

COUNCIL INFORMATION LETTER

March 2023

APRIL 25, 2023

City of Ypsilanti
Frances McMullan, City Manager



City Manager's Office

It's April, and spring has sprung! Much is happening within the City of Ypsilanti, with much to recap from the past month. We conducted interviews in search of a new Ypsilanti Police Chief on March 24th. The second part of the process was followed by a Meet and Greet with the potential final candidate on March 30th at Riverside Arts Center.



- We're maintaining the city calendar and newsletter with events occurring within the city.
- Reviewing several citizen complaints and directing those to the appropriate departments.
- Attended several meetings regarding the upcoming decontamination work and redevelopment proposals at Water Street.
- On Friday, March 10th, from 1 PM – 3 PM, City Hall offices were closed for employee ALICE training, including real-life lockdown scenarios at city offices.
- On March 21st City Council heard from two potential developers for the Water Street site. More information is coming soon.
- Economic Development Director Joe Meyers' last day is April 14th.
- Carlisle Wortman Associates Inc. will assume some economic development tasks relating to the current Water Street proposals.
- A new Human Resources Director has been hired and will begin on April 10th.
- Captain Kirk Moore has accepted a conditional offer for police chief—an official contract will come before the City Council on April 18th for approval.
- John Roe has been promoted to Building Department Manager.
- Amendments to Chapter 7 will be heard on 4/18, please submit proposed editions/deletions to Christopher Jacobs prior to the meeting. Budget Sessions will be held May 2nd, May 16th and June 6th at 6:00 PM.

City Clerk

- Clerk
 - The City Clerk attend their final year at Clerk's Institute and is now eligible for MiPMC certification.
- Elections
- The state is starting to create legislation to implement Proposal 22-2, The Bureau of Elections and Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks has stated legislation should be approved by late summer. The first election for full implementation will be the presidential primary.
 - Legislation that is currently being debated
 - Allowing all overseas voters, the ability to submit their ballot via email, instead of just active military.
 - The state has begun the process of creating permits for each local government to provide funding for Absentee Ballot Return Envelope postage.
 - The city is already in compliance with drop-box requirements.
 - The state is still determining how it will approach a list to automatically receive ballots. The issue is will there be one list for permanent ballots. Or will there be two lists one to receive a ballot automatically and one to receive the application automatically. This provides an issue for the Presidential Primary, the current practice is to request a ballot (Democrat/Republican/non-partisan if applicable). A solution would be to have a single

ballot style, however, political parties will lobby against this as they would lose the ability to access data on voter political affiliation.

- Increasing precinct size from 2,999 active voters to 5,000. Michigan is one of the only states that provides no reason absentee voting, election day voting, and now early voting. This would decrease the number of voters voting at precinct. The city would be able to drop from 10 precincts to 6 precincts without changing Ward mapping or voting location. It would relieve burden on staff to test equipment and deploy it, and decrease the need for as many election inspectors, and the need to purchase additional equipment for early voting.
- Nine days of early voting
 - The state is discussion parameters on the hours of operation. Current draft of the legislation states; Two days must begin at 7am and Four days must close at 7pm.
 - The legislation provides that a municipality may go it alone and provide the nine days of early voting. Staff has discussed this potential, but it would require the use of council chambers for all nine days. The legislation allows for partnerships with surrounding municipalities to provide a early voting site. Staff has been in discussion regarding this possibility. Lastly, a municipality could partner with the county to provide its nine days of early voting. At this time the county is unsure what capacity they have to assist, more information will be provided.
 - An early voting site must follow same protocol as on election day; there must be at least 3 inspectors (with a member from each major party).
 - There will be a need to purchase at least one more tabulator and Voter Assist Terminal for the early voting site. The tabulator can be programmed to handle all city precincts and if the city enters into a partnership, the programming will include the other jurisdictions.
 - There is still a question regarding the custody of the ballots, and this information will be provided once known.
- Administrative Hearings Bureau
 - Staff is continuing to process liens for properties with unpaid fines. All unpaid liens will be assessed to the Summer Tax Bill.
- Boards and Commissions
 - Board of Ethics Cannot meet due to limit of members.
 - Arts Commission cannot meet due to limit of members.
 - Human Relations Commission needs members.
 - Vacancies (as of March 23, 2023)

Board	Membership Type	
Art Commission	Commissioner	Vacant
Art Commission	Youth Member	Vacant
Art Commission	Youth Member	Vacant
Dangerous Bldgs	Dangerous Buildings Officer	Vacant
Ethics	Board Member	Vacant
Ethics	Board Member	Vacant
Ethics	Board Member	Vacant

