

Issues and Programs List
Jan. 1 - March 31, 2024
WSAQ, Port Huron

Section I: Issues

The station has identified the following issues as significant issues facing our community:

- A. Odor issues at the Smiths Creek Landfill
- B. Funding for St. Clair County parks
- C. Port Huron Schools sinking fund
- D. Upcoming city council elections
- E. Michigan's Presidential primary election
- F. Support for small businesses
- G. Upcoming road construction projects
- H. Community events and activities

Section II: Responsive Programs

A. Odor issues at the Smiths Creek Landfill

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Jan. 6-7 , 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

St. Clair County Commissioners are asking for the public's patience as they work on a permanent solution to the foul odor coming from the Smiths Creek Landfill. Commission Chairman Jeff Bohm says the county has spent over a half million dollars to address the issue and that measures taken to limit the odor at the Smiths Creek Landfill are working according to plan. Last year, the landfill's bio reactor system began producing more methane gas than it could use to create electricity. Commission chairman Jeff Bohm says a temporary flare is now up and running and is burning off the excess gas. Bohm adds there has been ongoing air and water monitoring at the landfill and so far there's been no indication of a threat to public health.

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: March 30-31, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

St. Clair County commissioners have extended a rental agreement for a temporary landfill flair to help deal with the odor complaints around the Smiths Creek Landfill. The new agreement lasts through May or until a newly purchased permanent flare can be installed at the site. County Commission Chairman Jeff Bohm says the source of that additional gas has been pinpointed to a waste stream received by the

landfill from the now closed Domtar Paper Mill. He says discussions with DTE Energy are ongoing as to what should be done with the additional gas moving forward.

B. Funding for St. Clair County parks

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Jan. 20-21, 2204

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

Over \$700,000 is headed to a new county park near Algonac. The new North Channel County Park has been named the recipient of three matching grants from three state agencies totaling \$720,000 dollars. The funds will be used for everything from building a parking lot to a canoe and kayak launch. Parks Director Dennis Delor says the footprint for the park has already expanded, with the county purchasing a neighboring property that was razed and will make room for additional amenities. Delor's comments were echoed by 7th District Commissioner Dave Vandenbossche, who called it a "win-win" not just for his district, but for the entire county. The North Channel Park is located on Pointe Tremble Road on the border of Algonac and Clay Township.

Name: WSAQ News
Date: March 8, 2024

Run Time: 3 minutes
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

St. Clair County voters will be asked whether or not to approve millages for roads and parks on the August primary ballot. Commissioners Thursday March 7th considered language for a road millage renewal and a new additional parks millage for operations and maintenance. The new parks millage would be at the rate of .494 mills for four years, which is in addition to the existing millage of the same rate that was renewed by voters in 2022.

C. Port Huron Schools sinking fund

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Jan. 27-28, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

Voters in May will be asked whether or not to approve a new millage in the Port Huron Area School District. During January's meeting of the Board of Education, members okayed language for a sinking tax fund. Superintendent Theo Kerhoulas says the 2.62-mil sinking fund would be used specifically for things such as building repairs and maintenance. It cannot be used for teacher or administrator salaries. Kerhoulas adds that if the sinking fund is approved May 7th, Port Huron Schools' property tax rate will still be below the average rate in St. Clair County.

D. Upcoming city council elections

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Feb. 3-4, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

Port Huron's mayor as well as three city council members are up for election this November. Although candidates still have plenty of time to decide whether or not to seek re-election, Mayor Pauline Repp was asked if she's given any thought to another two year term. Mayor Repp says she's leaning towards running for re-election but has not fully made up her mind. The candidate filing deadline for mayor and city council is in July.

Name: WSAQ News
Date: Feb. 20, 2024

Run Time: 3 minutes
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

Port Huron Mayor Pauline Repp says she will be seeking another 2-year term for mayor. In an announcement shared with local media last night, Repp says she wishes to "see through to fruition" a variety of projects her and council have been working on over the years. Repp has been mayor of Port Huron for 14 years, serving seven consecutive two year terms. Before that, she served as Port Huron City Clerk. Her term, as well as terms for councilmembers Sherry Archibald, Terri Lamb, and Bob Mosurak all expire in November of this year. The filing deadline to run for Mayor and City Council in Port Huron is Tuesday, July 23rd.

