



City Manager's Report: September 17, 2021

OPERATIONS

- Upcoming Event: October 2, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. City of Mason Open House
- November 2, 2021 Special Election Update: There have been 1090, Absentee Ballot requests so far for the election. On September 23, 2021 we will mail our initial batch of ballots and will continue to do so daily until Friday, October 29, 2021. Then, October 30 – November 1, 2021 (4:00 p.m.), voters may obtain an absent voter ballot in the clerk's office. City of Mason's Clerk's office will be open on Saturday, October 30, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. to issue absentee ballots. We will not be open on Sunday, October 31, 2021 for this election.

Staffing Updates:

- Open Positions: Seasonal Part-Time Crossing Guards – Open Until Filled. Full-time Laborer- Review of internal applicants being conducted.

LARGE CITY PROJECTS

| FY 2020-2021 CARRYOVER DUE TO TIMING | | | |
|---|---|--|-----------|
| Project | Project Name/Description | Status | Completed |
| UTILITIES: SANITARY SEWER, STORM WATER, AND WATER DISTRIBUTION (U) | | | |
| 2017-U23 | Well No. 6 Rebuild | In progress, expected to be completed by October | |
| 2018-U32 | South Water Tower Repair | In progress, expected to be completed by October | |
| PARKS/ CEMETERY/ FORESTRY/ NONMOTORIZED (P) | | | |
| 2017-P8 | Laylin Park - Phase II | Pathway and sidewalk completed; working on bids for pavilion and design for signs. | |
| 2020-P5 | Jefferson St – RR Pedestrian Crossing | Railroad work complete, Concrete/ asphalt -Oct | |
| 2020-P8 | Rayner Park- Master Park Plan | In progress, anticipated completion Fall/Winter | |
| BUILDING, PROPERTY, EQUIPMENT (B) | | | |
| 2018-B14 | Fire Rehab 815 Replacement | Anticipate delivery 3rd quarter FY 21/22 | |
| 2019-B2a | City Hall – Phase I Design and Security | Security complete- work space eval in progress | |
| 2020-B4a | DPW- Design | Staff is working on finalizing design. | |

| FY 2021-2022 | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|-----------|
| Project | Project Name/Description | Status | Completed |
| STREETS, SIDEWALKS, SIGNALS(S) | | | |
| 2017-S23 | Rayner St – Randolph St to Columbia St | Completed | July |
| 2017-S24 | Eugenia Dr – Northbrook St to End | Base layer of asphalt down. Final layer to be completed by October | |
| 2017-S25 | Hall Blvd – Ash St to South St | Pulverizing scheduled for mid-September. Staff has worked with USPS to coordinate the use of temporary mailbox system to help prevent mail delivery service interruptions from inaccessible street side mailboxes due to construction. Two mailbox cluster units have been located just south of the construction site on Vanderveen for residents on Hall Blvd. | |
| 2017-S26 | Columbia St – Park St to Jefferson St | Completed | July |
| 2019-S9b | Signal at E. Maple & S. Jefferson | DDA reviewed, acquiring quotes for Council | |

| UTILITIES: SANITARY SEWER, STORM WATER, AND WATER DISTRIBUTION (U) | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|--|
| 2017-U15 | Replace Hydrants and Mason Plaza | | City Council to consider reduced scope. |
| 2017-U34 | Well No. 5 Rebuild | | Expected to start mid- September |
| 2019-U3a | Wastewater Treatment Plant – Design | | Staff conducting final review of RFP |
| 2021-U1 | WTP- High-Pressure Pump VFD | | Staff developing RFP |
| 2021-U2 | WTP- Replacement of Valves | | Staff developing RFP |
| PARKS/ CEMETERY/ FORESTRY/ NONMOTORIZED (P) | | | |
| 2020-P3 | Hayhoe Riverwalk Trail – Eval. & Repair | | Grant submitted |
| 2020-P6, 2020-P12, 2020-P13, 2020-P14 | Lee Austin Park- Plan/Design Bond Park - Plan/Design Griffin Park - Plan/Design Hayes Park - Plan/Design | | Wolverine selected; to be completed by 3 rd quarter |
| 2020-P11 | Rayner Park- Phase 1 Construction | | Awaiting DNR funding response in 3 rd quarter |
| MOTOR VEHICLE POOL (MVP) | | | |
| 2017-MVP22 | Vehicle No. 83 | Police | Anticipated third quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2017-MVP23 | Vehicle No. 21 | Cemetery/ Parks | Anticipated 2nd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2017-MVP27 | Vehicle No. 86 | Police | Anticipate delivery in December. |
| 2017-MVP24 | Vehicle No. 59 | Cemetery/ Parks | Anticipated 2nd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| BUILDING, PROPERTY, EQUIPMENT (B) | | | |
| 2017-B5b | Building: Library Phase 1, Part 1 | | Grant Agreement approved, plan to bid in Sept |
| 2017-B7 | Building: Parking Lot Repairs | | Working on addressing punch list. |
| 2017-B10 | Fire: Furnace/AC, Office & Training Area | | Anticipated 2nd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2017-B11 | Fire: Washing Machine | | Anticipated 2nd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2018-B15 | Fire: Sprinkler System in Truck Bay | | Anticipated 2nd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2018-B16 | Fire: Station 1- Rear Approach | | Working on addressing punch list. |
| 2018-B21 | Police: Interview Rm Recording System | | Anticipated 3rd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2018-B23 | Planning: Master Plan/Zoning Update | | Finalizing contract with consultant |
| 2018-B24 | Building: Rental Furniture Replacement | | Anticipated 3rd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2019-B2b | Building: City Hall Renovations | | Anticipated 3rd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2019-B3 | Clerk: Laserfiche Avante Upgrade | | Anticipated 2nd quarter of FY 21-22 |
| 2020-B4b | Public Works Facility Construction | | Need to complete CIP: 2020-B4a |



