
MEMORANDUM



TO: Mayor Walker and Councilors
FROM: M McPherson, City Administrator
SUBJECT: **Bi-Weekly Administrator's Report**
DATE: September 26, 2023

I have the following observations and information to share from the last update:

Airport

I shared the Council's concern regarding the addition of the apron/tie down area expansion with KLJ. It was not included in the proposed 2024 Airport CIP budget.

We are still seeking applicants to fill the vacancy on the Airport Advisory Board.

Cannabis Regulation

On September 14, Sherburne County hosted a TEAMS meeting with various cities and township representatives to discuss where all the jurisdictions are at with their cannabis regulations. As with most issues, everyone seems to be at different stages and have different approaches. Some cities were waiting on the County to get its ordinances in place. There was significant discussion regarding who enforces which ordinance for County facilities in various cities. There didn't seem to be a clear answer.

Infrastructure

WSB, on behalf of Mille Lacs County, held a public open house September 12 for the proposed 2026 County Road 3 reconstruction project. There was not a large attendance, but there are also not a lot of property owners adjacent to the corridor either.

September 18 staff met with the County Engineer for a fall-check-in. The largest agenda items was a review of the CSAH 4/7th Avenue project, specifically the funding breakdown. The City will be applying for grant dollars to assist with the funding for the roundabout at 12th Street/7th Avenue. We have also reached out to the School District for possible participation as one "leg" of the intersection serves the schools. We hope to have the agreement between the City and County for funding approved in late October/early November. Other topics that were discussed included the roundabout at 21st Avenue/1st Street, the process of hiring a County Engineer, and the possibility of the City performing snow removal activities on Rum River Drive and 1st Street.

September 19 staff met with Superintendent Barton regarding the possibility of "flipping" the stop signs on 8th Street/6th Avenue South. Traffic has been backing up in the High School Parking lot (as it should) as students queue to leave north on 8th Street. Changing the location of the stop signs would create unimpeded straight travel to 1st Street. The consensus was to revisit this topic after additional time has passed; it is likely that students will find that travel south to Tiger Boulevard is an option and some traffic equilibrium will be achieved.

Finance

The audit is complete.

Annual Fire Billing

It was brought to my attention by PFRD Captain Mellgren that when calculating the annual billing to the townships, staff (me) used the full net tax capacity for Spencer Brook and Wyanett Townships. As a result, their portion was higher than in past years, which finally answers the question as to why they saw such a huge increase.

Staff recalculated the billing using the correct percentage of net tax capacity (revised bill attached). The net result is that Blue Hill, Bogus Brook, Greenbush, Princeton Townships and the City of Princeton should be paying additional and the two noted townships should receive a refund. I am recommending that we not collect any additional funds but that we do refund the overage as it is quite significant.

At the request of the PFRD Executive Board, I also calculated the 2023 bill for 2022 services using the MAT contract components (also attached). The increases to the above townships and the City are even greater under this billing method. I have not shared this with the Fire Advisory Board representatives, but I will do so.

Mille Lacs County

Staff discovered unpaid invoices from 2019 for snow removal services. They were sent to the County Administrator in the hopes of receiving payment and to possibly open the door for discussions regarding snow removal services by the City. To date, no response has been received.

Upcoming Meetings and Reminders:

- September 30 – Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge Wildlife Festival 10 am to 2 pm; this notice was sent previously by email.
- Week of October 16 – there will be short duration outages as PUC completes breaker tests at the plant. They are working with large users in their service territory to plan for these outages.