

COUNCIL INFORMATION LETTER
September 2023

OCTOBER 4, 2023

City of Ypsilanti
Andrew Hellenga, Interim City Manager



City Manager's Office

- Toured the MRF site at Ann Arbor Recycling.
- Continuing to meet with staff and residents to address issues with the city.
- Attending weekly meetings for the development of Dorothy Estates.
- Attending Pen Dam meetings.
- Engaging in discussion with the Washtenaw Shelter Associations for winter warming centers.

Past Month Special Events

- 9/1 – First Fridays at Riverside/Frog Island and the Freighthouse from 3-10 p.m.
- 9/2 – Private wedding ceremony/reception at Riverside Park Pavilion from Noon-6 p.m.
- 9/4 – Labor Day, city offices were closed.
- 9/10 – Ward 3 Community Picnic at Frog Island Amphitheater from Noon-2 p.m.
- 9/11 – Private Picnic at Riverside Park Pavilion from 1-3 p.m.
- 9/15 – Movie Night in the Park at Frog Island Park Amphitheater from 7-10 p.m.
- 9/16 – Browne Soul Musik Concert at Riverside Park Pavilion from 1-9 p.m.
- 9/16 – Dwight Street Social Neighborhood Association party on Dwight Street from 2-8 p.m.
- 9/17 – Orphan Car Show at Riverside Park from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 9/23 – EMU's Marchathon from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. They will be marching along with an EMU officer on various city streets. I am attaching the route they submitted.
- 9/24 – Fall River Day at Frog Island Park from Noon-3 p.m.
- 9/30 – The Ladies' Literary Club's Fall Festival from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 218 N. Washington St.
- 9/ Every Sunday- Latinos Unidos Soccer at the soccer field at Frog Island Park from 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

City Clerk

1. Clerk
 - a. New legislative software has been implemented for the creation of agendas.
2. Elections
 - a. City Council approved partnering with Washtenaw County to provide early voting for elections next year. Early voting will take place at the Freighthouse. City staff continues to meet and coordinate with county staff to ensure we are meeting our constitutional early voting requirements.
 - b. Several of the Bills the State Legislature passed concerning Election, did so without immediate effect. These Bill will become law ninety days after the legislature adjourns. This includes the ability to consolidate precincts from a 2,999 active voter threshold to 5,000. This will provide a brief window to consolidate precincts prior to the Presidential Primary. Staff's current plan is to only consolidate precincts that share a polling location, to avoid any confusion on Election Day. Still waiting on the legislature to adjourn.
3. Administrative Hearings Bureau
 - a. Staff continues to process liens on unpaid judgments and release liens for judgments paid as special assessments on tax bills.
4. Boards and Commissions
 - a. Board of Ethics cannot meet due to limit of members.
 - b. Human Relations Commission has enough members to meet if all adult commissioners are present.
 - c. Fire Civil Service is back up to 3 members.
 - d. Vacancies (as of October 2, 2023)

<u>Board</u>	<u>Membership Type</u>	<u>Last Name</u>
Dangerous Bldgs	Dangerous Buildings Officer	Vacant
Ethics	Board Member	Vacant
Fire Civil Service Commission		Vacant
Human Relations	Commissioner	Vacant
Human Relations	Youth Member	Vacant
Non-Motorized	Commissioner	Vacant
Non-Motorized	Commissioner	Vacant
Police Advisory	Commissioner	Vacant
Police Advisory	Commissioner	Vacant
Police Advisory	Youth Member (1 Year)	Vacant Youth
Police Advisory	Youth Member (1 Year)	Vacant Youth
Parks & Arts	Commissioner	Vacant
Parks & Arts	Commissioner	Vacant
Sustainability	Commissioner	Vacant
Sustainability	Youth Member (1 Year)	Vacant
Sustainability	Youth Member (1 Year)	Vacant

Finance Department

Accounting and Finance

- Received our 2022 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Award from GFOA
- Attended GFOA Budget Presentation Training

Treasury

- Received \$5.8M Fire and Police Pension Grant from the State of Michigan
- Attended the Washtenaw County Treasurer's Association on Sept 19, 2023
- Tax Collection as of 9/14/2023.

