

Focusing on the future of Luna Pier

Looking back on the rich history of Luna Pier, it is ease of mobility that put us on the map. Before the original pier was built, it was the inter-urban rail line or trolley cars that enabled people to escape the oppressive heat of the city during the summer before air conditioning was available. Affluent business owners built cottages and moved with their families to Lakeside or Lakewood to take advantage of the cooler temps on the shores of Lake Erie and commute to Downtown Toledo or the area now known as the Old West End. The men rode back and forth to work while their families relaxed in their beachside resort. The inter-urban line which also carried visitors to Toledo Beach made several daily runs on what is now Harold Drive. Automobiles took over and by 1927 the Toledo, Ottawa Beach and Northern Railway ceased operations but not before the “Luna Pier” opened featuring big bands and dancing under the stars. The pier flourished into the 1930s but rapidly declined after prohibition ended. Coincidence? I won’t speculate here but we are less than 19 miles from the Canadian border.



The world continued to change and the residents adapted. Paul Dussia’s Big Store of Lakeside became the Chateau Louise. Lakewood and Lakeside became Luna Pier. More seasonal residents made this their year-round home, especially when I-75 opened. A Consumer’s Power plant opened, the old trolley line became Harold Drive and Luna Pier became a city in 1963, building the infrastructure on tax revenue from the power plant. A new pier was built in 1983 resulting in the formation of the beautiful beach we have today.

It has been over 8 years since the JR Whiting plant closed, taking with it the majority of our property tax base. That was devastating to our city finances but once again, we adapted. Through it all, our real treasure has always been “place”. We still have beautiful beaches, and what I consider, the best access to the Great Lakes in Michigan. We have our beautiful wetlands and while I-75 has long replaced the trolley line as our link to the outside world, we still have a walkable community. Most of all, we have a safe community of people who care. That is our core on which everything else is built. Change is inevitable but incredibly talented people work together to manage that change. We watch out for each other and we take care of our public spaces as city resources are limited. We know things can be better and we roll up our sleeves to work towards reaching our potential. Projects always take longer than we think they should but we keep working. I can tell you, others are noticing. Visitors tell me what a treasure we have here, especially if it has been a while since they last visited.

Our beautiful new overpass is now open with progress being made on our non-motorized lane and our city logo over the northbound lane. Soon all lanes will be open as the work is finally wrapping up. Significant improvements are under way at the Luna Pier BP travel plaza with a new restaurant opening soon. The highway construction has significantly impacted all of our local businesses and it will be good to put that behind us. All of this along with the new travel plaza under construction just across I-75 in Erie will really put Exit 6 on the map. How we manage the change going forward is just as important now as it has always been. With your help, we will seize opportunities and still preserve our place. We can’t do it without you. We have openings on boards and commissions eager to put your talent to use. We also have other volunteer opportunities if you have scheduling limits. Contact me through our website, through our City of Luna Pier Facebook page or just stop in some time and we can talk. Be a part of this amazing legacy we call the City of Luna Pier.

Mayor Jim Gardner

Hi everyone!

Rasey Memorial/ Luna Pier Branch Library would like to invite you over for some fun children's and adult programs, check out some books or movies, use our computers and/or sit on our comfy couch and read.

Preschool story times are held Mondays at 10:30. The current session will go until November 25th and begin again January 27, 2025.



Teen Nights are the first Wednesday of the month at 5:30 p.m. In January 2025, it will be on January 8th due to New Year's Day.

After school dinners for children of pre-school age up to 18, are held every Tuesday and Wednesday at 4:00 p.m. After the meal on Tuesdays, there will be a fun activity and on Wednesdays we will play games. No registration is required, but please inform us if this is your child's first attendance.

On Saturday, December 7th, **Elf School** will be in session, starting at 1:00 p.m. Children will learn all that is necessary to perform elf duties, earn their elf certificate and even get their own elf name. Registration is limited so please register early.



There will be a **Drop-In Grinch Ornament making** from 10:00 am till 1:00 p.m. on Monday, December 23rd - for all children! While supplies last.

