The expression “spring has sprung” means that it has stopped snowing, the days are becoming warmer and longer, the grass is greening, the trees are blossoming, and everything seems to have new life; a rebirth of sorts. Spring is a time of renewal after a long, bleak, and cold Michigan winter.

Spring is “springing” up in our community, slowly, but surely. And with spring comes projects that are waiting to start in Caro as soon as the weather breaks. Street milling and paving of two plus miles of road will take place with a recycled tire mixture. The Luder Road Bridge will be getting a new top and repair. Phase 1 of City sidewalk repairs/replacements are starting, with Phase 2 slated for later this summer. Van Geisen Road is the targeted area for an addition of new sidewalks, as residents now need to walk in the roadway, which is not safe. The parking lot by the post office will be getting a complete facelift. Also, a few more trees will be planted around the City as we watch the trees that were planted last fall come into bloom. Later this year, the trail crossing should be completed to connect the Chippewa Landing walking loop with the Exchange Club Forest trail system.

Last year’s Frank Street project is now completed, but the engineer’s bill from Gourdie Fraser is way over what was bid; an issue that we are currently addressing. Plans for the South Almer Street project are getting close to completion and we are looking into bidding the construction-engineering portion separately so we won’t have the same overage issue.

We are looking into hiring an individual for the summer months to help develop information on the empty storefronts in the downtown area, look at our business’s needs, and help make our parks the jewels in the community that they should be by making a project list and getting the items done for both Bieth Park and Chippewa Landing. We are getting quotes on adding striping to some of the tennis courts for pickle ball. Repairing the disc golf course is being looked into. We have received the insurance settlement for the fire that destroyed bathrooms at Chippewa Landing and are working on a structure to house the new lavatories. Also, since the water leak has not been located, and the well that served the south part of town is off, we need to find a way to provide drinking water for the park and our consumers south of the Cass River.

Another successful Easter Egg Hunt should have taken place in Bieth Park, and we have plans underway for Movies in the Park, a City-wide Summer Picnic, and Music in the Park on Thursday’s. Plans are also in the making to construct a Pavilion at Atwood Park for the musicians, along with other uses. I would like to thank Caro Community Schools, Caro Chamber of Commerce, the Caro Area Library, Caro Shuffleboard Club, Caro Garden Club, and the Caro Baseball/Softball Federation for all the youth and adult programs that they have in our community and the City will continue to assist with their project, as is possible.

Con’t on page 2
Other items coming this Spring are: The City brush dump will open on the first and third Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. until noon for City residents to bring brush. We will still continue our weekly yard pick up and the three chipping days throughout the year. Coming soon will be the ability to pay your water/sewer/garbage bills at City Hall using a new credit card system. An addition to the Municipal Building is being looked at to house the Caro Police Department. The present building on Montague Street has structural issues and is very costly to heat and operate. A water study is out for bids for our current water system.

With these projects come a price. Fortunately, the City has the resources to fund these projects. According to the latest City audit, Caro has $9.9 million in the bank. Granted, $2.4 million is in restricted funds that must be kept in reserve, however that leaves $7.3 million available for projects to benefit all of our citizens. As of Fall 2017, after a year of constant persistence by me on your behalf, we are finally earning interest on this money in the amount of approximately $130,000 per year. The annual millage rate of 16.1643 on your taxes brought in $1.6 million last year.

With those figures in mind, I am asking the citizens of Caro to spring forward with their input. What would you like to see happen as a capital project in Caro? Would you rather see a lower millage? Would you like to be involved in the decision-making? We are in the planning stages of the next budget, which starts July 1st, and would like input.

PLEASE share your thoughts with me! Feel free to contact me at jgreene@carocity.net, message me on my Mayor Joe Greene Facebook page, or send me a note in care of City Hall at 317 South State Street. Happy Spring!!

**MANAGER’S MUSINGS**

BY: CHRISTOPHER OLSON

*There is joy in work...there is no happiness except in the realization that we have accomplished something.* – Henry Ford

As we reflect back on 2017 and consider plans going into 2018, it was a year of transition for the City: there were comings and goings with the City’s elected officials and staff, and the resulting adjustments as we learn about each other. The City had a clean audit for FY 2016-17, and once again finished in a strong financial position.

