



# City of Mexico Beach

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## Weekly Report June 13, 2025



### **National Blame Someone Else Day Edition**

(I didn't do it)

#### **Interim City Administrator Mell Smigielski**

##### RECYCLING

Public Works scheduled a meeting this week with Waste Management to discuss an opportunity to work together on a recycling program. WM has a brand new 30-million-dollar facility in Fort Walton Beach that separates recyclables (including glass). So far, no municipality in Bay County has signed on with them due to the newness of the facility. We have an opportunity to be the first. We discussed methods of pickup, frequency and equipment needed. They are looking at costs to make the program successful for both parties. As soon as they figure out costs, we will have them come to the next City Council meeting.

##### PAY DAY/PAY PERIOD

We tinkered with the idea of changing our pay period, which currently runs from a Wednesday through Tuesday (2-week period), with payroll being processed on Tuesday when the pay period is not yet complete. This causes unnecessary problems of trying to correct any overtime that is not yet known when payroll is completed. Changing the pay period would cause some issues with some departments so we decided to leave the period alone but change the day payroll is processed. Instead of processing on Tuesday with the checks hitting bank accounts on late Tuesday into Wednesday, we will process payroll on Wednesday with the checks hitting bank accounts on late Wednesday into Thursday.

## SHELLS

We continue to get calls on the next date the public can pick out shells. Right now, the tentative dates would be the Friday and Saturday before July 4<sup>th</sup>.

## GRILL

A few weeks ago, we reported that Eastern Shipbuilding borrowed our grill for a successful fundraiser. They returned it but came back to pick it up again. They refurbished it at their expense. Luckily, I took pictures before it left so we can compare the awesome work they did!



## SENATOR MOODY

Dan Paasch, from Senator Ashley Moody's office, will be holding mobile office hours in City Hall on June 20 from 11 am to 12:30 pm. The purpose will be to help constituents with federal issues they may be having.

## FIREWORKS

Here is a map of the fallout area of the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks. As always, we will close that portion of the beach the day before to allow for setting up on the day of the event.



## COMPLAINT PROCESS

Our Staff talked about our complaint process. Currently it is very informal, as it is in most small municipalities. The complaint comes in and gets routed to the proper department. At that point, we all assume the complaint has been completed, but there is no real method of follow-up. We considered purchasing available software that would allow the public to make a complaint on an app or website that gets routed to the proper department and has a tracking mechanism that is viewable by the public to ensure compliance. If a complaint isn't completed in a reasonable time frame, the software automatically contacts the department again. The department can even make notes to make the public aware of the progress. Sounds great, but the purchase price is in the 5 figures. Perhaps something for the future.

In the meantime, Juli will be working with our website developer to create an online form for the public to use to lodge complaints. We have found that most of the time, people like to call and talk with someone.

## BENCH

Donny Walker donated a bench to the City in honor of his late father-in-law. We will place the bench around 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to replace the bench that was destroyed. The bench will have 4x4 legs to concrete into the ground. The bench seat will be out of 2x6 and 2x4 instead of 2x4 and 2x2 and will be 5 feet wide. Our staff will create a donation policy for the Council to consider for future potential donations. Here is a picture:



## MULTI-USE PATHWAY

FDOT is in the study phase of a multi-use path from Crooked Sound Drive to CR 386 with an additional segment on US 98 and 15<sup>th</sup> Street to CR 386. Their plans originally have the 15<sup>th</sup> Street segment on the south side of the street. Anchor Engineering will be sending FDOT our plans for the 15<sup>th</sup> Street bridge to let them know we are placing the pedestrian bridge on the north side of the street. That way they can adjust their plans instead of having pedestrians having to cross 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

## PEDDLERS AND FIREWORKS

Recall at our last meeting there was a request for a permit to allow the sale of fireworks in the Toucans parking lot across the street from the main building. I know it's hard to believe, but we didn't have a peddlers permit application form. Juli created a form for us, and we sent it to the requester. Hopefully it will be completed in time for the June 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **ROUNABOUT ON CANAL PARKWAY**

We all know the 'roundabout' at the end of Canal Parkway is temporary. We also know the current configuration doesn't have the proper radius to allow for normal traffic flow. To do it right, we would need some additional property on the west side to allow for proper configuration. We contacted the St. Joe Company to let them know the parking they built for us lot is working really well during our busy times in conjunction with the 'roundabout', which allows beach goers to drop off their passengers and paraphernalia and then park in the parking lot. We asked the St. Joe Company if they would be willing to allow us to acquire some additional property on the west side of Canal Parkway for the 'roundabout' expansion. They will consider the request if we can give them a conceptual drawing of our needs so they can determine if it will allow adequate access to their property to the west. We contacted Anchor Engineering to see if they can provide a conceptual drawing for that purpose.

