

To: City Council
From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator
Date: July 3, 2014
Weekly Council Update

- **Individual Disaster Assistance Available:** Community Action of Eastern Iowa and Cedar County Public Health have contacted the City of West Branch concerning individual disaster assistance that is available to residents whose household income is 200% or less of the Federal Property Level. Applications must be received by Community Action of Eastern Iowa no later than August 15th. Applications can only be made for disaster related expenses or damages which are not covered by insurance. Interested applicants should contact Community Action of Eastern Iowa in Tipton at (563) 886-3191. The application form for assistance can be found at: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/470-4448.pdf>.
- **Storm Debris Disposal:** The City of West Branch and the National Park Service, in cooperation with the City's solid waste provider, Johnson County Refuse, placed a 20-yard roll off dumpster in the Water Street Parking Lot to allow residents to dispose of flood debris. Residents can access the parking lot from either Parkside Drive or South 2nd Street and deposit damaged drywall, carpets, and other storm debris in the dumpster. Household appliances will not be accepted. Thus far, residents have been taking advantage of the dumpster. We have had to remove a full dumpster three times within 48 hours of its original placement. The City is working with Chris Jones Trucking to have a second dumpster added today to provide dumpster space for residents who will be cleaning up over the holiday weekend. Both dumpsters will be available through the weekend and removed on Monday July 7th. Residents are encouraged to contact City Offices at (319) 643-5888 with any questions.
- **Flood Clean-Up Continues:** Public Works and other city employees continue various clean-up efforts throughout town. Cleaning streets, removing carpet from the Police Department, and cleaning up Town Hall were our initial priorities. A yard waste pick-up was completed today. Public Works staff is currently working to clean mud out of the Beranek Street Parking Lot, scrub the Town Hall basement floor, prepare for a burial on Saturday in the West Branch Municipal Cemetery, remove two trees that fell over roads in the Cemetery, push back the brush pile, grade the road into the brush pile so that residents can safely access that facility, monitor and push down trash in the dumpsters in the Water Street Parking Lot, complete maintenance at the Water Plant, clean our utility vehicles up after the flood, and remove carpet from the Food Pantry. Unfortunately, we are a week behind on mowing and trimming which will have to be picked up next week. All in all, the flood will push us back at least two weeks in terms of projects that the Public Works Department was working to complete.
- **Community Center Planning Kick-Off – July 9th:** The Park & Recreation Commission welcomes community members to attend the kick-off meeting for the Community Center Building Plan on Wednesday July 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber at 110 N. Poplar Street. Denny Sharp, with FEH Associates, will be on-hand to facilitate the kick-off.

● **Floods and Standing Water Safety Tips:** In the light of recent flooding the West Branch Fire and Police Departments want to encourage community members to be safe around standing water during and after heavy rain events:

- To protect your family and yourself, avoid floodwaters if possible.
- Do not drive unless your journey is absolutely necessary.
- If you have to drive in a flooded area, take precautions. Only drive through water if you know how deep it is. Many vehicles require only two feet of water before they float.
- Drive slowly and steadily to avoid creating a bow wave.
- Driving fast through standing water is dangerous - tires lose contact with the road and you lose steering control in what's known as 'aquaplaning'. Watch out for standing water, trying to avoid it if you can, and adjust your speed to the conditions. If you do experience aquaplaning, hold the steering wheel lightly and lift off the throttle until the tires regain grip.
- Driving fast through standing water can cause expensive damage - the air intake on many cars is low down at the front of the engine bay and it only takes a small quantity of water sucked into the engine to cause serious damage. All engines are affected but turbo-charged and diesel engines are most vulnerable.
- Do not drive through flood water if a vehicle is traveling in the opposite direction.
- Don't try driving through fast-moving water, such as at a flooded bridge approach - your car could easily be swept away.
- Test your brakes thoroughly after leaving the flood water.
- Do not walk through moving water. **Six inches of moving water can make you fall.** If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Keep children and pets from playing in flood water.
- Clean all items touched by floodwaters, including children's toys. Use one cup of household bleach in five gallons of water.
- Throw away items that cannot be washed such as mattresses, stuffed animals, baby toys, and wood cutting boards, as well as food that may have come into contact with flood waters.
- Wash hands often with soap and clean water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.

