

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

To: Mayor and Council
From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator
Date: May 11, 2012
Weekly Council Update

- **Tom Stewart Resignation:** Officer Tom Stewart announced that he will resign after three years of excellent service to the residents of West Branch. Tom will be missed. We wish him all the best in his new position.
- **West Branch Kids Safety Day:** The West Branch Kids Safety Day will be held on Saturday May 12th from 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the West Branch Fire Department, Village Green and Water Street Parking Lot. The event is being sponsored by the West Branch Police and Fire Departments, the National Park Service, the West Branch Lions Club, the Iowa Bicycle Coalition, World of Bikes, the West Branch PTO, West Branch Boy Scout Troop 156 and local church groups. Kids Safety Day events will include child safety seat checks, a bike rodeo, bike helmets and fitting, a booster seat practice station, bike safety checks, kids fingerprinting, bike registration and the smoke trailer.
- **Natural Gas Rates:** Alliant Energy has plans to file a natural gas rate case with the Iowa Utilities Board within the next 60 days. This is the first time Alliant Energy will adjust its natural gas rates since 2005. Alliant Energy is asking for, on average, a 4-7 percent increase. This could take effect next spring. Before then, Alliant Energy will implement a smaller interim increase. As a part of this adjustment, Alliant Energy is also proposing a cost management plan that will use \$36 million in federal tax benefits to partially mitigate this increase for a yet undetermined duration. All of this is subject to approval from the Iowa Utilities Board.

One of the main reasons for this increase is to recover the costs of safety and infrastructure improvements Alliant Energy has invested since 2005. Another main reason is that customer usage patterns have changed. To reflect these changes, Alliant Energy will adjust the allocation of costs to provide service to each major customer group.

Since 2005, average customer natural gas bills have actually decreased, largely due to lower natural gas prices. On average, annual residential customer bills have dropped almost 19 percent from 2005 to 2011.

- **Library News:** The West Branch Public Library is working on completing several projects this week. The Summer Reading Programs are being finalized and prepared for the community. The week of the 7th, the library will work on getting packets and other information together for distribution and beginning May 14th, the classes at the elementary school will begin coming over to visit the library to hear about the programs. Library volunteers also put in about two hours of work on the planted areas surrounding the library on April 29th until rained out around 3pm. New edging was put in around most of the building and most of the new plants were put into the ground and covered with mulch. About an hour or two of work is left once the ground dries out a bit. The two new computers from the Community Foundation of Cedar County were received and have been in preparation to be put in use by library patrons. This is almost complete and the should both be in use by Monday.

- **Iowa Football Bus Trip:** West Branch Parks and Recreation is offering a bus trip to the Iowa vs. Northern Illinois game at Soldier Field on September 1st. The game time is yet to be decided. We will be taking a Cedar Valley Transit 54-passenger bus. 50 tickets for the game have been secured. The total cost of the trip will be \$120 per participant. The \$120 fee will include the charter bus ride, game ticket, and a light lunch on the bus. The remaining 4 seats on the bus will be \$50 a person and will also include a light meal. I anticipate this will be a popular trip and seats will fill up quickly. A non-refundable deposit of \$70 a person is required to secure your spot on the bus. The remaining payment \$50 is due by August 30th.

- **Administrative Assistant:** Interviews for the part-time temporary administrative assistant position took place today. Four candidates applied for the position. City staff will present a candidate recommendation for Council consideration at the May 21st Council Meeting.

- **Upcoming Events:**

▪ Saturday May 12, 2012	West Branch Kids Safety Day
▪ Monday May 21, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
▪ Tuesday May 22, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.	Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
▪ Monday May 28, 2012	Memorial Day – City Offices Closed
▪ Monday June 4, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
▪ Wednesday June 6, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.	Joint Meeting of the City Council and West Branch School Board
▪ Tuesday June 12, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.	Animal Control Commission Meeting
▪ Monday June 25, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
▪ Monday July 16, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting

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.