Tax Year	Tax Levy	Tax Collection as of 9/14	Percentage
2023	\$ 10,320,111.05	\$9,554,169.44	92.57%
2022	\$ 9,819,396	\$ 9,002,862	91.68%
2021	\$9,152,903	\$ 8,521,962	93.10%

- After 9/14, the city will charge 3% penalty and .5% interest for every month starting Oct 1st.

Human Resources

- In hiring process for Equipment Operator and Police Officer positions.
- Completed hiring process for Firefighter/EMTs positions.
- Recruiting for Parking Enforcement Officer, Equipment Operator, Police Officer, and School Crossing Guard positions

September 2023 New Hire Summary



Reginald Dent
School Crossing Guard
Ypsilanti Police Department

Reginald has a passion for helping his city. His role entails watching for gaps in traffic and safely walking children across the roadway or intersections while holding a stop sign in such a manner as to be visible to approaching traffic.



Easton Parent
Firefighter
Ypsilanti Fire Department

Easton is excited to fill this role as a firefighter. His duties include: extinguishing fires, responding to emergency calls and performing emergency medical techniques in order to protect and minimize the loss of life and property.



Cory Armstrong
Firefighter
Ypsilanti Fire Department

Cory is excited to fill this role as a firefighter. His duties include: extinguishing fires, responding to emergency calls and performing emergency medical techniques in order to protect and minimize the loss of life and property.



David Sappington
Firefighter
Ypsilanti Fire Department

David is excited to fill his role as a firefighter. His duties include: Extinguishing fires, responding to emergency calls and performing medical techniques in order to protect and minimize the loss of life and property.

Internal Promotions



Aaron Smith
Interim City Clerk
Clerk Dept

As the most recent City Clerk, Andrew Hellenga has moved into the City Manager position, Aaron has moved from the Deputy Clerk position into the City Clerk position and is excited to serve in this new role.

Planning & Economic Development

- REDY Recertification is due at the end of October. The staff has been diligently working on the renewal.
- The staff has conducted staffing interviews with Carlisle & Wortman for the Departmental Audit.
- We have reorganized the third floor to create a meeting room for the Planning Department to help facilitate a more collaborative workspace.
- City Planner, Holli Andrews registered for the Michigan Association of Planning 2023 Conference, October 4 – 6th.
- Katie Jones attended the Ann Arbor SPARK Mobility Summit
- Katie Jones met with AKT Peerless and the EPA for discussions on environmental cleanup on the Water Street property.

Planning Commission

- There was a regular Planning Commission Meeting held on September 20th. No new cases were on the agenda, but staff presented updates on developments (see Business and Development Milestones below).
- Commissioners deliberated the current status of marijuana retail in the City of Ypsilanti. Planning Commissioners and staff will workshop a zoning recommendation to review in October (buffers and special use in all districts) to support the industry's carrying capacity.
- Commissioners discussed a plan to study upzoning in the R-1 District. The plan is in the formative stages of research and consideration.

Zoning Board of Appeals

There were no ZBA cases in September.

Partner Development

- The City Planner, Holli Andrews, attended the regular September Washtenaw Urban County Executive Committee Meeting.
- Holli Andrews participated at the Michigan State University global consortium of eMotional Cities along with MSU Ext professor, Harmony Fierke-Gmazel.
- Holli Andrews is working with NMAC and acting as liaison between the City and Michigan Fitness Foundation for the Pedestrian ED pilot program. In September, the partnership collaborated on a public marketing campaign “Are you paying attention?” (Gud Marketing firm with Michigan Fitness Foundation). Starting in October outreach will begin with videos at gas pumps, bus wraps and social media posts.
- Katie Jones participated in the Continuum of Care Winter Shelter Taskforce Meeting
- Katie Jones with Dan Kelly from the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County to begin discussions on daytime and overnight shelters in the City of Ypsilanti
- Staff attended the Growing Hope Community Meeting
- Katie Jones with Huron River Watershed Council on the US Fish and Wildlife Grant and State of Michigan Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy Grants

Public Service and Reviews

On-going zoning reviews for residential and commercial projects.

