



CITY MANAGER UPDATE TO THE CITY COUNCIL

In This Update:

- **From the City Manager:** CIP Updates & Eau Claire County Animal Society CIP Request, Congratulations to Aaron White, and Swearing In
- **Council Calendar**
- **Special Employee Spotlight:** Lieutenant Steve Patten

From the Manager

CIP Updates & Eau Claire County Animal Society CIP Request

Tour of CIP Projects: A number of people have requested to see some of the locations that are part of our CIP Budget. We will be working to set up a tour of some of the facilities or sites that relate to a CIP request. If there are any that you'd be particularly interested in viewing, let me know and we will work on it.

Eau Claire County Humane Association in CIP: You have no doubt received many comments and questions on the CIP funding for the ECCHA's new building, which the City has proposed removing in this year's CIP budget.

Here's a Q&A on the situation.

- *How did the amount get into the CIP?* The amount was added in 2021 for the 2022 CIP as an "out year" project at the request of the Humane Association. It's our understanding that requests to other municipalities for a capital investment were declined. The original rationale for providing the support is because the City relies on the ECCHA to kennel approximately 600 animals that the City takes in through animal control. ECCHA is an important partner, and their success is key to our operations. We do not seek to set up our own kennel or to work with another county shelter that would require longer travel time.
- *Why did you remove the funding?* There are a number of factors that have caused us to adjust all areas of the CIP, including:
 - We are taking a conservative approach to borrowing in hopes of preserving our bond rating;
 - The financial picture of the City continues to worsen due to decades of declining revenue and aggravated by recent inflation and the labor market; and
 - Rising interest rates have increased the cost of borrowing.

As a result, to prepare this year’s CIP budget, we needed to cut a total of \$12.3 million in spending across all priority areas. The total cut by area of investment is listed in the table below:

Area of Investment	Reduction
Affordable Housing	(\$1,100,000)
Humane Association Contribution	(\$500,000)
Information Systems	(\$110,000)
Land Acquisition	(\$511,000)
Parking & City Facilities	(\$1,445,100)
Parks	(\$635,000)
Planning Projects	(\$100,000)
Sustainability	(\$1,695,000)
Transportation Related	(\$2,845,000)
Vehicle & Equipment Replaceent	(\$150,000)
Water/Sewer	(\$2,980,000)
Weather Warning Sirens	(\$215,000)
Grand Total	(\$12,286,100)

In addition to these cuts, many items moved “off the planning horizon” of the CIP. These may or may not be returned at some point in the next decade, or we will look to dispose of the related assets. The items that moved off the horizon includ: Water-Well #13 Replacement, Transit-North Transfer Hub, Hobbs-Ice Center Improvements, Hobbs-Lobby Flooring Replacement, Hobbs-Facility Lighting LED Replacement, Hobbs-Parking Lot Sealing, Fairfax-Perimeter LED Lighting Upgrade, Fairfax-Waterslide and Retaining Wall Replacement, Fairfax-Bathhouse Door Replacement, Fairfax Parking Lot Paving, Central Equipment-Facility Maintenance and Upkeep, LBE-Fiber Optic Conduit, LBE-C/W Fire Station Projects, LBE-Taser Replacement, LBE-Public Safety Video System Replacements, Transportation-Snow and Ice Control, Parks & Recreation-Northwest Community Park, Parks & Recreation-Sport Court Replacement, Parks & Recreation-Irrigation Systems, Parks & Recreation-Archery Park, Parks & Recreation-Turf Replacement at Carson Park, Parks & Recreation-Owen Park Band Shell, and Parks & Recreation-Replace Mt Simon Baseball Fences.

- *Did you notify the ECCHA of the change?* The Finance Director, Police Chief, and ECPD Administrative Division Manager met with the ECCHA Director when the CIP was slated to be released to the public to notify them that we had removed the funding.
- *Was the donation guaranteed?* There is no contractual requirement. The Director indicated that they were not counting on the donation, but that they had hoped for it. Slated for 2026, the allocation was in an “out” year of the CIP. The Council formally adopts the next year’s CIP, while the “out year” allocations are far less certain and subject to reduction or postponement.

