

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT



Pictured above (left to right):
Assistant City Manger Kyle Whitney,
Executive Assistant Wendy Larson,
Management Analyst Jen LePage,
City Manager Bill Vajda



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT 2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Executive Department Overview:

The City Manager serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the City government, enforces all laws and ordinances adopted by the City Commission, recommends an annual budget and provides counsel and support to the City Commission on all issues affecting city residents.

In accordance with Section 2-80 of the City Code, listed below is a summary of activities for the Executive Department for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

Events

- Code Michigan – Code Michigan is a three-day codefest aimed at reinventing Michigan's government with open data. The event was the second annual of its kind, organized by the State of Michigan's Department of Technology, Management and Budget. In its inaugural year, the event was hosted in Detroit. This year, it was brought to Newaygo and Marquette as well as Detroit. Participants were given access to tons of civic data, a few rules and challenges and 48 hours to create mobile and web applications for public good and the chance to win cash prizes. The City of Marquette offered various datasets for the participants to utilize in their applications – including recently digitized cemetery records from our 113-acre, historic Park Cemetery.
- U.P. Managers Meeting – The Upper Peninsula Local Government Managers Association (UPLGMA) is a group of municipal leaders from the Upper Peninsula that collaborate on regional issues to share ideas, gain support from local elected leaders and help identify ways to make a stronger and more effective Upper Peninsula. The UPLGMA is made up of 26 cities and villages in the Upper Peninsula and in May of 2014, City Manager Vajda was elected as the Chairperson for the UPLGMA for a term of three years. Being elected Chair also requires Mr. Vajda to serve as a member of the Michigan Municipal League (MML) Governing Board.
- MML Convention – The Fall 2014 MML statewide convention was hosted in Marquette the week of October 14-17, 2014. The convention brought in over 400 municipal officials from throughout Michigan. Several workshops were held, including Biking the Downtown Iron Ore Heritage Trail, Crowdfunding and Microbreweries, Marquette's Waterfront Transformation, Presque Isle Park –

Color Walking Tour and a Mining History tour. The City kicked off the convention by hosting a welcome reception for all attendees, sponsors and guests at the Ore Dock Brewing Company. The reception was catered by some of Marquette's fine local venues, along with music, living statues and horse-drawn carriage rides.

Greater Transparency and Open Communication for Residents and Taxpayers

- Legistar online services – Online access to legislative information was greatly improved, and the roll-out of this new service provides interested parties the ability to search, track and print information for current and archival City Commission agendas, actions and other records.
- Meetings with Northern Michigan University (NMU) students – The City continued its outreach to the Associated Students of NMU (ASNMU), as well as conducted meetings with other NMU students, faculty and staff, including hosting interns selected from the NMU Masters of Public Administration program. As a result, Marquette and NMU further strengthened “town/gown” cooperation across a wide range of issues and initiatives.
- MSHS Student Council – This past year marked the third consecutive year that the City of Marquette and Marquette Senior High School Student Council continued our relationship. For the first time, the City Commission appointed three Student Council members as ex officio members of Marquette advisory committees. The Marquette City Commission and City Manager hosted Marquette Senior High School Student Council members during a live City Commission meeting for the second consecutive year. Prior to the meeting, City officials held an orientation, a tour of Commission Chambers and a question-and-answer session. The students then sat side-saddle with the Commissioners during the City Commission meeting.



- City Open House – The fourth annual City Open House was hosted at the Marquette Arts and Culture Center, located in the lower level of the Peter White Public Library, in February. More than 200 individuals attended this year's event. The Open House is an opportunity for the community to meet City Commissioners and City partners. Participants included all City Departments, the Marquette Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, the Marquette Board of Light and Power, ASNMU, MSHS Student Robotics Team and many more partner and civic organizations.