Business and Development Milestones

Affordable Housing

- 845-945 W Clark Road Project
 - Construction status
 - Proposed amendments to the plans
 1. Add carports on the family side where there currently exists ONLY uncovered surface parking.
 2. Add solar panels to one or both developments.
- 220 N Park Dorsey Estates
 - Closing is scheduled for October 3rd.
 - Pre-construction meeting held on August 14th.
 - Brownfields vendors and funding are in place (Nate Voght).
 - Groundbreaking to begin shortly.
 - v. Planning, Building Department, and West Construction meeting on September 28th.

Economic Development

- PUD 611 W Cross | EMU Credit Union
 - Demo completed.
 - Pre-construction meeting held Tuesday, September 19th.
- Research and Development 300 W Michigan | MI HQ
 - Meeting on September 20th City Department Coordination
 - Building, Fire, Planning
 - Community Engagement
 - Press Release, Community Impact Project Interview Series, Neighboring Properties Communications, Restaurant Engagement
 - Pending / Upcoming Grants | RAP 2.0 application to enhance Michigan Avenue (300 block) with streetscaping.
 -

Historic Preservation

- The commission met on September 12th and 26th, 2023.
- Processed 17 applications for work (13 were approved administratively and 4 were approved by the commission).
- Continued planning and began promoting the November 5th **Old House Ypsi** event (see more details and register at <https://cityofypsilanti.com/263/Historic-District>)
- Continued planning for the CLG-sponsored district resurvey work to begin in early 2024.

Downtown Development Authority

- Staff has been continuously working with Engage@EMU for this year's [ExploreYpsi Program](#). The program launched on September 6th. The goal of the program is to put \$10 gift cards in the hands of 2,000 new EMU students, faculty, and staff as introductions to the Ypsilanti business districts.
- The DDA approved the Downtown Construction and Water Shut-off with a commitment of \$50,000 reallocated from the Streetscape Capital Improvement line-item. The DDA Equity and Inclusion Committee workshopped the grant requirements and payout structure. We received a \$20,000 match from Washtenaw County for the grant relief fund. 25 applicants applied. The applications demonstrated losses up to \$80,000 in individual businesses from May to August 2023.
- Interim City Manager Hellenga has accompanied staff on “DDA walks” for business owner introductions.
- Coffee with Elize was held on September 22nd at Cross Street Coffee. Many DDA stakeholders utilized this time to talk to staff. The next one is on October 20th at Hyperion Coffee from 10-2 pm.
- DDA Board Special Meeting called for October 12, 2023, at the Freighthouse to discuss the letter of support and LEO Grant Application for Growing Hope.
- **September 21, 2023, DDA Board of Executives Meeting**
Approved:
 - Downtown Water Shut-off and Construction Relief Application Structure.
 - Up to \$20,000 to support the City/YCUA mill and overlay of the N. Adams St. Lot
 - Fencing and repairs for the Depot Town Plaza garden
 - Request for Growing Hope’s MI Community Center grant application for review.

Discussed: YPD Community Policing Centers and DDA Marketing and Promotion Contribution Application.

Department of Public Services

Operations/Admin

- MDOT will be performing the mill & overlay this month.
 - Thu, Oct 5: single-lane closures and parking lane closures for milling (pavement removal) on Michigan. Pedestrian and vehicle movement crossing Michigan will be limited at times.
 - Fri Oct 6, 6pm through Mon Oct 9 AM: FULL CLOSURE OF MICHIGAN AVE FROM HAMILTON TO THE HURON RIVER
 - Vehicle traffic will be able to get through Hamilton southbound (ped traffic on the west side); all other intersections will be closed to through traffic (vehicle and ped)
 - The easternmost block of Pearl (Washington to Huron) will be temporarily two-way and the intersection of Pearl/Huron will be open to traffic. Huron will be one way northbound still.
 - THIS WILL INVOLVE EXTENSIVE NIGHT WORK. MDOT's contractors are pushing hard to finish this up ASAP.
 - Fri Oct 13, 6pm through Mon Oct 16 AM: FULL CLOSURE OF MICHIGAN AVE FROM HAMILTON TO THE HURON RIVER (second verse)
 - Same restrictions as previous weekend. Again, they will be pushing hard. They hope to not have to use the full weekend.
 - Please note that staff requested Mon, Tue, and Wed daytime (or heck, even overnight) closures in lieu of weekend closures due to the extreme stress on local businesses. MDOT