We have an **Adult Book Club** the third Tuesday of every month (except December) at 6:30 p.m. Come and join a fun group of readers as we discuss books of all genres. We have a list of books for the whole year and have them ready for you to read the month before they are discussed.

Adult Craft Club is held the last Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. In December 2024, the Adult Craft will be on Tuesday, December 17th due to the holidays. We make all different types of crafts that are fun and mostly easy.



Both these adult programs are a great way to meet people and enjoy an evening of conversation and creativity.

Be sure to check our library on-line calendar for other upcoming programs and events.

We would like to thank all who have made donations, monetary and materials, to our branch for programs and equipment. We cannot tell you how much these donations help! They have enabled us to continue our **Back-to-School Bingo**, plus other children's programs throughout the year. Your generosity has helped us serve so many in the community. **It's so nice to work with a community that Cares!**

If you are interested in any of the children's programs above, please register on-line or by stopping in the library, or give us a call at 734-848-4572.

If you are interested in the Adult Craft, and have not attended before, please call the same above number so we are sure to have enough materials. You do not need to register for the Adult Book Club.



Please, if you have any questions or concerns, call 734-848-4572

***Hope to see you soon,
Becky, Jill, and Shannen
Monroe County Library System
Rasey Memorial Branch***

Municipal Services News:

Winter will soon be here and we are asking for help from all residents. To make our job easier and more efficient we would appreciate residents' cooperation in not parking on side streets when there is any measurable snow fall. In addition, there is no parking of vehicles or trailers of any kind at the end of streets with no outlets. Please keep personal items well off the road (basketball hoops) so that they do not get damaged by the plow.



Due to liability reasons, we are no longer able to receive used oil, antifreeze or any other fluids from residents.

The burn pile is for **branches only**, no cardboard, trash, furniture or lumber is allowed.



The compost pile is for **yard waste only**, no cardboard, trash, furniture or lumber is allowed.

We have been having a problem with someone doing donuts in the boat launch parking lot, this is creating ruts and making it hard for people to drive and walk thru the parking lot. If you are the one, please stop, if you see someone doing this, please take a picture of the vehicle if possible and report it to the Luna Pier Police or City Hall.



Please check to see if your sump pump or downspouts are connected to the sanitary sewer, if they are, please reroute them. The load to the WWTP that these illegal connections are adding sometimes triples the flow at the plant. This is much higher than what the plant is designed for and adds to the cost of treating the wastewater.

MESSAGE FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE

As the new City Clerk, I thought I'd take this opportunity to tell you a bit about myself. I lived the majority of my life in Phoenix, Arizona. I grew up there, went to school and attended Arizona State University. I studied Social Work with a focus on policy, administration and community. I moved to Luna Pier a bit over 2 years ago. Prior to moving, I spent the last 25 years working in the nonprofit sector in positions that focused on building strong communities and assisting individuals to attain their goals.



Part of why I moved was concern over the impending water crisis in the southwest. Another part was just coming out of the pandemic and reevaluating what I wanted from life. It seemed like a good time for a change. So that's how I ended up in Luna Pier, and I couldn't be happier with this move. I enjoy living in Luna Pier. The city is friendly and has a small-town feel. I love living so close to Lake Erie and getting to visit the Pier on a regular basis. Life here is very different than living in a hot and over-crowded city built in the desert.

I am enjoying my new position here at City Hall. I am learning new things and meeting new people every day. This job is highly administrative with many different duties to complete on a daily basis. This is perfect for me, as I'm someone who writes to-do lists and enjoys crossing things off those lists. So please feel free to come in and introduce yourself, and avail yourself to the City's many services. City Hall is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Charlie Boyce, City Clerk
734-848-6495 ext. 205
cboyce@cityoflunapier.com

Voter Turnout



778 Luna Pier residents voted in the General Election. This is approximately a 78% Voter turnout rate for the city. 194 absentee ballots were requested and 184 of these ballots were returned. 132 ballots were cast during the early voting period, and 462 ballots were cast on election day.

