

## November 1, 2018 Department of Public Services

The following items are designed to present information on Public Services Department work items recently completed, those expected to occur during the upcoming month, and other items of potential interest to the public. Information is subject to change at any time due to staff availability, weather events or other emergency situations, or numerous other factors. Items are not necessarily in order of importance, and may not be repeated in their entirety from month to month unless there is a need for continued reporting.

1. Citizen Request Module items – The City launched the new “My Monroe on the Go” application in August that is now being used to track citizen requests, and will now automatically generate work orders for service. During the month of October, a total of 86 service requests were entered requiring action from this department. The largest category, as in most months, was Forestry with 33 requests, followed by 9 street light outages, 7 garbage complaints, 4 pothole requests and 4 other road hazard concerns, 3 traffic issues, 3 signs requests, 3 dead animals, and 3 others, which included one clogged catch basin, one graffiti concern, and one sink hole.
2. Forestry Activities – in the month of October the Forestry work group completed 171 tree plantings, trimmed an additional 20 trees, and fully removed 4 trees. Also, DTE has notified the City that they will be trimming trees within the City sometime in the near future for line clearance, mostly in the southwest part of the City. Finally, four willow trees in poor condition that were found at Veterans Park are being scheduled for removal as soon as practical.
3. Vactor Truck / Storm Cleaning – the City Council approved the purchase of a new vactor truck to be used in cleaning catch basins and storm sewers at the August 6 meeting, and we accepted delivery in September. We will attempt to complete as much work as possible before heavy leaf drop requires the re-assignment of vactor personnel and freezing temperatures prevent its use.
4. Cold Patching – this continues to be a primary work activity throughout the year, even now that the weather conditions have stabilized. Citizens should feel free to contact Public Services staff via the citizen request module, phone, or email to report potholes, and we will do our best to handle complaints as quickly as possible. We typically try to address any complaints within 48 hours most of the year.
5. Parks staffing – As with past seasons, one (1) DPS Maintenance Worker was transferred under the Parks Maintenance Supervisor again this year, but has returned to the DPS labor pool. The temporary assignment began April 2 and ended October 27 this year as per the adopted budget and approved organizational structure. Should the Parks Supervisor require additional assistance or for heavy projects off-season, DPS staff will assist as able at their request, otherwise full responsibility for all parks items other than forestry issues, the grass cutting contract, and contracted capital projects falls under the Parks and Recreation Department.

6. Street Sweeping – we have been running one sweeper for our maintenance level since June. However, normally around late October, DPS begins to intensify our on-street leaf collection activities, as even those leaves that fall directly into the street from City trees and those that blow around from adjacent property terraces can easily become excessive. For a period of about four to six weeks (depending on the weather), we run two or three (if all of our older units are operable) sweepers along with two to four dump trucks in a rotating convoy to avoid having to continuously return the sweepers to dump leaves themselves each time the hopper unit is full. We have found this is the most efficient method, but residents should be advised that it does still normally take a full month to make a City-wide cycle, and all work is often not completed until the end of November or early December, depending on weather conditions and final leaf drop. This also unfortunately can tie up nearly half of our available personnel during this time, so our ability to respond to discretionary tasks is very limited. Obviously, removal of as many leaves as possible before the first major snowfall is a high priority to avoid plowing these back into the terrace, which makes for a larger mess in the spring depending on the quantity. We will be delivering our composted leaves to Snow's Nursery, who has agreed to process roughly 1,600 cubic yards for \$6 per cubic yard on our behalf. Leaf collection, like regular street sweeping activities, is charged to the City's Refuse Fund millage.
7. Mowing Contract – we are completing the fifth year of a five-year mowing contract, and mowing activities will run through the end of November. The regular contract work was divided into 5 groups this contract, with US Lawns of Southgate handling mowing in Woodland Cemetery and Memorial Place, along with monthly weed trimming along more than a mile of riverbank, and Ron Noel Lawn Service of Monroe handling all other City properties. In total, the City contracts for mowing 613 gross acres (nearly 1 square mile), which is roughly 9% of the entire area of the City. The City Council has approved extending the contract with Ron Noel Lawn Service for their activities for an additional three (3) seasons through 2021, and we will be exploring options for the riverbank mowing with our own staff starting in 2019, depending on equipment purchases. We will also be looking at changes to the delivery package for the cemeteries as well starting in 2019.
8. Leaf Bag Distribution – the City will complete its distribution of 70,000 leaf bags on November 5. Bags were distributed on most Saturdays in October from 8 A.M. to 1 P.M., and on most Mondays and Wednesdays from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. at the Department of Public Services facility at 222 Jones Avenue. Bags were limited to 50 per person for City residents only, and staff loaded them directly into vehicles for the citizens, which seemed to be well received again this year.
9. Enterprise Fleet Management Program – the City Council approved of entering into a contract with Enterprise to lease vehicles to the City in lieu of cash purchases, and said vehicles are then replaced on a five-year cycle to minimize maintenance costs. City staff will continue to perform the maintenance, and staff is finalizing the vehicle specifications for the first 18 vehicles. As a part of the program, we will also be switching to a different fueling program that should afford more widespread fueling options. The first 18 vehicles have been ordered and will be delivered in the next 2-4 months, depending on the units. Significant time is being spent in transitioning to the Enterprise maintenance program, which will better allow for determination of costs and maintenance history.
10. Yard Waste – yard waste collection will continue through the week of December 10. Guidelines for yard waste collection are listed on the City's Refuse Reference document on the City's web page. Residents may continue to use the City-supplied yard waste bags, as well as those purchased from area vendors, along with re-usable cans with yard waste stickers, available free at City Hall.

