

City Council continues to hold our meetings via Zoom, as we continue to wait for further approval to allow for more people to assemble for indoor gatherings.

Our 8/18 meeting started with a presentation from Jenny Bennett from the Beatnik Bazaar. Jenny covered the state regulations around farmers markets and what the Beatnik Bazaar has been doing to meet these regulations. The next Beatnik Bazaar will be held September 12th in the Gathering Place.

We have extended the purchase agreement with Rite Aid, as they continue to work through their corporate expansion plan that was set back due to the current Pandemic.

The Council did authorize the entertainment of bids for a new Fire Truck. In our prior meeting, Tim Lubitz our Fire Chief updated the council on the need for a new fire truck. We continue to work on what this expense will be and how to fund this project.

Council approved the temporary closure of streets on Labor Day for a celebration at the Veterans Memorial Park. The vote was postponed on this from our prior meeting, pending additional information on social distancing.

Can you believe it is already September? We had the storm that went through this past week that resulted in tree damage in a portion of the city but also missed a large portion. The city is working to do the brush pick up associated with the damage. This will take longer as our primary piece of equipment used for picking up brush is in the shop for repairs.

In our September 1st Council Meeting, the primary topic of discussion was the request to amend our ordinances to allow Botanical Biologics, our operating grow facility in Belding to grow adult use cannabis in addition to the current medical use product. Lisa Ratliff attended our meeting and updated us on the differences in licensing that is required by the state. The market has changed and many individuals that required medical use product are now purchasing recreational cannabis. In essence, there is no difference in how the varieties of cannabis are grown, but the tagging process is different. This change to us would not be noticed. During discussions it was asked if the City is approving a retail location for the sale of recreational cannabis as part of this; this is currently not approved or allowed in the city of Belding. Lowell, Cedar Springs and in the near future Ionia, will have retail sales locations, we only have approved an agricultural production facility. In this meeting it was the first reading of the ordinance changes, we will vote on the ordinance changes at our next meeting

John updated us on the brush removal from the recent storm, the removal of trees from the river lookout in the Gathering Place and the need to have maintenance done on our lagoon system at our waste water treatment plant.