- declined due to the volume of through traffic on the weekdays vs the weekends- effectively prioritizing through traffic over the health of the local agency.
- Please also note that *none of the downtown sidewalk bricks are historic*. They date from the early 2000s, and they can still be purchased new from the producer, Endicott. We even have two shrink-wrapped pallets of them here at the yard. Many people have been harassing the workers as they install the new, compliant, concrete ADA ramps regarding the brick; please spread the word that we're getting a legally-compliant and safer pedestrian crossing and absolutely not missing even one spec of historic significance.
- Working with stakeholders on creating a "local event detour map" for use and distribution.
- Working on alternate location for DPS operations due to condition of the main building. Anticipate operating with reduced capacity from November onward.
- Personnel updates:
 - Three open Equipment Operator positions on crew (out of 17 - 18% vacancy). Note: several employees are in the process of attaining their CDLs.
- Toured the Recycle Ann Arbor Materials Reclamation Facility (MRF) with Interim City Manager Hellenga, and DPS Supervisor Blakley. We learned a lot about both the operations of the MRF (which is where we bring the City's recycling) and Recycle Ann Arbor.

Facilities

- Moving forward with Fire Station and Police Station concrete, retaining wall, and basement wall projects.
- DPS
 - Moving forward with temporary facility relocation exploration.
 - Exploring on-site options, of which there are few.

Forestry

- Employees attended rigging class.
- Beginning to work on stump removal. Approximately 50 trees have been removed this year. Continuing to remove hazard trees.

Streets

- 4 right of way permit applications approved
- We are currently working with the Deja Vu contractors and AAATA to coordinate a closure of Pearl for installation of a fire suppression water line.
- Patched throughout the City.
- Working with DTE to resolve ongoing right-of-way work issues.
- Continuing to work with MDOT and YCUA on their respective projects, as well as the separate MDOT contractor on the Michigan Avenue Bridge project.
 - YCUA's project is substantially complete.
 - MDOT: see above note
- Huron River Drive (LeForge to Cornell) construction is ongoing' approximately two week behind schedule. Two-way traffic restored; sidewalk is open.
- Forest Bridge work is ongoing and behind schedule due to additional damage being discovered. Lift starting this week. Anticipate going over budget by \$100k and reopening in November.
- Please encourage your constituents to exercise their patience and drive safely, especially near construction zones. We have noticed many, many drivers moving barrels, barriers, and cones "out of their way" and driving into construction areas as soon as no workers appear to be present (and sometimes when they are). This practice can be very, very dangerous to the drivers and very costly to the City both in terms of delays and repair costs. We understand that construction season is frustrating- particularly this construction season- but we can all make it through together with patience and allowing some extra travel time.

Solid Waste

- Continued work with WRRMA on joint trash pickup RFP; identifying unique City needs.
- Issued compost drop-off passes to 12 residents/property owners.
- One refuse truck out of service due to fire; another still out of service as we await final adjustments from the upfitter.
 - On Tuesday 9/26, a fire started in the hopper of the new recycling truck. At this time we believe it to have been due to an improperly disposed of lithium-ion battery; we do not recycle batteries curbside. No one was injured, and both the YPD and YFD responded quickly to help control the scene and put out the fire. To put out the fire, the load was deposited on the street; crews spent a significant amount of time that afternoon cleaning it up. Approximately 2 tons of recycling was contaminated and thus trashed. The recycling route was completed on time that day with one of our older trucks.
 - Please take a moment to encourage your constituents to review the items we accept curbside for recycling... although most materials we reject, we reject as they cannot be recycled; other items, such as household toxics and batteries, simply cannot be disposed of curbside due to dangers such as these.
- One blue recycle truck failed to sell via Biddergy 9/25; another pending auction on 10/25 presuming both new trucks can be returned to service. Will re-auction first truck.

