



# WHITEHALL

## *Our City, Our News*

JULY 2014

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Tax increase information—see “Fixing a Hole”
- For daytime sewer or water emergencies call 894-4157. After hours call 911.
- Utility bills are mailed quarterly.
- Building and zoning permits are available at the Department of Public Works.

### City of Whitehall

#### City Council Members

Mayor Mac Hatch  
Mayor Pro Tem Edd Whalen  
James Bartholomew  
Tanya Cabala  
Jeff Holmstrom  
Steve Sikkenga  
Orville Smith

Visit us at  
[www.cityofwhitehall.org](http://www.cityofwhitehall.org)

 And Like us on Facebook

## “Fixing a Hole”

The 2014/15 Street Improvement project will include major repairs to Slocum Street from Mears to Iowa; Lincoln Street from Warner to Mary; and Mary Street. These streets were chosen based on a “rating” using engineering standards combined with a pressing need for underground sewer and

water upgrades. The project is estimated to cost 1.6 million. All but \$243,000 can be funded with anticipated revenues and fund reserves. To cover the gap, the City added three mills to the tax bills which you recently received. This will cost the average home owner an extra \$120. The City Council will

review the need for a street millage on an annual basis.



## “We Can Work It Out”

The City Council just passed a \$6.8 million operating budget for the fiscal year which began July 1. Rather than bore you with how revenues have been declining, reduced, and withheld, let's talk about proactive choices the City has made to meet our financial challenges. The Industrial Park has paid off its debt. Bonds for streets, the downtown, the water system, and the sewer system will expire in the next two years. This will reduce annual debt payments

by \$356,000.

The cost to treat sewage waste will increase 5%. To zero out the effect of this to our customers, we have reduced our water rates 10%. The water fund is in a much healthier financial position than the sewer fund and can absorb this lost revenue without any significant reduction in services.

The City has made significant changes to the benefits offered to our employees including

higher co-pays and reduced post-employment costs. We have reduced pay scales for new employees and have restructured our staffing. These changes are expected to save \$544,000 in payroll costs over the next five years.



# “Don’t Let Me Down”



It seems that each season, no matter how much we like it, brings with it some tedious tasks. For summer it's mowing the lawn. Some people like their yard work and it shows; others, not so much, and that shows too. But mowing the grass isn't just about looks. An unmowed lawn creates pollens that can

aggravate allergies and provides a home for unwelcome guests like fleas, ticks, mosquitos, mice and snakes. That impacts the health of other people.

Because of the concern for public health the City of Whitehall has an ordinance that requires residents to mow their lawns and the police

department is active in enforcement. The first step is always to notify residents to mow their lawn but citations will be issued for uncorrected violations. Improve the looks of your home, be a good neighbor and save yourself some money. Keep your lawn well mowed.

# “Help”

## ATTENTION WATER CUSTOMERS WITH SECONDARY WATER METERS

To protect you and the city water supply the State of Michigan (DEQ) requires that all of these services have a backflow protection device, that the testable devices be tested, and a copy of that test be given to the City of Whitehall Department of Public Works for reporting to the state.

The deadline for submitting the backflow test results to the City is November 15, 2014. We are suggesting that before you shut your system down for the winter, you have your

device tested and submit the test results. If we do not receive a copy of your test results by November 15, 2014, your secondary meter will be removed.

PVB and RPZ devices are testable and must be tested every three years. Testing must be done by a licensed Master Plumber that is a certified tester. We maintain a list of certified testers in this area.

We have an extensive Cross Connection Program in place which is regulated by the State of

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Water Bureau to protect our public water supply system.

If you have any questions please contact the department at **894-4157**, we would be happy to answer your questions or set up an appointment to help you determine if you have a device, what kind it is and if it is testable.