Thank you for taking the time to vote. If anyone is interested in becoming an Election Inspector, please give me a call at 734-848-6495 ext. 205.

City Hall will be closed on the following days during the holiday season:

- Thanksgiving - Thursday, November 28th and Friday, November 29th
- Christmas - Tuesday, December 24th and Wednesday, December 25th
- New Years - Tuesday, December 31st and Wednesday, January 1st



I hope everyone has a safe and wonderful holiday season.

Winter Taxes

Winter Taxes will be payable December 1, 2024 thru February 14, 2025.

You can now pay your taxes on line on the City of Luna Pier's web site at www.cityoflunapier.com.

1. Go to: Departments
2. Click on Treasurer
3. Pay your taxes online



When paying with a debt or credit card, there is a 2.6% service fee that will be added.

We also now have a drop box slot located on the front door of City Hall that you can drop your tax payment in. Please no cash and if you would like a receipt, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

If you have any questions or need help with this service, please contact me at 734-848-8120 x203 during our regular business hours.

Dee Parran

Treasurer

Stevens Disposal's Holiday Schedule Pick Up

- ❖ For memorial and Labor Day all routes run one day behind for the entire week
- ❖ For Thanksgiving only Thursday and Friday routes run one day behind
- ❖ For Christmas, New Year's Day and 4th of July, it depends on what day of the week they fall:
 - If one of these holidays is on a Monday, all routes run one day behind
 - If the holiday is on a Tuesday, then Tuesday through Friday run one day behind
 - If the holiday is on a Wednesday, then Wednesday through Friday run one day behind
 - If the holiday is on a Thursday, then Thursday and Friday run one day behind
 - If the holiday is on a Friday, then Friday runs one day behind
 - If any of these holidays falls on Saturday or Sunday, we do not run a day behind
- ❖ If there is ever a change from the above schedule, a letter or phone call will be made
- ❖ When Friday routes are picked up on a Saturday, you should put your trash out the night before as those routes start between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. because the landfills close earlier on Saturday



Luna Pier Volunteer Fire Department

The LPVFD would like to say thank you to the community for your support throughout the years. We are always looking to bring more volunteers into the department so that we are better able to support our community!

Been looking to add some skills to your resume? Like to feel good about yourself by helping others? The training is paid for, and the people are amazing. Please stop by on any Monday evening, or any time you see someone there, and see what we are all about!

We would like to invite the community to our Annual Feather Party on Saturday, November 23rd. This is the Firemen Association's yearly fundraiser. The money that we raise is used throughout the year to cover the purchase of replacement equipment and items, as well as using some of the funds to give back to the community.



Doors open at 5, bingo starts at 6; \$25 to get in the door. The bingo prizes are turkeys and there will be a light lunch served at intermission. We are also selling raffle tickets for a chance to win a new La-Z-y Boy chair, \$100, or \$50. The tickets cost \$1 each or are 6 for \$5 –message us on Facebook or at the Fire Hall if you are interested in a chance to win.

Thanks to our volunteer grant writer, Dave Weaver, we were able to obtain a \$2,000 grant from Michigan Gas that we used to purchase three AED's. Two of these life-saving devices will be used by fire department and one will be with the police department.

This is your friendly reminder to check the batteries in your smoke detector. Also, if your smoke detector is older than 10 years old you should consider getting a replacement.

Chief Bob Dinius

Parks & Recreation

Swift summer breezes, sun races across the sky, summer vanishes like a dream.

It's Fall, Y'all! The bridge is open! We had a great summer!

The Luna Pier Parks and Recreation Committee is made up of a small group of dedicated, local volunteers. We try to keep a regular calendar of fun events and help guide the maintenance of the parks. All the things that we do are done with donations and volunteers.

Our goal this past year was to continue to beautify the parks and create some great partnerships within the community. By partnering with the DPW, LPVFD, DDA, City Council, Volunteers, Green Labs, we were able to accomplish the following:

- Painted Picnic Tables
- Kid's day (Summer Smash)
- Volleyball Net at Water Tower Park
- Yard of the Month
- Raised money for future park improvements and MORE!
- Planted donated trees at the library
- Planted trees at 1st street and Memorial Park
- New Basketball hoop at 7th Street Park
- Shining Star

Our biggest event of the year was the Luna Pier Night Market in September! The attendance was estimated to be 2,200 people and we raised \$1,270 to help upgrade the pavilion at Memorial Park.



Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm, at the Rasey memorial Library in Luna Pier. We do our yearly planning at the January meeting. This year that will be on Tuesday, January 14th. If you are interested in helping, have suggestions, or just want to see what is happening please join us!

Note: No meeting in December

Best Wishes, Chris Burchett, Chair

Stay warm and safe this winter



As the winter cold sets in, the City of Luna Pier Building Department urges residents to use portable heating devices, fireplaces and wood stoves safely. Heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires in the United States and becomes the leading cause during the cold winter months.

With the high cost of fuel, many people may be purchasing a space heater or adding a fireplace or wood-burning stove to their home. When not used or installed properly, these appliances can present serious safety hazards.

Portable and Other Space Heaters

Portable heaters can be an affordable supplement or alternative to central heating. However, when used improperly, space heaters can cause carbon monoxide poisoning, fires and even death.

Keep the area around the heater clear at all times with at least three feet of open space around the unit so that nothing catches fire, including bedding, clothing, pets and people. Don't use the heater as a "clothes dryer", combustibles placed on or near a heater is a fire hazard. Supervise the heater when it's on, especially when children and pets are nearby, and turn the heater off when you leave the room. Also, don't leave the heater on at night when it cannot be watched over.

Only use fuel fired heaters that are listed and labeled for use in the home. Commercial, "tunnel type" and most LP gas heaters are not intended for home use. These units require adequate outside ventilation to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning and require large open spaces around the units to limit fire hazards.

Other tips include allowing Kerosene heaters to cool before refueling, wipe any spills and filling kerosene heaters outside so that fumes and accidental spills don't cause a fire. Use the correct fuel for the heater; usually K-1 kerosene for kerosene heaters can only use 1-K kerosene. Only use proper and correctly marked containers for the fuel, the improper fuel added to a heater can become an inferno! Also, be sure you've installed smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and that they are working properly.



Fireplaces & Wood Stoves

Have your chimney inspected by a professional prior to the start of every heating season, and cleaned if necessary. Creosote, a chemical substance that forms when wood burns, builds up in chimneys and can cause a chimney fire if not properly cleaned. Be sure the unit has a proper hearth (masonry or fireproof area) or that a wood stove is placed on an approved stove board to protect the floor from heat and hot embers. Always protect your home and your family by keeping the proper distance for the unit and by using a sturdy screen when burning fires.



Remember to burn only wood. Never burn paper, pine boughs (branch/needles) or trash, which can float out the chimney and ignite your roof or a neighboring home. Never use flammable liquids in a fireplace.

If you're in the market for a fireplace or wood-burning stove, contact the Building Department first to determine if you need a permit before installation and inspection by a trained professional.

We recommend you purchase a fireplace or wood-burning stove that is labeled by an approved testing and inspection agency. Work with your builder or other licensed contractor to find the best interior location. That decision will be based on the chimney's path and the safest and most efficient location for your home.



Once installed, inspected and approved, the homeowner needs to read the instruction manual carefully to understand how the fireplace or wood-burning stove works. The City of Luan Pier also suggests contacting your insurance agent. Most insurance companies require a rider to the homeowners' policy and a copy of the final inspection report.

If you need additional information or have questions, please contact the Building Official, Michael Demski at 734-848-6495 ext. 202 on Wednesdays from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm or on Friday from 7:30 to 9:30 am.

Hoping you will have a very safe and happy holiday and winter season!

Luna Pier Residents,

As we come to the close of the summer season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the positive strides our community has made and express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your continued partnership in ensuring the safety and well-being of our city.



This past year has been one of growth and progress for our department, thanks to the strong relationship we've built with each of you. From neighborhood patrols to local events, your willingness to work together has made a significant impact.

