



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

September 10, 2021

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ardagh/Sawmill Pkwy: Staff is currently reviewing what is the last phase of the redevelopment plans. Phase 1, which is the initial addition on the western portion of the building, is nearing completion. Ardagh has submitted a petition to the city requesting a vacation of last 300-400 feet of Sawmill Parkway to make way for the major phase of construction with a public hearing set for late September. OHM has been working with Ardagh's engineering group to coordinate both the Sawmill Pkwy reconstruction and acquisition of right-of-way to make way for a turnaround at the end of the road. Staff also envisions approaching council in the next meeting or two for consideration of a CRA tax abatement request from the company.

Contractors are also planning an interim temporary fix to reduce the bumpiness of the roadway prior to the full reconstruction occurring in 2022. Work is anticipated to occur in late September.

The city also held a kickoff meeting with EDA regarding the project. Based on that meeting, the city is moving forward with developing full construction drawings, through OHM, with hopes of bidding the project over the winter months in anticipation of a spring/early summer 2022 commencement to the construction.

ConAgra: As of today, the City has completed in person interviews with all three (3) of the final firms – including The Rose Company, NAI Harmon Group and Hoty Enterprises. Staff anticipates making a recommendation to Council on September 28th in terms of the preferred firm in hopes of securing authorization from Council to begin negotiations with the development firm on a series of agreements necessary to bring the Conagra redevelopment to fruition. We want to thank all the firms who have shows interest in the site and Huron throughout this process and all those individuals who assisted as part of the review/selection team including Sam Artino, Bob Howell, Doug Steinwart, Russ Critelli, Mike Spafford, and Erik Engle. A special thank you to our consultant, Montrose Group, which included Nate Green and Jamie Beier Grant for all their hard work through this process.

Stride Mobility/Safe Harbor Insurance: I want to send a special thank you and congratulations to Mark and Julie Schneiders and the entire Stride Mobility and Safe Harbor teams for their grand opening and ribbon cutting last week. Hundreds of people attended the ceremony on September 2nd and were provided tours of the facility. We are truly fortunate to have these companies in our community and we thank them for choosing to expand, grow and invest in Huron.

Sawmill Creek: On July 13th, the City voted to pursue the annexation of nine (9) parcels currently located in Huron Township – and more easily recognized as the Sawmill Creek Resort, Conference Center and Golf Course. On July 16th, Huron Township consented to the annexation and agreed to move forward. The reasoning behind the proposed annexation is to provide local subsidy to the project via a financing tool commonly referred to as a "Section 41 Tax Increment Financing." The type of proposed financing can only be undertaken by a municipality and cannot be undertaken by a township – hence the need for the proposed annexation. The final major hurdle needing to be accomplished was consideration and approval of the TIF by the Huron School

District. We are happy to report that on July 20th, the School Board voted to approve the 30-year, 75% TIF. We are so grateful for the support of the School Board and the Administration and believe we set forth a truly mutually beneficial package that will both ensure a long-term predictable revenue stream to the district while also ensuring adequate revenues to both complete the Sawmill Creek Resort project and fund a capital infrastructure fund to address the western gateway to the City and the intersection of Cleveland Road and Rye Beach. This is truly a tremendous public private partnership involving the city, Township, School District and Cedar Fair. There is still a great deal of legislation needing to be brought forth to effectuate the annexation and TIF, which will be occurring over the next several months including but not limited to:

- Development agreement
- Service payment agreement
- School compensation agreement with Huron Schools
- School compensation agreement with EHOVE
- TIF Ordinance
- Final Annexation Agreement
- Bond issuance for Sawmill Creek redevelopment

We hope to wrap everything up prior to the end of 2021.

INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES

Rt. 6 Streetlights: Work has commenced on the installation of new streetlamps along the first Phase of Route 6. Crews have been mobilized for approximately 2 weeks and hope to be completed in the next 2 weeks. First Energy will then follow to remove the older light along the corridor with hopes of having the entire project wrapped up in late September or early October.

Berlin Road: The new water line installation and road resurfacing project is substantially complete. Crews will be completing a handful of punch list items; however, the project was able to be completed and the roadway reopened prior to the start of the school year. A special thank you to Jason Gibboney, OHM, and the contractor for their work on this critical project. The roadway looks beautiful, and we have received numerous positive comments from residents about the quality of the work, efficiency, and minor level of disturbance it created for those on the corridor. Well done everyone.

Huron Public Power: The City, along with AMP-T and First Energy, successfully coordinated a major meter change out at the City's main transmission point to acknowledge the increased load from new and anticipated customer base. Our partnership with AMPT was instrumental in getting this project done quickly and cost effectively. Work was fully completed on Thursday September 9th and the substation is now energized. We truly appreciate all the cooperation and patience of all our customers during this process.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Masterplan Update and Visioning: The City Architecture and RestartSmart teams provided a final presentation of the Vision 2020 Action Plan to both City Council and the Planning Commission on August 25th. Based on this presentation, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend adoption of the Action Plan to the full Council – which will be taken under consideration on September 14th. We want to thank the entire Planning Commission membership for their involvement and feedback in the process and look forward to their involvement moving forward as the projects get underway.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Fish Cleaning Station: The City has received the draft of the grant agreement for ODNR and is seeking Council approval of the grant agreement on September 14, 2021. The grant is capped at \$500,000 and is processed on a reimbursable basis. Once approved, the city will look to complete final design, secure an engineer's cost estimate, and begin the bidding process in hopes of commencing construction in early 2022 and opening in mid-2022. We are very grateful and appreciative of ODNR for this grant assistance.

