

## CITY MANAGER REPORT

TO: Mayor Pat Humphrey & Clare City Commission  
FROM: Jeremy Howard, City Manager  
DATE: February 16, 2023  
RE: City Manager's Report

For the Agenda of February 20, 2023

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DDA Meeting. The DDA held a meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>. There, unfortunately, was not a full quorum for the meeting, but a discussion was held with those in attendance regarding the proposed new Christmas decorations for this next season. The consensus was to change to something new (red and green Christmas trees, candy canes, and wreaths on the smaller poles).

Planning Commission Meeting. The Planning Commission had several items on its last agenda which included:

- Approval of a site plan for an Airplane Hangar Addition being built on Lot 203 at the Clare Municipal Airport.
- Approval of a special use permit and site plan application to Michigan Pure Green for an Adult Use Processing Center at 690 Industrial Drive in the South Industrial Park.
- Continued discussion of Ordinance Amendment to Section 52-308 – Vehicle Storage and Parking. It was a good discussion and lasted several hours. Further discussions/meetings will still need to take place to draft an ordinance that will hopefully address many of the issues that the City Commission asked them to look at.

Planning Commission / City Commission Annual Joint Meeting: Every year the City Commission and Planning Commission hold a joint meeting to discuss the Planning Commission Annual Report for the previous year along with any other topics of interest. The Planning Commission reviewed the 2022 Planning Commission Annual report with the City Commission. The two boards also discussed current and future projects as well as topics of mutual interest for work in the next year.

Lake Shamrock Dredging Project. Dredging work has continued daily, typically getting between 6 and 8 loads of material a day removed and hauled to the spoils location. However, with the change in weather, the County has recently implemented frost laws which have made it so that we are unable to haul the spoils. We are hopeful that the frost law's weight limits will be short-lived and that once they are lifted, we can get several more weeks of dredging in before our permit-required fish spawning pause dates of April 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup>. During these downtimes, there are other items that are being addressed such as tree trimming along the lake on some properties as well as bank clean up. We are also looking at shoring up the location where the barge offloads material during this time. The hydraulic dredging RFP was opened on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> and we did receive two bids. Those are being reviewed currently and you will see a bid approval recommendation and request come before you at an upcoming meeting.

.Gov Changes. Now have launched a new City of Clare website ([www.cityofclare.gov](http://www.cityofclare.gov)) there are other changes related to the .gov change that need to be made. All city email addresses are now using cityofclare.gov though we still have the .org addresses setup as aliases for the time being so that no emails are missed during this roll out and transition. Our letterhead, business cards, forms, website content, etc. will slowly be transitioning as well as stock is used up and as time permits. Training for the new website updating capabilities by city staff is scheduled as well and that will be a much-needed addition to allow us to make updates quickly and easily as needed.

Verizon Cell Tower. Update – Work is continuing and the conduits for the fiber have been installed. We are still waiting on the installation of the fiber and the switching over of the tower from 4G to 5G.

Shamrock Park Ice Rink. Unfortunately, this year the weather has not cooperated for the ice rink at Shamrock Park. We were able to flood it and have it usable for a very short period but with the warm weather, the ice melted quickly. If Winter comes back (likely in Michigan), we might be able to try again, but we are uncertain at this time.

Spark Grant Results. If you remember in December of 2022, the City applied for two DNR Spark Grants (Depot Restrooms and Emerald Isle Recreation Complex Parking Lot). In total, the DNR received and considered 462 applications requesting more than \$280 million dollars. Unfortunately, our projects were not selected during this round. 21 other communities were selected to share \$14.2 million in Michigan Spark Grants for outdoor recreation projects. The DNR has announced that there will be additional grant rounds and there is approximately another \$50 million dollars to be allocated. The city will be applying again for the next rounds.

Farming Leases. As you know, the City of Clare contracts with Rawson Farms to farm several hundred acres of land at the airport and on the south end of Clare by the industrial park. Recently the City received a letter from Rawson and Rawson that explained that beginning in the 2023 season (this spring) they will be getting out of the farming business and therefore are not renewing their leases with the City. Due to this change, we are currently reviewing options and most likely will be looking to contract with another farmer to utilize the land. We are also looking at the possibility of putting out an RFP to solicit the farming and obtain bids on per-acre pricing for the lease.

Tour. Continuing with our periodic tours, we have reached out to JX Truck Center (Peterbilt) to schedule a tour of their facility. If we hear back from them with an okay before Monday's meeting, we will plan to head north following the meeting for an informal tour of their facility.

Attachments:

1. Rawson Farms Letter.

**Rawson and Rawson**  
7689 North Nottawa Road,  
Farwell Michigan 48622

January 31, 2023

Dear Landlords:

2022 was a whirlwind of a year. As you are aware, Ray was hospitalized in October 2021, and then in and out of the hospital the majority of 2022 and ultimately passing away in September. With that the boys and I have had to reevaluate our future with the farm.

Several years ago, Ray began the process of finding a new owner for the farm. He wanted to secure a less stressful future for his family. With no future generation to take on the farming business, it made our decision easier to finish what Ray had already started.

As of last week, we planned on farming this coming season of 2023, however an opportunity presented itself that would allow us to fulfill Ray's final wishes. So, with that being said, Rawson and Rawson will no longer be leasing your ground to farm.

We have farmers interested in renting your property, call if you are interested 989-588-2499.

We want to take this time to thank you for being our landlord all these years, and supporting our family in all our endeavors of past planting and harvesting seasons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Helen Steve Dave".

Helen, Steve, and Dave Rawson

As of January 31, 2023, the farm of the Rawson family will start the process of closing.