



July 2016

City Council

Jeff Altoft, Mayor
Mike DeVore, Mayor Pro Tem
James Hodges, Councilmember
Jeff Phillips, Councilmember
Alan Teelander, Councilmember

City Hall

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DPW Director

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The reluctant Chief

A good man takes over as Fire Chief

Last year when the topic of who would become the Fire Chief after Frank Martin retired, Ron van Overbeek always said, “Nope. Not going to be me.” There’s a funny thing about absolute statements regarding your future, situations change.

The Lowell Area is fortunate that situations have changed. Even though Martin was a terrific Chief for many years, the man stepping up to do the job is experienced, highly capable and the type of person our firefighters want to follow. In June, his contract as Fire Chief was confirmed by the Lowell Area Fire & Emergency Services Authority, a joint community board. The department serves the City of Lowell, Lowell Township and Vergennes Township and each is equally represented on the Authority board.

In 1989, van Overbeek became an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) working with the Lowell Police Department. After 2 years, the EMT’s were moved over to the Fire Department and van Overbeek began his firefighting training. He moved up through the ranks by being reliable, helpful and effective in his job. As Deputy Chief under Martin since 2007, he handled operations, freeing Martin to handle the administrative responsibilities. Still when Martin announced his departure, van Overbeek didn’t think he wanted the job, because he doesn’t enjoy the political and paperwork aspects of the job. It made perfect sense to everyone, except him.



“I can’t fill Frank Martin’s shoes. I’m not him. We’re going to have to find our own way to continue the quality of service that Chief Martin established,” said van Overbeek. “We have new people being trained. They are joining a great team. Things are working well, because we have good people.”

The Fire Department is staffed by part-time people (including the Chief) who training year after year. “We do this because we want to. We have training and skills that can help our neighbors when bad things happen. It’s not for financial gain. It’s about helping people.” Van Overbeek’s full time job is as Safety Officer for Lowell Light & Power. He helps people there, too.

Our community is fortunate to have people like Ron van Overbeek, who step in to do a tough job when we need him. He’s honest, straightforward, and willing to do the hard work to take care of his team. Thank him and congratulate him, next time to you see him around town

The search continues

Resumes for the new City Manager are in and narrowed to a few candidates. Now is your opportunity to meet them.

Stop in for the open house on Monday, July 11th, 6-8 p.m. at Grand Volute. This is a great opportunity to talk to the candidates in an informal setting. Learn about them and what they can bring to our community to help us all grow.

On Tuesday, July 12th at 9:00 a.m. continuing throughout the day, the City Council will hold a special meeting to do public interviews with candidates. Each candidate will field questions from the Council. You can sit in on this process.

The plan is to select one candidate and make an offer following the public interviews. Our new City Manager could begin working by mid-August.

Get registered!

August brings the primary election for our state legislature and county offices. To vote in this primary, you must be registered by July 5th at 5:00 p.m. Voting takes place on August 2nd. You can no longer vote straight party, so there may be longer lines at the polls.

If you don't know if you are registered or not, check out this website that helps answer that question. Michigan.gov/vote provides registration, poll location, a sample ballot and other useful voting information.

If you are 60 or older, you may obtain an absentee ballot without further reason. You may also be put on the permanent absentee ballot list, which automatically sends you a ballot for each election. Check with City Clerk for details and look for the ballot on the City website.

It's in the mail

As always, summer tax statements will be arriving in

July. Taxes aren't due until August 31st. That gives you plenty of time to take care of them before or after your vacation. If you don't see yours by then end of July, call City Hall.

More parking downtown!

The new parking lot behind south-side Main Street businesses is finished! The Veteran's Memorial parking lot now wraps behind the building and continues out to S. Monroe. This provides easier access to businesses on that side of the street and more parking in general.

With the resurfacing done on Main Street through



downtown, new lines have been painted. This has also added more parking spaces along this business area. With 56 new parking spaces, it should be easier than ever to find a spot to park!

Festival time is here!

Downtown Lowell will be filled with fun and excitement July 7th-9th during the Lowell Riverwalk Festival. The fun begins at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Saturday is a day full of activities, events, crafts and entertainment beginning at 10:00 a.m. and continuing through the fireworks at 10:15 p.m. Bring your sunscreen, buy your duck and join the fun! For details, check out the Festival website at <http://www.riverwalkfestival.org/>.

Be the change!

If you want to get involved and make a difference in your community, we need volunteers. There are two openings on boards.

- Lowell Light & Power Board
- Arbor Board

If you are interested in getting involved, contact City Hall.

July Meetings

July 6, 7:00 p.m. City Council
July 8, 6:00 p.m. Lowell Area Recreation Authority
7:00 p.m. Airport Board
July 9, 12:00 p.m. Downtown Development Authority
6:00 p.m. Lowell Light & Power Board
July 11, 6:00 p.m. City Manager Candidate Open House
July 12, 9:00 a.m. City Manager Public Interviews
July 13, 12:00 p.m. Arbor Board
3:30 p.m. Fire Authority
7:00 p.m. City Planning Commission
July 20, 7:00 p.m. Lowell City Council
July 21, 6:00 p.m. Parks & Recreation Authority
July 23, 6:00 p.m. Light & Power Special Meeting
July 27, 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Special Meeting
July 28, 6:00 p.m. Lowell Historic District Commission