- *How does the ECCHA receive support from public entities?* I talked recently to Director Shelley Janke, and she indicated that most communities pay a per animal nightly kenneling fee of \$17/night. The City of Eau Claire’s most recent annual fee was \$36,372, which roughly works out to \$17/animal/night. Director Janke said they would be increasing fees to help pay for the costs of the new shelter. We learned that other local governments also using the facility did not make a capital contribution but instead continue to pay for use in their operational budgets. As described in the attached memo from Administrative Division Manager Kelly Thompson, the amount that communities pay to support ECCHA may be lower than what’s received by other county shelters, and we’d encourage ECCHA to increase the fees charged Eau Claire and other communities served so that it can cover the debt payments associated with their new building. We support the approach of having the ECCHA pay for its rising costs due to the new facility through a transparent fee structure that treats Eau Claire the same as other communities, so that the cost is spread fairly according to use.
- *If the Council were to opt to have the funding restored, how would that work?* Any adjustment to the CIP at the point of a submitted City Managers budget is with Council, and offsetting capital expenditure reductions will need to be identified. Or, more borrowing could occur if there is capacity to do so within the law and within City-adopted fiscal debt policy. (However, at this point, there is not that capacity.) In addition, the Council would need to establish that the construction of the ECCHA building meets a “public purpose,” which is a standard that allows the City to borrow funding. It’s unusual for the City to donate to another entity, so this is something we need to explore. If it was deemed legal and permissible and we made the investment, the City would seek to have ECCHA waive fees for a period of time that would match the investment, such as for ten-year period. The exact terms would depend on what ECCHA establishes as a fee structure for other communities, as we seek parity with other communities’ contributions.

New Community Development Director: Join me in congratulating Aaron White as our superstar Economic Development Director takes on a new role as Community Development Director. He is pictured here in one of the *many* interviews he has done since he started working for the City in December of 2018.

Aaron worked in Economic Development and Housing in Kansas since 2008 until he moved to Eau Claire. Before working in Community Development, he managed logistics at Cargill,

farmed as a hobby, and served as a Corporal in the Marines from 1989 to 1993 in the first Gulf War and also in Somalia. (He sometimes says that there are few situations that are stressful when compared to surviving combat.) Aaron has an MBA and a BA in Political Science and Psychology.



The interview teams were impressed with Aaron's ideas on how to continue to build up the many different and related aspects of community development, including inspections, code enforcement, affordable housing, economic development, and planning/zoning. Aaron is very well respected from all corners of the city. Aaron gets a LOT done, and he does that in a thoughtful way - preserving relationships and seeing connections between the nuts and bolts to the big picture.

Aaron says: "I'm really looking forward to new challenges as Community Development Director. There is so much potential in this community, and we have a great team in place to help guide our future success."

This is a different type of director than Eau Claire has had in recent decades. Historically, the Community Development Director has doubled as the City's Planning Director. Our awesome prior director, Scott Allen, though, accomplished the feat of creating a Planning Manager in the form of Ned Noel. That Division also recently hired Katrina Berg, which makes them fully staffed. Meanwhile, Inspections is working to reach full staffing, and we are considering creating a new Neighborhood Services Division that can work on code enforcement, trash-related issues, and perhaps also parking. With the shift of Aaron into Community Development Director, we have someone who is an expert in Economic Development who will be supported by these other excellent managers. This dream team of managers and staff will get a chance to bring everything together. We are excited for Aaron and excited to see what's next for Eau Claire!

Swearing In: Last Monday, we had a ceremony to swear Chief Matt Jaggar into his new role. Here are the comments I shared to wish him well. It was great to see such an awesome turnout and to hear what Matt hopes to do in his new role.

I'm honored to have an opportunity to say a few words about Chief Jaggar, who I've had a chance to work with for the past 14 months.

Very few people have a job like a Fire Chief...

The Chief runs a medical service for 106,000 people over a 500 square mile area, from half an hour south in the Town of Drammen, half an hour east to the Town of Luddington, and 20 minutes north to the Town of Wheaton. Like our health care systems, but on wheels, our EMS service is complex, with complicated health and mental health needs of patients, complex staffing requirements, complex stakeholder issues, and challenging billing and finances.

