

# INSIDE *the* CITY



A primary source of news and information for City employees regarding internal events, policies, and procedures that affect our work for the residents

## From the City Manager:

February 2017 Edition

### City Commission Reaffirms Commitment to a Welcoming Kalamazoo

On March 21, 2016 the Kalamazoo City Commission issued a proclamation affirming that the City of Kalamazoo is a Welcoming Community and respects the innate dignity of all people.

The proclamation resolves, "...that the City of Kalamazoo is affirmed as a place where all foreign-born and native-born Americans can live, work, and play together; share in each other's customs and ideals, and appreciate and promote cultural diversity. We urge residents and stakeholders of the Kalamazoo community to join with the efforts and spirit of the Welcoming Michigan Initiative and others to join in lifting up the City of Kalamazoo as a welcoming environment for all."



Kalamazoo City Manager Jim Ritsema added, "Many people from across the globe come to Kalamazoo to work, learn, or make it their home and our entire community benefits from this diversity and cultural exchange. It creates opportunities to learn from the experiences of others and enriches life in the City. We want to continue to encourage these contributions to our community."

Recent actions by the federal government have spurred a vigorous national debate about the enforcement of immigration law in the United States and have prompted questions from many community members about how these actions will affect our community and local law enforcement. The impact of these actions in the City of Kalamazoo was a topic of discussion during the February 6, 2017 City Commission meeting.

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety General Order G-40 identifies procedures regarding contact with undocumented immigrants. This policy was revised in 2009 and has been in effect since that time. The policy states:

- Kalamazoo Public Safety Officers lack jurisdiction in the enforcement of Federal immigration and naturalization laws. Kalamazoo Public Safety Officers shall not arrest or detain anyone solely suspected of being an illegal alien, unless working in conjunction with federal agencies who have requested the assistance of KDPS. Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety Officers may seek...

<i>City Commission</i> .....	2
<i>Public Services</i> .....	3
<i>Public Services, IT</i> .....	4
<i>HR, Parks &amp; Rec,</i> .....	5
<i>KDPS, KRVT, Vigil, KHPC</i> .....	6

(continued from page 1)

...information on immigration status if they are assisting Federal Agencies in the investigation of a criminal offense, or when immigration status is relevant to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense.

- Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety Officers are prohibited from soliciting information status from persons who are seeking police services or is the victim of or witness to a crime.

The January 25 Executive Order by the Trump Administration, “Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States,” directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to only use existing authority to enter into voluntary agreements with state and local law enforcement agencies to perform immigration enforcement duties. The decision by KDPS to cooperate with Federal authorities on a suspected undocumented person(s) would be centered on public safety risk and not merely on someone’s “status”. This is the long-standing position of KDPS and it is not impacted by this Executive Order.

## City Commission Retreat Set for Saturday, March 4

The Annual City Commission Retreat is set for **Saturday, March 4 from 8:30 - 5:00 in the Governing Board Room of the Metro Transit Offices, 530 N Rose St.**



During the retreat the Commission will discuss priorities for 2017 and continue the discussion of the Foundation For Excellence. FFE projects and programs that have been proposed for this year will be presented for approval.

“We want our operations and policies to engender trust within the community and not have certain communities live in fear of the police,” said Public Safety Chief Jeff Hadley. “If certain communities fear the police it inherently makes them less safe, makes KDPS officers less safe and makes this community less safe. These policies are in the best interest of public safety and in the spirit of the City’s efforts to foster a welcoming community.”

Following the discussion of this issue at the February 6 City Commission meeting, Vice Mayor Don Cooney voiced his support for efforts to preserve Kalamazoo a welcoming city. “I was so proud to be one of over a thousand people who stood in that park yesterday in the freezing cold for more than two hours to declare that Kalamazoo is a welcoming city,” he said, referring to the Rally Against Islamophobia and for Muslim, Immigrant, and Refugee Rights held in Bronson Park on February 5. “That’s the message that we’re sending to the world”

## Property Tax Reduction



Assessment notices were mailed this month which contained a notice about the property tax reduction that will be in effect beginning this year. The property tax rate assessed by the City of Kalamazoo will be reduced from 19.2705 mills to 12.0000 mills, resulting in a reduction of about \$363 for a typical home with a taxable value of \$50,000. The reduction will be included in the next tax bills, which will be mailed in late-June.

