



West Branch City Council
City Administrator's Report
3/02/20

Pending Action Items:

(Wastewater Topic)

Told Baldrige is on travel back to the States and may have to go through a screening process before reentering the country or the state. He is not ill, but will have to go through observation. In the meantime, we will be looking to schedule a meeting with Baldrige Environmental and V&K sometime at the end of the month.

(College Street Bridge) – No New Update

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.

Dave Schechinger, P.E.
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319-466-1000

Eric Gould
egould@v-k.net
319-466-1000

(Cubby Park) Splash Pad – No new Update

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.

Report from the Desk of the City Administrator:

- **Reminder New Councilmembers:** Please set up time with Nick for website pictures.
- **RFP for Trash Collection and Recycling Service.** We received proposals from
 1. Johnson County Refuge
 2. ABC Disposal
 3. Waste Management
 4. Republic Services

Staff will be working through the various options for collection services, and will have a staff recommendation at our March 16th meeting. As a note: there were no bids that offered sticker option. Most offered 5 year agreements and one offered a 5 year and a 8 year agreement.

- **I know that many of you maybe concerned about the Coronavirus** and I wanted to share some information with you. I encourage all of you to use the **CDC website** to get the most accurate information as we move forward and I will keep you updated if we need to do anything else. For now we should know that some basic facts about the coronavirus. It is highly contagious respiratory illness. As of February 28th (last Friday) there have been a no cases in our state (See Attachment 1). However, these event change rapidly. For now here are the basic facts:

1. The coronavirus is a highly contagious respiratory illness.
2. The best thing you can do to protect yourself, your team and your family is:
 - a. Wash your hands thoroughly and often, particularly after you have touched a public area. Hand sanitizer can help but it is not as good as washing your hands. I like to sign the alphabet when I wash my hands to ensure I'm being thorough.
 - b. Consider not shaking hands and do an elbow bump instead.
 - c. Disinfect areas of our offices often.
 - d. Cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough (and wash your hands).
 - e. Avoid touching your eyes or mouth.
3. STAY HOME when you are sick or to care for someone in your family. We have a very generous sick policy – use it!

For more information please see the following links: <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus> and/or <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

Follow up / Reminder Items:

- Legal question regarding the **city's obligation to maintain alleys**. There was a legal assertion that the city is not maintaining its alleys in accordance with the city or state code. Upon review of the City attorney the argument that has an obligation is true but it doesn't mandate at what standard the maintenance must exhibit. In other words the fact that we continually replace the gravel that washes out from the alley satisfies the legal requirement for maintenance. There alley improvement beyond basic standards of maintenance is not required by law.
- "Greater Attention on Code Enforcement" article has been submitted to the West Branch Times should be published in the near future. Four more curtsey letters are expected to go out this week (*Draft submitted attachment 2*).
- **Still working.** Cedar/Johnson County Road Question regarding Speed limit. We have received complaints that the Speed limit traveling south is 35 mph (Johnson County Jurisdiction). Yet, on the east side of the road traveling north the speed limit is 25mph (City of West Branch Jurisdiction). We found a 28e agreement from 1977 that gives the responsibility of all maintenance including erecting and maintenance of signs to the City.
- I will be attending the Iowa Municipal Management Institute March 18-20; Topics include: Successful Management Strategies, Economic Development Challenges & Opportunities, Inclusive Organizations, Social Media Management, and Dealing with the Pressures of City Management.
- I will be attending the East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) and Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) will offer a free workshop for local floodplain management officials: 10:00am - 2:30pm on Tuesday, March 31st ECIA Office Conference Room, 7600 Commerce Park Dubuque, Iowa

Coming Events:

- On **Tuesday, MARCH 3rd, 2020 at 10am** at the Cedar County Courthouse - MCM Consulting, the vendor that has been working on the study of the Cedar County radio network, will be giving a presentation as to their recommendations as to the Cedar County 911 Network.
- Meeting with the National Park Service – Project Coordinators March 4th @ 11:00 am

- Hoover Hometown Meeting March 12th, 2020 at 11am in the West Branch City Council Chambers.
- ECIA will be holding free “Council Effectiveness Training” March 19th or March 22nd.
- Happy Retirement for Tim Malott 1pm -4 pm Cedar County EMA Offices 1410 Cedar Street, Tipton

Have trouble viewing? click [here!](#)

Please Join us for a **FREE** training! Council Effectiveness

This training will help shorten the learning curve for new board/council members and help deepen the understanding of those who are veterans to the board/council.

