

Ed Bradford – Chief Finance Officer for Manistee, lives in Onekama and has filed to run as the Onekama Township Treasurer against the long term incumbent in the August 2nd Primary. As Lynda Beaton reported, Mr. Bradford discussed this with the City Manager, Thad Taylor, but the information was not passed on to City Council members. It is really not an issue, unless Ed wins the Primary and competes with the Democratic candidate (who is not opposed) in the General Election in November. Mr. Taylor indicated there would be “minimal impact” with Mr. Bradford’s duties with the City if he was to be elected. I noted in the candidate interviews in the Manistee News Advocate the current Treasurer has “office hours” three days a week during business hours – and I would consider that a meaningful impact if he intended to continue that service. My position is any outside employment or activities should have no impact (minimal impact would not be acceptable) on his duties as Manistee CFO. His first responsibility is to the City of Manistee. There is currently no City policy on outside employment and that question has been raised by Councilman Zielinski, who like myself was previously employed by the State of Michigan and required an application for secondary employment to be approved by the Department Head and reviewed on an annual basis. There is a succession plan within the department, and both the City Clerk and Deputy City Clerk have training to fill in should it be necessary, but neither should be placed in that position unless illness or some emergency should require it. If the time comes to make an adjustment, it will be dealt with.

Joslin Cove – on the agenda again for modification of the original Brownfield plan. I’ve reviewed the plan and have concerns about the financing – no institution is identified and penalties don’t come into play until after the completion date. It would be great to get the project moving again and see it completed. The planned units will be less square feet and two stories, rather than the current three story units. It is an estimated \$8,000,000 investment by the developer for the remaining 32 units and infrastructure (including a public space). I want some assurance once it starts, it will be finished.

The next work session will have a presentation of the City retirement system (MERS) and address the issue of \$1,330,000 of unfunded liability. The City has contributed \$1,400,000 to this plan the past 8 years and is projected to contribute an addition \$1,400,000 in the next 4 years – a dramatic increase in costs. I’ve suggested moving to a “defined contribution” program for future employees to get away from taxpayer liability for market fluctuations that impact our liability. There is a spreadsheet posted that I created from budget documents that indicates past costs and future projections. The numbers are real “attention getters” and I’m not proposing taking anything away from current employees.

Overtime continues to get my attention – Public Woks leads the way on overruns on the past budget. With light snow fall this past year, no water line freeze ups, and little in the way of water and sewer line work – it is hard to understand why we have this situation. The past budget indicated there are little in cuts that can be made in the future without impacting services – and we need better management of our resources. I opposed the purchase of a street crack sealing machine (\$70,000) and ending our partnership with the County Road Commission based on the lack of personnel to perform the service in the City. It will come up again, as any purchase over \$25,000 has to be bid and approved by City Council. We may need to look at increasing partnership opportunities or contracting services to reduce expensive equipment costs and reduce the demands on our personnel.

Thus far, Roger Zielinski and I have no opponent for the upcoming election. Erin Pontiac has filled to run for the seat formerly held by Eric Gustad, but no candidate has filed for the 1st District where Coleen Kenny has indicated she will not run again. The filing period ends August 2nd at 4:00 pm. Write in

candidates can still fill to run through October 3rd. I'll push to appoint Erin Pontiac to the vacant seat after the filing period ends so we will have a 7 member City Council (even though it is not "required"). In the absence of a competitor for the seat, she would be only candidate on the ballot anyway.

12th Street - finally got a judicial ruling, in favor of the City, that will allow us to move forward on 12th Street reconstruction with sidewalks and meet the "Major Street" standards required by State Law. The only issue that remains is compensation for taking the 28' of property. It was reported in the Manistee News Advocate.

Best wishes for a great summer and hope to hear from you – thanks - Jim