“Love Needs a Holiday”
Shop with a Hero

Two nights filled with laughter and joy — that was December 11th and 12th as our local heroes participated in Shop with a Hero and Shop with a Cop at our local Walmart and North Muskegon Meijer.

On December 11th, members of the Muskegon County Sheriffs Department, White Lake Fire Authority, Montague Fire Department, White Lake Ambulance Authority, and the Cities of Montague and Whitehall Police Departments participated in “Shop with a Hero” at the local Walmart. Each of the twenty children received $100 as part of a grant donated by Walmart to buy gifts for themselves and their families. On December 12th, Shop with a Cop was held at the North Muskegon Meijer who donated $100 gift cards to children in need. The City of Whitehall’s Police Department was well represented this year. Participating in the Shop with a Hero were Officers Chris Mahoney, Derek Sova, Kevin Nummerdor, Austin Bean, Travis Bolles, and Detective Brandon Mahoney. Participating in Shop with a Cop was officer Eric Whitlow. Thanks to Walmart, Meijer, and our local officers for making these such special nights for the kids!
“What Am I Gonna Do About You”

Snow Removal
As a reminder that when removing snow from private property it is unlawful to deposit, or cause to be deposited, snow, ice, or slush on any roadway or highway. Traffic Codes may be viewed in their entirety at City Hall.

The Fire Authority asks that property owners keep fire hydrants clear of snow to assist them in accessing the hydrants during an emergency.

Please make sure that your mailbox and post are in sound order. IF the City’s plow truck physically hits the box or post the City will make repairs or replace it. However, IF the snow load damages the box or post it will be the responsibility of the property owner to repair or replace it.

Sidewalk Snow Removal:
City sidewalk snow removal will be back this year. The priority will be routes leading to and from the schools and also downtown. Other sidewalks will be cleared subject to available funding and manpower. It is still, by local ordinance the adjacent property owner’s responsibility to clear their sidewalk in a timely manner.

“But Why”

Water and Sewer Rates
The City’s sewer rate will increase by $0.22 per thousand gallons and the water rate will increase by $0.09 per thousand gallons starting with the January billing. The combined new rate of $6.62 per thousand gallons will cost the average household using 21,000 gallons per quarter an additional $18.48 per year. This rate increase and others from recent prior years has been necessary to offset the costs of sewage treatment and capital investment at the County level and for necessary infrastructure improvements to our own local sewer and water systems. Some of these improvements have included new underground collection and distribution systems in conjunction with street repairs on Lake and Slocum streets, cleaning and painting the water towers, and a new lift station at Tannery Bay. The City has drawn down $1.7M in cash reserves from both systems over the last five years.

For the trivia buffs – a gallon of water at a local supermarket is selling for $1.29 per gallon. Ours sells for 2/10 of a penny per gallon. If we sold our water for what most consumers are willing to pay, we would raise $396M in one year. That would be enough revenue to run the entire City for 61 years, with NO taxes!
**“Rumor Has It”**

**Notes from the Chief**

The change in seasons changes our focus. Now that snow is upon us, literally, we want to remind everyone that, for the safety and benefit of the whole community, we’re asking you to do your part. This is a reminder that parking is prohibited between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. throughout the winter. This allows our City DPW to do their best at clearing our streets for safe travel. The fines start at $10.00 and can increase up to $100.00 for multiple violations.

Also, City ordinances require everyone to keep the sidewalks along their property clear for the safety of pedestrians, especially kids heading to school. We especially don’t want people walking on a winter roadway to avoid a neglected sidewalk. Please help keep everyone safe.

We are concerned for our citizens’ safety, not about writing tickets. We know that snow creates several difficulties but on the bright side, we don’t have to worry about people not mowing their grass.

---

**“Somebody Up There Likes Me”**

**2018 Small Business Exemption for Commercial Personal Property**

**About the exemption**

Last year, businesses with less than $80,000 True Cash Value of personal property owned, leased or used by them (or any related entity) within a tax collecting municipality could qualify for an exemption if they timely file the Michigan State Tax Commission affidavit. This exemption continues in 2018. Exemption affidavits must be fully completed and in the assessor's hands by the deadline.

**How to file**

If your commercial personal property is less than $80,000 True Cash Value, please fill out Treasury Form 5076 “Small Business Property Tax Exemption.” Recently, this form was provided to you by the Equalization Dept. Otherwise, Treasury Form 5076 can be found at the following link: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/treasury/5076f_493854_7.pdf

Manufacturers must complete Treasury Form 5278, which can be found at the following link: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/taxes/5278_500796_7.pdf

**Where and When to file**

To be considered for exemption, the required affidavit must be received by **Feb. 20, 2018**.

**Please send to:**

Muskegon County Equalization Attn. Assessing 173 E. Apple Ave., Suite #201Muskegon, MI 49442

Owners are responsible to timely report even if not in receipt of the letter. Filings received after Feb. 20, 2018 cannot be processed. If you have any questions, you may contact Muskegon County Assessing at 231.724.6386.
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—Jeff Johnson
Plumbing/Mechanical—Jim Callender
894-4157
2055 Warner Street

Meeting Dates
City Council
2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Planning Commission
1st Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.

BRA/L DFA/TIFA
2nd Thursday of January, April, July and October at Noon

“I’m a Survivor”
Howmet Playhouse

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, businesses, and grants, we have exceeded our $3.6M fundraising goal. We have raised $3,700,000 to renovate the Playhouse! The project is underway with plans to complete in Summer 2018.

The Playhouse is an enterprise fund within the City of Whitehall and does not receive tax dollars for operations or programming. These are funded through ticket sales and the Managing Director works with donors and sponsors and applies for grant funding to support the playhouse. The City has committed to $550,000 to the capital improvements from the industrial park tax base known as the Local Development Finance Authority.

In order to provide year-round programming, improve safety and become code compliant, the project includes new HVAC, plumbing, electrical, theater systems (drapes, lights, sound) as well as a 5,000 sq ft addition to the south. The original facade will be visible through the expanded glassed-in lobby; great care is being taken to restore, as best we can, the look of the 1916 entrance with the original doors. A new box office, concessions, and restrooms, as well as handicap access to the stage, will be included in the addition. A green room/rehearsal space can be used for classes and community gatherings. Adequate backstage dressing rooms and restrooms are included. A new, paved parking lot will provide safe access for patrons with mobility challenges as well as more onsite parking.

If you are still interested in supporting our capital improvements, you may do so at the Community Foundation for Muskegon County website; be sure to select the Howmet Playhouse Capital Non-Endowed Fund. If you prefer you can send a check to us directly at 405 E Colby, Whitehall, Michigan 49461. IRA disbursements, stock transfers, cash, check or credit cards are accepted.

Over 100 years ago, the people of this community had a dream that now resides at the corner of Mears and Slocum. They said “Yes” and we are forever grateful that they did. We thank our donors and supporters for continuing to believe it’s worth saving. Should you have any questions, please contact Beth Beaman at (231) 894-4048. She will be happy to walk you through the plans and answer any questions you have.

Thank you to all of our patrons, sponsors, and donors for keeping our 100-year-old Playhouse going strong! See you at the Playhouse! Check out our website for more information. www.howmetplayhouse.org