



Newsletter to Outline City Improvements – October 2023



Introduction...

In short, this document was developed to outline some of the City of Lake City's recent efforts, general improvements, and specific programmatic achievements. I am proud to report that our collective stakeholders including staff, elected/appointed personnel, and part-time and/or seasonal staff have made measurable progress in many program areas during the delineated period. I am confident we would not have been so successful if we did not have support from the collective team, so I am hopeful our staff, personnel, and all area stakeholders are happy with the observed progress, especially since we have continually operated within the fiscally prudent confines of a lean structure.



In this Newsletter...

- ✓ First, thanks again, Judy.... And welcome back, Robyn and Lori...
 - o We have much to accomplish, and I am confident the collective team can/will be successful in our endeavors!
- ✓ Help Wanted!!!
 - o We are still seeking a couple more residents to serve on the *Board of Review*.
 - o If interested, please fill out this brief electronic form <https://forms.office.com/r/iFfrFisJ3P>, or for additional information, please check out the ensuing links:
 - <https://cityoflakecity.com/2023/10/16/volunteer-opportunity/>
 - [Application and related Procedures for City Board and Committee Appointments – City of Lake City](#)
 - [City Assessor – City of Lake City](#)
 - o As an alternative, please share this information with residents in the city that may be interested in getting more involved.
- ✓ BS&A Software – Utility Billing, Taxes, Assessor CLOUD upgrades, and related procedures for city billing/payment practices.



First, we can't say it enough but.... To ALL Staff/Personnel/Stakeholders --- THANK YOU!!!

Hello, TEAM CLC... I am sharing some of your recent achievements because I want to publicly thank our staff, and further all stakeholders that have supported the great City of Lake City and greater community. I believe we ALL should be justifiably proud of our progress, though I/we recognize there is much work to be performed! As always, the ensuing document will not capture all your achievements during the delineated period, but we wanted to take a moment to outline progress and try to touch on some of the highlights. We will continue to look for opportunities to ensure we are meeting professional and legal standards including ongoing implementation of prudent fiscal practices, and further we'd like to drive projects and pursue opportunities to improve the current footprint of the CLC, as envisioned by the collective City Council. In short, we will:

- ✓ Continually work hard, as a team, and provide exceptional customer service for the citizens and visitors alike, in this great community.
- ✓ Implement and continually revisit policies and procedures to ensure effective and efficient operations.
- ✓ Support the City Council to ensure we are appropriately sharing information so they can make informed decisions.
- ✓ Ensure City Council and the respective Board's and Committees are supported and further kept apprised, so they can make informed decisions.



Updates... Current Projects & Collective Achievements...

- ✓ First, I am excited to report that we welcomed back Lori and Robyn. We've accomplished a lot in the last couple of weeks, so I am hopeful this progress will continue.
- ✓ We also recently welcomed back Judy to assist us with the election, so please be sure to thank her for all her assistance. As I mentioned before, Judy has received several requests to assist us through the years, and I know many appreciate and respect her ongoing willingness to provide expertise and support the community.
- ✓ I also know the City Clerk, Danielle and Judy will be able to drive the election processes to a successful conclusion; whereby, all county/state requirements are completed/achieved.
 - The election is a lot of work, so we would also like to preemptively thank the election workers for their efforts.
 - Of course, we'll stay out of the way, but please let us know if there is anything we can do to appropriately provide support.
- ✓ As we move forward, we would like to discourage the practice (to the extent possible) of taking over/under payments for utility bills, and we recognize some have been doing this practice for a long time, though the perceived convenience factors will hopefully represent a dated idea once we offer auto bill pay, or by sending bills via email, etc.
 - Longer term, we'd ask that you please consider that we can email a copy of your bill and/or you can setup auto bill pay because general management of the funds is a timely process for staff, and we recently confirmed that we have an inordinate number of over/under payments going into our books which can/will have a deleterious impact.
 - If the transaction has been completed in the BS&A Utility Billing then any subsequent changes will necessitate manager approval prior to



making a change, which is a good additional control or improvement without being too onerous for staff.

- As a reminder, we need your email address, because we are now able to send bills electronically, so here is the contact form if you have not provided your email address, please see [Contact – City of Lake City](#).
- ✓ Again, the city's Assessing, Utility, and Tax data will now safely reside on the metaphorical BS&A cloud.
 - In terms of our related program data, the vendor has taken on the responsibility for security and related data management.
- ✓ I am excited to report that our City Assessor, Brian Hoekema, has been performing work to address a couple of program area requirements, including training sessions and scheduling meetings with the appointed members, and the city's APEX software was recently renewed.
- ✓ We recently removed 70 stumps from various locations in the city via Joe's Tree Service--- a big thank you to Joe and his team, and further thank you to Ray and all LC staff that helped clean up the parks.
- ✓ We received council approval to proceed with a citywide roadway project to address several streets in the CLC.
- ✓ Staff have researched and met with vendors in anticipation of water meter/reader replacement project, which will hopefully be completed soon...
- ✓ In addition, here's the link to information regarding Halloween 2023, <https://cityoflakecity.com/2023/10/24/halloween-2023/>, and further information pertaining to our utility billing project, <https://cityoflakecity.com/2023/10/24/we-need-your-help/>, or see below for the related information..

