

To: City Council
From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator
Date: December 31, 2015
Weekly Council Update

Tidewater Drive and Division Street Now Open: Tidewater Drive and Division Street were both opened back up for traffic early this week and the temporary road through the new Casey's parking lot has been closed. At this point the plan is to leave the temporary road in place until spring although it will only be used for construction access should that be necessary. Rathje Construction completed all of the underground utility improvements and the majority of the road improvements before the winter weather shut them down for the season. The remainder of the road work will be completed as soon as possible in the spring and includes turn lane work on South Downey, asphaltting the transition between the new surface and the existing road, approaches to the Days Inn and approaches into the Casey's site. There will also be grading and seeding completed after the rest of the road improvements are done in the spring.

Main Street Meet and Greet: Everyone is invited to meet incoming Main Street West Branch Executive Director Kevin Rogers and welcome him to his new position on Wednesday January 6th from 5:00-6:30 p.m. at the Brick Arch Winery. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served and a brief presentation will be made between 5:30-6:00 p.m.

City Administrator Matt Muckler met with incoming Main Street West Branch Executive Director Kevin Rogers this week to discuss upcoming projects and events for both the City and Main Street. We will be working together on a business recognition program. The featured business for January is Fulwider Agency. Fulwider is celebrating their 50-year anniversary in 2016, having been founded in 1966.

Police Department Update: Officer Derek Holmes is on the job here in West Branch. Derek's first day was Wednesday December 16th. Chief Horihan reports that Officer Holmes is doing a great job in acclimating to his new position. Officer Wesley Homeister started on Monday December 21st and will begin his training at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy on Monday January 4th. We wish Wes well with his training and look forward to his return in May.

Chief Horihan continues to work with Holly Corkery from Dallas Lynch on the update to the Police Department Policies. Holly is putting the final touches on the reserve officer portion of the policy. After that section is completed, the document will be formatted and transmitted to Chief Horihan for his review.

Seven Responses Received to the Park RFQ: Bolton & Menk, Inc., Fehr Graham, French-Reneker-Associates, Inc., Hart-Frederick Consultants P.C., HBK Engineering, IIW, P.C., and Snyder & Associates all submitted statements of qualification for the West Branch Park Improvements Project at Pedersen Valley. The Park and Recreation Commission will spend the next couple of weeks screening the statements and conducting interviews in an effort to narrow the field of applicants to three for consideration by the City Council. Council is scheduled to interview the top three firms at a City Council Work Session on Tuesday January 19th at 6:00 p.m.

Sidewalk Notices Distributed: Seventeen notices were delivered today to residents and businesses who failed to clear their sidewalks of snow and ice. As a reminder, sidewalks must be cleared of all snow and ice within twenty-four hours after the end of a snow or ice event. If sidewalks are not cleared, the City will clear the sidewalks and bill the owner at a rate of \$50/sidewalk plus a \$40 administration fee. Corner lots are considered two sidewalks, and are billed accordingly. Residents are encouraged to have a sturdy snow shovel and a supply of ice melt on hand and to practice smart shoveling techniques while clearing their walks and drives. Finally, please remember that snow from sidewalks or driveways may not be pushed into or across City streets.

Summer Reading?: Yes, it is December, but the West Branch Public Library is already planning for the next year's Summer Library Program. Presenters are being scheduled and materials ordered. This coming program's themes are geared towards health, fitness, and general well-being. The program's themes include "Exercise your mind, Read" and "On your mark, get set... read!" In addition, the Library is still underway with its regular winter events and programming including pajama storytimes every Tuesday night, after school programs with Parks & Rec every Wednesday afternoon, and Pajama Storytime every Friday morning. While further information will be provided next month, another Family Movie Night is scheduled for January 23rd.

Winter Weather Reminders: Snow emergencies are issued by the Public Works Director in consultation with the Police Chief and City Administrator. During a Snow Emergency, on-street parking is not allowed. Drivers are encouraged to find alternate parking spots before the first snow fall so that you have a place to park. Violators can be ticketed or towed. Snow emergencies will be announced via the West Branch City Website at www.westbranchiowa.org and the West Branch Cable Access Channel 5. The City also notifies the West Branch Times and other media sources.

Christmas Tree Curbside Pick-Up: The City of West Branch is currently picking up Christmas trees that are placed at the curb with plastic, ornamentation and stands removed. Friday, January 22, 2016 will be the last day for Christmas tree pick-up. Please call the City Office at (319) 643-5888 during regular business hours if your tree has not been picked up within a day or two of placement at the curb.

Holiday Trash Pick-Up – Saturday January 2nd: Trash pick-up will be delayed due to the New Years' Holiday until Saturday January 2nd. City Offices, the Park & Recreation Department and the West Branch Public Library will be closed on Friday January 1st.

2016 Pet Tags Now Available: All cats and dogs over four months of age residing within the city limits must be registered annually with the City of West Branch. Tags for 2016 are now available at City Office located at 110 North Poplar Street. Current rabies vaccination papers are required at the time of registration. The fee for registering pets is \$5.00 per animal. A \$5.00 late penalty fee will be applied if an animal is registered after Jan. 31, 2016. Reminder post cards will be mailed to all current pet owners in January. Additional reminders have been placed on the December utility bills, the City website and West Branch Times. The [Annual Pet Registration Form](#) is also available on the City's website which can be mailed in. Future enhancements to this program are being considered.