## **CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Here are some of the code activities for the week:

- Worked Boat Launch for 6 hours on Saturday helping with the shell give away.
- Issued 2 citations at Boat Launch
- Spent the rest of week working on 29 Turtle Light Violations sent to me by MRD company who surveyed the beach:
  - Copies of Turtle Light Ordinance
  - Copies of Recommendations to resolve violations
  - Rewrite Notice Violation to fit the Turtle Light violations
  - Designed spreadsheet to keep track of when violations mailed
  - Sent violations by certified mail
  - Called HOA person in charge of condos for their violations
  - Visited Centennial Bank to turn off their sign light.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Every year our trucks have to have their water pumps certified. This was done this week and all passed, so we are good for the next 12 months. It is a very thorough test and really puts each apparatus through its paces.

We have received the equipment on the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant (VFA) and the paperwork has been turned in for reimbursement. This is a 50/50 grant and we have used this every year for the last 5 years to help with the purchase of needed equipment. This year we received 2 sets of wildland gear and three bailout kits with harnesses. This means that all our department members have the same equipment available to them.

We continue to see an increase in numbers on the beach as we move deeper into the summer season. The new wider beach is making patrolling easier in places like

in front of El Governor and all the access points for department apparatus are holding up to traffic well. Now that the ropes are finished, we will complete the missing numbers.



## **HARBOR MASTER**

- June is again looking like the busiest June since I became Harbor Master; both on the slip side and the boat launch side of things.
- Just a heads up for Friday 20<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> the GollyWhopper fishing tournament will be taking place. Captains party on 20<sup>th</sup> at 1700 hrs, free food and fun. Then weigh in on the 21<sup>st</sup> from 1530 hrs. Come join in on the fun. This is also a fund raiser for the Mexico Beach Fire Department 501-c-3 to help with further education of our firefighters.
- Great Job!! by Mark and his crew with the shells on the parking lot at the boat ramp. After some rain it will look even better. Thank you.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

### Projects and Tasks Completed or In Progress

- Beach Projects
  - The last of the installation of additional poles and rope barriers are pending the missing material that is being delivery.
  - Continued beach raking is ongoing.
  - Public Works continues to work with the Turtle Research Team with the leave no trace.
  - Public Works is checking and cleaning the beach daily.
  - Vandalism to Jetty Rocks has been repaired.
  
- Traffic and Safety Improvements
  - FDOT is finishing the striping and US Highway 98 work.
  - FDOT has been watering the grass more often and attempting to save as much as possible.
  - Waiting for the installation of the new fire department and speed verification signs for US Highway 98 that will be installed for eastbound traffic.
  - Additional stop signs and other roadway signs are being repaired and re-installed under FDOT regulations.
  - Additional speed limit signs and no outlet signs are being installed on streets throughout the city.
  - Sidewalk repairs are underway and two sections of US Highway 98 and several sections along 15<sup>th</sup> Street are being repaired this week and will be finished next week.
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- Stormwater Management
  - Three stormwater drainage locations at residential properties are being installed next week depending on weather conditions.
  - Inspection of stormwater canals for clearing and operational effectiveness.
  - Meeting set June 26 with FDEP for the drainage solutions by US Highway 98 and 15<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Nine (9) stormwater inspection was completed.
  
- Parks and Recreations
  - Two days of shells give-a-ways was a complete success. Several additional days will be announced later this month.
  - Snapper Season continues without issues.
  - Extra staffing at the fish cooler and restrooms during the weekend, and the cooler is checked each evening.
  - The Boat Ramp Park parking lot shell resurfacing with crushed shells is near completion.
  - Thanks to the CDC we are in the process of major upgrades to the Pickleball Courts and park around that location. Two (2) new court dividers have been installed, new sunshades have been ordered, the parking area is being replaced with crushed shells, new concrete pads

have been boxed at all court entrances, and new mulch for the playground area has been delivered.

- Regular park maintenance and updates.
  - The missing pieces to the Pickleball Court privacy fence are being installed.
  - Reviews for ADA compliance access points to the beach are being discussed.
- Routine Operations and Maintenance
    - Restroom cleaning and maintenance across public facilities
    - Roadway maintenance and landscaping, including mowing
    - Ongoing fleet repairs and preventative maintenance
    - Continued pothole repairs and general roadway maintenance
  - Sanitation
    - Two (2) pending commercial dumpsters are still being coordinated by local businesses.
    - All sanitation trucks have been cleaned, and new maintenance procedures are now being conducted.
    - Sanitation is operational during the weekends for commercial dumpsters and beach cans throughout the season.
    - Truck # 008 is still down for maintenance and repairs.
    - A successful meeting with Waste Management was completed and a new presentation for recycling options will be presented to the Council soon.
  - Administrative
    - Budget submissions and reviews are underway.
    - Coordinating with FSU for training and career building is underway.