Agenda Report: September 20, 2021 City Council Meeting

AGENDA ITEM:

Update from Staff Regarding Resuming Water Shut Offs

RECOMMENDED ACTION

No action is required at this time

HISTORY

On March 18, 2020, Governor Whitmer issued Executive Order 2020-28 which restored water service to occupied residences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The restriction on turning off water was eliminated when the Governor's Executive Orders were determined no longer effective as of November (30 days following the ruling). This means that utility shut-offs could resume with the January 2021 water bills. At the Council's December 21, 2020 meeting, staff provided an update noting that we intended to halt all utility shut-offs until at least July 2021 but would resume late fees.

We reviewed the status of water accounts this last month and we currently have 190 customers that would be in shut-off status. Outstanding debt on average for 2021 has been \$23,000 per month compared to \$15,000 in 2020. The total number of accounts over \$200 is 38 of the delinquent accounts, many are held by tenants. If they do not pay, the landlord will be responsible as the bill will be converted to a tax collection. By continuing to not shut off water, this has impacted the timeliness of collections, provides no incentive for a consumer to pay on time, allows accounts to get extremely high balances that may put some in jeopardy of tax foreclosure and creates a delinquency a landlord or new owner would eventually be responsible for if account is left unpaid.

The shut off notice process includes sending a past due notice to all residents the day after bills are due with a due date 10 days later. The day after past due notices are due, we send a shut off notice giving them another 10 days on balances greater than the penalty amount. If a balance greater than the penalty amount still exists after both notices, staff proceeds to physically hang a notice on a property, if bill is not paid within 24-48 hours water would be shut off.

Shut offs are allowed by ordinance, but staff has the flexibility on policy related to when this occurs. Staff plans to move forward with a hybrid approach to allow some flexibility within the existing pandemic. We plan to resume utility shut offs in November 2021 that would trigger accounts to be shutdown when their bill passes \$200 past due. In the future, we will be recommending an increase of new tenant deposits to \$250.

By moving in this direction, we are providing some flexibility to residents that are struggling paycheck to paycheck, limiting staff time for shut offs and gives staff ability to shut off those that move into complete non-payment or make no effort to establish a payment plan. Staff would continue the same shut off notice process but only physically hang a notice on properties with accounts that have balances over \$200.

Staff is providing this update as you may hear from residents impacted by this change.

SUMMARY

Authority:

- **City Charter: Sec. 82-242. Payment for service required.** No free service shall be furnished by the system to any person or to any public agency or instrumentality, but service so furnished by the system shall be paid for in accordance with the schedule of rates, or any revision of such schedule, in compliance with the provisions of this article.

- **City Charter: Sec. 82-246. Collection of charges, enforcement of lien.** (b) In addition to all the rights and methods of collection, the city shall have the right to shut off and discontinue the supply of water to any premises or to disconnect any premises from the public sewer for the nonpayment, when due, of water or sewer service charges, or for the refusal to allow reasonable access to the premises for service or repair to city water meters. All disconnection charges and fees, as established by city council resolution, shall be paid prior to turning on the water to or reconnecting such premises to the POTW and all previous utility bills shall be paid in full. Before utility service may be disconnected for nonpayment, the Authority shall first provide written notice by first-class mail to the owner of the premises served as shown on the city's most recent tax bill, to occupants of the premises, and to any tenants of the premises as shown on the city's personal property tax roll and provide the owner and/or tenants an opportunity for an informal hearing for the Authority to review any factual disputes.

Urgency: This will start addressing our outstanding debt within the utility fund.

Relation to Other Actions: None

FISCAL IMPACT

Current/ Future Budgets: Accounts Receivable will be collected timelier with ability to shut off past due utility accounts.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

None