



HILLS HIGHLIGHTS

Winter 2017 #95

Mayor
Michael Coakley

City Commissioners:
Michael J. Dul
Susan McCarthy
Sarah H. McClure
Stuart D. Sherr

City Hall
45 East Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
48304-2322
Telephone: 248.644.1520
Facsimile: 248.644.4813
www.bloomfieldhillsmi.net

City Office Hours:
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday – Friday

Non-Emergency:
Police and Fire: 248.644.4200

Emergency: 911

City Commission Meetings:
Second Tuesday of every
Month at 7:30 p.m.

Planning Commission Meetings:
Second Tuesday of every
Month at 4:00 p.m.

**Zoning Board of
Appeal Meetings:**
Third Tuesday of every
Month at 4:00 p.m.



THE YEAR AHEAD

By: Michael Coakley, Mayor

Greetings. It is my honor and privilege to serve as Mayor this year. While there has been and will be significant changes at city hall, with our new Building Official Keith Woodcock, our new

Finance Director/Treasurer Keith Francis and Interim City Manager David Hendrickson, all of whom are doing a fine job of keeping things running smoothly, our focus this year is going to be the same as in years past, to preserve and protect our high quality of life and services, with the fiscal discipline we have rightly come to expect of our administration. This means continuous improvement of our public safety services which are already top notch, development of a sound budget while maintaining low taxes, and steadily working on our infrastructure, primarily roads, water and sewer.

The Commission will be looking to see if we can accelerate our roads program to address some of our deteriorated roads sooner than originally planned. This is primarily a budget issue that we will be addressing as we develop our next budget in the coming months. Also, improvements to the wireless communications infrastructure are already under way and we'll look to build on those efforts. To further improve our telecommunications, we are looking at potentially bringing in fiber optic service. And, we are in the midst of our search for a new City Manager, which we are doing with the able assistance of the Michigan Municipal League.

Central to all our efforts at preservation and protection is strong adherence to our ordinances. Our ordinances are the backbone of our community setting the ground rules for how we relate to each other as neighbors and good citizens. They are only as good as our adherence to, and enforcement of them, though. To that end we can expect stepped up enforcement efforts, which in the words of our Building Official Mr. Woodcock will be "firm but fair". Only by that means will we maintain the esthetics of our community in a manner fair to all.

Here's wishing us all a happy, healthy and prosperous 2017.



2017 City Commission Goals

By: Sarah H. McClure, Commissioner

At a recent meeting, the City of Bloomfield Hills Commission approved goals for this upcoming year. The goal setting process helps the Commission and Administration team work towards the same objectives and “row in the same direction.”

Some efforts are ongoing such as determining which roads are to be reconstructed next and what are their funding source. The beautification of our community and additional tree planting along our streets continues. Another task from last year which is still in progress, is improving the Long Lake Road railroad overpass. Also, the City Commission will continue to monitor our long term liabilities, in particular our OPEB (retiree health care) situation. In addition, we plan to complete union negotiations with our Public Safety Officers whose contract expired last June.

One major new goal is the hiring of a new City Manager. As you may know, after ten years with the City, Jay Cravens moved to Tennessee where his daughter and her family reside. Public Safety Director Chief David Hendrickson has stepped in as Interim Manager. The City Commission established a search committee comprised of Mayor Coakley, Mayor Pro Tem McClure, and City Clerk Burton and has hired Michigan Municipal League to oversee the search process. We hope to have a permanent City Manager in place this spring.

Several other tasks relate to City planning and the building department. Our building and permit fees have been updated to better reflect City costs. Processes will be implemented to track and review these annually. Also, we are currently going out to bid for our planning consultant services. Periodically doing so helps insure we are getting the best price and expertise for our residents. Our Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals members will be receiving some additional training to help in their responsibilities.

Other Commission and Administrative goals include researching and discussing possible improvements to the fiber optic and cellular service in the City. The City Clerk is rolling out a mobile app for the City website and will implement a legal review of the city code. The Public Safety Department is working to improve the City ISO rating which could result in lower residential and commercial fire insurance rates.

The two dozen approved goals and their implementation progress are included in each month's City Commission packet and can be found on the City website.