- 24-hour- response – Over 48 information requests were completed during the year, in addition to over 48 other information requests initiated through other “open door” resident contact.
- Committee Orientation Sessions – The City Manager and City Attorney conducted three committee orientation sessions for over 40 staff liaisons and volunteer members of authorities, boards and committees. These “boot-camp” sessions provide incoming volunteers with a framework of basic information needed for effective participation in City government.
- Art in City Hall – City Hall Art Galleries (“The People’s Gallery,” the “City Manager’s Suite” and the “City Walls of Art”) continued strong support for public art with the display of regional artists in City Hall. The Marquette Arts and Culture Center works with artists to schedule display of works on a rotating basis. Viewing times are during normal operating hours, and information for aficionados is provided should visitors wish to purchase their favorites.
- Letters to Donors and Organizations – The City Manager sends thank you notes to local area organizations for their altruism and generosity on behalf of the Marquette community. Reports of these efforts are collected through the local news media, and this year 123 letters were gratefully forwarded for these acts of altruism and kindness.
- Radio Interviews – In order to ensure all opportunities are taken to inform residents and taxpayers of issues before the City Commission, and prior to each regular meeting, the City Manager provides a preview through the “Walt and Mike in the Morning” show at Great Lakes Radio. The interviews, which can be heard live on 101.9 FM and posted on the Show’s internet site, update the public on scheduled agenda items, government processes and opportunities for residents (and non-residents alike) to participate in City government.
- Community Office Hours – The City Manager hosts monthly office hours at the Peter White Public Library. These two-hour open format sessions provide residents, employees and Commissioners the opportunity to ask questions, discuss concerns, or to make suggestions regarding any City interests. More than 50 individuals attended the Manager’s Community Office Hours during the fiscal year.
- *Marquette Matters* – *Marquette Matters* is a bi-monthly publication created and distributed by the City Manager’s Office in both hard-copy and online formats. The subscriber list for the online edition continues to grow, and each edition includes focus articles regarding various issues before the City, as well as *Bill’s Blog*, providing an opportunity for Manager Vajda to share his views directly with community readers.
- Charter Cable Channel 191 – The City of Marquette’s Public, Educational and Governmental Access Channel can be found on Charter Cable channel 191. This year, the City began to utilize the channel as an outlet for original municipal information, with a series of short videos focused on the establishment of a Local Development Finance Authority and a SmartZone. In addition to this content,

staff has been populating the live feed with topical informational videos (like a recording of a panel of elected officials and state energy experts speaking at NMU) and with spots highlighting the best of the Marquette area (such as nature videos by local videographers). Plans are in the works to further expand the Channel 191 portfolio.

- Regular meetings with state officials – City Officials held quarterly meetings with elected federal and state officials and their representatives to discuss and provide input to current issues and updates facing the City.
- Media attention – As a top destination for recreation and family, the City of Marquette is routinely in the national news. Activities and issues in the City are receiving more attention from media channels such as the NBC/Today Show, the Weather Channel, CNN, and publications such as The Atlantic, the New York Times, the National Geographic Society, the Smithsonian, among many others.
- All-America City Finalist – The City was selected as one of 23 finalists for the National Civic League (NCL) All-America City Award. That designation was the culmination of months of teamwork and was made possible by the contributions of numerous partner organizations in the City. A coalition of representatives from local education, government, nonprofit and recreation organizations represented the City at the NCL national convention, including representatives from the Peter White Public Library, the YMCA of Marquette County, the Marquette Food Co-op and the Downtown Development Authority. While at the Denver convention, the group shared ideas and best practices with those from cities across the country.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was successfully concluded between the City and Marquette General Hospital-Duke LifePoint regarding the construction of a new \$280 million hospital campus on the current site of the Municipal Service Center (MSC). The Scope of the project calls for the establishment of a Brownfield Redevelopment Project to improve infrastructure, realign roads and relocate the MSC.
- LDFA/SmartZone – Marquette partnered with the Cities of Houghton and Hancock, as well as Northern Michigan University, Michigan Technological University, and Michigan State University, to form a “SmartZone” for enhancement of local economic development. SmartZones act as business incubators and accelerators, providing a wide variety of resources to entrepreneurs. The SmartZone is funded through Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which is collected and administered through Local Development Finance Authorities (LDFAs). In parallel to the establishment of the SmartZone, the City revitalized its LDFA, and directed it to support the SmartZone, and other economic development interests of the City.
- Next Michigan Development Zone – In December 2013, Governor Rick Snyder signed legislation authorizing the creation of a Next Michigan Development Zone (NMDZ) in the Upper Peninsula. Forty-three communities, including townships, villages, Cities and Marquette and Delta Counties, collaborated toward the

