

City Administrator's Monthly Activity Report

Aaron Burnett, City Administrator

June 2024

(Issued July 12, 2024)



Monthly report of the City Departments of the City of Mason City

Airport

Reported by David Sims, Airport Manager

Date: June 2024

United Airlines Enplanements/Deplanements	FBO Fuel Flow
From 6/1/2024 – 6/30/2024	24356 Gallons
Enplaned 531 / Deplaned 656 (+11% June 2023, Equal year to date)	(+29% from last year)

Capital Project Update

- The Commercial Passenger Terminal is nearing completion. Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening scheduled for July 24th at 11:00 AM. The first flight from the new Terminal is scheduled for July 31st.
- Equipment Storage Building is complete, waiting for punch list items to be addressed.
- The Taxilane Rehabilitation Project Phase 1 completed, Phase 2 to be completed in July.

Routine Activities for the month – Administration and Operations:

- Federal Aviation Administration conducted the annual Certification Inspection. Airport passed with only minor findings to correct.
- Prepared new leases for all Terminal and T-Hangar tenants.
- Help Airport Emergency Plan Tabletop and Review with all mutual aid agencies.
- Coordinated transition of hangar tenants to new hangar facility.
- Negotiated lease terms for all terminal tenants.
- Seek quotes for asbestos removal for existing terminal prior to demolition.

Activities planned for next month and other comments:

- Coordinate transition of tenants to new terminal facility.
- Approve new leases for all terminal tenants.
- Approve quotes for asbestos removal in existing terminal.
- Approve quotes for new firefighting gear.
- Accept completion of new T-Hangar Facility

Development Services Department

Reported by Steven Van Steenhuyse, AICP, Development Services Director

On June 5-7, Planning and Zoning Manager Tricia Sandahl and I attended the Preserve Iowa Summit in Mount Pleasant. Having never attended this conference in the past, I came away with a renewed appreciation for the historic preservation work done by Tricia and our excellent Historic Preservation Commission in Mason City. We were also able to get ideas from the Mount Pleasant HPC, who are also working on the restoration of an historic African American church, similar to our St. John's Baptist.

The Development Services Department in June evaluated four Permitting and Licensing software programs to replace the current program, which does not have a viable mobile application for use in the field. The staff has seen demonstrations of each program and is evaluating which best meets the City's needs. A decision is planned for late July or early August.

Planning and Zoning Division: The Planning and Zoning Commission met June 14 to review a P1 Site Plan for 43 North Iowa at 300 North Washington Avenue. A P1 site plan is for a function that is otherwise allowed in the zoning district, but which may have site or operational characteristics that could affect the neighborhood. The P&Z approved 43 North Iowa's petition to establish a Residential Care Facility in the former Globe-Gazette building.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment met on June 4 and approved a special exception to allow reduced setbacks at 220 23rd Street SW, to allow an addition to the house.

The Historic Preservation Commission held a special meeting on June 26 to consider demolition of a duplex house at 213-215 South Monroe Avenue. This house was determined to not be historic, allowing the demolition to proceed. The Commission also discussed plans to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the construction of the East Park Bandshell. A resolution to recognize this historic structure was forwarded to the Mayor for presentation at a City Council meeting in July.

Code Enforcement Division: The Code Enforcement officers reviewed 127 cases in June, almost equal to the 128 cases reviewed in June 2023. The majority of the complaints were due to garbage and junk, rubbish, and refuse.

With the continued loss of ash and other trees, the Division is seeing more nuisances related to dead, dying and diseased trees. An owner with a nuisance tree is given 30 days to remove the tree, at which point the City has the option to remove the tree and bill the cost to the owner. Since this can be a significant cost, the Division is seeking qualifications from licensed tree contractors to create a list of contractors to be on call. Bids will be requested from the contractors on this list. The intent is to provide a more cost-effective option to homeowners when a tree must be removed.

The City acquired 830 12th Street SE in May. After some consideration, the City has decided to present a plan to the Council to solicit bids to determine if it can be renovated. The neighbors have shown concern about this house due to its long history of neglect. When the bidding process is

complete, Staff intends to determine if renovation or demolition is the best option. Other 657A efforts are ongoing.

Building Inspections Division: 31 major building permits and 28 minor building permits were issued in June. Total construction valuation of all permits was \$6,037,744, leading to \$33,514 in permit fees.

Rental Inspections Program: The Housing Inspector inspected 94 units and issued 9 Rental Dwelling Certificates.