Our commitment to protecting and serving remains unwavering, and we will continue to work diligently to build a community that is not only safe but also united in its strength.

I am proud of the progress we've made, and I'm equally excited about the opportunities for growth and improvement in the year ahead. Together, we will continue to make our city a place where families thrive, businesses flourish, and all citizens feel safe and supported.

On behalf of the entire police department, I wish you and your loved ones a happy and healthy future. Thank you for your trust, cooperation, and continued commitment to making Luna Pier a great place to live.

A couple of items that I would like to address. The city is taking a proactive approach to combat blight and maintain the quality of life for all residents. The Luna Pier Police Department and Building Department will be enforcing blight ordinances with increased diligence. A new Blight Committee, has been formed by City Council to address and mitigate the effects of property neglect. The police department, building department and Blight Committee, will be overseeing this initiative. The committee will focus on identifying issues such as abandoned buildings, overgrown lots, neglected structures, and other signs of urban decay. The police and building departments will address the identified issues. Property owners are reminded that failing to maintain their properties in accordance with city codes will result in consequences, including fines, liens, and potential legal action.

The Blight Committee will be conducting regular inspections throughout the city, and will advise the police and building departments of their findings. Violations will be swiftly addressed. We urge property owners to take immediate steps to bring their properties into compliance with local standards. The city is committed to restoring the health and vibrancy of our neighborhoods, and we believe that by holding property owners accountable, we can create safer, more attractive areas for residents and businesses alike. Let us all work together to prevent blight and promote a thriving community for everyone.



Jim VanDeraa
Chief of Police
Luna Pier Police Department

As always Luna Pier has its snowbirds that are heading south for the winter. Here are a few reminders on what to do before heading south for the winter or just going for a week or two vacation. These are some essential tips to protect your property and give you peace of mind while you're enjoying your time off:



1. Secure All Entry Points

Before leaving, double-check that all doors and windows are securely locked. Consider adding additional security measures, such as deadbolts, sliding door locks, and security bars on windows. If you have a home security system, make sure it's activated and functioning properly. Some systems allow you to monitor your home remotely, so ensure that your app or online portal is set up for easy access. You can also install smart locks or video doorbells, which let you control access and monitor any activity from your phone while you're away.

2. Make Your Home Look Lived-In

Burglars often target homes that appear unoccupied, so it's important to create the illusion that someone is still at home. Consider putting lights on timers, which can turn on and off at random intervals, simulating normal household activity. If possible, arrange for someone to park their car in your driveway, or ask a trusted neighbor to collect your mail and newspapers. You can also temporarily suspend mail delivery through the post office to avoid a pile-up of letters that could tip off potential intruders.

3. Take Precautions with Your Valuables

Keep your valuables out of sight. Store expensive electronics, jewelry, and important documents in a secure location like a safe or a locked drawer. If you're worried about the security of items that must stay at home, consider removing them or asking a neighbor or friend to store them temporarily. Avoid posting on social media that you're away, as this could alert thieves to the fact that your home is empty. If you're planning on sharing photos from your vacation, do so after you've returned.

4. Unplug Electronics and Turn Off Utilities

To reduce the risk of fire or power surges, unplug unnecessary electronics such as computers, TVs, and kitchen appliances. You can also consider turning off the main water supply to avoid any potential leaks or plumbing issues while you're gone. Additionally, setting your thermostat to an energy-efficient temperature can save you money and ensure that your home stays safe while you're away—especially if you're leaving during extreme weather.

5. Inform Trusted Neighbors or Friends

Let a trusted neighbor, friend, or family member know when you'll be gone and provide them with emergency contact information. This person can keep an eye on your property, collect packages or mail, and even perform basic checks on your home in your absence. Make sure they have access to your contact information and any necessary keys in case of an emergency.

By taking these simple yet effective steps, you can enjoy your vacation without worrying about the security of your home. A little preparation goes a long way in keeping your property safe and ensuring that you come back to a worry-free, well-protected home.