The Chief runs a fire and rescue service for more than 70,000 people and 28,000 buildings and a prevention team that works to reduce risk. As the department that anchors North Central Wisconsin, the Chief must plan for the unknowables in our region and then help their crews respond in the moment, whether that be a water rescue, a rescue from a 21-inch-wide septic tank, or the all-too-real

continuing threat of loss of life and property due to fires, which have become increasingly intense and dangerous.

The Chief's responsibilities involve keeping those 106,000 people safe and healthy, responding to the requests and interests of the City Council and community leaders, problem solving and strategizing with our Finance Director and the City Manager's Office to do our best with limited resources, and participating actively as a member of the City Directors Team.

But the most important responsibility that the Chief has, I believe, is to keep the crews who serve our community safe.... Safe from the real threats of injury due to an incident, safe from the more gradual, cumulative impact of exposure to cancer-causing chemicals, and safe and resilient from the unseen effects of exposure to human suffering and trauma, day after day. The Chief's duty is to reassure the people who love and depend on our staff that those staff will come home healthy and happy and ready to return to the station the next day to carry on this most essential work.

Because of all of these challenges, I'm so pleased to be part of a swearing in ceremony for Matt Jaggar. Matt is deeply principled and disciplined. He has listened, trained, and watched over the years. He has taken action whenever needed, even when that meant putting his safety in threat's way. He has the brainpower to problem solve and share a unique view to our Citywide leadership team. He has the compassion to hear and respond to the needs of his staff. We are grateful for Matt's family, who provides him joy and a respite from the difficult work, and we know that Matt helps care for and lift up them in the same way that he will care for this whole Fire Department, City Government, and community.

Matt is willing to do the hardest, scariest, or least comfortable work. He's willing to fight for solutions that help take us into a new chapter. In a world that has much struggle and suffering, it's an honor and privilege to be one of the people finding those solutions and giving that relief, and we know, Matt, that you will do an amazing job carrying that weight.

Pictured here (photos courtesy of Joshua Miller) are Chris Bell passing over the Chief's hat to Matt Jaggar, plus Matt with the Council Members who were able to attend. (Thank you!)



Council Calendar (With Tentative Work Session Dates)

- Monday, June 12th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion night
 - New District 1 Council Member Jessica Schoen sworn in
 - Public Discussion of 2024-2028 CIP Budget
- Tuesday, June 13th: Council Meeting
 - Presentation of Housing Needs Assessment report
- Monday, June 19th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Kickoff
- *Friday, June 23th: 2024-2028 CIP Budget Amendments Due*
- Monday, June 26th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, June 27th: Council Meeting
 - Updates on Phase II ARPA Projects
- Monday, July 10th: Regular Council public Hearing/Discussion Night
 - Public Discussion of 2024-2028 CIP Budget
- Tuesday, July 11th: Council Meeting
 - Council action on 2024-2028 CIP Budget
 - 2024 Operating Budget Work Session 1
- Monday, July 24th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, July 25th: Council Meeting
- Monday, August 14th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, August 15th: Council Meeting
- Monday, August 28th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, August 29th: Council Meeting
- Tuesday, September 5th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Discussion
- Monday, September 11th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, September 12th: Council Meeting
- Monday, September 25th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, September 26th: Council Meeting
- ❖ *September 29th – City Council receives 2024 Proposed Operating Budget*
- Monday, October 9th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
 - Public Hearing #1 on 2024 Proposed Operating Budget
- Tuesday, October 10th: Council Meeting
 - City Council Operating Budget Work Session #2 (Department Directors)
- Monday, October 23rd: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
- Tuesday, October 24th: Council Meeting
 - City Council Operating Budget Work Session #3 – Amendment Discussion
- ❖ *November 3rd – City Council Budget Amendments Due*
- Monday, November 6th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Discussion
- Monday, November 13th: Regular Council Public Hearing/Discussion Night
 - Public Hearing #2 on 2024 Proposed Operating Budget

