

# *Letter from the Mayor*



## **Fire Protection Millage**

As all of you have undoubtedly noticed, your City government has been actively working to beautify our community and bring all of our residents together with events throughout the year. After all, our commitment is, and always has been, to improve the City we all call home in every way we can. To that end, our most pressing commitment now is the fire millage recently placed on the November ballot.

The City and Township have been discussing the fire department millage question for over a year, trying to determine how much money is required. Historically, citizens in the city and township have each contributed exactly the same to this shared project, 0.5 mill. This month, the citizens of the Township voted to increase their contribution by another 0.5 mill, to a total of 1.0 mill.

So the question now, of course, is what approach should the City take? While the City Representatives have had a debate with representatives of the township over how much is needed, here is our millage request for the November ballot: the City is asking for an additional .5 mill for a total millage of 1.0 over the next ten years replacing the current .5 mills beginning 2018-2027.

By replacing the millage now in effect, the new millage would help to correct the drop in funding suffered by the fire department following the 2008 recession. The residents of the City have always paid the exact same millage as residents in the township for the Fire Department's budget and this new millage request will allow City residents to continue to do so. Specifically, each resident, whether in the Township or the City, will pay 1 mill of their taxable value.

We have a joint Fire Department with the township. I wanted very much to take this opportunity to communicate directly with each of you on this important topic.

## **Great Things Happening**

We now have beautiful flower baskets brightening our Downtown. The flower baskets were coordinated by our local club, Touch the Earth Garden Club. The City is incredibly blessed with a group of individuals recently certified as MSU Master Gardeners. The wonderful gardens at Center and Saginaw and near Aubree's are cared for by this group. The members also helped pick the colorful flowers in the baskets. The baskets popped with color this year.

Many thanks to the City's DPW for watering and making sure that the baskets stayed beautiful. Also, many businesses donated to place flowers in the tree boxes including Rotary Club of Grand Blanc, Aubree's, Little Joe's, Old World Village, Perfect Cleaners, Mrs. Andrykovich and Hallmark Agency.

We want to continue to make these improvements that positively impact the community. For example, we applied for and received a grant from The Harding Foundation for a "POP-UP" development on Grand Blanc Road which should be ready next spring, allowing small business start-ups a chance to grow and an extension of the pocket park. We also continue to welcome new businesses to our Downtown, with Italia Gardens ready to break ground soon. As so many of you have experienced, we enjoyed our second year of the very successful First Friday Food Truck Festival. It is heartwarming to see so many residents enjoying an evening out in our Downtown and spending time on Sunday at the Farmers Market in its 12th year. We also had our first Festival of Lights last December and are planning to expand that event this year and in the coming years. By the end of fall, we will have 9 utility boxes painted by local artists. So much more is happening. This is just the beginning!

*Let's celebrate our Community and make it better by working together.  
Let's strive to Be Grand Blanc!!*

### *From the Desk of the City Manager:*



#### **Grants Received**

In 2013, the City began the process of receiving a Drinking Water Revolving Fund grant/loan that would modernize the City's water plant and system. The automatic meter read system allowed the DPW department to no longer read meters manually, but allow the water biller to pull in the meter reads at City Hall offices. This alone saved hours of manpower allowing DPW workers to work on needed capital projects. The water tower painting was another project that was needed for several years and was completed with this grant/loan. The waterline looping project allowed better water delivery and system processes in areas of the City that needed system reliability. This project also improved water plant capital items that reduced energy usage. Of these projects, those items deemed energy savings or "green" projects were considered grants amounting to \$809,128. The total draw amount was \$1,875,180. The remaining \$1,066,052 will be paid over 20 years at a low interest rate of 0.5%.

In 2014, the City applied for a SAW Grant for Stormwater Asset Management plan. The City knows the importance of understanding the flow of stormwater during storm events. This grant helps map the City's infrastructure and place the information in the City's GIS system to better manage and troubleshoot issues in the system. The SAW grant amounts to \$474,975 with the City paying \$52,775. Without this grant funding, these projects could not have been done.