## SCADA Update Underway

A significant milestone in the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) project was reached earlier this month with the [installation of a 130' radio tower at the Kalamazoo Water Reclamation Plant](#).

The tower is part of the project's first phase, the creation of a high speed radio communication network that will eventually connect all of the City's water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the system. The radio network will primarily utilize water towers for elevation, however a tower at the Harrison Facility was necessary and a second tower will be installed at Water Station 24 at Al Sabo in Oshtemo Township.

The move to radio communication for the City's SCADA system will replace the existing network of phone lines and dramatically decrease the response time needed to monitor water and lift stations. All of the equipment will be owned by the City, and the only recurring expense for the new system once installed will be its operation and maintenance.

The FCC licenses needed for the system have already been secured, and the network's "backbone" is expected to be completed this year. Equipment will then be installed to connect the components of the water and wastewater systems to the network.

The SCADA project will also replace the software used to control and monitor the system with a modern program that offers more robust support.

A project of this nature requires careful coordination between engineers, contractors, utilities, and regulatory agencies. Tom Koporetz, the project's lead, has successfully managed the complex elements involved and gotten it to where it is today. The SCADA project is expected to be completed within two years.

## Maintaining Our Fleet

The City's Public Services Department maintains a shop and employs a dedicated staff of mechanics to maintain the over 800 pieces of equipment that maintain our infrastructure. During the winter months, certain equipment can be in use 24 hours a day for plowing streets, hauling snow, and spreading salt to maintain safe roadways. Well-maintained vehicles are critical for this work and like all vehicles, the equipment in service requires regular maintenance and occasionally more substantial repairs.

From time to time, larger projects will present themselves, as was the case recently when it was discovered that one of the City's dump trucks was in need of a complete engine rebuild. When such a large scale repair is needed, one of our master mechanics evaluates the work to determine whether it will be contracted out, performed in house, or whether replacing the parts/vehicle entirely is the best course of action.

In this particular case, it was determined the best course of action was to rebuild the engine in-house. The work required roughly 50 hours at an approximate cost savings of about \$5,000 compared to replacing the engine of the truck. This particular job was completed by Dan Pogue.



The City's staff of mechanics work each day to keep the vehicles and equipment running smoothly. From Public Safety vehicles, to dump trucks, to mowers and everything in between, the vast skills of our fleet staff make a lot of our work possible.

## Quick Response Restores Traffic on Whites Road

On February 6 a vehicle struck a utility pole along Whites Road near Bronson Boulevard. The accident resulted in major damage to both Consumers Energy's utility pole and the traffic signal controller cabinet which was directly hit. The sensitive electronic components needed to control the signal were damaged, rendering the signal inoperable.

Public Services staff responded quickly to the incident and immediately set up temporary stop signs before identifying the necessary repairs to restore the traffic signal. Coordination with Consumers Energy was essential as the traffic signal could not be repaired until the utility pole was replaced.

Staff worked throughout the weekend to restore the intersection to normal operations. Following the replacement of the utility pole on February 10, the traffic signal was repaired and operable again by 8:00 p.m. the following day.



Thanks to the efforts of our Public Services staff the damaged equipment was quickly replaced and normal traffic flow was restored to the intersection of Bronson Boulevard and Whites Road.

## The Importance of Paying Attention

In December, six of Metro Transit's wireless devices that provide connectivity to signage, bus stops, buses, and GPS tracking systems were infected by a hacker virus that began using large amounts of data. 8gb of data was improperly used in December before the totals skyrocketed to 79gb in January and 95gb in February when it was discovered. IT staff have been working with Verizon and the vendor who installed the signage to rectify the problem and secure the devices.

This incident can serve as a reminder to diligently review your monthly bills and invoices to ensure that any errors or discrepancies are caught. These devices in question typical use less than 5mb in a billing period.

## Use Jabber, Make Your Work Life Easier

Now that the entire organization is on the unified Cisco phone system, every employee has access to the Jabber software.

Jabber is a great way to quickly communicate with other staff, but also provide a lot of other benefits. For example, Jabber will tell you if someone is in a meeting or otherwise unavailable. Jabber can also look up phone numbers from the directory and initiate phone calls.



The more staff that are actively using Jabber the more valuable it is. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with this tool and use it to collaborate with other staff. If you have any questions, our IT staff will be happy to explain how it can help make your day easier and help get it running on your work station or laptop. Contact the helpdesk at x8400.