Eric Christianson with the Iowa State Extension will be providing in site on:

- Legal responsibilities of elected officials
- Open Meetings/Open Records
- Ethics
- Provide valuable tools to help work cohesively as a group and make the best decisions for your communities
- Help uphold the public's trust in you and help you better serve the community

Please RSVP to: hmcpherson@ecia.org

Thursday, March 19th
5:30pm - Light Dinner
6pm - 8pm - Training
ECIA Offices
7600 Commerce Park
Dubuque, Iowa 52002
RSVP by: 3/9/20



Wednesday, April 22nd
5:30pm - Light Dinner
6pm - 8pm - Training
Clinton Community College
Main Office -Room 139
1000 Lincoln Blvd.
Clinton, Iowa
RSVP by: 4/17/20



STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses like 2019 novel coronavirus.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information: www.cdc.gov/nCoV



2019-nCoV: What the public should do

The current outbreak of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was first identified in China but has now spread internationally, impacting an increasing number of countries. Sustained community spread is occurring in China. Limited person-to-person spread, most associated with close contact with a patient with confirmed 2019-nCoV, has been seen outside of China. No community spread of 2019-nCoV has been identified in the United States at this time.

In the coming days and weeks, we expect more confirmed cases in the United States, including some person-to-person spread. The goal of CDC's aggressive ongoing public health response is to prevent spread of 2019-nCoV in the United States.

What you should do

- **STAY INFORMED** – CDC is updating its website daily with the latest information and advice for the public. (www.cdc.gov/ncov)
- **REMEMBER TO TAKE EVERYDAY PREVENTIVE ACTIONS** that are always recommended to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.
 - » Avoid close contact with sick people.
 - » While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible.
 - » Stay home if you are sick.
 - » Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands; germs spread this way.
 - » Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs.
 - » Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol.
- **IF YOU FEEL SICK** with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, and have traveled to China or were in close contact with someone with 2019-nCoV in the 14 days before you began to feel sick, seek medical care. Before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.

What you should not do

- **DO NOT** travel to China.
- **DO NOT** use facemasks. CDC does not recommend the use of facemasks for the **general U.S. public** to prevent the spread of 2019-nCoV.
- **DO NOT** show prejudice to people of Asian descent, because of fear of this new virus. Do not assume that someone of Asian descent is more likely to have 2019-nCoV.

All persons in the U.S.—including those of Asian descent—who have not traveled to China or been in contact with someone with a confirmed or suspected nCoV case in the last 14 days are at low risk of becoming sick.





Protecting and Improving the Health of Iowans

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

There is an expanding global outbreak of a respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus. The disease the virus causes has been named COVID-19. While most COVID-19 cases are associated with travel to or from China, person-to-person spread is now being reported in other places, including [Hong Kong](#), Iran, Italy, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand. There are currently no cases of COVID-19 in Iowa, and there is no person-to-person spread in the U.S. For the general public, who are unlikely to be exposed to the virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is low.

The Iowa Dept. of Public Health will update the following chart with numbers of Iowans being monitored and tested for COVID-19 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

February 28, 2020

People Being Monitored by Public Health	
Asymptomatic (no symptoms)	13
Symptomatic (with symptoms) & being tested	0
Completed public health monitoring	31

COVID-19 Testing in Iowa	
Positive	0
Negative	3
Pending	0
Total	3

Monitoring began February 3, 2020, in accordance with recommendations from the President's Task Force on Coronavirus.

PERSPECTIVES

GREATER ATTENTION ON CODE ENFORCEMENT IS COMING.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REDMOND JONES II

Spring is coming and the City of West Branch Nuisance Committee would like to notify everyone that we will begin diligently enforcing the newly adopted City Nuisance Ordinances. We will be focusing on safety and improving community appearance by working with citizens and property owners to improve and maintain property aesthetics and value.

Our new code enforcement approach has updated our procedures in the way nuisance issues are adjudicated. Instead of just waiting for the lengthy process of working through District Court only, the state code gives us the ability to setup a local nuisance appeal board that can assist in making summary judgments. Although these judgement can ultimately be appealed to District Court, in many cases local appeal boards help communities address nuisance issues faster and with more collaboration with property owners notified of code violations.



How it works? If you are in violation of a city code, you will be notified by certified mail as a courtesy. It is not required. It is intended to advise that a violation of law or municipal code has been observed. If the property owner does not accept certified mail or any other permissible attempt at notification, or perform the necessary action required to correct the violation. The city may perform the required action via city staff or by contractor, and assess the cost against the property for collection in the same manner as a property tax.

Any person ordered to abate a nuisance may request a hearing with the newly formed Nuisance Hearing Committee as to whether a nuisance exists. At the conclusion of the hearing, the hearing committee shall render a decision. The findings of the hearing committee shall be conclusive and, if a nuisance is found to exist, abatement shall be ordered in a timeframe determined by the committee. Any further appeal or appeal of the Hearing Committee's decision maybe had by filing a claim with the District Court.

The penalties for ignoring abatement orders has also been strengthened. Penalties can be reflected in three areas: Criminal, Civil, and Administrative. Depending on the violation an offense could involve all three potential penalties. For example a nuisance that violates state law, and municipal code that would also incur the expenses to the city for adjudicating the abatement. Depending on the case, the fines can range from \$250 - \$1,375; this is in addition to any abatement expense needed to correct violations.

*For more information, please see our website at: www.westbranchiowa.org
Or You may contact our city offices at: 319-643-5888*