League Receives Grant to Develop Water Quality Offset Program: It was announced in September that the Iowa League of Cities would receive a grant from the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to fund the development of a water quality offset program under the framework outlined in the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy. The December 2015 edition of *Cityscape*, the Iowa League's monthly magazine, contains an article that provides additional information. That article is attached to this week's Update.

Upcoming City Meetings & Events: Please see the Calendar of Events on the City Website at <http://westbranchiowa.org/home> for a complete list of all upcoming events. There are several Council, Board and Commission Meetings and other events currently scheduled:

- Monday, January 4th at 7:00 p.m. City Council Meeting
- Wednesday, January 6th, 5:00-6:30 p.m. Main Street Meet and Greet at Brick Arch
- Thursday, January 7th at 6:30 p.m. Park & Recreation Commission Meeting
- Tuesday, January 12th at 6:30 p.m. Animal Control Commission Meeting
- Wednesday, January 13th at 6:30 p.m. Zoning Board of Adjustment Mtg.
- Thursday, January 14th at 6:30 p.m. Library Board of Trustees Meeting
- Thursday, January 14th at 6:30 p.m. Park & Rec Consultant Interviews
- Monday, January 18th Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- Monday, January 18th, Time TBA Martin Luther King, Jr. Event at Town Hall
- Tuesday, January 19th at 6:00 p.m. City Council Work Session #1
- Tuesday, January 19th at 7:00 p.m. City Council Meeting
- Tuesday, January 19th, after regular mtg. City Council Work Session #2
- Saturday, January 23rd at 7:00 p.m. Family Movie Night at the Library
- Tuesday, January 26th at 6:30 p.m. Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

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.



By Dustin Miller | Iowa League of Cities

League receives Conservation Innovation Grant to develop Water Quality Offset Program

It was announced in September that the League will be one of the 2015 recipients of a Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) that is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The League received a CIG grant totaling \$715,000 over three years to fund the development of a Water Quality Offset Program in Iowa under the framework outlined in the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy. The CIG program looks for innovative approaches toward increasing usage and effectiveness of conservation practices, and has funded other market-based conservation efforts in the past. The application was a partnership between the two cities, proven experts in the field environmental science, engineering firm Kieser & Associates and law firm Troutman Sanders with the goal of developing innovative, practical solutions that are right for Iowa. Combined these groups have created more than 25 different credit trading systems across the country.

The ultimate goal of a trading or offset program is to generate the same or increased nutrient reduction in the watershed at a reduced cost to municipalities and their ratepayers. Nutrient reduction through conservation practices by agricultural producers can be far more cost effective than technology at the waste water treatment plant, especially if the city is trying to achieve greater numbers than currently in the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Many cities have looked at conservation practices outside of the city limits and inside the city for a multitude of potential benefits including increased nutrient reduction, flood mitigation and habitat development.

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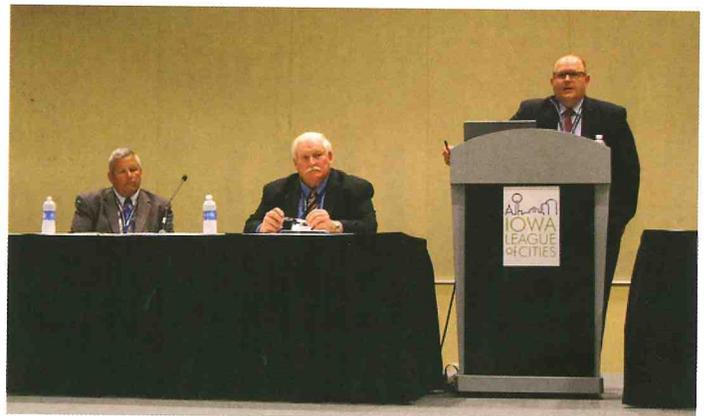


As part of the grant, the League has created a Technical Advisory Committee that is made up of a diverse group of stakeholders from agriculture, environment, city and industry. Members of the group will meet regularly to tackle questions around this framework development. The League and the point source community hope to utilize this stakeholder input to come up with how a system should be structured in Iowa. These questions will come from both the point source and non-point source perspective but backed against the Clean Water Act and the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

The League understands that finding flexibility and understanding environmental regulations is a huge value to our membership, and the Environmental Coordinating Committee pushed the League to look for innovative strategies such as water quality trading to meet these standards. Please feel free to contact League staff for updates on this process and if you have questions about how this potentially impacts your community.

The grant funds will leverage the ongoing watershed projects in the cities of Dubuque and Storm Lake who have utilized state programs to develop projects upstream from their communities. These cities have collaborated within their watersheds through the State Revolving Fund's Sponsored Project Program and an Urban Water Quality Initiative award from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to develop projects with environmental benefits that have value to their citizens. The watershed work in other cities such as Charles City and Cedar Rapids will also inform the process. All of these cities are holistically looking at their environmental impact to understand if this work can have a reduction-of-costs benefit to their citizens.

Dustin Miller is the League general counsel and may be reached at (515) 244-7282 or dustinmiller@iowaleague.org.



The League held a workshop during the Iowa League of Cities Annual Conference & Exhibit in September about the Water Quality Offset Program. Several different organizations were in attendance. Joining Dustin Miller from the League on stage was: (top, left to right) Secretary of Agricultural, Bill Northey; Mayor Jon Kruse, Storm Lake; (left) Mayor Ron Corbett, Cedar Rapids; City Manager Michael Van Milligen, Dubuque.