And last but certainly not least is avoiding getting scammed. Scams have become more sophisticated over the years, targeting individuals in various ways, from phone calls and emails to social media and even in person. These fraudulent schemes can lead to financial loss, identity theft, and emotional distress. The good news is that by staying informed and vigilant, you can avoid falling victim to these scams. Here are some essential tips to help protect yourself:

1. Be Cautious with Unsolicited Communication

One of the most common ways scammers operate is by reaching out to individuals through unsolicited phone calls, emails, or messages. If someone claims to be from a legitimate organization—such as a bank, government agency, or utility company—and asks for personal information or payment, be suspicious. Never provide sensitive information (like Social Security numbers, credit card details, or passwords) over the phone or via email unless you're certain of the identity of the person contacting you. When in doubt, hang up or ignore the message, and contact the organization directly using a verified phone number or website to confirm the request.

2. Watch Out for Too-Good-to-Be-True Offers

Scammers often lure victims with "too good to be true" offers, such as incredible deals on products, services, or even job opportunities. If you come across an offer that seems unusually cheap or promises guaranteed results with little effort, it's likely a scam. Be particularly cautious with online shopping—always check reviews, research the seller, and ensure the website is secure before making any purchases. Also, be wary of job offers that require you to pay upfront for training or equipment. Legitimate employers don't ask for payment before hiring you.

3. Protect Your Personal Information

Scammers often rely on social engineering tactics to manipulate people into revealing personal information. Be mindful of what you share on social media and avoid oversharing personal details such as your full name, birthday, address, or vacation plans. These seemingly innocent pieces of information can be used to impersonate you or gain access to your accounts. Regularly review your privacy settings on social media platforms and be selective about what you make public. Additionally, always use strong, unique passwords for your online accounts and enable two-factor authentication whenever possible.

4. Research Before You Act

Whenever you are presented with an unfamiliar request for money or personal information, take the time to research and verify the legitimacy of the situation. Scammers often create a sense of urgency, pressuring victims to act quickly. If you are unsure about an email, call, or offer, ask questions, seek advice from trusted friends or family, and check for warning signs such as poor grammar, unprofessional communication, or suspicious links. You can also report potential scams to authorities like the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or your local consumer protection agency to help protect others from falling victim.

By staying alert and practicing caution, you can avoid the risks of scams and protect your financial and personal security. If something feels off, trust your instincts and take the necessary steps to verify before taking action. It's always better to be safe than sorry when it comes to safeguarding yourself against fraud.

From the Assessing Department

A common question often asked from a new homeowner is;

Why did my taxes go up in comparison to the previous owner's taxes?

The short answer:

The tax liability increased due to the taxable value uncapping the year after transfer of ownership.



What is meant by "taxable value uncapping"?

Except for additions and losses to a property, annual increases in the property's taxable value are limited to 5% or the inflation rate, whichever is less. In the year following a statutory transfer of ownership, that limitation is eliminated and the property's taxable value is set at 50% of the property's true cash value (i.e., the state equalized value). This is what is meant by "taxable value uncapping". See Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) 211.27a(3).

Note: A property's true cash value is usually not the same as its sale price for a variety of reasons. An assessor must determine the true cash value of a property which has sold in the same manner that the assessor determines the true cash values of properties which have not sold. Therefore, an assessor may not automatically set an assessed value or a taxable value at half of a property's selling price. See State Tax Commission Bulletin No. 19 of 1997 and State Tax Commission Memorandum dated October 25, 2005 that describes the illegal and unconstitutional practice of "following sales."

How do I know if I "uncapped"? Example from an Assessment Notice

The change in taxable value will increase/decrease your tax bill for this year by approximately: \$1845	PRIOR AMOUNT YEAR: 2017	CURRENT TENTATIVE AMOUNT YEAR: 2018	CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR TO CURRENT YEAR
1. TAXABLE VALUE (Current amount is tentative):	65,787	102,000	
2. ASSESSED VALUE:	97,500	102,000	
3. TENTATIVE EQUALIZATION FACTOR: 1.000			
4. STATE EQUALIZED VALUE (Current amount is tentative):	97,500	102,000	4,500
5. There WAS/WAS NOT a transfer of ownership on this property in 2017. WAS			

← Taxable and Assessed are the same.