Transit & Safety Division: There were 11,508 rides on the fixed route system, up from 10,713 in June, 2023. Total ridership through June is up over the same period in 2023. Training was provided for two new employees.

Corridor Revitalization Loan (CoRL), Downtown Revitalization Loan (DoRL), and Building Renovation/Life Safety (BuRLS) Programs: The Grant and Forgivable Loan Review Committee did not meet in June.

Developments: The Development Review Committee met four times in May. Three concept plans were reviewed, with all three plans accepted as minor site plans, including two plans for outdoor fireworks sales (at the Willow Run complex and at the two HyVee sites). Two major site plans were approved: a classroom and social room addition to Messiah Lutheran Church at 2728 4th Street SE and the new Delaware Apartments complex at the NW corner of North Delaware Avenue and 1st Street NW.

Residential, commercial, and industrial projects that are recently begun or are underway:

- Construction is on schedule for Chick-fil-A at 3128 4th Street SW.
- Foundations have been installed for the Amazon Fulfillment Center, a 50,000 sq. ft. distribution warehouse at the SW corner of 43rd Street SW and South Washington Avenue (just west of the Highway Patrol Division Station).
- Ongoing projects:
 - Federal Avenue Rowhomes, 11 new units at the SE corner of North Federal and 2nd Street NE, is nearly complete. Leasing is expected to begin in August.
 - City projects: New Airport Terminal (nearly complete; ribbon cutting planned for 7/24), Mason City Police Station Renovations, and the Mason City Fire Station Addition.
 - Good Shepherd, Inc, renovation of the former nursing home at 222 South Pierce Avenue to an assisted living facility.
 - Ulta Beauty, in the vacant store adjacent to Old Navy. An opening date is unknown.
- Three applications were submitted for a rooftop solar array (all residential).
- Work continues on the Prairie Rock Trail Bike Park, including the shelter building.
- Construction of the Willow Creek Riverwalk is underway.
- The Delaware, LLC, had an informal groundbreaking to meet grant deadlines. A formal groundbreaking is expected soon. Portions of the lot will continue to be used for parking as construction proceeds. The agreement with the developer includes leasing the parking area to the City after construction, so that parking for downtown residents and businesses in that area will be available.

Elmwood-St. Joseph Cemetery

Reported by Tyler Anderson, Cemetery Manager

Tyler

- Extremely busy with follow-up from Memorial day season, assisting families with burials, plot situations
- New columbarium – new 72 unit columbarium was delivered in late May. Waiting on concrete pad around columbarium to be completed before we start to sell units and advertise the new unit
- Board approval to start selling headstones through the cemetery office as of June 13, 2024, using Fewell Monument as the wholesaler
- Wrapping up fiscal year, helping city hall with various end of year paperwork

Paula

- Continuing to add information to CIMS, including older obituaries and new additions to the grounds
- Answering several questions about plots, upcoming inurnment burials, and decoration guidelines

Grounds:

- Memorial Day season follow-up – trimming and mowing non-stop, due to ideal growing temperatures; helping Tyler with various citizen requests
- Continuing to install new signage throughout cemetery as time and budget allows
- New shop building – Central Lock Security installed a security system in both shop buildings and the cemetery office, waiting on Russ from IT to finish internet connection to the building
- Very busy month for burials

Engineering Department

Reported by Mark A. Rahm, P.E., City Engineer

Several city projects are progressing well through design, permitting, construction and development phases. The most notable of those are the Mason City Bike Park and Trails sub project, Bid Package 2, the Murphy Park Trail and Bridge Project and the Taft Avenue Water Main Loop project. Development activity also picked up on the New Energy Freedom project.

Bid Package 2 – Contractor: Rock Solid Trail Contracting, LLC

The City Council approved the contract and bonds with Rock Solid Trail Contracting, LLC on June 4th for the Bike North Iowa Bid Package 2 project.

A kickoff site meeting for design was held on June 13th.

Murphy Park Trail and Bridge – Peterson Contractors, Inc. of Reinbeck, IA

The City Council approved the contract and bonds with Peterson Contractors, Inc. on June 4th for the Murphy Park Trail and Bridge and North Illinois Avenue Bridge Improvement projects.

The City Council also approved Amendment No. 3 and Amendment No. 4 to an original agreement with WHKS for continued services related to the project. Amendment No. 3 involved the preparation of a draft and subsequent final report to the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Amendment No. 4 includes services for construction administration and observation for the project.