Dates to Remember

February 14th - Winter Tax Bills are due at City Hall without penalty

February 20th - City Hall Closed in Observance of President's Day

February 28th - Last day to pay 2016 summer and winter taxes and penalties at City Hall

March 11th & 18th – Board of Review Hearings



We Are Indebted

By: *Stuart D. Sherr, Commissioner*

Welcome to calendar year 2017! I say calendar year because from your City's perspective, we are only half way through our fiscal year which ends on June 30. For us, now is when we begin the budgeting process for our next fiscal year which will run from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. Budgeting is the most important (and most time consuming) work we Commissioners do each year. Per state law, we must complete and approve the new budget prior to the expiration of the current fiscal year.

The vast majority of the City's revenues (approximately \$7.8M or 78%) comes from your property taxes. We estimate our property tax revenue will increase by about \$300K due to rising property values, new construction, and major remodels. As you know, the City operates on a not-for-profit basis. The money we collect is used to fund the City's services (such as road repairs) and pay obligations.

I have always said that running a governmental body is like running a business. We have revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities (both short and long term), and employees. In this article, I choose to focus on our long-term debt.

As of June 30, 2016 (the end of the City's last fiscal year), the City's total current and long-term asset and liability picture for both our Governmental Activities Fund (basic operating services) and our Basic Activities Fund (Water and Sewer Fund), was sound as follows:

	2016	2015
Assets	\$41,582,170	\$37,728,338
Liabilities	30,562,058	27,642,627
Net Position (assets – liabilities)	\$11,020,112	\$10,085,711
Change in Net Position	\$934,401	

From this big picture, I would like to focus on several specific obligations. In 2007, the City issued Road Construction Bonds totaling \$3M at an average rate of 4.00% maturing in 2018. In 2010, the City again issued Road Bonds totaling

\$4M at 2.0 to 3.5% maturing in 2025. In 2014, the City issued Pension Obligation Bonds totaling \$15,860,000 with interest between 0.40% and 4.00% and maturing in 2034. This allowed the City to fund the unfunded portion of the City's pension obligations. The City was able to make use of a special state law given our AAA credit rating. The City simultaneously negotiated with its unions to place all new employees in a defined contribution pension plan and avoid the far less predictable defined benefit pension plan.

Lastly, the City provides retiree health care benefits to eligible employees. These are known as Other Postemployment Benefits or "OPEB." While the City is not obligated to prefund the insurance premiums, the City has in recent years been paying approximately \$300K (in addition to the annual premiums of approximately \$600K) to fund the liability. Nonetheless, using actuarial tables, the City has an unfunded OPEB liability of approximately \$9.5M.

Rest assured, your City's financial condition is and remains safe and sound. At our municipal level of government, I remain vigilant concerning our debt levels. We have taken steps to reduce our exposure to long term liabilities such as pension obligations and retiree health care obligations. We have also restructured some debt to spread and smooth out the payments. Given the upcoming maturity of the 2007 Road Bonds, we will discuss generating funds for road repairs. The timing is good as interest rates will remain relatively low notwithstanding several probable quarter point rate bumps by the Federal Reserve.



My first year as Commissioner

By: Susan McCarthy, Commissioner

At the beginning of every year people reflect on the past year and begin planning for the next. As I finished 2016, my first year as a commissioner for Bloomfield Hills, I reflect on what I learned and the experience of being a City Commissioner. First, I am very grateful that I served on the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals for six years before becoming a City Commissioner. My past experience with the two boards were invaluable and gave me a better understanding of the issues that face a city commission. We have several issues we address throughout the year, but here are a few of the challenges, opportunities and rewards I experienced:

The Challenges:

Like any household or business, you have a budget. There are several things you would like to do, but all financial advisors will tell you to set a budget and stick to it. That is what we do on the commission. There are several budget meetings that take place before the budget is finalized. Everything is reviewed with several discussions on ways to improve and save money. We look at history, trends and plan for the future. There are several things we would like to do, but fiscally we are not able to. The roads are a major topic for our budget discussion. We are always looking for additional

funding to improve our roads. Road replacement is planned several years in advance. Priorities are set based on careful analysis. Unfortunately due to our weather in Michigan the roads deteriorate rapidly. Last year we allocated additional funding for road repair knowing that a focus on maintenance will help reduce further deterioration of our roads. In addition, we have a meeting set for the beginning of this year with our consultants to review the five year plan for road repair and replacement and make adjustments where necessary.