● **4th of July Breakfast:** American Legion Chauncey Butler Post 514 is inviting the public to an all you can eat breakfast on Friday, July 4th from 7:00-11:00 a.m. at the Town Hall, located at 201 East Main Street. Cost for the breakfast is \$7.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children aged 5-12. Eggs, pancakes, sausage, and a drink will be served. For more information regarding the breakfast, please contact Legion Commander Joanne Brookshear at 319-936-1081 or Legion Adjutant Wayne Fraenholtz at 319-930-1196.

● **Holiday Trash Pick-Up:** Garbage and recycling will be picked up in West Branch on **Friday, July 4, 2014**, not on Saturday as previously reported. All recycling and garbage should be placed curbside no later than 7:00 a.m. For specific questions regarding pickup of garbage and/or recycling, please contact the City's provider, Johnson County Refuse, by calling 1-877-423-9877. Please note that brush and yard waste may continue to be placed curbside for pick up on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Residents are asked to place those items curbside by 7:00 a.m. to ensure pickup. For additional information, please contact City Offices at (319) 643-5888. Due to the Independence Day holiday, City Offices will be closed on Friday, July 4, 2014.

- **Practical Farmers of Iowa Play Premier at Scattergood:** Scattergood Friends School & Farm are hosting the play premier of “Map of My Kingdom” on Saturday July 12th at 7:00 p.m. “Map of My Kingdom: is a play commissioned by Practical Farmers of Iowa and written by Mary Swander, Iowa’s poet laureate, that tackles the critical issue of land transition. The play will be performed by Elizabeth Thompson, an actor who lives in central Iowa and is a graduate of Iowa State University. In the play, character Angela Martin, a lawyer and mediator in land transition disputes, shares stories of how farmers and landowners have approached their land transitions. Some families struggled to resolve the sale or transfer of their land, dissolving their relationships. Others found peacefully rational solutions that focused on keeping the land – and the family – together. Admission is \$10 and RSVP’s are required. RSVP to Lauren Zastrow at lauren@practicalfarmers.org or (515) 232-5661 by Wednesday July 9th.

- **Summer Reading Update:** As of this week, the Library reports having enrolled 362 youth, sixty teens and sixty adults registered for Summer Library Programs. The Blank Park Zoo event brought out 140 attendees, with visits from animals such as a screech owl, an armadillo, and a baby alligator. Over fifty people came out to hear from the storm chasers from Chasing4Life, and learn about our changing climate and storm safety. The West Branch Fire Department's Fire Science program had 108 in attendance, where kids learned how to use a fire extinguisher with a fire simulator, learn fire safety and create a home evacuation plan, and see several rescue vehicles and their equipment. Upcoming events include Ben's Bubble Show, with bubbleologist Ben Jeminez on July 8th; Potions Class with Professor Severus Snape on July 15th; and Life Science with Sarah Subbert from Cedar County Conservation on July 22nd. All programs begin at 6:30 pm.

Teen program participants enjoyed a visit from Cedar County Conservation, where they learned different ways to start campfires, along with campfire precautions and cleanup. Cedar County Sheriff's Office investigators taught us about forensics and crime scene investigation. Other programming has included Kitchen Science, and Art & Music. Upcoming programming includes Upcycling and Repurposing, Water Wars, and a joint field trip to Lake Macbride with WB Parks and Rec. The Adult program this year is geared not only for reading, but also for language learning, writing, and continuing education. The adult program grand prize this year is an iPad mini.

- **Infrastructure News:** City Engineer Dave Schechinger worked with city staff the day of the floods at the lift station and at the wastewater treatment facility. Both the lift station and lagoons functioned properly on Monday evening. Dave also completed bridge inspections on Tuesday morning and found no damage due to flooding. Dave will provide a complete report to the City Council at the July 21, 2014 City Council Meeting.

- **Mayor’s Parade:** Registrations are now being accepted for the 2014 Hoover’s Hometown Days Mayor’s Parade. The parade will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 2, 2014. Registering your group by July 25th will ensure priority placement in the parade and announcement by the parade’s emcee. Please contact City Offices at (319) 643-5888 or visit the “News and Announcements” section of the City Website at <http://www.westbranchiowa.org/news-and-announcements> to access the registration form, information, and parade map.

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.