A preconstruction meeting involving the City of Mason City, WHKS, Peterson Contractors, Chosen Valley Testing, Heartland Asphalt, J. Petticord and Bob McKiness Grading and Excavating was held at the offices of WHKS and via TEAMS on June 25th.

A Notice to Proceed was expected to be issued in mid-July.

The **Taft Avenue Water Main Loop** project plans were completed and will be submittal to the IDNR for permitting review along with the construction permit application forms. I tentatively plan to set the Public Hearing at the meeting of the City Council on August 6th.

The developing group for the **New Energy Freedom** project located in the recently annexed property in the southwest area of the city submitted a baseline monitoring water usage report for the city's review and comment. The city also shared information with the group including water flow data. The city continued coordination efforts with the group that will directly impact the final design of the Taft Avenue Water Main Loop project.

Finance Department

Reported by Brent Hinson, Finance Director

Utility Billing

- Working toward accepting credit cards in person at the Utility Counter in the coming months
- Mailed 9,929 utility bills and 384 disconnection notices, completed 260 utility service orders

Finance

- Attended Winnebago Watershed board meeting. Thanks to Council for approval for City to act as fiduciary. Set up new Fund 550 for this initiative.
- Worked with staff to implement utility rate changes effective with the first bills in July.
- Attended meeting along with Aaron with a developer I worked with in Garner. They are interested in projects in Mason City.
- Bidding of CD Investments- 2 investments were bid this month: 1) \$5M for 91 days went to First Citizens at 5.37%; and 2) 2M for 182 days went to First Citizens at 5.41%.
- Preparation for COLA increases on July 1st
- Continued work with Electronic Recordskeeping
- Coordination with Southbridge Mall operations
- Printed 856 payroll checks/stubs, 737 payable checks
- Reconcile credit card bank deposits for Aquatic Center, Golf Course, Campground, Arena, Police Department, Cemetery, & Inspections
- Scanned 1,327 invoices for payment processing

GIS

- Attend ITAG Conference.
- Share MC Tree application with tree crew.
- Participate in Cloud Point geospatial webinars.

IT

- KnowBe4 training.
- Zuercher meeting with agencies.
- Look at government channel programming issue.
- Construction meeting for PD.

Fire Department

Reported by Erik Bullinger, Fire Chief

EMS OPERATIONS

FF Cornick has successfully passed the IA State and National Registry testing for Emergency Medical Technician.

FIRE OPERATIONS

Annual pressure testing of more than 11,000 feet of firehose was conducted in June, completing the annual testing.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

All required firework stand inspections were performed, with safety education provided to employees.

Fire extinguisher training provided to CGC Public Health and Court House employees, 98 in total.

HAZMAT

Delivered a presentation on Hazmat Team operations for Cargill Kitchen Solution's rescue team, focusing on chemical hazards at their facility.

Conducted a site safety visit and chemical hazards overview for the Growmark and Iowa Traction Railroad facility.

TRAINING

Firefighting

Iowa Under Water Search & Rescue delivered an evening meet & greet showing off equipment & capabilities.

EMS

Annual medication review and training with Mercy One Pharmacy staff.

ASHER training (Active Shooter Training) with police department and Mercy One staff.

Mass causality training with battalions, delivered 2 of 4-part series.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

MCFD firefighters and members of the MCFD Fire Explorers Post conducted public fire extinguisher training, sponsored by the Mason City Wal Mart.

Firefighters on 2nd Battalion participated in the Mind Mania Camp at NIACC, presenting life support equipment in a hand-on environment.

RENOVATIONS UPDATE:

- Parking lot concrete successfully poured.
- Lower level: Training Room and Office demo completed, with utilities being installed. Weight Room ceiling removed for utility installation soon.
- Concrete block for dormitory addition delivered. Weather has delayed installation.
- Major utility work is underway.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

Hosting lunch for St. Florian Burn Foundation campers heading to Okoboji's Camp Foster YMCA in July.

Human Resources Department

Reported by Perry Buffington, Human Resources Director

Department	Full-time	Part-time	Grand Total
Airport	5	2	7
Cemetery	3	1	4
City Administration	3	1	4
Development Services	12	20	32
Engineering	17		17
Finance	11		11
Fire	47	1	48
Human Resources	2		2
Library	13	3	16
Mall	1	7	8
Museum	6	2	8
Operations & Maint	67		67
Police	46		46
Recreation	7		7
Youth Task Force	2		2
Grand Total	242	37	279

Plus 160 Seasonal employees

Staffing

Currently we have 4 recruitments underway and 3 additional being worked on, with a total of 15 vacancies that are in various stages of the recruitment process. Hired 1 full-time and 2 seasonal employees during June. We experienced 1 termination during the month. We have 7 retirements occurring from July to September.