- Tuesday, November 14th: Council Meeting
 - City Council action on 2024 Proposed Operating Budget and levy
- Monday, December 18th: Joint Plan Commission and City Council Meeting for Zoning Overhaul Discussion

Additional Dates:

- Friday, June 16th: Eggs and Issues Legislative Update
- Saturday, June 17th: Boyd Park Ribbon Cutting
- Monday, June 19th: Juneteenth Celebration (5:30PM)
- Tuesday, June 20th: Chamber Reception for President Berge
- Friday, July 28th: LWM Local Government 101
- Tuesday, August 1st: National Night Out

Employee Spotlight:

Here’s our next employee spotlight! Today we highlight **Lieutenant Steve Patten** out of station 9. (Submit your highlight suggestion here:

<https://forms.gle/f1PUPpFaWStsvH458>)

Training: “I received training through multiple different Fire and Ems classes through CVTC leading up to the enrollment and completion of the fire medic and paramedic associate degree programs.”
 Best part of job: “I enjoy making a positive difference people’s lives, working with a great group of people, and I take a lot of pride in the fact that after all the years the fire service has been in operation, that the community still trusts us day or night to ‘fix’ their problem, big or small... that’s pretty cool!”

Favorite activities outside of work:

“Spending time with my wife and kids, on the water boating/skiing/ tubing/fishing, or attempting to hunt!”



Humane Association

Public Purpose

The City of Eau Claire, through the Eau Claire Police Department, has the statutory responsibility to provide specific services related to dogs and cats. We are required to take custody of and care for stray dogs and cats. The City of Eau Claire does not have a physical structure to fulfill these legal requirements. The structure and associated operational requirements are provided through an annual contract between the City of Eau Claire and the Eau Claire County Humane Association.

Summary of Services Provided through Contract

The annual fee (2023 - \$36,372) includes boarding of stray animals for the statutory time period (4 nights – 5 days for adoptable animals and 7 nights – 8 days for un-adoptable animals) plus includes the surrender fee to the Humane Association if the animal isn't claimed an euthanasia fees if the animal is not adoptable. If the animal is claimed the animal owner pays the Humane Association. The only additional costs we pay ECCHA is if we hold an animal for cause in a neglect case. That is charged at \$17/day and we bill that to the animal owner (they may pay it or it could go to collections). We also pay vet charges on stray animals if they are incurred during the hold period. The CSO's must transport the animals to the vet office.

Other Jurisdictions Contracts with their Humane Association

I contacted several other municipalities and discovered that the majority of them have their officers and/or community service officers respond to animal calls, the only exception is Eau Claire County, in which the Humane Association takes their animal calls, in most cases. None of the municipalities indicated they contributed to a capital project at their human association.

Augusta and Fairchild, both in Eau Claire County, do not contract with ECCHA, but instead contracts with a local vet clinic for their stray animal holds and euthanasia. Additionally, they only take dogs, not cats, if someone calls in with a cat they request they rehome them or find alternatives themselves.

Below is the cost paid by each agency or municipality.

Agency	2023 Fee	Population	Cost Per Resident
Eau Claire Police Department	\$ 36,372.00	69,441	\$ 0.52
Eau Claire County	\$ 43,620.00	106,452	\$ 0.41
Chippewa Police Department	\$ 16,565.75	14,778	\$ 1.12
Menomonie Police Department	\$ 33,314.00	16,794	\$ 1.98
La Crosse Police Department	\$105,000.00	52,185	\$ 2.01

Number and type of Animal Impounds

Based in information from the Eau Claire County Humane Association, below is the number of total animals taken in to the Humane Association. The "Total Strays" column is how many we would be "charged" for if we were charged per animal.

	Total Animals	Owner Claimed	Total Strays	Total Paid to Humane		Cost Per Stray
2018			487	\$ 32,510.00	\$15/day	\$ 66.76
2019			447	\$ 27,090.00	\$15/day	\$ 60.60
2020	500	178	322	\$ 30,038.00	\$17/day	\$ 93.29
2021	505	200	305	\$ 36,372.00	\$17/day	\$ 119.25
2022	607	181	426	\$ 36,372.00	\$17/day	\$ 85.38