Programs and Services in 2017

Annual reports of activities were received from departments in significant detail. The following is a brief summary. In the Police Department, overall dispatched calls were slightly down, but arrests and traffic issues were up significantly. For the Fire Department, overall runs were down about 50% from the prior year, but about average when compared to the past five years. Building permits were at 17 residential and 19 commercial, in 2017, with 105 completed trade permits (electrical/plumbing/mechanical) and 31 open trade permits (still in progress at year’s end). In our water and sewer departments, overall water pumped and provided to customers is about 5% higher than the prior year, but still less than 2008. The City pumped about 346 million gallons of water in calendar year 2017 and took in close to the same at the wastewater treatment plant. The DPW maintained 24 miles worth of streets. Administratively, the City recently updated its employee handbook, and has actively participated in numerous intergovernmental cooperative arrangements.

**FY 2018-19 Annual Budget**

The budget process has started for the City. Along with maintaining the number and quality of existing services, there are several proposals for new projects and programs. These are being considered in light of financial and staffing realities. As a document, the budget will be evolving so that it will better display the City’s services, operations, programs and projects. Operational reports and statistics will be utilized with the financials so we can show where we have been, where we are, and where we are going, as well as to communicate our effectiveness and efficiency.

Of note is that the General Fund will see about an 8% reduction in property tax revenues in FY 2018-19. This will be close to a $132,000 revenue “loss” to the City when compared to the prior fiscal year.

**Projects**

As we planned for 2018, there are several major projects. We will be addressing the pavement on several streets and repairs to the Luder Road Bridge. These projects come with a total of $786,000 in grant funding. There will be other physical improvements and repairs throughout the City, and these will be described in further detail in other forums. There is also a good amount of investment in the City by existing and future employers; please watch for newspaper articles and City web-page announcements.

**Farewell**

DPW Superintendent Charles Sundblad retired from the City of Caro in late March 2018, after 29 years with the City. He has been appointed DPW Director for the City of Grandville, near Grand Rapids. Charlie’s knowledge and expertise will be missed.
A WORD FROM THE CLERK
BY: KAREN J SNIDER, CMC

How fascinating it is to be a part of the changing seasons and that is why I love living in Michigan. Our dogs are so excited about being able to get outside and take longer walks. Yup, it is called “Spring”. The mud doesn’t make me happy, but the thought of warm weather puts a smile on my face.

This is also the time of year that residents are thinking about filling their swimming pools. Remember that if you have a fairly large pool, you may want to contact the water department at 673-2226 to get a meter read before and after filling your pool. There is a $15.00 fee for each read but you will not get charged the sewer usage. Sewer is charged based on water consumption. You may want to inquire about a separate lawn meter if you do a lot of outside watering or washing your vehicles (673-7671). You are only charged for water on this meter. There are initial costs, however, over the long run you can save money.

Exciting changes are coming with the implementation of online payments and a credit/debit card machine. The City has contracted with Payment Service Network (PSN) to implement these services and should be available around the end of May. More information will be available on the city’s website at www.carocity.net.

PUBLIC WORKS HIGHLIGHTS
BY: CHARLIE SUNDBLAD
DPW SUPERINTENDENT

Spring is in the air!! In May, we will start chipping brush. Remember that we only do it on the first Monday in May, the third Monday in July and the first Monday in October. In addition, the City dump area located on Weeden Road will be opened from 10 a.m. to noon the first and third Saturday starting in April and ending the last Saturday in November. Emterra will start their yard pickup also in April. If you need a copy of the brush policy you can pick one up at the Municipal Building or find it on the City website at www.carocity.net.. Hydrant flushing will take place the week of April 23rd. There will be a notice in the paper and on the radio. The City does not allow raking or putting of grass clippings in the gutters. Have a great summer!!!!

WASTEWATER TREATMENT
BY: CURTIS WELLS, SUPT

Spring has arrived!! I don’t think anyone is more ready than I am. The older I get the less I like winter. With that being said, our RV dump should be open by the time this article comes out.

This time of year we are all thinking about spring cleaning. Please remember that any unwanted liquids should be disposed of properly and not poured down the drains around our homes. Paints, cleaning supplies, and other chemicals should be taken to the recycling center. Below is the information for the Tuscola County Recycling Center.