11. Tree Lighting / Banners – DPS staff will be partnering with volunteers from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to install decorations ahead of the downtown tree lighting, which is scheduled for Saturday, November 17. As with last year, the DDA volunteers will be decorating any poles and locations that can be reached with ladders, and our staff will be installing the overhead decorations at the three (3) banner locations, the lights on the large tree in front of the courthouse, the light poles on the Monroe Street Bridge, and the lit decorations mounted on various light poles. As per normal, we will be switching out the vertical fall banners with winter banners prior to this time.
12. Winter preparatory work activities – during the month of October, there are a number of items that are handled in anticipation of winter, and these have generally been completed, including shutting off the Lotus Fountain in Loranger Square (late September this year), removal of the aeration fountain in the Munson Park pond (early October this year), removal of the boat docks at Hellenberg Field (mid-October this year), and removal of the floral display at Memorial Place (early October this year). The Parks and Recreation staff is handling closing of the restrooms, and will determine the schedule for this work. The in-roadway pedestrian crosswalk signs in the downtown area will also be removed in November or early December ahead of possible plowing activities.
13. Election Set-up and Tear-Down – as with all elections, Public Services staff will be assisting the Clerk-Treasurer’s office with setup on the Monday prior and teardown on the Wednesday following the election November 6. Our crews do work in the evening hours as well on Monday due to some facilities being unable to accommodate setup during the daytime hours as they are in use.
14. Winter Operations Policy – shortly, the Department will be issuing our official winter operations policy document, which will likely be similar to, if not identical to, last year’s policy. We typically strive for this document to be available by November 15 each year. Also, the Clerk-Treasurer’s office advertised the ordinance requiring sidewalk clearance in October as required by the ordinance, so that the City’s legal notification is now met. The Parks and Recreation Department will again handle snow removal activities at the various park facilities, including Munson Park and Mark Worrell Trail in particular for more targeted attention to our facilities that remain most heavily-used during winter and snowy conditions. At present, all 14 Teamster personnel are currently budgeted to remain under the supervision of the Public Services Department during winter operations, with Parks retaining one (1) Teamster assigned to their operations and available for winter activities.
15. Downtown curb line snow removal contract renewal – after two (2) years with a dedicated service contract, in 2017-18 the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) chose not to enter into a contract to remove the continuous row of snow from the top of the curbs in the downtown area that results from both roadway plowing and sidewalk clearance by property owners. As such, DPS staff will be again tasked fully with this work in 2018-19. With these activities generally considered to be a lower priority than street and parking lot clearance City-wide, in larger storm events this activity may be postponed 3-4 days until it can be undertaken.

***Prepared by: Patrick M. Lewis, P.E., Director of Engineering and Public Services***