Historic District	Commissioner	Vacant
Historic District	Commissioner	Vacant
Human Relations	Youth Member	Vacant
Human Relations	Youth Member	Vacant
Police Advisory	Commissioner	Vacant
Police Advisory	Commissioner	Vacant
Police Advisory	Youth Member	Vacant Youth
Police Advisory	Youth Member	Vacant Youth
Parks & Recreation		Vacant
Parks & Recreation	Commissioner	Vacant
Parks & Recreation	Commissioner	Vacant
Parks & Recreation	Commissioner	Vacant
Parks & Recreation	Youth Member	Vacant
Sustainability	Commissioner	VACANT
Sustainability	Commissioner	Vacant
Sustainability	Youth Member (1 year)	Vacant
Sustainability	Youth Member (1 year)	Vacant

Finance Department

Accounting and Finance

- Attended the MGFOA Spring Seminar on March 3, 2023
- Department Budget meetings were conducted with Department heads and their office managers.
- Received MERS Annual Pension Investment Report.

Combined Reserves							
	Balance as of 12/31/2021	Invoiced & Other Contributions	Transfers	Benefits Paid	Net Investment Income	Admin Expenses	Balance as of 12/31/2022
Total	\$23,002,521.83	\$206,365.00	\$0.00	(\$1,082,358.39)	(\$2,387,325.06)	(\$42,008.63)	\$19,697,194.75

Assessing

- Prepared assessing and taxable rolls for 2023 to be used for FY 2024
- Conducted March Board of Review

Treasury

- Meeting with Washtenaw County Deputy Treasurer Sue Bos to discuss 2022 tax year settlement.
- Attended Washtenaw County Treasurers Association meeting on March 21, 2023 via zoom.
- Prepared final tax payouts to the different taxing jurisdiction
- Submitted Final Tax Settlement to Washtenaw County Treasurer

Human Resources

- Filled Equipment Operator and Human Resources Director positions.

- Recruited for Police Chief, Police Officer, Fire Fighter/EMT, Equipment Operator, Public Services Laborer, and School Crossing Guard positions.
- Attended Ace Alternative High School Career Fair, making students aware of opportunities within the City (March 20th)



Malik Mullen
Equipment Operator
Dept of Public Services

Provides tree care for city trees: pruning, disease control, planting, and stump removal; grass cutting, seeding, leaf removal, ball field upkeep and field markings, facility/play equipment repair and maintenance are all included in the upkeep of city parks; performs routine upkeep on city buildings and property locations, such as mowing and snow and ice removal; performs site cleanup, such as mowing and rubbish disposal, and private property protection as directed by the code enforcement officers.

- At the City of Ypsilanti, with the new year, we have ten new employees and two internal promotions. <https://cityofypsilanti.com/DocumentCenter/View/3915/New-Hires-2023>

Planning & Development

Economic Development

- 220 N Park is closing on their financing and work will begin soon.
- 845-945 Clark Rd – the Groundbreaking will be on May 24, 2023 at 1:30
- 206/210 N Washington begins its approval process at HDC in January followed by Planning Commission in February and a formal incentive request triggering the CBO in January.
- Staff attended meetings about Water Street decontamination efforts.
- Two Developers presented proposals for development on Water Street in March.
- There were two proposed additions to the residential lot program from Washtenaw County, one requiring foundation demolition. Council will consider a demolition request and the two additions to the residential lot program at the April 4, 2023, meeting.
- Work is happening on the College of Business. Permits for renovation to be pulled in the next month.

Planning Commission

- Planning Commission met on March 15th for the regular monthly meeting –To review the updated sketch plan submitted by Sky Holdings LLC to renovate 599 S Mansfield for a vehicle towing / repair / storage business in the PMD. The Commission voted to approve the updated sketch plan, which provided additional plans and studies of the conditions set forth in the November 2022 public hearing.
- To review the final draft of the 2022 Annual Planning Commission Report. The Commission voted to approve the draft for final submission.
- To review the activities of the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee. This included a briefing on NMACs participation in a new pedestrian education campaign organized by the Michigan Fitness Foundation. NMAC has agreed to serve on the steering committee for this pilot program with 3 other municipalities. Participation will secure additional support and marketing for the City of Ypsilanti and the work of NMAC. The timing of this partnership provides additional benefits as MDOT begins work with the City of Ypsilanti to renovate Route 12, by showing good faith and collaboration between the City, NMAC, MDOT and the rest of the Ped Ed Campaign

Team. The City Planner will serve as the City point person. Bonnie Wessler, DPS Director is also on board to support this effort spearheaded by NMAC.

Zoning Board of Appeals

There were no ZBA cases in March.

