



Issue September 2017

City Council

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Mike Burns Reflections

City Manager Marks First Year in Position

City Manager Michael Burns started working for the City of Lowell on September 6, 2016. He takes a look back at his first year and what he looks to do in the future.

Burns came to Lowell with an impression of strong community which has not changed in the past year. He sites things such as Pink Arrow, Gilda's Club, events along the Riverwalk, Christmas events, and financial donations to replace the Showboat as some of the things which makes an attractive city to live in and visit.



The job has not come without struggles. One of the City's more pressing issues is lack of revenue. While Lowell has the second highest millage rate in Kent County, it is based on property value. The City generates approximately \$94,000 per mill compared to a \$200,000 and \$650,000 per mill in somewhat comparable cities in Kent County. In spite of this challenge, the budget was balanced this year leaving a small surplus.

Mike Burns feels the City is continuing to grow. New businesses along Main Street are welcoming customers. Companies like Attwood and Litehouse are adding jobs and expanding their facilities. Still, there is room for continued growth looking at and responding to trends sought by communities similar in size to Lowell.

Burns believes investing in a downtown area making it attractive to residents and visitors is what will drive the accomplishments of the community. Continuing to make Lowell a destination to live, work, and play will provide decades of future success where residents continue to take pride in the community.

Exploring the Arts

The 49th annual Fallasburg Arts Festival will take place Saturday and Sunday, September 16 & 17 from 10am – 5pm. Fallasburg Park will be filled with arts and crafts, activities for kids, food vendors, and musical entertainment including The Bruce Matthews Band, Easy Idle String Band, and The Adams Family.

Over 90 artist-made items have been donated and will be raffled off during the festival. Proceeds from the raffle will go toward programs and events through LowellArts.

Cleaning Up Day

It's time once again to clean up your home and get rid of bulky items, recycle paint and oils, and more. Clean up and recycling will take place at the Lowell Fair Grounds from 9am – 12pm on Saturday, September 30.

This event is open to those living in the Lowell Area School's District. Be prepared to present a tax bill or voter's registration card and driver's license to prove eligibility. Traffic should enter the grounds near the Grand River boat launch. One trailer/pickup truck load per household. For more information contact Greater Lowell Vision at 616-897-9161.

Absentee Ballots

City Hall will be sending out absentee ballots for the November 7 election. The only item on the ballot will be for the election of City Council members. Three seats are available and five candidates are running.

Public Hearings – When and Why

Public hearings are required when referring to rezoning, variances, and establishments of a Planned Unit Development (PUD). During public hearings residents are given the opportunity to speak out in support of or provide reasons of dissent.

Public hearings are not required when creating or changing an ordinance but can be held at the will of City Council in order to receive public feedback.

Show Off Your Pink Side

The 10th annual Pink Arrow Pride Game will take place Friday, September 8. Lowell will be hosing East Grand Rapids for volleyball, soccer, and football.

The Pink Arrow Quiver will take place on Saturday, September 9 at 9:00am. While you're signing up for the Quiver why not participate in the Triple Crown by adding the Harvest Hustle on October 14 and the Turkey Trot on November 11.

A Field Tip to Fenton

Last month some members of City Council and City staff, along with representatives from the Downtown District Authority (DDA) traveled to Fenton, Michigan. City Manager Mike Burns was the Assistant City Manager there prior to coming to Lowell. He worked with the DDA to formulate and put in place a street scape plan. Representatives from Lowell were able to see first-hand what a similar layout in the historic district might look like.

Pink Arrow Game Schedule

Friday, September 8 is the Pink Arrow Game. A t-shirt is your ticket to the game. They can be purchased at Pep Talk and Springrove Variety.

- 2:30 – Gates open
- 3:00 – Boosters Concessions and Restaurant Row open
- 3:30 – National Anthem presented by LHS Choir
- 3:30 – Volleyball and Soccer Introduction and matches
- 6:00 – Survivor and Honor Walk
- 6:35 – Football Player and Honoree introduction
- 7:00 – National Anthem presented by Dave Bray
- 7:09 – Pink Arrow Game Lowell vs East Grand Rapids

September Meetings

- Sept. 2, 8:00 a.m. Coffee with Council
- Sept. 5, 7:00 p.m. Lowell City Council Meeting
- Sept. 7, 12:00 p.m. Downtown Development Authority
- Sept. 11, 12:00 p.m. Arbor Board
- 3:30 p.m. Lowell Area Fire Authority
- 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission
- Sept. 13, 6:00 p.m. Lowell Area Recreation Authority
- 7:00 p.m. Airport Board
- Sept. 14, 6:00 p.m. Lowell Light & Power Board
- Sept. 18, 7:00 p.m. Lowell City Council Meeting
- Sept. 19, 6:00 p.m. Parks & Recreation Commission
- Sept. 26, 6:00 p.m. Lowell Historic District Commission