



CITY OF HURON
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

September 24, 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 begin earlier this week.

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: After issuance of an RFP, receipt of five (5) proposals and conducting in person interviews with three (3) firms, staff has made its recommendation to Council for a development firm. On September 28, staff will be recommending NAI Harmon Group, from the Toledo area, as the preferred developer for the site. The review/selection committee felt that NAI Harmon Group, and their architectural and construction team had tremendous vision for the site and an eager willingness to take feedback during the design process. This coupled with their expertise proved to be major factors in the committee's recommendation to Council. The companies will be making a joint presentation to Council tomorrow that will give everyone a background on the development team and also a high level vision/conceptual design for the site. Staff is hoping to receive Council's blessing on the recommendation and begin the negotiation process with the Company. We also will ensure adequate opportunities for public, Council, Planning Commission, etc...to provide feedback on the ultimate final design, greenspace design and site plan over the next few months.

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: Installation of the new streetlights as part of Route 6 Phase I is substantially complete. Crews have been mobilized for approximately 3 weeks and hope to be completed in the next week or so. First Energy will then follow to remove the older light along the corridor with hopes of having the entire project wrapped up in late early October.

Rt. 6 Striping: Pending ODOT final approval, which should come in the next few days, final striping should be occurring on Route 6 within the next two weeks. Final striping is anticipated to take up to five (5) entire days to complete.

Mucci Farms: On Wednesday, September 23rd, Mucci Farms requested permission to begin lighting their facility starting at 5:00am on Thursday, September 24th due to the inclement weather. While the current lighting plan allows lighting to begin on October 1st, the administration did not see any reason why they couldn't start lighting during the early morning hours just over a week early, and approved the request. Mike Spacek was consulted and confirmed that the recent HPP meter upgrade was complete and ready to handle the increased load.

ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

Firelands Scientific: On September 22, Firelands Scientific presented conceptual plans to the Planning Commission to solicit feedback prior to full site plan submission. As presented, the Company is exploring the addition of over 50,000 additional square feet of growing space, office

and warehousing, as well as the addition of approximately 250 parking spaces on on-site retention measures. The Company plans to present a final site plan to Planning Commission at an upcoming meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Fish Cleaning Station: The City has received the fully executed grant agreement back from ODNR for \$500,000. Staff is currently working with OHM to develop a final proposal for 100% design and bidding document preparation. We hope to present that proposal to Council in the next meeting or two for consideration.

FINANCE

2022 Budget Preparation: The Finance Director has been meeting with department directors over the last few months to discuss the 2022 budget. The updated master plan has been a great resource for the administration during these discussions. The first draft of the 2022 budget book is expected to be completed and distributed to City Council and the Finance Committee by early October. The first finance committee meeting to discuss the budget is scheduled for October 18th.

Monthly Financial Report: The August financial report was emailed to the Finance Committee and Council. Income Tax receipts are still up by over 10% from 2020, a good sign for the local economy. Please let the Finance Director know if you would like to see any other information in the monthly financial report.

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. There are no new updates from last management report. Here is what we know as of September 24th:

- 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

Active Projects: The Huron Water Plan will be hosting the students and faculty of the BGSU Firelands Chemistry Department for a water plat tour on September 28th.

PERSONNEL

Director of Operations: Staff has placed advertisement for this position and will conduct its first application review on October 20th. This position is a replacement for the recently vacated Assistant to the City Manager position held by Mike Spafford. 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: The Fire Department held a swearing in ceremony on September 26th for new firefighters Kegan Lobsinger and Mike Clavette. We again want to congratulate them and their families on their hire and wish them well in their careers moving forward.

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**
- HJR Annual Agreement (Recreation) – **Completed.**
- Huron Township Fire Protection Agreement (Fire)
 - Huron and Huron Township have tentatively agreed to the terms of a new Fire Protection Agreement. Legal counsel on both sides are finishing

up updates to the agreement in hopes of having both Council and the Trustees consider the new agreement at meetings in 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 – **Formal Negotiations in Progress.**

UPCOMING MEETINGS

September

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.