creation of this partnership. Next Michigan Zones foster regional economic development and provide member jurisdictions with access to ALL economic development programs within Michigan's toolkit. The City of Marquette serves as one of four charter members of the NMDZ Board, along with the City of Escanaba and Marquette and Delta counties.

- Regional Transportation - In May, the City of Marquette and Lundin Mining reached an agreement to allow for the maintenance and improvement of City transportation infrastructure to be used in the delivery of minerals from Lundin's Eagle Mine in northern Marquette County to its mill in Humboldt. In parallel, the City remains in dialogue with local jurisdictions to identify and implement long-term solutions supporting mutual growth interests. The City Commission on Oct. 27 adopted a traffic ordinance designating City streets unavailable as through streets for heavy truck traffic. The ordinance bans trucks over 10,000 pounds from driving on Genesee, Division, Grove, Third, Fourth and Seventh streets, Lincoln and Presque Isle avenues and on Lakeshore Boulevard between U.S. 41 and Hawley Street. Trucks can travel on these streets only if they are making a delivery or pickup from a business or residence on one of these streets.
- Local Brownfield Development Coordination – The City remained an active partner with the Marquette Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, and provided active coordination and support to a number of new developments within the City, including the Liberty Way complex, Founders Landing, the Nestledown Bed and Breakfast and consideration for other proposed projects and activities. At the end of the year, the City Brownfield portfolio included approximately \$400 million of new projects – equal to approximately 40% of the overall value of the City prior to their initiation.
- Recycling – In May, the City of Marquette officially began a partnership with the Marquette County Solid Waste Management Authority, wherein the City delivers its recyclable materials – collected through weekly curbside collection – to the Authority facilities in Sands Township. From there, the Authority processes the materials and gets the recyclables to market. The net revenue (the revenue remaining after the MCSWMA's costs for processing and distribution) is then split, with 60 percent going to the City and 40 percent remaining with the Authority. According to Authority data from the year, the City's 60 percent share has equated to more than \$12 per ton of recyclable materials.

Policy Support and Coordination

- The City Manager's Office provided coordination and support to a wide variety of partners and jurisdictions regarding policy issues of mutual interest. Frequent partners included the Governor's Representative to the Upper Peninsula; regional House and Senate legislators and staffs; Federal House and Senate Congressmen and their staffs and local and neighboring jurisdictions. Many of the opportunities to collaborate were undertaken for a wide variety of Strategic Priorities of the City Commission, including regional Infrastructure replacement, U.P. Rail systems, an area bypass (I.E., "ring road"), and regional energy reliability.

- The City Manager's Office provided support and coordination to City Commission advisory committees, and as a result, a number of significant plans and efforts were successfully completed, including adoption of an updated City Arts and Culture Master Plan, conclusion and recommendations regarding the Regional Recreation Authority feasibility study, migration of the Sister City Advisory Committee to an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and transition of the Advisory Committee toward becoming an International Council.
- Review and implementation of City plans regarding the Heartwood Forest, Cliffs-Dow remediation and redevelopment, Old Coast Guard property transfer, Marina Plans, Waterfront Plans, Ore Dock Preservation, Transportation and Parking, Automated Utility Metering and facilities maintenance and improvement. The City collaborated with State of Michigan Emergency Officials and representatives of over 21 counties regarding the development of an Emergency declaration request supporting mitigation of over \$15 million of freeze-related damage associated with an ongoing weather emergency – including a period of time when the Marquette area was listed as the coldest location on the planet.
- Total Number of Commission meetings supported (regular, special, work sessions, joint): 74
- Total volume of email communications sent by the City Manager to the City Commission during this reporting period: 593 (average ~ three/day).
- Total number of public service announcements approved during the reporting period: 486

