

Date: August 18, 2010

To: Mayor and Council Members

From: John Archocosky, Manager

RE: Monthly Activity Report

The DPW has been busy over the past few weeks as a result of the various construction projects ongoing in the City. Since our last report, the Hunter Road Water work has been completed. The tank was cleaned and repainted along with the replacement of the mud valve which apparently was the cause of last winter's freezing problem. You may recall that a substantial amount of ice formed inside the riser on the bottom of the tank about 75' off the ground. The freeze-up did not cause any permanent damage, but required our Water Department personnel to place heaters inside the tank riser to thaw the mass of ice that had formed. Because it was located directly above the access ladder, it was impossible for our crew to climb the tank to determine the cause. The process of thawing took quite a bit of time which cost the Water Department over \$3,000 in labor and material. This problem has been remedied with the restoration work which is now complete. The color of the tank and new lettering have been changed and it can now be seen welcoming travelers from the east as far out as Bates. Our crew placed the tank back on line this past week.

A few of the heavy rains we received during the past three weeks are clearly proof that the sewer projects the City has undertaken have been worth the effort. In the past, anytime we received such heavy rainfalls it caused our lift stations to send out high level alarms requiring our crew to respond. More often than not, these events would happen after normal work hours or on weekends which would result in substantial added labor and equipment costs. The fact that our systems can now handle such peak rainfall amounts satisfies yet another requirement that we had to meet as part of the MDEQ's Consent Order. Our engineers will work to document these rain events so that we can submit the information to the MDEQ as evidence that we are now in compliance with those particular requirements of the ACO Agreement.

Negotiations have continued with our DPW's union representatives, and I believe we have already agreed to several changes that will result in significant savings to the City in the future. As with all employers/employees in both the public and private sectors, health insurance and retirement benefit costs continue to be of greatest concern. Although there still remain a few outstanding issues, I am confident that a final contract document will be ready within the next month for the full Council's consideration. Our labor attorney, Mr. Steve Girard, is trying to establish dates for our next meeting with the DPW Union as well as with the Police Department's representatives. Again, Mayor Zanon has taken time to

participate in several hours of the most recent negotiations and his presence at these sessions is very much appreciated.

I recently attended a meeting in Marquette along with EDC Director Julie Melchiori and DDA Attorney Ron Basso to learn about the procedural changes and new economic development programs which have recently been introduced by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. We all found the information very valuable and have identified several new possibilities for the City of Iron River.

Rachel Andreski also recently attended the Upper Peninsula Human Resources Association quarterly seminar in Marquette for the 2010 Employment Law Update. Changes in workplace law are occurring constantly with expanded concerns in disability, health care, privacy, equal pay, union organizing, drugs and smoking, COBRA, and more. These issues were discussed along with answers and strategies that work.

Although we are about to lose our summer student employees, the grass is continuing to grow as though it was May. Hopefully, the DPW will be able manage parks and grass cutting activities without their help. Our summer student employee who worked in the Assessor's office was able to photograph almost every residence in the entire town. This is a critical piece of data that will be used in our GIS program as well as with the new assessing software.