The 2018 Inflation rate Multiplier is: 1.021

What does this mean for you?

In the calendar year after you purchase your property, your taxes will no longer be based on the previous owner's capped taxable value. They will uncapped and become the same as the assessed value. The taxable value in your second calendar year of ownership will only increase by the rate of inflation or 5%, whichever is less, unless additions or losses to the property occur, because it is now capped.

Your taxable value may now be different than your neighbors. Their taxable value may have been capped many years before yours and may have a much lower tax bill. The Assessed Value is the factor to be used when comparing properties for current value in the market.

The Michigan Department of Treasury has a link referred to as, The Millage Rate database and Property Tax Estimator allowing individual and business taxpayers to estimate their current property taxes as well as compare their property taxes and millage rates with other local units throughout Michigan. See the link below for more informatuion.

https://www.michigan.gov/taxes/0,4676,7-238-43535_43540---,00.html

City Financial Insight (by Connie Cole):

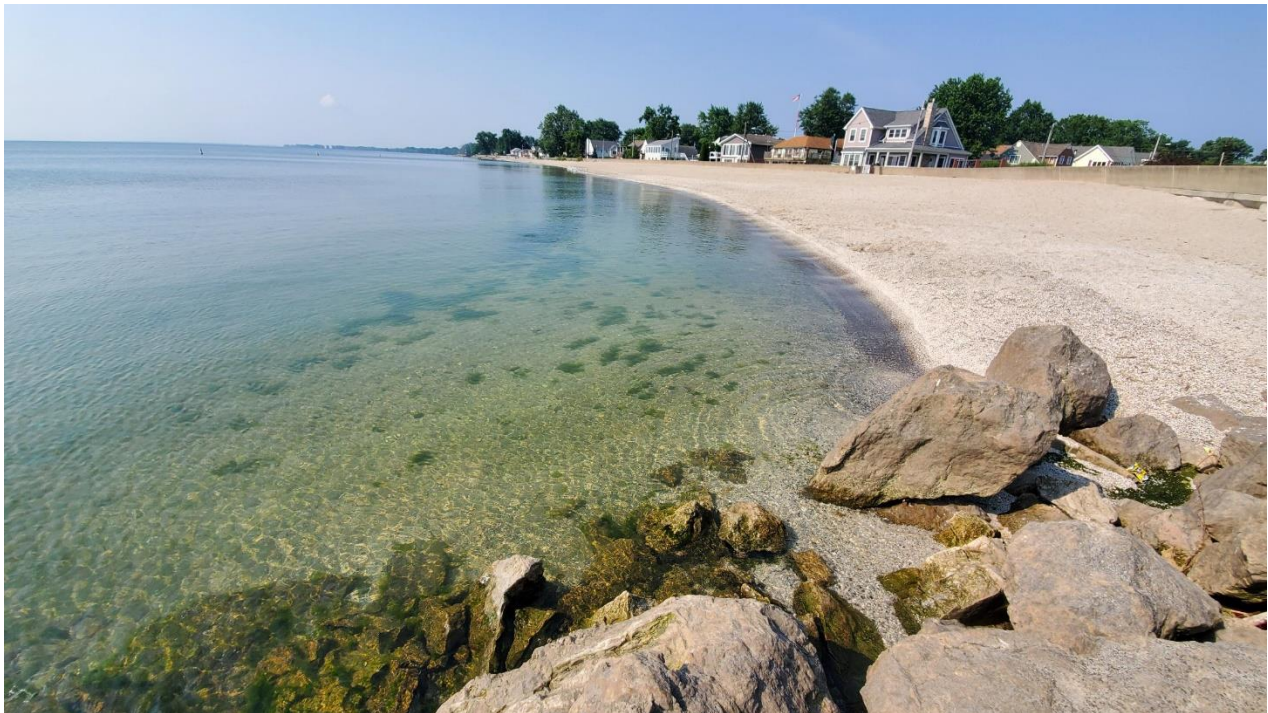


When I moved to Luna Pier a few years ago and attended a few council meetings, I began to wonder just how much money was allocated to maintaining and improving our Parks. I also wondered if our City was financially healthy – and wondered how many employees the city had to maintain our parks/buildings. After being involved in the Budget workshops for the last 2 years, I have discovered a few things that I would like to share. Note: This is my opinion, and you are welcome to review the Auditor’s report from 2022-23 which is on the City’s website ([2022-2023-Audit.pdf \(cityoflunapier.com\)](#)) or to look at the Budget information approved in June 2024. The following information is primarily based on the fiscal year ending June 2023 audit.

- The City has typically not spent more than what comes in from taxes, parking, grants, etc. The spending policy has been conservative with spending primarily allocated to basic essentials. General Fund Revenue (excluding grants) was approx. \$832k.
- The City is paying a significant amount of long-term liabilities for Consumers Energy Judgment Bond and drain assessment (annual cost of \$109k). These loans are expected to be paid off between 2029-2031.
- Retiree related cost was approximately \$332k.
- Wage and benefit cost for current active employees in 2023 was \$226k.
- Equipment Maintenance Cost/Fuel cost (\$112k), Utilities & Streetlights (\$53k) and Insurance Cost (\$30k) are other major expenses. The remaining amount is spent on building/park maintenance, materials & supplies, attorney fees, audit fees, new equipment, etc. The City usually also funds any shortfall on the Police Fund (millage) in the range of \$40-\$60k.