The opportunities:

This past year we reviewed and updated several of our ordinances, building fees and contracts. We updated ordinances with a focus on making sure they addressed current issues and were easy to understand. The building fees were reviewed and modified where necessary to make sure they were in line with the work that was being done. The commission decided to review every contract that comes up for renewal and send it out for bid. Our goal is to make sure that the citizens of our community receive the best service for the best value. We will continue this process going forward.

The Rewards:

I have learned that we have an amazing group of people who work for the city of Bloomfield Hills. In every department, from the city employees, DPW, Public Safety, Boards and Commissions, the goal is to maintain the uniqueness the City of Bloomfield Hills has and improve upon it where needed. We are fortunate to have all of them serving our city.

Serving as a commissioner for the City of Bloomfield Hills has been a rewarding experience. I feel fortunate to be able to contribute to this beautiful community we all call home.



There's an App for That!

By: Amy L. Burton, City Clerk

The City of Bloomfield Hills is happy to announce we now have a mobile app. The City of Bloomfield Hills mobile app can be downloaded from the App Store or in Google Play, just by searching for City of Bloomfield Hills_MI.

Recently launched through our website host, a mobile app was included as part of the city's 2016 website redesign process and we are pleased to roll it out to the public. Mobile users now have access to the full content of the city's website.

The app provides a connection between the city and its citizens and visitors. Users can enjoy convenient access to news, services and event information.

Some features of the mobile app include: Emergency Alerts, Community Calendars and frequently used forms and documents. A unique function titled CRT allows a user to snap a photo and add a brief description of the issue while the app will assign the GPS coordinates and send the information directly to city administration for investigation. This feature can be useful for efficiently reporting a variety of concerns such as a pothole on a city street, a down tree or possibly even a street light outage.

We are now using the latest technology to offer another form of communication to provide an open government for our residents.



A Road to Repair

*By: David Hendrickson,
Interim City Manager*

While serving as the Interim City Manager over the last several months, I have gained a new appreciation of the City's road systems. As the Public Safety Director, my primary concern has always been from a safety perspective in keeping the roads free of snow, ice, and debris. Now that I have the additional concerns of road longevity and road replacement needs, I find myself looking at our roads much differently.

The old-adage "as predictable as Michigan weather" holds considerable meaning for our road conditions, including our gravel roads. The unpredictability of Michigan winter weather causes our gravel roads to wash out during quick thawing and excessive rains. Quick thawing of the top layer of the road also creates soft and muddy road conditions, thus creating ruts and pot holes which are difficult to navigate.

Paved roads are also susceptible to degradation from freezing and quickly changing temperatures. Water can deteriorate paved roads by finding its way between and under the paved section where it freezes and expands to cause cracking. Road salt applications help keep the road safe from icy conditions, but unfortunately also break down the bonding agents that hold the asphalt together.

As the City's leadership continually work on ways to fund road improvement projects, road repairs must constantly be addressed. This winter I have watched our Department of Public Works move from one road repair issue to the next. After plowing and salting one week, they are dealing with washed out or thawing gravel roads the next. We work to fix pot holes on both gravel and asphalt pavement as quickly as we can and welcome the calls we receive from our residents about their concerns. These calls help us to identify areas that we may not have gotten a chance to notice due to the high demand for road repairs in the winter and spring.

If you have a road concern, please call City Hall at 248-644-1520 and we will address your concern as soon as we can. You may also call our DPW at 248-530-1412 but you may have to leave a message as the staff is typically on the road most of the day.



Include the Building Department as part of your design team

By: Keith Woodcock, Building Official

With spring just a few months away, many residents are now working on plans for renovations and additions. So often we see a project get out of control because the advance work for design and code compliance was not given enough time and attention at the start. This beginning stage of the project sets the foundation for either smiles or tears as the project progresses. It is much easier to erase a line on paper than it is to move a wall or pool after construction has started.

The City of Bloomfield Hills Building Department, with our professional Planning and Engineering consultants are here to be part of your design team from the beginning. We truly want to help you succeed with all of your improvement projects. So often we see unfortunate delays and misunderstandings with projects that could be resolved with proper communication. This communication starts in the



design phase. By making our group part of your team from the beginning we can help prevent most ordinance or code mistakes before they become costly problems.

