

**City of West  
Branch  
Office of the  
City  
Administrator**

To: Mayor and Council

From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator

Date: June 17, 2011

Weekly Council Update

- **Property Tax Update:** The Iowa League of Cities has provided some additional feedback on the commercial and industrial property tax provisions adopted by the Iowa House of Representatives last week. If the property tax legislation that was adopted to HF697 in the Ways and Means Committee on June 6th and amended onto the bill during floor debate on June 8<sup>th</sup> would become law, there would be substantial consequences for the City of West Branch. According to the League of Iowa Cities, West Branch would lose the following revenue due to depressed commercial and industrial taxable valuations:

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| Fiscal Year 2014 | \$15,480 |
| Fiscal Year 2015 | \$30,960 |
| Fiscal Year 2016 | \$46,439 |
| Fiscal Year 2017 | \$61,919 |
| Fiscal Year 2018 | \$77,399 |

These numbers give the Legislature the benefit of the doubt that they would actually backfill a portion of the lost revenue, so the losses could be even greater. Additionally, if commercial and industrial growth occurs, backfill figures would be reduced. These revenue losses would have to be addressed in future annual budgets through a combination of budget cuts and/or property tax increases to our residents.

Due to a lack of legislative action, the League did not send out the *Legislative Link* this week. As the League reported earlier in June, the state government continues to face a shutdown unless a budget is adopted prior to July 1st.

- **Lions Field Parking Project:** Public Works Staff began the Lions Field Parking Lot project this week to concrete the parking area on Pedersen Street adjacent to Lions Field. The rain in the last week has delayed the project slightly, but Public Works will continue to work on the project next week. By completing this project in-house, the City is expected to save over \$10,000.

- **Scott Drive Detention Basin Project:** The Scott Drive detention basin project was completed this week. Over 270 tons of material was removed from the basin to allow for drainage so that the basin can be maintained and function as it was designed. Crews also reset a culvert outlet pipe so that water can properly drain out of the basin and to reduce potential problems with standing water and mosquitoes.
  
- **Bridge Inspection Update:** Calhoun-Burns and Associates, Inc. has received the engineering agreement for the inspection of four bridges in West Branch that the Council approved on May 2, 2011. Calhoun-Burns President Mike Vander Wert, P.E. contacted the City this week and stated that the inspections will take place in June and that the results of the inspections will be delivered to the City by the end of August.
  
- **Animal Control Commission:** The West Branch Animal Control Commission met on Tuesday evening June 14<sup>th</sup>. Present at the meeting were Commission members Alan Beyer, Leesa Johnson, Amy Lynch, Dick Slach, and Gina Heick. Also present were Mayor Don Kessler, City Administrator Matt Muckler and Officer Kory Hanna. The Commission discussed some recommended changes to Chapter 55 (Animal Protection and Control) of the City Code, which will be presented to Council for consideration in July.
  
- **RAGRAI Update:** A food vendor informational meeting was held on Thursday June 16<sup>th</sup>. A representative from the Cedar County Environmental Health Office presented information to interested food vendors. Next week, a planning meeting will be held with potential partners for traffic control for RAGBRAI. Several groups have expressed interest in assisting the Police Department with traffic control including the Lions Club, AmeriCorps, and the National Park Service.
  
- **Library Update:** The Summer Reading Program at the West Branch Public Library continues to be a big draw this year. Current registration number as of June 17th for reading incentives is 322, surpassing the 301 from 2010. On the evening of the 14th, Sarah Subbert from Cedar County Conservation visited the library and talked to young attendees about Native American housing. Also of note, the library had a huge turnout for the Thursday Theater, a weekly movie showing, on June 9th with over 100 attendees trying to fit in the library's community room. As expected, this wasn't an easy or comfortable fit. Programming continues next week with a program every day and a special visit from the Grout Museum's Starlab on Tuesday evening.

**The information provided is one-way communication and should not be discussed among you as this would be a violation of the open meeting law.**