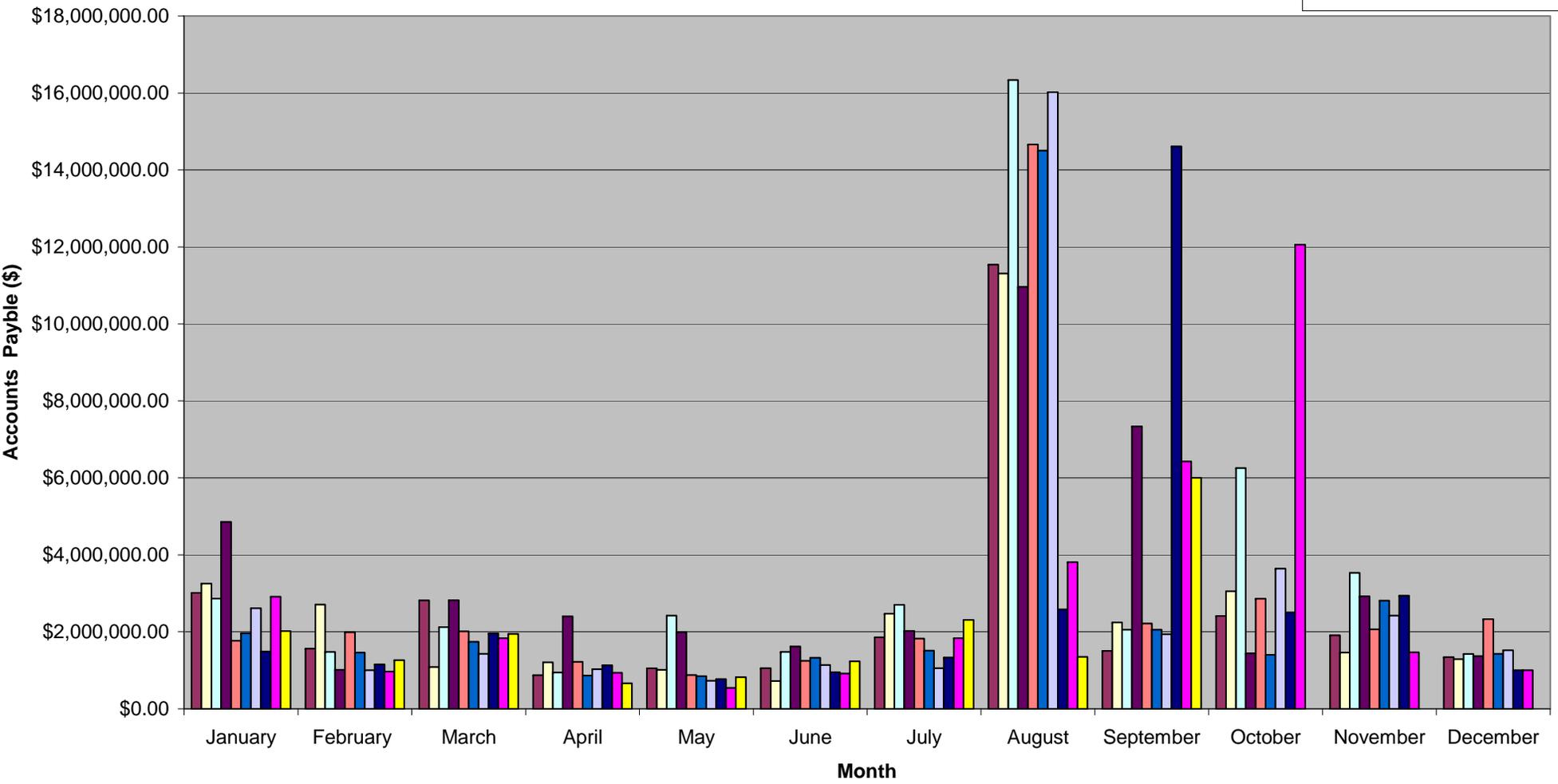
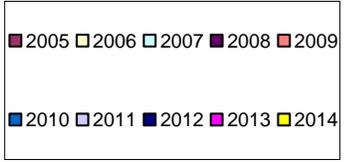
Governing Documents

