.

##### Clerk

The City Clerk is working from home handling meeting agenda preparation and assisting with electronic meetings, preparing meeting minutes, preparing meeting notices, posting to web site and other social media, and working remotely with iCompass to continue implementation of the



legislative management system project. Clerk and Deputy attending management team meetings and remote training and monitoring COVID-19 information.

### Recreation

Director is attending management team meetings and remote training and working with City Manager on short-term and long-term assessment of recreation needs.

### Engineering

Wightman is performing construction engineering for Irwin Avenue Phase I and Phase II projects, completing design of North Clark Street reconstruction project, meeting with property owners on the project, and will be preparing bid specifications and bid process in the next few weeks. Great Lakes Engineering is completing the North Albion Street Bridge grant application under the Michigan Local Bridge Program.

### Attorney

The City Attorney continues to answer legal questions and perform legal reviews daily.

### Public Safety

Law enforcement and fire services continue as usual with social distancing practiced to the extent possible. Chief Kipp is attending management team meetings and remote training. Deputy Chief Kern is serving as the city's emergency management liaison, with Lt. Mike Kolassa serving as assistant emergency management liaison. The department monitors COVID-19 information and attends numerous emergency management coordination meetings. A total of 2 officers are on patrol each shift, and this is expected to be able to increase to 3 shifts when the new officers are on board. The department is planning for coordinated staffing with the county sheriff if needed. Three public safety officers are serving on a county task force to respond to certain other emergencies as necessary.

### Public Services

Water Treatment and Waste Water Treatment Plants staffed with two people each on staggered shifts. Parks, cemetery, streets, and utility maintenance workers are on call to respond to critical infrastructure work when needed. The department responded to two sanitary sewer backups over the past two weeks. The department is working to comply with the water service reconnection orders of the Governor.



## City Manager

I am going into the office at least twice weekly to review mail and sign necessary documents, holding virtual management team meetings with department heads, coordinating with the city's emergency management team, responding to emails, checking and responding to phone messages, attending county emergency management meetings daily, attending MML COVID-19 webinars, monitoring information through the City Managers listserv, attending weekly Irwin Avenue project progress meetings, holding weekly phone meetings with the mayor, responding to council and staff phone calls and text messages, preparing reports, and monitoring Governor's executive orders and following up with staff as appropriate.

## General

The city is operating under the following Governor's executive orders:

- 2020-15 – Remote public meetings
- 2020-21 – Suspension of activities not necessary to sustain or protect life
- 2020-26 – Income tax filing deadline extensions
- 2020-28 – Restoration of water service
- 2020-36 – Protecting workers who stay home, stay safe when they or their close contacts are sick
- 2020-38 – Temporary extension of certain FOIA deadlines

## UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

For the information of city council, the following items are in the queue for city council consideration over the next few council meetings (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Michigan Transportation Economic Development Category A grant agreement
- Rental Registration and Inspection Ordinance and Program
- IT Services Contract
- Sidewalk Program Fund Utilization
- Holland Park Sidewalk Improvement Project
- City Hall Closures for Document Management/Purge
- Betty Butterfield Request to Purchase City Property
- Code Enforcement Priorities
- Anderson's Ethanol Waste Water Discharge Permit and Fees
- Adult Use Recreational Marihuana Facilities
- 2023 Local Bridge Program Grant Application Approval
- Michigan Transportation Economic Development Category B Application – First, Second, Third, and Wild Streets