I want to thank everyone in advance for their cooperation, and please remember that... disposable does not mean flushable!!

The City Offices will be closed on Monday May 28, 2018 in observance of Memorial Day.
CARO POLICE DEPARTMENT
BY: CHIEF BRIAN NEWCOMB

Spring is around the corner and we look forward to warmer weather and outdoor activities. Caro Police want everyone to keep in mind to be aware of walkers, bicyclists and motorcycles. Enjoy the nice weather in safety.

Speaking of safety, unfortunately we recently responded to back to back reports of students at Caro Middle School and High School making threats to use gun violence within the schools. The incidents involved a 14 year old boy and a 15 year old girl. It is speculation as to whether or not the students planned to carry out the threats. The threat alone is a 20 year felony. In both cases, the threats were heard and reported, which is very important. Those that heard the conversations were concerned enough to report it, which enabled authorities to act swiftly and decisively to prevent any violence.

The topic of gun violence in America is a politically and emotionally charged issue. There is wisdom in remembering that all persons have a right to their opinion. Getting angry because another person has a differing opinion from yours is a negative process and does not lead to any solution.

Caro Schools was one of many institutions nationwide that planned and participated in the National School Walkout to support the victims of the Parkland school victims. Caro Police were tasked with providing security for the walkout. We did so without incident. As the Caro Police Chief, I was very impressed with the planning and content of the walkout. The students, teachers and staff were respectful and peaceful. The presentation was not confrontational and accomplished what was intended. To honor those 17 students that lost their lives in Florida by merely attending class to learn. The walkout brings attention and discussion to the problem we all face with gun violence.

I was asked to speak to the student body at the Caro High School and Middle schools just prior to the walkout. The discussion centered around the threat reports from the previous week. Without getting into a debate, I presented the facts we had, what was done and what the future holds for the two involved students. I attempted to answer the concerns of the students.

I acknowledged the national debate about cause and effect of gun violence. I firmly believe this: That if we all woke up tomorrow and followed the golden rule of “treat others as you would like to be treated”, it would be a different world. It is also a fact that mental health is a contributing factor in every gun violence incident. I asked the students if they could bring themselves to watch out for each other by taking notice of the students who are considered “different” in dress, speech, looks, economics, home environment etc. If you see them sitting alone, day after day at the lunch table, walk up and say “Hi”, introduce yourself, show the kindness and consideration we all crave. Show them that someone cares about them. If every student sat down with those disenfranchised students, one a day for the entire school year, it could make a difference in both of your outlooks on life. Anger is dissipated when you know someone cares and listens to you.

A lesson we could all stand to keep in mind…..

CODE ENFORCEMENT
BY: CHIEF RANDY HECKROTH

The Code Enforcement Officer would like to thank everyone for their efforts in keeping our City clean this past winter. Although there is still work to be done, it looks great.

With spring coming soon, the snow will disappear and our lawns may show evidence of items that need to be cleaned up.

If you do receive a notice, PLEASE contact this office immediately. Extensions may be granted based on individual situations. Please do not ignore the notice.

Please review the following list, for the most active blights and zoning issues---

- All vehicle must be properly plated and in running order
- Pallets, crates, tires, appliances and any type of construction material & equipment are not allowed
- All fences, pools, and any type of structure needs to have a zoning permit

The first scheduled brush chipping will be May 7, 2018. Please contact this office for a full schedule and the rules and requirements.

Please be safe and enjoy the Michigan spring.
BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT:
HILLS & DALES GENERAL HOSPITAL

Hills & Dales General Hospital is happy to introduce Millwood Street Primary Care Clinic. Staffed by Dr. Afonso Ferreira and Norma Abbott, Nurse Practitioner, Millwood Street Primary Care offers a full service clinic for any of your healthcare needs. Dr. Ferreira has been a long time partner of Hills & Dales, seeing patients a few days a week in Cass City. Recently, we were able to move that partnership to a full time opportunity, which also allowed us to open a clinic in Caro. Our goal was to provide a clinic where our patients can receive care close to home. We have patients that come to Hills & Dales from all over, and we wanted to provide a clinic that is a little closer to home if possible. Now, with opening Millwood Street Primary Care, we are also able to offer outpatient lab services for our patients.