Training

- Two commissioners, one planning staff person and one ZBA member attended the Citizen Planner Series led by the MSU Extension, the six-week curriculum which ended on March 23rd. Three commissioners are studying virtually with the Citizen Planner self-paced online classes.
- City staff completed the full six-week Citizen Planner course and three Michigan Association of Planners planning and zoning workshops in March.
- On March 10th, the Planning Department attended the ALICE Active Shooter Response Training presented by the Ypsilanti Police Department.

Historic District Commission

- The Historic District Commission (HDC) had one scheduled meeting in February. It took place February 14 in person at City Hall and over Zoom. There were eight applications for work in the historic district for the month. At the meeting, the commission held a public hearing and approved the demolition application for 206-210 N Washington and approved five other applications. One application was postponed, and staff approved one application administratively.
- On January 23, the State Historic Preservation Office opened the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit 2023 application. Owner-occupied residential properties that contribute to the local historic district or to the National Register district are eligible. Owners of eligible properties can receive a state income tax credit for up to 25% of their estimated qualified expenses. Please visit <https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/historic-preservation-tax-credits/state-historic-tax-credit-program/> for more information, and preservation planner Ellen Thackery is always happy to answer any questions or help homeowners with their projects and applications. She can be reached at ethackery@cityofypsilanti.com and 734.482.9709. The credits for homeowners will be open until the program maximum has been reached.
- The commission has two vacancies in case anyone would like to spread the word to a candidate interested in historic places.

Downtown Development Authority

The DDA Board considered several proposals in February including:

- A covered bus shelter proposal on West Cross Street from OHM – The board decided to request a meeting with AATA to discuss a simpler and more cost-effective design and proposal
- 2023 Landscaping Contract – The board voted to authorize the executive committee to negotiate a price and scope of work with DJ’s Landscaping and we are nearing the finalization of that contract which includes a huge expansion to the number of hanging flower baskets and flower planters in Depot Town, Downtown, and West Cross.
- The DDA Board requested an updated historic image to celebrate the 2023 Bicentennial using the billboard in the North Huron parking lot located Downtown.
- The DDA received updates about our upcoming special event sponsorship funding requests in April. There are expected to be a dozen applications for funding that will be considered next month, including Ypsi Glow, Juneteenth, Rumble of the Bumble, Ypsi Jazz Fest, Beautifypsi, and many more.
- The DDA rejected a proposal to split the cost of vandalism reimbursement to five local businesses totaling just over \$5,000. The DDA deliberated the proposal and concluded it was not the role of the DDA to reimburse businesses for these losses and doing so could set an expensive and dangerous precedent for the future.

DDA Staff will now hold monthly DDA staff open hours, *Coffee with Chris and Elize* at local coffee shops. Stakeholders are invited to share ideas, learn about the DDA and how to get involved, get help with DDA grant applications or navigating business orientated permitting processes. The location will rotate between districts and will be held the day after each DDA Board Meeting. The next one will be held Friday, April 21 from 10am-2pm at Bridge Community Cafe – 217 W Michigan Ave.

Community Development

- The daytime and overnight warming centers are set to close by the end of March and City Council will receive a presentation on the number of participants and activity from these initiatives in April.
- The Parkridge coding project is well underway with almost a dozen consistent participants weekly. One student has excelled very quickly in a short amount of time and has started discussions with CODE 313 and his family to pursue a paid internship.
- Letters have been provided to all the marijuana appeals to chart a timeline for their opening and satisfying any outstanding conditions.
- The department is preparing a memo about the Community Benefits Ordinance for the second meeting in April. Staff will recommend its re-adoption and request any proposed edits from City Council.
- Embracing our Differences of Southeast Michigan will be requesting permission from the City to host a youth art installation at our first City Council meeting in April.

Department of Public Services

Operations/Admin

- Celebrating the retirement of Mechanic John Sherwood after 15 years of service. Congratulations, John!
- Continuing budget development.
- Continuing Capital Improvement Plan update
- Attended a career fair at ACCE with Human Resources representatives.
- Attended and assisted Parks and Recreation & Sustainability Commission with administrative tasks.
- Attended the Michigan Infrastructure Council Asset Management Champion program.
- Assisted in preparing legislative funding asks.
- Working on participating as a facility with Miss Dig to help safeguard stormwater systems.
- 13 right of way permit applications received
- 1 radon test kit sold
- Personnel updates:
 - Five open Equipment Operator positions on crew (out of 17 - 29% vacancy).
 - Held interviews for Equipment Operator; made one offer, accepted & to begin 4/3; another offer accepted & to begin May.
 - One Mechanic vacancy upcoming at the end of March; hired backfill from Heavy Equipment Operators (Cooper).
 - Posted Heavy Equipment Operator position internally, hired backfill from Equipment Operator (Nash).
 - Accepted resignation of Office Manager; conducted interview with internal candidate.
 - DPS Supervisor position to be posted soon.
 - One Equipment Operator off-duty due to on-the-job injury.