- The City Management Team continued to oversee the implementation of the new City Charter. Specifically, the City Commission ultimately adopted Charter-mandated ordinances pertaining to ethics, real estate sales and public information/communication. Additionally, the City Manager recommended a strategic planning process, as required by the Charter. The City Commission then undertook an in-depth strategic planning process, which concluded with the adoption of a strategic plan on Aug. 12, 2014. The planning process will be revisited every two years.

Management Analysis

- The chart below details the Marquette City Commission's average monthly accounts payable for a 10-year period. The average accounts payable over that period is \$1,431,066.48 per regular City Commission meeting. The purpose for the consistently high accounts payable in August is due to collected tax monies being disbursed to respective jurisdictions. Due to the change in fiscal year and corresponding change in the due date for taxes—in 2013, the second meeting in October showed the highest accounts payable amount for the year.

**Monthly Comparison of Accounts Payable
2005-2014 (Current)**



Budget

- The City Management Team oversaw a 15-month fiscal year, which completed the City's transition to the new fiscal year mandated by City Charter. The previous fiscal year ran from July to June, while the next fiscal year extends from October through September.
- The City implemented several budget process changes resulting from existing commitments for constant improvement, as well as unprecedented volatility resulting changes in State revenue sharing, greatly increased Michigan Tax Tribunal (MTT) protests with the City's largest taxpayers and unmitigated "black swan" impacts resulting from record-setting weather emergencies. As a result, approximately \$2 million of general fund revenues were cut, or otherwise encumbered prior to the start of FY2015. The new processes were implemented following a zero-base review of all City obligations, and are designed to provide greater agility through the fiscal year.
- The City conducted informational work sessions regarding the impact of outstanding pension liabilities, changes in Federal Healthcare law, and Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) reporting changes that may impact the City in the future. In spite of the high degree of all financial impacts, the City was able to maintain its "AA" credit rating, demonstrating the confidence in City financial management practices, and lowering municipal bond costs.

Other

- Strategic Planning Process – The implementation of the revised City Charter required the City to adopt a strategic plan. The plan was to include input from the public, staff, committees and the City Commission. In March 2013, the City Commission appointed a three-member subcommittee to work with the City Manager in creating a process to develop Commission goals and objectives for the Strategic Plan. In August 2013, the City Commission adopted the Marquette Visioning and Strategic Planning Process for use in addressing City Charter mandates. In April 2014, the City Manager initiated the first strategic planning process, wherein document templates and initial guidance were released to all administrative departments and all Commission boards and committees. All input was coordinated through the City Manager's Office, and input from individual boards and committees was first considered and approved by vote prior to inclusion of final materials. The resulting collection of material was compiled and collated within a binder and included input from each City department and the City Manger's Office, as well as each of the 26 Commission boards and committees. In total, 117 pages of strategic issues were identified, requiring four Commission work sessions and approximately 14 hours of deliberative review. The City Manager maintained notes and provided an overview of plans, projects, issues, status and goals that were identified by the City Commission to be considered as priorities for the current and upcoming fiscal year. As a result, the Marquette Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2014-16 was adopted at the June 30, 2014 regular City Commission meeting.