- The City’s Department of Public Works (DPW) and Wastewater Treatment Superintendent time/wages are allocated 75% to Wastewater Treatment plant (30 hrs/week) and 25% to DPW (10 hrs/week).
- There are two full-time employees at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Wastewater Treatment employees’ wages, operating cost, and long-term debt are funded through sewer rates on your South County Water bills.
- There are typically two seasonal part-time DPW employees to do mowing and maintenance of parks, buildings, and roads. DPW wages & equipment charges due to road maintenance are charged against Major Road and Local Road funds which are funded through gas taxes and allocated by the State. The 2024-5 budget allocated one additional full-time employee for DPW (position has recently been filled).

- The City has a full-time City Clerk & Treasurer. There is a part-time building inspector, assessor, fire chief, police chief and police clerk. Police officers are also part-time and paid for out of revenue from the Police Millage.
- Our Mayor is paid \$4,750/ year (\$3k out of General Fund and \$1.75k out of Road Fund) and each councilmember is paid \$1,200/year.

My view is that it is challenging for the City to maintain and improve current buildings, equipment, and parks with limited DPW employees and the current property tax and Parking revenue. The good news is that tax proceeds (including marijuana tax proceeds of \$52k) and fund balances have been increasing, grants have provided funds for new equipment, and parking revenue continues to provide over \$125-135k in revenue. That being said the City benefits from citizens who generously donate their time and money to specific initiatives including grant writing, parks and recreation fund raising, and pitching in whenever they see a need to lend a helping hand. If you think more needs to be done, it will require more volunteers/donations or a willingness to pay more in taxes.





City of Luna Pier
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Calendar of events



Nov. to June	X City Council, 7:00 PM, 2 nd and 4 th Thursday Water Tower Park
Nov. to June	X DDA, Water Tower Park-4 th Tuesday 7:00PM
Nov. to June	X Parks & Recreation, Water Tower Park-2 nd Tuesday 7:00PM
Nov. to June	X Flood & Erosion Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM Water Tower Park-3 rd Tuesday
Nov. to June	X Planning Commission, 4:00 PM, Water Tower Park-4 th Tuesday
Nov. 23	X Feather Party, 6:00 PM, Fire Station
Nov. 28, 29	X City Hall Closed, Thanksgiving
Dec. 6	X Christmas Tree Lighting & Visit from Santa, 6 PM Tree Lighting at Pier Plaza, Santa visit at Fire Department
Dec. 24, 25	X City Hall Closed, Christmas
Dec. 31 & Jan 1	X City Hall Closed, New Years