Facilities

- Opened bids for the elevator project; one bid received.

Motorpool

- Welcome Scott Cooper to the mechanic's role, and congratulations to John Sherwood on a well-earned retirement!
- Performed extensive repairs & diagnostics on street sweepers in preparation of sweeping season. Anticipate offering for auction older Elgin sweeper; has not been in active use for more than a year.
- Two of three recycling/yard waste trucks (packer trucks) at outside repair shop for diagnosis and service beginning week of 3/27.

Streets

- Patching extremely limited from 2/23 through 3/22 due to ongoing brush cleanup work. Patched Arnet, Bellevue, Collegewood, Cornell, Emerick, Emmet, Garland, Green, Harriet, Huron River Dr, LeForge, E Michigan, W Michigan, Normal, Pearl, Prospect, N River, N Washington.
- Met with Michigan Fitness Foundation to discuss potential safety education project. Planning Dept will take lead.
- Held preconstruction meeting for upcoming Forest Ave Bridge work.
- Assisting Nonmotorized Committee in exploring potential grant opportunity.

Solid Waste

- Working with Recycle Ann Arbor on contract renewal
- Requested presentation from WRRMA on potential joint solid waste contract RFP
- Issued 60 compost drop-off passes (each applicant gets 4)
- Issued 27 recycle bins
- Issued 2 Freon tags

Stormwater

- Cleared drains on an emergency basis during melt event(s) & rainstorms.

Parking

- Net hourly Passport revenue (credit card only, citywide): \$5877.75 (3646 transactions)
- Gross hourly Parkeon (cc & cash, depot town) revenue: \$2600
- Permits issued: 22
- Tickets issued: 431
- Appeals received: 41 (note: appeals can be made up to 90 days from ticket issuance)

Parks & Special Events

- Working with partners to move north end Frog Island project forward
- YPD implemented software solutions to modernize booking and payment acceptance.

Sustainability

- Submitted [Michigan Green Communities](#) Challenge assessment; anticipate re-certifying for Gold status for second year.
- Assisted Sustainability Commission in exploring potential grant opportunity.

Police Department

Activity:

Statistics for the current period reflected by the past three months.

	January	February	March
Arrests	19	38	38
CFS	1081	1040	1375
Reports	156	126	155
Tickets	58	53	64
Warnings (NEW)		42	65

Staffing:

- Ofc Hadley is nearing the end of phase three of the FTO program.
- Ofc Alexopoulos is entering the shadow phase of the FTO program.
- Ofc Dennis Masterman began phase two of the FTO program.

Recruiting:

(2) conditional job offers were extended to police officer candidates currently enrolled at the Oakland Community College Police Academy.

Training:

Communications Manager Tom Koch attended Public Information Officer Training March 9th – 10th.

Fire Department

March 31st, 2023



City of Ypsilanti Fire Department

Activity Report:

	January 2023	February 2023	March 2023
Fire and EMS Calls	250	199	266
Inspections	7	6	12
Non-emergency requests	1	1	2

The following trainings/classes occurred during the month of March:

- Cross lays

- Hazmat
- Fire Behavior
- Search and Rescue- Eastern Michigan University is allowing the Ypsilanti Fire Department to use Hoover Hall for training. All three shifts are taking advantage of this training opportunity.
- Four Firefighters are being certified as Basic Life Support (BLS) Instructors; this will allow them to provide CPR training to city employees.

Apparatus/Building Update:

- AC unit replaced. The new unit will be more efficient and will provide better air quality, work is still ongoing, and some updates are still needed.
- 3/15- boiler went out and was repaired on 3/16.
- 3/24- boiler passed state inspection.
- 3/8 Squad-1 licensed by the State of Michigan to provide BLS EMS services.
- 3/20 Engine 2-1 sent to Cummins for repairs.
- 3/21 Engine 2-1 repaired and in service.
- Crawford door recoded the key entry for the back door and installed a new keycode and buzzer for the front door entry.

Personnel:

- Lt. written exam scheduled for June 12th, six firefighters will be taking the exam.
- Reviewing applications for hiring employees.

Notes:

- Station and apparatus deconned weekly.

Overall Department Status Update:

- Actively working on approved Fire Station Capital Improvements.

On March 18th the Ypsilanti Fire Department participated in a chili cook-off at the Firehouse Museum, Firefighter Tim Wilson took first place in both the judges and audience choice. -Congratulations Tim!