So many of the projects that are being proposed in our city are very elegant and design intensive. This also makes them very technical with many issues that need professional attention. We are here to help! Please bring your project concepts in to us at the beginning so we can help advise and guide you. As the Building Official, I can meet with you as a walk-in or by scheduling an appointment. Our planning consultant has open meetings one morning a month, which just requires you to call and reserve a time. Additional meetings can be scheduled as needed to help you.

Please call the Building Department at 248-530-1400 to get started.

Baldwin Public Library

The end of the Adult Services renovation is quickly approaching. We expect the Adult Services area to be finished this May. The project includes the following enhancements:

- Improved acoustics, energy efficiency, infrastructure, wayfinding, and lighting
- More natural light, let in by new exterior windows along the curved wall on the southwest side of the building
- Exposure of the original brick color of the 1927 building
- Transformation of the Birkerts Addition, with furniture, fixtures, carpeting, and layout reflecting the modernist style of the space
- More study and collaboration rooms, an updated computer lab, a new makerspace, and a new reading room off of the Grand Hall

Materials from the Library's adult non-fiction, DVD, audiobook, music, and teen collections have been placed into storage, although the highest-demand items are available in the Grand Hall. If you're unable to locate an item you need, a librarian can arrange for you to obtain it through interlibrary loan.

Baldwin's digital services—including downloadable ebooks, audiobooks, magazines, music, and streaming movies and TV shows—are available without interruption. Visit baldwinlib.org for access to those resources.

Upcoming Programs

Income Tax Time, with CPA Tom Hill – February 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Book Club Boot Camp – February 27 at 7:00 p.m.

Blackthorn: Celtic Music – March 6 at 7:00 p.m.

10 Steps for a Successful Home Sale – March 21 at 7:00 p.m.

The Remarkable Life of Mary Cassatt – April 25 at 7:00 p.m.

Intro to eBooks – May 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Nelsons' Wildlife Safari Presents: Animals from Around the World – May 13 at 10:30 a.m.

Everyone's Reading: Once in a Great City by David Maraniss – May 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Sign up for our Construction Updates and Youth, Teen, and Adult Events newsletters at www.baldwinlib.org



Household Hazardous Waste

Household products should never be poured down a sink, storm drain, or ditch. What's under our kitchen sink or in the garage can be hazardous to people and our water. Help keep our rivers, lakes, and beaches clean by knowing how to handle your household waste.

Which products are hazardous?

- Automotive: Oil, transmission fluid, gasoline/diesel fuel
- Home improvement: Oil-based products, glue, rust remover, paints and furniture strippers
- Pesticides/weed killers
- Cleaning Products: Tub and tile, oven
- Medical Items: Old medication, syringes/needles
- Other: nail polish, hair relaxer, mercury thermometer, alcohol-based lotion, prescription medication, aerosol cans

How do I store my products?

- Keep unused products in their original containers with their label intact.
- Keep all lids and caps on and tightly closed. Store products inside dry, cool areas, away from kids and pets.
- Only buy what you need and maintain a small inventory.

How do I dispose of my products?

- Never dump household hazardous waste down storm drains, sinks, or on the ground. Take them to a recycling location.
- Items can be disposed of at the Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority (SOCCRA) disposal facility at 991 Coolidge Highway in Troy between 8:00am and 3:30pm on Monday thru Friday. Additional information can be found at www.soccra.org.



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

Manufacturing recycled products requires, on average, 17 times less energy than manufacturing the same products from virgin materials. Help keep your environmental footprint down by following these top 10 reasons to recycle:

1. Good For Our Economy: American companies rely on recycling programs to provide the raw materials they need to make new products.
2. Creates Jobs: Recycling in the U.S. is a \$236 billion a year industry. More than 56,000 recycling and reuse enterprises employ 1.1 million workers nationwide.
3. Reduces Waste: The average American discards seven and a half pounds of garbage every day. Most of this garbage goes into landfills, where it's compacted and buried.
4. Good For The Environment: Recycling requires far less energy, uses fewer natural resources, and keeps waste from piling up in landfills.
5. Saves Energy: Recycling offers significant energy savings over manufacturing with virgin materials. (Manufacturing with recycled aluminum cans uses 95% less energy.)
6. Preserves Landfill Space: No one wants to live next door to a landfill. Recycling preserves existing landfill space.
7. Prevents Global Warming: In 2000, recycling of solid waste prevented the release of 32.9 million metric tons of carbon equivalent (MMTCE, the unit of measure for greenhouse gases) into the air.
8. Reduces Water Pollution: Making goods from recycled materials generates far less water pollution than manufacturing from virgin materials.
9. Protects Wildlife: Using recycled materials reduces the need to damage forests, wetlands, rivers and other places essential to wildlife.
10. Creates New Demand: Recycling and buying recycled products creates demand for more recycled products, decreasing waste and helping our economy.