Hiring Activity:	- Police Officer-9 openings (Police): One new hire started in June, conditional offer on 1 candidate, and processing background checks on 3 applicants from the 5/15/24 recruitment. Next testing date is scheduled for 7/10/24.
	- Police Sergeant - 1 opening (Police): Civil Service list already established and assessment center completed. Chief promotional interviews to be conducted in July.
	- Fire Lieutenant Promotional List (Police): Created a Civil Service promotional list for the Fire Lt position for temporary assignments and future promotions.

- Storekeeper - 1 opening (O&M): Filled by internal transfer in June.
- Heavy Equipment Opr-Tree Crew - 1 opening (O&M): Filled with internal transfer with Council approve of appointment in July.
- HR/Records Specialist - 1 opening (HR): New position, job will be posted in July to create a Civil Service hiring list.
- Deputy Fire Chief-EMS - 1 opening (Fire): Vacancy due to upcoming retirement this fall. Promotional process will begin in the near future.
- Admin Asst - 1 opening (O&M): Vacancy due to upcoming retirement this fall. Recruitment will begin in the near future.
- Operations & Maint Mgr - 1 opening (O&M): Vacancy due to upcoming retirement at end of summer. Position under review with City Administrator and HR.

Labor Relations/Legal

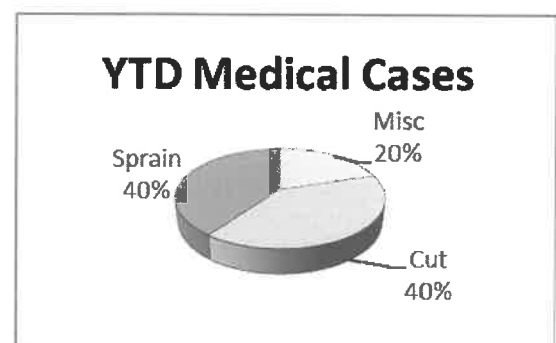
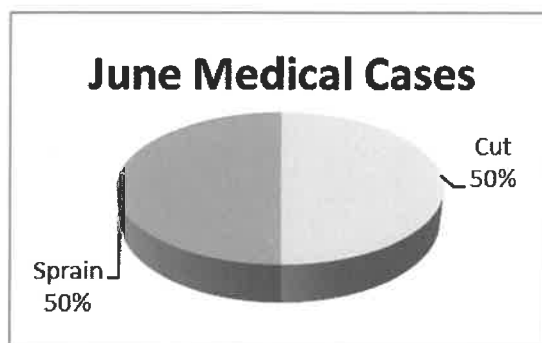
No significant labor issues to report. Next contract negotiations will occur late in 2024 with the Teamsters.

Major Projects

- The HR department has used temporary staffing to enable us to convert all current employee personnel files to electronic format during the month of June as part of the City Electronic Recordkeeping Initiative. Work continues on the electronic conversion of our employee medical files on the next phase of this project.
- Implementation of a new HRIS electronic database system will be implemented by early fall 2024 in conjunction with the implementation of a new timekeeping system by the same vendor through the Finance Dept. Weekly project planning meetings continue with initial database setup, final completion by September.

SAFETY STATISTICS

The City has experienced 10 injuries requiring medical attention in 2024 compared to 13 injuries during the same period the prior year. Our workers compensation experience rating has shown strong improvement over the past several years.



MacNider Art Museum

Reported by Edie Blanchard, Museum Director

General Activities:

Daily / Weekly / Monthly tasks:

- The focus for the month of June was the preparation for the MacNider Arts Festival. This occupied most of the staff's time.
- The Museum was not fully staffed during this time and due to staff absences, the Museum elected to hire a contract employee to complete some of the extra outreach classes to ease the burden on staff.
- The Museum staff made the final preparation for Festival, as well as executed the event with no complications.
- Festival was an overwhelming success. Many of the activities ran out before 1:00 pm instead of lasting until the close of 5 pm. When possible, more items were procured for activities but most required weeks of planning. Over 300 items per activity were prepared. There were 1 dozen activities.
- Food served at Festival ran out by around 3 pm. Due to this most of the festival was taken down sooner than expected and volunteers sent home early.
- The Pancake breakfast also had an outstanding attendance of over 300. Council Members Joshua Masson and Tim Latham made pancakes with Mayor Bill Schickel. Their spouses helped with the preparation and distribution.
- The week following the festival staff returned to the Museum to is original condition.
- The summer rush of visitors began in late May and continued into June.
- Museum performed outreach at several locations it partners with: IOOF Care Center, Manly Care Center, Good Sheppard Care Center, and Salvation Army Adult Daycare.
- The Museum worked on details related to its offsite storage facility.
- Summer classes were held starting with the first summer art camp. It was filled with a waiting list.
- The Museum has set the date for its annual fundraiser as Friday, October 11th.

