



West Branch City Council
City Administrator's Report
2/4/20

Pending Action Items:

(Wastewater Topic)

We are continuing to gather data and looking for ways to strengthen our results. It should be noted once again that the Baldrige project was able to turn around a difficult lagoon environment into an environment that met the new state required level. This was achieved with a lagoon that is still only operating at 75% of its efficiency. The lagoon is approximately only 5 feet deep when it should be 15 feet deep. So, if we can continue to eat away at the volatile sludge (the sludge that can be digested by the enzymes) and we eventually dredge the non-volatile sludge (the man made items plastics, latex, and etc.) we will have storage for warmer water for the enzymes to work in. Thus, strengthen our system to better operate in the colder weather. Baldrige will be out of the country for the month of February but he has showed us how to introduce the enzymes upstream (lift station and other key sewer line locations) to allow the enzymes warmer temperture to work before getting to the lagoons. V&K has made overtures to representatives with Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and they are willing to listen and review more data from our project. DNR would like to see our cold month data. Baldrige Environmental will continue to work to improve its cold month data with process and mythology trials. DNR has a process that if we can prove the positive results in the cold months, then we can get approved for a formal DNR pilot study which would give us another year in our compliance plan.

(College Street Bridge)

We are still waiting for the State to conduct their final project audit, before we can process the final billing. We hope that we will get anywhere from \$80,000 - \$85,000 back from our retainage. This could bring our remaining project balance to \$250,000 or less. We anticipate paying the balance down with \$100,000 from Road Use tax (which maybe in two payment for cash flow reasons), and we have already declared \$75,000 in Tax Increment Financing Asking's. This could leave us with a balance of approximately \$75,000 which could come from future TIF asking or payment from Water or Sewer funds (since portions of this project involved these infrastructure items). V&K has conducted a walk-through with the contractor and Iowa Department of Transportation. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns; please do not hesitate to contact the city's project engineers.

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(Cubby Park)

The West Branch Lions Club and Bayer have indicated that they are interested in donating a total of \$5,000 to the West Branch Splash Pad project.



This would bring our total to \$5,048.00. Our goal is \$170,000 for a splash pad that uses recirculates water system. A pass through water system would cost less but would be less environmentally friendly and could hurt the City's ability to expand its water permit as the city continues to grow.

I have prepared a letter to the Carver Trust and have received a call from Lynne Sasmazer, the program director. She informed me that the city's request would likely be well received; however the funding request would have to be capped at \$25,000, and we could only make the request after we have raised 50% of the project cost. Currently, that goal would be \$85,000 of which we have raised \$5,000.

Report from the Desk of the City Administrator:

- After visiting with ECIA and DNR Administrators who coordinate the grant it was concluded that our project although eligible would not likely rank high enough to be funded under the Community Catalyst Grant. It was recommended that we seek the Main Street Challenge Grant; however, after visiting with state program managers it was determined that this also would not rank well. At this time, we will not be billed for any of the work ECIA has started.

Follow up / Reminder Items:

- Downtown East Redevelopment Site. It has been determined that the city can be reimbursed if the rock material remains on the site. However we MUST have a third party weighing process that is accepted by DNR. It was stressed that we need to have tickets that verify the material to be removed. This process will only account for a potential \$25,000. The other \$25,000 it be expense to the removal of the structures deconstructed this is to include the concrete foundation and surround structures including drives and foundations.
- Dollar General Items. The developer is working through couple of items and is waiting to hear from the city regarding conditions.
- Still working on Nuisance Enforcement Letters Completed see letters attached. Please find attached a draft "COURTESY NOTICE OF VIOLATION" and "NOTICE OF VIOLATION". I will be filling out the code violations section and sending out courtesy letters later this week. We will also be working to place an article in the West Branch Times with a public education advertisement. It is on our web site, but we are working to place on our news feed (which shows on our first page of the web site). We will also mirror our efforts on the city's Facebook and Police Department sites. I believe we wanted to run these activities for 30 – 60 days? If you would like our courtesy period to be longer or shorter please let me know. Thank you for your attention and feedback in this matter.
- Still working on New Garbage Renewal Process – The RFP has gone out.
- I Met with the Iowa Great Places Committee, and requested the committee to consider two potential projects that potentially could be the center point of our next Great Place Grant Application. 1) Funding for splash pad with theme that could tie in other water features around the county; and/or funding for digital tourism kiosks network that will tie-in local sites, businesses, and tourist venues.

Coming Events:

- None