City of Bloomfield Hills

45 E. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304-2322

2017 Bloomfield Hills City Commission:

Michael Coakley, Mayor
Michael J. Dul, Commissioner
Susan McCarthy, Commissioner
Sarah H. McClure, Commissioner
Stuart D. Sherr, Commissioner

CITY STAFF:

David S. Hendrickson, Interim City Manager
Amy L. Burton, City Clerk
Keith Francis, Finance Director, Treasurer
David S. Hendrickson, Director of Public Safety
Keith Woodcock, Building Official
Jamie Spivy, DPW Foreman
Paul Combs, Code Enforcement Officer

EMERGENCY:

Police, fire, Medical – dial 911
After hours (non-emergency) (248)644-4200

CITY GOVERNMENT:

Manager's Office – (248)530-1404
Building Official – (248)530-1408
Clerk's Office – (248)530-1403
Finance & Treasurer – (248)530-1402
Police / Public Safety Dept. – (248)644-4200
Public Works – (248)-530-1412

Where to Get Answers

CITY SERVICES:

Animal Control – (248)644-4200
Building & Permit Info. – (248)530-1400
Building Inspection Line (248)593-9350
Code Enforcement – (248)530-1410
Fire Marshall – (248)530-1409
Library Service – (248)647-1700
(Baldwin Public Library)
Planning & Zoning Info. (248)586-0505 (LSL Planning)
Police Services (Non-emerg.) (248)644-4200
Property / Assessing Info. – (248)858-0084
(Oakland County)
Sanitary Sewer Service & Billing – (248)858-1110
(Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner)
Street Maintenance – (248)203-0621 or (248)530-1404
Trash & Waste Pick Up – Rizzo Environmental Services
(586) 772-8900 or (888) 877-4996
Voting Information – (248)530-1403
Water Service & Billing – (248)858-1110
(Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner
hours – 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)
Water and Sewer Line Repair – (248)858-0487
(Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner
hours – 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

OTHER SERVICES

AT&T Repair Service – (800)515-7272
Amtrak (Info / Reservations) – (800)872-7245
Baldwin Public Library – (248)647-1700
Birmingham (City) – (248)530-1800
Birmingham Public Schools – (248)203-3000

Birmingham / Bloomfield Chamber – (248)644-1700
Bloomfield Hills Country Club – (248)644-6262
Bloomfield Hills Schools – (248)341-5400
Bloomfield Township – (248)433-7700
Bloomfield Township Police Dept. – (248)433-7755
Bloomfield Township Senior Services – (248)723-3500
Bloomfield Open Hunt – (248)644-9411
Comcast Customer Service – (248)855-6971
Customer Advocate – (734)254-1690
Consumers Power (Service, Billing & Emergencies) –
(800)477-5050
Cranbrook Educational Community – (248)645-3000
DTE Energy – (Customer Services & Emergencies) –
(800)477-4747
Haven (Domestic Violence Counseling) – (248)334-1274 or
(877)922-1274
Oakland County – (248)858-1000
Oakland County Assessor – (248)858-0776
or (248)858-0740
Oakland County Health Dept. – (248)858-1280
Oakland County Clerk / Register of Deeds – (248)858-0581
Oakland County Treasurer – (248)858-0611
Oakland Water Resources Commission –
main: (248)356-6299 emergencies: (248)624-6366
Road Commission for Oakland County – (877)858-4808
weekday hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.
After hours & weekends call – (248)858-4895
U.S. Postal Service – 2050 South Blvd. (248)332-3981
Village Club – (248)644-3450
West Bloomfield Township – (248)451-4800
48th District Court – information & probation:
(248)433-9373 criminal: (248)647-1141