Operations & Maintenance/Parks Department

Reported by Bill Stangler, Operations & Maintenance Manager

Utility Division:

Replaced 7 valves; updated to 6" lead size in fire hydrants; fixed 2 main breaks; poured 25 yards of concrete; spent 3 days hydro excavating for other departments; hauled rock for 4 days

Wastewater Division:

- Electric Pump installed rebuilt pump
- Had issues with generator at 15th Street lift station
- Took camera van to Des Moines to have new equipment installed
- Installed new air compressor for sampler in lab
- Presented Russ Rosenbaum with retirement watch
- Still dealing with high flows due to heavy rain over the month
- Went to Lake Mills landfill for tour (Paul and Stephany)
- Update several industrial user permits (pretreatment)

Sanitation Division:

(1) We now have a full six months working with Absolute Waste Recycling Center, things are going very well for us and them. They like that we curb sort the materials to keep contaminants out of the recycling stream and bringing them only clean products that are being recycled.

(2) The new packer truck we just put out on the route is working out well and will be a good fit for us in the future.

Street Division:

Storms took a toll on trees again this month. None of the trees that lost branches or fell were Ash trees. But this extra work did cause many Ash tree removals to be placed on hold.

We continue to spend numerous hours on trying to maintain gravel alleys and streets.

Closed Highway 122 for the Police Department for an issue they encountered.

Installed the remaining statues downtown.

Removed Ash trees along East State Street and along Linden Drive, work will continue into July.

Continued mowing along roads and ditches. There are a lot of ditches we can't get into the bottom because of water levels.

Set up for Cannonball Days.

Parks Division:

Set out picnic tables and garbage cans for MacNider Museum art festival.

Had a tree go down and damage a piece of equipment at Prairie Playground, currently looking over quotes.

Repairs were made at the bandshell from vandalism and age (lights, boards and handrail).

Tennis Services of Iowa came and completed their work at the East Park pickleball courts.
The former Madison School walking trail was removed and is scheduled to be repaved.
Trail was replaced on 4th NE from Carolina to the Deer Pen.
Assisted preparations and set up for Cannonball Days.

Police Department

Reported by Jeff Brinkley, Police Chief

June Highlights

- Patrol
 - We've been making use of bike patrol this summer to ride some trails and get to places that aren't always accessible by vehicle. That has resulted in some arrests on outstanding warrants and drug violations.
 - Patrol officers have continued to complete case follow-up on cases on assigned to investigations as a result of staffing. We are also getting some officers additional training that will help them with this follow-up.
- Investigations
 - Background investigations in-progress on three applicants approaching conditional offers of employment.
 - Major casework – shooting, robbery, and an arson – this month resulted in the filing of several search warrant applications and support of some of our partner law enforcement agencies at the state and federal level.
- Parking and Animal Control
 - Summer brings with it an increase in animal-related issues. This month, we took 62 animals to the stray animal shelter. We also investigated nine bite cases.
 - For the year, we've collected \$6,700 in delinquent parking tickets from vehicle owners when they get their annual registration renewal.
- Weather
 - Patrol has responded to a wide variety of weather-related issues this month, including downed tress/wires and street flooding.
 - We have continued to monitor water levels on the Winnebago River with Cerro Gordo County EMA and the Mason City Fire Department to make sure we are informed and prepared if levels endanger our community.

Public Library

Reported by Mary Markwalter, Library Director

June was a very busy month at the library offering summer reading programs for all ages, live music and helping patrons.

The meeting rooms were in use every day in June.

The library is working on plans to create a coding lab to offer coding classes during the fall. The coding lab will include IPADS and training materials.

