

To: City Council

From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator

Date: October 4, 2013

Weekly Council Update

- **Zoning Board of Adjustment Update:** The Zoning Board of Adjustment approved a variance of City Code Section 165.11.4 to allow for a retaining wall to be located in the side yard at 203 Ridge View Drive by a 3-2 vote at their meeting on Monday September 30, 2013.
- **Nuisance Abatements:** A magistrate judge found in favor of the City of West Branch on a municipal infraction for a nuisance abatement at 203 E. Green Street. The judge ruled that the City of West Branch was to abate the nuisance. The nuisance was abated and the cost of the clean-up was billed to the property owner. On another former nuisance issue, the new owners of 315 E. Main Street have done a tremendous job in cleaning up their new property. Junk and weeds have been removed from the property and an accessible fire exit is currently in the process of being constructed.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funds:** The East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) has announced the opportunity for local governments to apply for regional Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Transportation Alternatives (TAP) funding. While the East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) serves as the Council of Government organization for the City of West Branch for most of the services, ECICOG provides the City of West Branch with transportation services. The TAP program is intended for construction, planning and/or design of non-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclist and other non-motorized forms of transportation. Other eligible uses include construction or non-construction projects under the Safe Routes to Schools program, and turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas associated with designated Scenic Byways. During this application cycle, approximately \$154,000 is available for programming. Pre-application is required by October 31, 2013, and completed applications are due back to ECICOG by December 16, 2013.
- **Cancellation of October 7th Council Meeting:** Due to the staff time necessary to prepare for several recent meetings, the October 7th City Council Meeting has been cancelled.

- **Poplar Street Project:** Lynch's Excavating installed a new 6" water main from Main Street, north on Poplar to the City Office. Three valves were installed at the intersection of Main and Poplar. A boil order was issued for residents and businesses in the area on Tuesday and then lifted on Thursday. Public Works staff will be replacing the parking lot adjacent to the City Office in the coming weeks. The water main project will continue as well. Lynch's is scheduled to connect the north end of the new water main to existing main that runs north to Oliphant Street Field, connect the water service to the City Office and disconnect the old water main on Main Street. The disconnection of the old water main will require a boil order to be issued for the 200 block of W. Main Street, all of Wetherell Street, the 100 block of North Oliphant Street, the 100 block of Poplar Street, and Poplar Trace in the National Historic Site on Thursday October 10th. Those residents were notified earlier today of the pending boil order.
- **West Branch Preservation Commission:** The Preservation Commission approved a sign permit for the new quilt store, Colton Creek Mill Quilt Shoppe, which will be located at 108 W. Main Street. We welcome owner Tami Urmie to West Branch and wish her the best of luck with her business on Main Street.
- **ICCSPPPI:** Iowa Certified Construction Site Pollution Prevention Inspector (ICCSPPPI) Training will take place on Wednesday November 13th in Ankeny. The training includes regulatory requirements, erosion processes, basic hydrology, new topsoil requirements, practices for pollution prevention and stormwater management, and the duties and responsibilities of inspectors with guidance on what to inspect and when to respond. Those seeking ICCSPPI certification must pass the written exam at the end of the day and sign the code of ethics. Both Matt Goodale and Paul Stagg will be completing this training and certification program.
- **Family Movie Night:** The West Branch Public Library will be holding its first Family Movie Night of the year this Saturday, the 5th, at 7:00 p.m. As always, the movie is a newly released title appropriate for viewers of all ages. For title details, please contact the library at 643-2633 or by email at staff@westbranch.lib.ia.us. Popcorn and refreshments will be provided. Several technology improvements will also be coming soon to the library. The WBPL website will be updated this weekend to provide a mobile site for viewing on cell phones and tablet computers. Also, NEIBORS, the library's downloadable ebook and audiobook service will soon allow users to directly renew items they have checked out. While both small improvements, we hope that they will both make the use of the library a bit more convenient for our community.
- **Trick or Treat and Halloween Event:** Trick or Treat will take place on Halloween, Thursday October 31st from 5:30-8:00 p.m. The Annual Costume Contest and Chili Supper will be on October 31st at the West Branch Fire Department. Supper will be served from 5:00-7:30 and the costume contest will

start at 7:30. This is a community event sponsored by West Branch Parks and Recreation, West Branch Fire Department, West Branch Public Library, and Main Street West Branch. Supper will consist of a bowl of soup or hotdog, drink, cookie and roll for \$5.00 or \$20.00 for a family. Downtown businesses will be open for Trick or Treat on Halloween and Bethany Lutheran Church is planning a Trick or Treat event for their parking lot.

- **IDNR Big Picture Watershed Workshop:** The DNR will hold a workshop in Marion on November 18th on a watershed approach to community planning. Comprehensive land use planning and watershed management have a lot in common, but they don't always get done at the same time for the same reasons. This one-day training will provide an overview on watershed issues including plans, policies and practices that enhance watershed planning and management. Council members interested in attending are encouraged to contact Shanelle in the City Office before November 10th. Planning & Zoning Commission members will also be invited.

- **Park RFQ:** The Park and Recreation commission narrowed the applicant field for the comprehensive park plan down to three vendors. The various commission members will be calling the references listed on the firms' proposals. Interviews have been scheduled for Thursday October 10th at 5:30, 6:30, and 7:30 at the West Branch Public Library Community Room. Each vendor will have the opportunity to give a presentation up to thirty minutes followed by a question and answer time. Questions for the vendors will be based on the criteria that was laid out in the RFQ including firm's past experience with similar projects, the firm's experience with community engagement, the availability and capability of the firm's staff, the ability of the firm to work with various city staff and commission members, the firm's technical and financial resources, the firm's familiarity with the City of West Branch, and the firm's ability to complete the project in a timely manner and within budget. The Park and Recreation Commission will discuss the vendors at the next meeting on Thursday October 17th and have a recommendation for the City Council at the October 21st City Council Meeting.

- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Monday October 7th City Council Meeting - CANCELLED
 - Tuesday October 8th at 6:30 p.m. Animal Control Commission Meeting
 - Thursday October 10th, 6:30 p.m. Library Board of Trustees Meeting
 - Thursday October 10th, 5:30 p.m. Park & Rec RFQ Vendor Interviews
 - Tuesday October 15th at 6:30 p.m. Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
 - Monday October 21st 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.