According to History.com:

- Halloween is a holiday celebrated each year on October 31, and Halloween 2023 will occur on Tuesday, October 31.
- Over time, Halloween evolved into a day of activities like trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, donning costumes and eating treats.
- Did you know? One quarter of all the candy sold annually in the U.S. is purchased for Halloween.
- Did you [also] know? More people are buying costumes for their pets. Americans spent nearly \$500 million on costumes for their pets in 2021—more than double what they spent in 2010.

<https://www.history.com/topics/halloween/history-of-halloween>



In terms of safety, the Michigan State Police previously advised, "Let common sense be your guide!" MSP continued on Twitter. "Talk to kids about where to cross the street, not to go in anyone's home and don't eat anything till they get home. And if you see something that concerns you, just throw it away. Be safe, be nice and enjoy the day!"

Prepare your kids for safe and fun trick-or-treating with the tips below from MSP:

- Go in groups — kids under 12 should be supervised.
- Be visible — use glow sticks or flashlights.
- Use crosswalks when possible.
- See the ensuing link for additional tips for 'When walking'...and 'When driving'....

[Michigan officials offer tips for a safe Halloween night \(ourmidland.com\)](https://ourmidland.com)

Halloween – October 31 – 5:30p to 7:30P

FUN FACTS & SAFETY TIPS
[HTTPS://CITYOFLAKECITY.COM/EVENTS/4031/](https://CITYOFLAKECITY.COM/EVENTS/4031/)

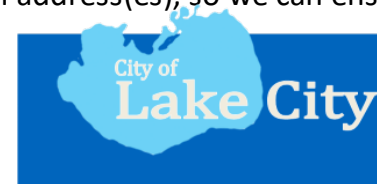


Utility Billing

If you have not heard already...The City of Lake City is currently updating our water meters (as needed), reading equipment, and related software. Once the project is completed, you will be able to easily pay electronically, monitor your actual or real time usage, and you'll be able to receive an electronic copy of your bill.

If you have not already, please go to the city's 'Contact' page [Contact – City of Lake City](#) of the website and provide your email address. In addition, we are currently certifying our utility billing data, so please confirm your billing/actual address(es), so we can ensure a successful launch.

Thank you in advance for your help!





Some of the recent documents or other interest areas on the city's website, include:

- ✓ link to the agendas, <https://cityoflakecity.com/document-category/meeting-agendas/>
- ✓ link to our approved meeting minutes, <https://cityoflakecity.com/document-category/meeting-minutes/>
- ✓ link to our finalized Resolutions, <https://cityoflakecity.com/document-category/resolutions/>
- ✓ link to the General Application, <https://cityoflakecity.com/documents/employment-application-policy-and-application-document/>
- ✓ this is the 'live' link to our regular CC meetings, <https://cityoflakecity.com/join-city-council-meeting/>

Additional Information/Notices:

- ✓ We are still seeking volunteers to serve on the city's Board of Review.
- ✓ In addition, the City of Lake City recently transitioned to the Lake Missaukee Fire Department for fire services, and they would like to invite the community to their '*Halloween Party for the Community*', see below for their fun invitation.
- ✓ We were recently featured on the news, too.... <https://cityoflakecity.com/2023/10/23/in-the-news/>



Have you ever wanted to help your community or meet new people?

If so, we have a great opportunity for you that does not entail a lot of time, and further this experience may give you requisite background to pursue other opportunities while servicing your community.

If interested, please complete a brief survey application at the ensuing web address, <https://forms.office.com/r/iFfrFisj3P> or call the City of Lake City at 231.839.4561.

Additional Information/Links can be found at:

- <https://cityoflakecity.com/documents/cityof-lake-city/>
- <https://cityoflakecity.com/documents/cityassessor/>





Closing

In closing, we will continually work with the collective City Council to drive the city's projects, and effectively support our team members in all operations. As always, the goal is to develop confidence, professionalism, and abilities within our team, so we are ready to take on any project or challenge as we strive to provide the highest level of service possible for our citizens and in support of the greater community. I/we will continue to keep you apprised of our progress, please check back on the website for updates and emergency alerts or come see us at the next City Council meeting.

As always, thank you for your ongoing interest and support!

Robert C. Vautaw, MPA

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