

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

To: City Council

From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator

Date: April 26, 2013

Weekly Council Update

- **Summer Calendar:** The summer activities calendar is now on the Park & Rec Department Page on the City Website. This includes information for various school camps and programs sponsored by the West Branch Public Library, National Park Service, Scattergood and the West Branch Park & Recreation Department. Citizens are able to click on an event and will be directed towards more information or a registration form. The calendar is in PDF format for easy printing. Other community groups are welcome to add programs to the calendar by contacting Park & Rec Director Melissa Russell at (319) 643-4212 or via e-mail at recdirector@westbranchiowa.org. The calendar is subject to change as more activities are added.
- **COPS Grant:** The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) announced this week that grant applications for FY 2013 are now being accepted. The COPS Hiring Program provides for the hiring and rehiring of additional career law enforcement officers in an effort to create and preserve jobs and increase their community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. There were some substantial changes in the grant as presented this year. Most notably, local communities who are awarded the grant would match 25% of the cost of a new officer for the first three years of the grant period. As in past years, the local government would also agree to fully fund the officer position for the fourth year. The maximum award amount for the FY 2013 COPS Grant is \$125,000. Applications for the COPS Hiring Program are due by May 22nd, so there is a very short window of opportunity to apply for the grant this year. Staff is working to explore different options that are available to the City in putting together a grant application.
- **Park & Rec Summer Programs:** West Branch Park & Rec summer program information and registration forms are now on the City Website including Tball, Swimming Lessons, a Lost Island Water Park Trip, Day Camp, Twisters, Jungle Gym, Tumble on West Branch, and Lunch Bunch. This season, Parks and Recreation is experimenting with an online registration option. Payments will still need to be received at West Branch City Office, however registration can be completed either online or with a printable form. Hopefully this will simplify the registration process for participants and city staff in the future.

- **Library Building Project Design Charrettes:** The West Branch Public Library's design charrette process was held this week over the 23rd and 24th. Five members of FEH Associates as well as the library's consultant, George Lawson, were present at the library throughout the full two days providing initial sketches on the top ranking sites from prior meetings. An update on the event will be provided at an upcoming council meeting once images from the charrette are available.
- **Altorfer Site Plan:** The Planning & Zoning Commission met on Tuesday evening and recommended approval of the revised site plan for Altorfer, Inc, contingent upon a city engineer review to ensure all stormwater management requirements have been met. Revisions included shifting the location of the building to the north and expanding the building by approximately 5,000 square feet. The revised site plan will be considered by the City Council at the May 6, 2013 Council Meeting.
- **Iowa League of Cities End of Session Updates:** Next Friday, May 3rd, marks the scheduled end of the 110-day legislative session. There are many details that remain to be decided before the end of the session, including completion of the overall state budget.

Property Tax Bill

The Senate came into session briefly on Thursday to reject the House's property tax amendments to SF295 and send the bill back to the House. The differing proposals are headed to a Conference Committee but those details have not yet been released.

Utility Liens for Commercial Property on Water Usage

HF 524 was unanimously passed by the Senate on Monday and will now move to the Governor for signature. The bill extends the utility lien exemption and allows owners of commercial rental property to notify cities that their tenants are responsible for the water usage to avoid water utility property liens for unpaid bills. The League has registered opposed to the bill.

- **Upcoming Events:**

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ Saturday April 27 th | City Wide Garage Sale |
| ▪ Saturday April 27 th , 10:00-2:00 | Prescription Drug Disposal Event |
| ▪ Monday April 29 th - all day | Earth Day Tree Planting Event |
| ▪ Saturday May 4 th | City Wide Clean Up – Water St. Parking Lot |
| ▪ Monday May 6 th at 7:00 p.m. | City Council Meeting |
| ▪ Tuesday May 7 th at 7:00 p.m. | Park & Recreation Commission Meeting |
| ▪ Thursday May 9 th , 6:30 p.m. | Library Board of Trustees Meeting |
| ▪ Tuesday May 14 th at 6:30 p.m. | Animal Control Commission Meeting |
| ▪ Monday May 20 th at 7:00 p.m. | City Council Meeting |
| ▪ Thursday May 23rd at 6:30 p.m. | Preservation Commission Meeting |
| ▪ Tuesday May 28th at 6:30 p.m. | Planning & 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.