



December 4, 2015

Mayor Donald D. Lyons
City Council Members

Dear Mayor Lyons and City Council Members:

The following report has been prepared to provide you with an update on current issues or projects in progress:

Upcoming Meetings: None

Gorlich Building Update



Interior work has been completed on the Gorlich Building demolition. On Monday, December 7, the large equipment necessary to remove the exterior walls will begin moving into town. Anticipate some road closures around the demolition sight as work progresses.

“Thank-you” Town and Country Garden Club Christmas elves from the Town and Country Garden Club brought their holiday spirit to City Hall this week. The garden club took on decorating the tree at City Hall nearly a decade ago. The baton of this tradition was passed on from our own First Lady Joan Lyons. “Thank you” ladies for continuing the tradition for the people of Dowagiac, the tree is beautiful.



You will also see the Club’s artistic hand each time you visit downtown. Town and Country designs, plants and decorates the large flower pots in the streetscape of downtown. You can see the winter season changes tonight when you bring your family to the Candle-light Christmas Parade.

CGI The city's partnership with the media company CGI, continued this week. Garrett Modeste was visiting with area businesses and organizations this week on the different options of participating in the project with additional videos or advertising. Bobbie Jo Hartline ran in to Garrett and as they waited in the checkout line at an area business and he conveyed, "Dowagiac is now one of my favorite towns. Everyone has treated me like their neighbor, greeting me and waving even when I am just walking on the sidewalks. I feel like a local now." It is ironic how *that* just happens to be the message being conveyed in the video that will be produced about our community this spring. Dowagiac has great resources, people and opportunities... You should be here too.

Miniature/Pot Belly Pigs

At the last council meeting a resident asked Council to consider allowing miniature pigs (aka Asian Pigs or pot belly pigs) in residential neighborhoods. We are not the first community in Michigan to be asked to consider this change. Currently our zoning law classifies all pigs as livestock and livestock is prohibited in all residential zoning districts.

A review of how this question has been addressed by other communities is helpful for our consideration. This review of their research has shown that many in the veterinary community would classify this type of a pig as a pet rather than livestock. Once it is determined that the animal should be considered a pet, then regulations are developed on the following categories:

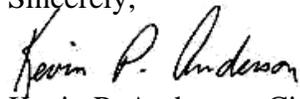
1. Maximum Size. A maximum weight of 120 pounds is common.
2. Allowed Zoning Districts. Residential properties, not commercial.
3. Indoor Pets. It is common to see language that says the pet must be kept indoors expect for periods of exercise and elimination of waste.
4. Leash. Like other pets, the miniature pig is not allowed to run at large and must be on a leash or in a fenced yard.
5. Number of pigs allowed. One per premise is a typical regulation.
6. Vaccinations. Documentation of vaccinations is expected.
7. Spayed or Neutered requirements are typical.

An ordinance to allow miniature pigs is a zoning change. Zoning changes require a public hearing to be held by the Planning Commission and a Planning Commission recommendation prior to Council's action. Since it would be an ordinance change, two readings of the ordinance needs to be held by Council. This process could be completed by the end of January 2016.

City Council Quarterly Workshop City Council will meet for their quarterly workshop on Friday, December 11.

Candle-light Christmas Parade – Don't miss the best Christmas parade in Southwest Michigan. The fun begins at Beckwith Park and across downtown at 6:30 pm and the parade steps off at 7:00 pm.

Sincerely,



Kevin P. Anderson, City Manager