FINANCE

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): On July 22, the City received the first tranche of the ARPA funds, totaling \$359,767.52. The second and final distribution will be received 12 months from now for the same amount. Here is what we know as of August 6th:

- A recent proposed amendment to the State's allocation legislation for NEUs may result in the City receiving more ARPA funds in 2023 and 2024. That is, if the State has any ARPA funds left over after 2022, the proposed legislation will require the State to reallocate those funds to NEUs. If you recall, the City's initial allocation of \$1.3 million was nearly cut in half. The State approved to reduce allocations to municipalities and disburse ARPA funds to all townships in Ohio.
- The City will have until December 2024 to commit these funds to a purchase/project, and December 2026 to expend the funds.
- The Auditor of State's Office released accounting guidance on proper recording of the funds. The Office recommends creating a separate special revenue fund, like the accounting used for the CARES ACT funds. The new ARPA Fund (Fund 227) was approved by Council for separate accounting of these funds.
- Staff is preparing plans and analysis using the most recent guidance from the U.S. Treasury.

- A STAR Ohio investment account was opened to deposit the funds and earn interest in the short-term. Any interest earned on these funds may be deposited into the City's General Fund and is not required to be used on ARPA eligible uses. The 1st disbursement was transferred into the STAR Ohio account upon receipt.

WATER DEPARTMENT

August Month-End Totals:

- 80.975 million Gallons of raw water usage
- 76.635 million Gallons of treated water produced
- 2.269 million Gallons of wash water required
- 51.213 million Gallons to Erie County
- \$8,326.57 in treatment chemical costs
- Filtration Plant running at 76.83% of capacity for the month
- Required staffing – 6 Full-Time

Active Projects:

- Valve locating for annual valve exercise program and hydrant flushing
- High Service and first basement repainting completed
- Harbor North new water service line in progress

PERSONNEL

Director of Operations: Staff is working on job description and anticipates advertising for position in the next two weeks. This position is a replacement for the recently vacated Assistant to the City Manager position held by Mike. The city has retained the hourly services of Mr. Spafford on an as needed basis to help during the transition until a new employee is hired. The city, prior to hiring, will approach Council to formally recognize the position of Director of Operations in our Administrative Code. This position is anticipated to focus mainly on, Huron Public Power, Facilities, Communications, IT, Capital Planning and Projects and other higher-level needs of the administration.

Fire Department: 6 new Firefighter/EMT Part-Time employees were hired and will be starting this week and next week.

CONTRACTS

2021 will be busy with renegotiation of several multi-year agreements/contracts that expire this year. Agreements/contracts to be reviewed and renegotiated for 2021 include:

- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – **Completed.**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – **Completed.**
- Chief Building Official and Inspection Services (Building) – **Completed.**
- Prosecutor (Court) - **Completed**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) – **Completed.**
- Huron Township Fire Protection Agreement (Fire)
 - Staff has met with Huron Township regarding renewal of the above agreement. It was a very fruitful conversation with both jurisdictions verbally coming to agreement on multiple mutually beneficial changes to the new agreement – which will be either a two- or four-year agreement to not have this contract's expiration coincide with the expiration date of the fire bargaining unit contracts. Staff and legal counsel have completed a redline update to the existing agreement and have sent said agreement to Huron Township for review and consideration. The city has received modest comments back from the Township. Staff hopes to present a final version of the proposed contract either in late September or early October.
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) - **Completed.**
- FOP – Patrol Officers (Police)
 - FOP Patrol Officer have approved a draft agreement as of September 9th, 2021. Staff hopes to present a final version of the new 3-year contract to Council in late September or early October.
- FOP – Sergeants (Police)
 - FOP Sergeants have approved a draft agreement as of September 9th, 2021. Staff hopes to present a final version of the new 3-year contract to Council in late September or early October.
- IAFF (Fire) – **Formal Negotiations in Progress.**
- AFCSME - **Kickoff meeting is set for mid-September.**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

September

Council Meeting: Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.

Board of Building and Zoning Appeals: September meeting has been cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

Planning Commission/Design Review Board: Wednesday, September 22, 2021, at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.

Council Meeting: Tuesday, September 28, 2021, at 6:30pm at the Boat Basin Amphitheater.

October

Huron Joint Recreation District: Tuesday, October 5, 2021, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Utilities Committee: Wednesday, October 6, 2021 at 5:00pm in the Main Conference room.

Board of Building and Zoning Appeals: Monday, October 11, 2021, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Council Meeting: Tuesday, October 12, 2021, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Council Meeting: Tuesday, October 26, 2021, at 6:30pm in Council Chambers.

Planning Commission/Design Review Board: Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at 5:00pm in Council Chambers.

Records Commission: Thursday, October 27, 2021, at 9:00am in the Main Conference Room.