Stormwater

- Working with Planning & Development Department to improve communication with developers and process around stormwater compliance issues.
- Swept streets. Sweeper pump failure took the sweeper out of service for approximately two weeks.
 - <https://cityofypsilanti.com/828/Street-Sweeping>
- Worked with Pipeline Management, Advanced Underground, and YCUA on investigation of storm infrastructure failures. Diagnosis and repair moving forward as time and budget allow.
-

Parks & Special Events

- Worked with Events Coordination stakeholders on upcoming festivals.
 - Working with leadership on potential staffing/structure changes due to staffing changes in CED.
- Continued mowing parks and margins.
- Soliciting quotes to address Japanese Knotweed in Riverside Park.
- Work on Parkridge Softball field project complete.
- Continued work on CDBG projects with GM & Sons on Parkridge Park concrete work; replaced pavilion slab again and installed accessible path at northwest entrance adjacent to community center. ADA ramps upcoming in October

Parking

- One parking enforcement officer on duty.
- Working to finalize West Cross employee parking pass pilot program.

Police Department



Activity:

Statistics for the current period reflected by the past three months.

	July	August	September
Arrests	42	26	29
CFS	1438	1406	1650
Reports	194	179	184
Tickets	62	62	66
Warnings	85	72	69

Personnel:

- M. Hadley attended a recruitment event at the Schoolcraft Police Academy representing YPD.

Anniversary(s):

- Ofc. Tiffany Heath celebrated 4 years with the Ypsilanti Police Department: DOH 9/23/2019.
- Lt. Robert Murphy celebrated 16 years with the Ypsilanti Police Department: DOH 9/24/2007.

Recruiting:

- We currently have seven officer candidates in our recruitment process in various stages, some new hires and some lateral. with plans to attend the November Washtenaw Community College Academy with other potential prospects.
- Contingent on the recruit completing the Field Training and Evaluation Program (FTEP) process:
 - Any officer who refers a police candidate to the organization and they complete Field Training, that officer will receive \$500 dollars.
 - Now offering a \$1500 signing bonus to any lateral hire that completes Field Training.

Community Engagement:

- YPD attended the Breakfast Club Engagement Meeting on University of Michigan Campus working to expand our relationship with our surrounding municipalities and their enforcement agencies on September 13th.
- YPD attended the Parkridge Monday Morning meeting kickoff an in-person event on September 11th.
- On September 25th Ypsilanti Police Department participated in 'See Something Say Something,' as well as the week leading up to it.
- Upcoming events for YPD- Shop with a Cop Dec 12th (Emu, MSP, Ypsi and Wash County Sheriff's Office & DEA Takeback on Oct 28th on the same date planning to attend the annual Trunk-or-Treat event at Parkridge Park from 3PM – 6 PM.

Fire Department

September 30th, 2023



City of Ypsilanti Fire Department

Activity Report:

	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023
Fire and EMS Calls	222	281	229
Inspections	13	13	13
Non-emergency requests	4	5	5

Training Update:

The following trainings/classes occurred during the month of September:

- Donning turnout gear and SCBA's
- Hose deployments
- RIT Pack Ops
- Truck Ops
- Mayday Training
- Forcible Entry
- Tech. Rescue Training- Tech Rescue Team members
- HAZMAT Exercise- Hazmat Team members
- AMA training with Superior Township/ pump Ops and Advancing Hoselines
- Probationary FF's also working to complete probationary book requirements.

Apparatus/Building Update:

- 8/1 Engine 1 OOS
- 9/6 Routine truck maintenance.
- 9/7 Tower OOS due to air leak.
- 9/8 T-1 repaired and in service.
- 9/25 Electrical outlet installed in kitchen and 2 lights replaced.

Personnel:

- FF's Dave Sappington and Cory Armstrong First day on duty for YFD 8/28/23.
- 9/5 FF Easton Parents first day on duty.
- Captain Wurmlinger attending Fire Officer II classes.
- 9/26- 9/29 Fire Marshal Pope and I attended the Michigan Fire Inspectors Society Conference.

Notes:

- U of M continues to hold car seat installations at YFD every third Tuesday.

Overall Department Status Update:

- Actively working on approved Fire Station Capital Improvements.
- **YFD IS FULLY STAFFED**