



TO: Mayor and City Commission  
FROM: Paul Preston  
SUBJECT: Status Report – April 2006

It is my pleasure to submit for your review my monthly status report. If there are any issues on which you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

1. **Canora Boys And Girls Chorus**

We are pleased to advise you that beginning April 29<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting a delegation from our Sister City of Okaya. There will be 45 junior and senior high school students and 24 adults, who will be spending four days in Mt. Pleasant. The Chorus will perform with the Mt. Pleasant High School Concert Choir at 7:00 p.m. on Monday evening, May 1<sup>st</sup>. The delegation will visit City Hall beginning at 3:00 p.m. on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and their visit will include a walking tour of Island and Nelson Parks. We will be pleased to show them the trees that were donated by their City and the commemoration plaque that was placed there last April. On Tuesday they will visit the Ziibiwing Center and give a short concert there, and in the afternoon they will visit Maplewood Assisted Living Center and again give a short concert for the elderly residents.

The Chorus was here in 1999 and they give an excellent concert. I would urge you to attend the concert as I know you will enjoy it.

2. **Police And Fire Negotiations**

We continue to negotiate with these bargaining units, and have reached a point where we will be seeking the assistance of a mediator. We are scheduled for the end of the month with the firefighters and towards the end of May with the police and command officers.

3. **Tribal Lawsuit**

City Attorney Steve Martineau has been in touch with Tony Adams, who is the Assistant Attorney General representing the State in the Tribal lawsuit. I have copies of the pleadings and the briefs in the office if you would like to see them. It would appear that the biggest concern in the lawsuit deals with enforcement of local laws on Tribal members on Reservation land. Obviously there are other ramifications that Steve will discuss further with the Attorney General.

It appears from the material in the briefs and pleadings that this will be a lengthy process in that all relevant material does not need to be submitted to the judge until May of 2007. The case is being heard in Federal Court in Bay City.

4. **Fluoride**

Gladys Mitchell has presented proposed language for a referendum to Rob Flynn. Essentially what it seeks to do is have the voters repeal our current ordinance and prohibit us from adding "fluorine-containing substances" to the City water supply. Once the language is approved, I assume she will seek the 500 signatures required to place this on the ballot. If she is successful in getting the required 500 signatures, the initiative will be on the November ballot.

5. **Cellular Towers**

As you will recall, we have entered into an agreement with Verizon to construct and then deed to the City two cellular towers, one at the DPW and the other in Industrial Park-South. Both towers have been installed, and they are now setting up the equipment at the base of the towers for their operation. At this point I do not know when they will become fully operational. As you will recall, not only will Verizon use the towers but we have the authority to lease space on the towers to other users.

6. **Unsafe Structure At 607 And 611 North Washington**

As you know, the Building Safety Department has been proceeding toward either restoration or removal of the buildings on that property. The Department has been moving forward to try to have this situation corrected and is working with the property owner's attorney and the City Attorney in the hope of resolving this matter.

7. **Federal Cable Franchise Bill**

You may have received this information from the Michigan Municipal League, but it is my understanding that the U.S. House Of Representatives Committee On Energy And Commerce is expected to vote on this bill the week of April 24<sup>th</sup>. Essentially what this legislation would do is eliminate local control of the franchise process; fail to provide sufficient enforcement authority by local units of government over the use of our rights-of-way; and limit revenues from the five percent gross revenue cap on franchise fees by excluding certain

services currently included in the revenue base, which will obviously have a negative impact on our ability to operate MAC3TV. It also does not protect Michigan's Metro Act, from which we receive approximately \$80,000 to \$90,000 a year for our budget. As you know, the City Commission has passed resolutions opposing this legislation, and they have been sent to our representatives and senators.

8. **Budget Work Session**

We would like to schedule a meeting on the proposed 2007 Budget as well as a follow-up to our revenue enhancement work session that was held a few weeks ago. Would you please bring your calendars with you Monday night so that we can pick a date and time that would be convenient for all of you. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

9. **Construction Projects**

We are in the process of beginning our construction projects for this construction season. One of the projects is already almost nearing completion, and that is the relining of the Elizabeth Street sewer. Over the next few weeks we will be taking bids for our other projects. As you know, Duane Ellis keeps us well-informed through his monthly status report.

10. **Ranney Well Repair**

As you may recall from a previous status report, we were having some difficulty with the Ranney Well repair. The building has been settling and we hired a consultant and a contractor to make the repairs. The design that the contractor has proposed to our consultant did not meet with their approval, so the contractor has hired a different engineer and hopefully we can move forward with this repair.

11. **Work Session On Capital Improvement Plan**

We will hold a work session on the proposed capital improvement plan at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

12. **Project 2000 Tax Case**

As I have indicated, all of the briefs and responses have been filed at the Supreme Court within the proper time frame. I was hoping to have received word of a scheduled hearing date by now, but that is not the case. Therefore, all we can do is sit and wait to see when they will hear our case. Obviously I will let everyone know as soon as I know.

13. **Board Of Review**

Lansing is at it again. According to Dave Rowley legislation is being introduced that would change the process to appeal property assessments. Commercial, industrial and developmental property assessments would be appealed directly to the Tax Tribunal, while residential property appeals would still be heard at the local level. The Assessors' Association is opposed to such a change. One of their concerns is that the Tax Tribunal could be handling an appeal of property located in the City and we may not even know about it. We will probably be hearing more about this from the MML.

PLP/je