✍

Recreation Department/Highland Park Golf Course/Mason City Arena

Reported by Brian Pauly, Recreation Superintendent

I wanted to start this month's report highlighting our lesser known programs. In the month of June, Dylan Hall, Recreation Programmer, ran three totally different camps. First week, he held Toddler Camp which held for kids ages 2 to 5, which is an underserved age by our department. He continues to find ways to reach out to this age group. Hall started this program last fall and kept it going even through his job change within the department. Hall also oversaw Archery Camp which continues our great community partnership with Mohawk Archery Club, and held Fizz, Bubble, and Goo Camp which was based out of the Mason City Arena in the month of June.

The Aquatic Center is benefiting from the new Sentry Water Heaters. Even with cooler temperatures at the end of June, we saw favorable numbers in the month. We did see a slight decrease in attendance at the Aquatic Center from last fiscal year. I believe we would have been within 1% of last fiscal year if we did not have the unexpected closer during the hottest part of the summer last year at the end of June.

Another great highlight at the Mason City Aquatic Center is the new program we are running during lap and family swim. We are now offering adult water aerobics. The first class saw increasing numbers each day and it is successful to the point we are offering additional classes in July.

Highland started its Junior Golf Program. This is where Nick Largent, Director of Golf, provides beginner group lessons to youth in our community. This program fills up every year and continues to provide a chance for youth to try golf with a former professional/D1 golfer. I was stopped by three different families and was told how great the program is for their child(ren) and how great Largent and his staff are with the kids.

To keep in perspective about how bad the irrigation leaks are at Highland, Eli McGallian, Grounds Superintendent, measured water applications to all areas at Highland. In the month of June, he watered the greens four times and the back fairways twice. He did not have to water the tee box at all in the month of June. We did go over the minimum water usage for our June bill. McGallian does his best but with parts becoming obsolete or extremely high price due to the rarity, he can only do so much.

The Mason City Arena first concert was held on June 7th. Even though we did not get the attendance we wanted, the band performed a great show for everyone. Unfortunately, the I Love the 90's Tour featuring **Vanilla Ice, Treach of Naughty by Nature, Color Me Badd, Rob Base, and Young MC had to be rescheduled for August 23rd**. As stated in a press release, "Our priority is to ensure that everyone has a great time attending shows at the Mason City Arena, and we appreciate your understanding and support. Scheduling multiple national acts on a single date presents unique

challenges and, if possible, date changes are avoided. We are excited about the addition of All-4-One, and this show is going to provide a first-class experience.” We are focusing on events leading up to the 90’s show which is now our last show of the summer; North Iowa Fights on July 27th, Matthew West with special guest Megan Danielle on August 4th, National Night Out on August 6th, and Greg Warren with special guest TBA on August 17th. If anyone wants more information, please direct them to masoncityarena.com which is updated weekly.

Volunteer Program

Reported by Mary Litterer, Volunteer Program Coordinator

Activities for the Month of June 2024:

The Mason City Volunteer Program is in full swing this month with Earth Day cleanup winding down 108.24 hours of time was volunteered in June, cleanup will continue throughout the summer. If you would like to adopt an area, please give us a call. The Beautification Program is Blossoming, the program can always use extra help. The program had five new volunteers join again this month expressing interest in different projects. A grand total of 245 volunteers volunteered 3,566.75 hours in the month of June.

- Volunteer supplies for Earth Day Clean up, coordination, ongoing throughout the summer.
- Worked on adoption of flower gardens to reflect actual active plots and communicated budgets for new gardeners.
- Worked with vendors for Beautification program, communicated payment and garden information. Bills submitted to be paid to vendors.
- Continued to supply Earth Day Groups with bags, and gloves for cleanup areas on going.
- Set meeting for River Float cleanup in August.
- Worked with several new volunteers on project currently active and upcoming projects.
- 457 Cannonball Park Days opened.
- Worked on a newsletter article for Fall.
- Swimming Pool flowerpots to enhance the pool areas.
- Worked with several Gardeners on issues that have arisen this month.
- Took progression pictures of flower gardens for reports.

Youth Task Force

Reported by Youth Task Force Director

Grant/Budget Updates:

- United Way documentation for FY25 was submitted.
- The One on One Mentoring disparity report was submitted on 6/27 to Iowa Health and Human Services.
- There will be no subcontract for FY25 for the G-H-V One on One Mentoring program as they are being funded by their district. This frees up \$11,000 for FY25 YTF budget.

One on One Mentoring

- Collecting data for year-end report.
- Planning for FY25 school year.

Child Care Works

- Weekly meeting taking place with the Chamber and CCW committee members.

Executive Board Meeting- No June meeting