# “Come Together”



## Howmet Playhouse Summer Schedule

July 10-12	Motherhood Out Loud
July 17	The Smell of the Kill
July 18	Murder by Natural Causes
July 19	The Complete World of Sport (abridged)
July 24-26	East of the Sun, West of the Moon—Presented by the White Lake Youth Theatre program
July 31, Aug 1-2	The Mousetrap
August 7-9, 14-16	Leading Ladies
August 21-23	Hospitality Suite

July 17-19: The talented students of CMU's Summer Theatre touring company will return to the Playhouse stage with three performances that will knock your socks off!

Show times are 7:30 pm, except for the July 25 performance @ 2:00 pm.

Tickets are available at [www.howmetplayhouse.org](http://www.howmetplayhouse.org), the Playhouse Box Office Monday—Friday: 1:00 pm—5:00 pm or by calling 231.894.2540.

## “With a Little Help From My Friends”

Two new electronic signs have been installed at the Howmet Playhouse to replace the changeable letter marquee that required a person to lean over the edge of the roof to change the message, even during winter months with snow and ice to contend with. The sign was made possible through extremely generous donations in memory of Joanne Hatch, with a sizable donation from the Montague/Whitehall Rotary Club, the Charles L. Hitesman Memorial Fund, the Taste of White Lake, and Johnson Outdoor Digital.

Lighting has recently been

added to the Sailboat/Trees sculpture in Covell Park. Funding was made possible by a grant from the Covell Park Fund advised by the White Lake Community Fund of the Community Foundation for Muskegon County. A special thank you goes out to Pete Kunz for writing and securing the funding and coordinating the project.

The Community Foundation will also be supporting the local arts with a grant to the Howmet Playhouse to underwrite the production of the play *Leading Ladies*. The Community Foundation for Muskegon County was created in 1961 to

improve the quality of life for Muskegon County residents. As a publicly-supported community endowment, the Foundation receives and manages contributions from thousands of community citizens and organizations who are committed to the future of Muskegon County.



# “How Do You Do It”



## Election Information



### Office Hours

#### **City Hall**

405 E. Colby Street  
894-4048  
Monday - Friday  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### **DPW**

2055 Warner Street  
894-4157  
Monday - Friday  
7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

#### **Inspections**

Building—Chris Hall  
Electrical—Tim Chorney  
Plumbing/Mechanical—Jim  
Shereda  
894-4157

2055 Warner Street

### Meeting Dates

**City Council**  
2nd and 4th Tuesdays at  
7:30 p.m.

**Planning Commission**  
1st Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

**BRA/LDFA/TIFA**  
2nd Thursday of  
January, April, July and  
October at Noon

All registered voters for the City of Whitehall vote at City Hall, 405 E. Colby Street. Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. To find out if and where you are registered to vote, check out [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote).

#### **Primary Election: August 5, 2014**

**Voter Registration** - The last day to register to vote for the August 5 Primary Election was July 7, 2014.

#### **General Election: November 4, 2014**

**Voter Registration** - The last day to register to vote for the November 4 General Election is October 6, 2014

If you have not already registered to vote, you may do so at any Secretary of State's office, or at Whitehall City Hall at 405 E. Colby Street.

Absentee ballots are available for persons: who are college students or anyone planning on being out of town on Election Day; physically unable to attend the polls without assistance; 60 years or

over; appointed as election inspectors in a precinct other than where they vote; confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial; with religious tenets that prohibit one from attending the polls. Ballots can be mailed to the voters registered address, college address, or another location if specified on the application up until 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election. The City Clerk will be in the office on Saturday, August 2 (for Primary election) and November 1 (for General election) to issue and receive absentee ballots. Absentee ballots must be returned to the City Clerk by 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

And remember, as always, picture identification is required for someone to vote without signing an affidavit. Voters can satisfy the picture identification requirement by showing a Michigan driver's license or a Michigan personal identification card. Other forms of identification may be used, check with your local clerk for a list of accepted documents.



## “I Want to Tell You”

**Did you know...that according to the EPA, dog waste is one of the top three water pollutants.**

Please be kind to the environment and each other and pick up your dog's waste. Remember to bring a baggy (or two) to help keep our parks people-friendly and clean.