## Respecting Differences: Save the Date

The annual Respecting Differences Diversity event will take place on **Wednesday, April 12 at Miller Auditorium. Programs will be held at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.**

## Staff Changes

### **NEW HIRES**

**Nicole Corstange**, Police Officer I

**Zachary Drake**, Police Officer I

**Sean Gilmour**, Public Safety Officer I

**Andrew Groenveld**, Police Officer I

**Alan Klein**, Police Officer I

**Gustavo Monroy**, Public Safety Officer I

**Jeffrey Townsend II**, Police Officer I

**Joe Dusenbery**, Police Officer I

**Scott Tenney**, Police Officer I

**Ernest Hawkes III**, Police Officer I

**Ryan Desimone**, Waste Water Op/Maint.

**Matthew Harris**, Police Officer I

**Jessica Brogan**, HR Assistant

**Elizabeth Cheeseman**, Code Admin Clerk/Cashier

### **PROMOTIONS & RECLASSIFICATIONS**

**Lakisha McMillon-Palm**, Detective

**Rachel Blank**, Public Safety Officer I

## Softball Manager's Meeting

The **2017 Softball Manager's Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, February 22 in the Community Room at Mayors' Riverfront Park (251 Mills Street)**. Online registration (new this year) will be discussed among other important topics for the season. Please have at least one representative from your team attend the meeting. The Men's and Women's Divisions will be at 6:00 p.m. and the Co-Ed Division will meet at 7:00 p.m. If you would like to receive softball information emails and updates, send your contact information to [mollie.e.finkelberg@gmail.com](mailto:mollie.e.finkelberg@gmail.com).

## Parks and Rec Winter Cancelled due to Lack of Snow

The Winter Jamboree has been cancelled for 2017. The event had already been rescheduled from its original January date due to no snow, and after the a second attempt with uncooperative weather the event has been cancelled.



## Samba School

After a successful introductory class in January, school is in session starting Saturday March 4! Family and individual registration is now open for the six-week program from March 4 through April 8.

Kzoo Samba is for everyone regardless of background or experience and parents are encouraged to join with their kids! The Kzoo Samba Drumming School will also lead to the creation the City's first Samba Drumming group to perform at local events. To perform at local events with the group, you must complete the six-week intro to Samba workshop series and pay a membership fee.



For more information or to register, contact the Parks & Recreation office at (269) 337-8191 or visit [www.kzoo-parks.org](http://www.kzoo-parks.org).

## KDPS Chief Hadley Joins Law Enforcement Coalition for Common Sense

Chief Hadley has been asked to serve on the Law Enforcement Coalition for Common Sense, a national non-partisan initiative started by Mark Kelly and his wife, former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who are co-founders of Americans for Responsible Solutions. Chief Hadley attended the launch event for the group in Washington, D.C. on February 13, which included a panel discussion on Capitol Hill regarding the importance of responsible gun ownership and the role of law enforcement voices in the gun violence prevention debate. The advisory committee of the Coalition includes 20 law enforcement officers from across the U.S. Chief Hadley was quoted in an article on the event in USA Today, available [here](#).

## Historic Preservation Awards of Merit



It's not too late to submit a project, person, or organization for a Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission Award of Merit! The awards recognize efforts to preserve our heritage and history, including preservation projects, individuals who have made a contribution to preservation (such as contractors and architects) and institutions with a track record of preserving their historic resources. You can find more information in the nomination packet [here](#).

## Stories from the KRVT



From increased community connections to a healthier, more active lifestyle, the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail means a lot of things to a lot of people. The Parks Foundation of Kalamazoo County has introduced a new monthly series to highlight some of the many things that make the KRVT such a valuable resource in Kalamazoo. Every month, [Stories from the KRVT](#) asks trail users what they love about the trail, how they use it, and what could make it better. Check it out!

## Community Vigil Planned for Anniversary of Kalamazoo Shooting

One year ago an unthinkable tragedy came to Kalamazoo, taking six lives from our community and forever changing many more. **A community vigil will be held at Wings Stadium on Monday, February 20 beginning at 6:30 p.m.** The Kalamazoo-area community is invited to mark the one year anniversary of this tragedy together, remembering those lost, showing continued support for the survivors and the victims families, and honoring the first responders who rushed to each scene.



Following the vigil, the families of the victims will be making an announcement about an upcoming memorial project that is in progress.