Millwood Street Primary Care is open 5 days a week, with hours of Monday-Thursday, 9:00-5:00 p.m., with lunch from 12-1. And Friday, 9:00-12:00 p.m. To make an appointment, patients can call 989-672-1555.

Millwood Street is the 10th clinic location for Hills & Dales. Other locations include Kingston, Ubly, and many in Cass City. We also have 3 Center for Rehabilitation Centers, offering physical therapy and rehabilitation services throughout the Thumb. Hills & Dales is also undergoing a large expansion and renovation project right now, which will add updated clinic space, lobby area, gift shop and conference room, as well as updates to 12 of our patient rooms.

We are thankful for the opportunity to bring services to the Caro community and look forward to providing healthcare services for many years to come.

CARO FIRE DEPARTMENT
BY: CHIEF RANDY HECKROTH

With spring right around the corner, and yard clean up near—please be mindful of the burning laws in the State of Michigan and within the City limits of Caro.

For burn permits outside the Caro City limits, please contact the fire station at 989-673-2002. You will hear a message concerning the rules and regulations for the State of Michigan. Permits are valid for 30 days. Anyone that would like to have a camp fire within the City limits, in an approved container, please leave your name and number. The Fire Chief will contact you, with specific rules for within the City limits. Please remember that the state only allows the burning of tree branches and logs. No garbage, and no lumber of any type, anywhere in the state.

Please contact the Fire Chief or a Firefighter for all your fire safety related questions.

If you would like to schedule a fire truck for your event, please contact the Fire Chief.

Please note the following recall—

Name of product:
Kidde fire extinguishers with plastic handles

Hazard:
The fire extinguishers can become clogged or require excessive force to discharge and can fail to activate during a fire emergency. In addition, the nozzle can detach with enough force to pose an impact hazard.

Remedy:
Replace

Recall date:
November 2, 2017

Units:
About 37.8 million (in addition, 2.7 million in Canada and 6,730 in Mexico)

Consumer Contact:
Kidde toll-free at 855-271-0773 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET Saturday and Sunday, or online at www.kidde.com and click on “Product Safety Recall” for more information.

SWEARING IN NEW FIREFIGHTER

Randy Heckroth—Fire Chief, Jacob Lefler and Karen Snider—City Clerk
BRAHMS'S NEW ACRE

As valued and loyal customers know, Bock’s Big Acre has been a staple of Caro for a long time. The store has always carried a wide variety of products which include: agricultural products, feed and seed, home goods, lawn and garden, pet feed and supplies, and much more. All served up with a friendly smile and a big thank you to its customers.

Times change, big box stores have entered the scene, but small town America still counts on its small businesses to offer quality products and excellent customer service. That is why back in October of 2015 a young couple from Pinckney, Michigan, Jeff and Katie Beemer, decided to purchase Big Acre stores in Caro and Brighton. The purchase was an effort to keep small business in small towns. The Beemer’s have a strong sense of community and feel it necessary to promote that type of atmosphere in their businesses. They look forward to serving the Caro community for many years to come.

Though many faces have changed and new faces and management take over, customers should still look forward to receiving quality products and outstanding customer service. The store has added on a fresh new look, new products, U-Haul Service, different events and workshops, chick and fish days, to mention just a few. We look forward to you stopping in to see Bock’s Big Acre’s updated facility and meeting our new manager, Linda Poehlsen.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

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<td>Council</td>
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<td>June 4 &amp; 18</td>
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<td>Planning</td>
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<td>Parks &amp; Rec</td>
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SPRING CLEAN-UP

Saturday May 5, 2018
8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

City of Caro Residents Only!

Clean out the garage, attic, basement and yard.
Bring all of your junk to the fairgrounds
(next to the horse barns)

Tires
Tires without rims will be accepted
Limit 4 per household
(First 50 Passenger tires only)

Yard waste, branches up to 2’ in diameter,
no longer than 4’ in length can be dropped off

All appliances, refrigerators and freezers
(Freon MUST be removed)
(most heating and cooling places will remove)

For more information call the
City offices at 989-673-2226