

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

To: City Council

From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator

Date: March 8, 2013

Weekly Council Update

- **Dog Park Community Information Meeting:** The Animal Control Commission invites the community to attend a dog park information meeting on Monday, March 11th at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station. The Commission will share plans and new location for the dog park.
- **Public Works Update:** Public Works received the skid loader from Altorfer at the end of February. Staff has made use of it to clean up snow in the downtown area. It has also been great for clean up and continued backfilling of the numerous water main repairs that have occurred this winter. The attachments for the skid loader will be in around the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month. Last week, a water main break occurred on North Maple Street near the school that was repaired during the day. After turning the water back on, another leak was discovered on West Orange Street. Repairs were made to that break and finished up around 1:30 a.m. the following morning. Public Works staff would like to thank Lynch's Excavating for the hard work and long hours they put in on these repairs.
- **Park and Recreation Update:** Park and Rec spring registrations are going well. Girls on the Run is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week and going well. This spring, there are fifteen participants from 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade. This is up from the ten participants we had in the fall. Registration for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade track and field started Thursday evening. Currently there are twenty-four children registered, however more are expected to register next week. The registration closes March 18<sup>th</sup>. The Annual Easter Egg hunt will be Saturday March 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. sharp at the Elementary School Playground. The Easter Bunny will once again make an appearance.
- **Certified Budgets Delivered:** The certified copy of the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Annual Budget was hand-delivered to the Cedar County Auditor's Office by the Deputy City Clerk this morning. The electronic copy of the certified budget was sent to the Iowa Department of Management this morning.
- **Annual Audit Delivered:** The annual audit was delivered this week. Hardcopies will be distributed with Council Packets next week. The electronic version is now available on the City Website (see below).

- **Library After Hours:** The West Branch Public Library held the first Friday night program for adults, Library After Hours, on February 22nd. The library had thirteen adults in attendance to discuss organization. Host Linda Stoolman provided ideas on how to organize everything from incoming home paperwork, household schedules, and photographs. Response to the program was very positive and among others in attendance, the library staff, itself, has been inspired to better organize office and desk space. We are look forward to the next Library After Hours on April 5th where host Diane Heick will discuss plants and gardening. All interested parties are definitely encouraged to attend!

- **City Finance Webpage Updated:** Several updates and additions have been made to the City *Finance* webpage: <http://westbranchiowa.org/departments/finances>. In addition to all fiscal year (FY) 2012 reports now being available, the FY 2014 budget has been added. Annual audits dating back to FY 2004 have been placed on the site. The newly required Urban Renewal Report and TIF Indebtedness Certifications are also available. This webpage truly is a one-stop shop for all financial information concerning the City of West Branch. Residents are encouraged to review all of the City's financial information.

- **Water Utility Liens on Commercial Properties:** The Iowa League of Cities provided an update this week on legislation concerning water utility liens: “HSB200 moved through subcommittee and the House Local Government Committee under the deadline. The bill allows owners of commercial property to notify cities that their tenants are responsible for the water usage to avoid water utility property liens for unpaid bills. Under Section 384.84, subsection 4 of the *Code of Iowa*, a city has the ability to certify unpaid utility bills to the county treasurer so that they become a lien upon the property served by the utility. During the 2012 session, an exemption from this utility lien was expanded to include other utility services, including the services of sewer systems, storm water drainage systems, sewage treatment systems, solid waste collection systems and solid waste disposal systems. The city could require a 90-day deposit from the tenant as security but once that notice was given by the landlord, the city could not place a lien for unpaid utility charges against that property. HSB200 would extend the utility lien exemption for residential rental property under Section 384.84, subsection 4.d. to commercial rental property. This would likely result in a substantial increase in the number utility accounts covered by the utility lien exemption. The League is registered opposed to the bill.”

- **Upcoming Events:**

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| ▪ Monday March 11 <sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.   | Dog Park Community Info Meeting        |
| ▪ Tuesday March 12 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.  | Animal Control Commission Meeting      |
| ▪ Thursday March 14 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. | Library Board of Trustees Meeting      |
| ▪ Monday March 18 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.   | City Council Meeting                   |
| ▪ Monday March 25 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.   | Zoning Board of Adjustment Meeting     |
| ▪ Tuesday March 26 <sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.  | Planning and Zoning Commission 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.**