Name: WSAQ News
Date: March 29, 2024

Run Time: 3 minutes
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

A few new names have been added to the list of hopefuls running for elected office in Port Huron this November. Current City Councilwoman, Anita Ashford has thrown her hat in the ring as a Mayoral candidate, taking on Pauline Repp who has held the position since 2009. Ashford has two more years left on her council term, so if she is unsuccessful in her bid for Mayor, she will remain on City Council. Vying for the three available seats on City Council, as of yesterday, are Barbara Payton, Julian Ruck, and Richard Carwile, with Sherry Archibald and Teri Lamb seeking reelection. Absent from that list so far is councilman Bob Mosurak whose term is up this year. Councilman Jeff Pemberton this week announced he's seeking the District 2 County Board of Commissioners seat Jorja Baldwin is leaving behind to run for state rep. In the event that Pemberton or Ashford win their elections, since their spot on council isn't up until 2026, they could go to the next highest vote-getters in the previous City Council election. If no one is found using that method, eligible city voters could then submit a letter of interest for council to consider. If not elected, Pemberton and Ashford would continue on council until their terms end in 2026.

E. Michigan's Presidential primary election

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Feb. 10-11, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

2024 is shaping up to be a busy year for local elections officials. Not only will there be four elections this year, starting with this month's Presidential Primary, but new election laws also go into effect which create a period of in person early voting for the first time in Michigan. Cyndee Jonseck is the Port Huron City Clerk and says early voting begins Saturday February 17th and continues up until election day Tuesday, February, 27th.

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Feb. 23-24, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

Election Day in Michigan is Tuesday, February, 27th but early, in-person voting is now underway. Fort Gratiot Township Clerk, Bob Buechler, says you can come into his office during normal business hours to cast your ballot in person. You can also request an absentee ballot that will be mailed to you and you can visit one of the township's three polling places on election day. Buechler reminds voters that the presidential primary on Tuesday will be different from other elections in that there are separate ballots to choose from for both Republicans and Democrats and that choosing one or the other does not register you with that party's affiliation.

Name: WSAQ News
Date: Feb. 28, 2024

Run Time: 3 minutes
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

Primary voters across Michigan handing decisive wins to President Biden and former President Trump Tuesday. In Michigan's Republican primary, former President Trump winning another landslide but Nikki Haley is vowing to stay in the race through Super Tuesday. As for Trump, he's already focusing on the general election where Michigan will once again be a crucial battleground. President Biden also won his party's nomination in Michigan, despite tens of thousands of Democrats choosing to cast their ballots as "uncommitted".

Name: WSAQ News
Date: Feb. 29, 2024

Run Time: 3 minutes
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

With Michigan's presidential primary in the rear view mirror, the national attention now shifts to 16 other states who will be holding their primaries this coming Tuesday - dubbed "super Tuesday". Although former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley has yet to win a Republican primary, over a quarter of republicans in Michigan still decided to cast a ballot for her this week. Detroit Free Press politics editor Emily Lawler says Haley brought in about 27% of the vote. On the Democratic side, about 13% of Michigan democrats decided to choose to be "uncommitted" rather than to vote for President Biden in Tuesday's primary.

F. Support for small businesses

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: Feb. 17-18, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

Calling all thumb area entrepreneurs - the Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County wants to help you. Dan Casey, CEO of the EDA, says they've recently been awarded a \$2.5 million grant that will establish the Eastern Michigan Small Business Network. Casey says they will be accepting up to 40 applicants from St. Clair, Sanilac, Huron, Lapeer, Tuscola, and Genesee counties. Each participant will receive coaching, mentoring, and up to \$7,000 in crucial support services to help their small businesses flourish and grow. Applications can be submitted on the EDA's website.

G. Upcoming road construction projects

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: March 9-10, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

A double dose of construction is slated for the Port Huron area. The Michigan Department of Transportation is planning to rebuild Huron Avenue from the Military Street Bridge to Glenwood in 2026. That's in addition to the Blue Water Bridge Plaza Expansion project that's been decades in the works, with the first phases to begin this year. Port Huron City Manager James Freed says he's concerned about the impact the pair of projects will have to local businesses. He has since established a roundtable group consisting of residents and stakeholders to put forth suggestions to city council and MDOT. Freed suggests the amount of traffic crossing the Blue Water Bridge has been on the decline for years and with the planned opening of the Gordie Howe International Bridge in the Fall of next year, Freed wonders if a Blue Water Bridge expansion will be needed at all.

Name: Blue Water Beat
Date: March 16-17, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 8 times daily 12am-12pm ROS

After decades of planning, the first phase of the Blue Water Bridge Expansion Project is set to begin this year. Some evidence of the project can already be seen right now as crews remove trees and relocate utilities in the area of Pine Grove and 10th Avenue. MDOT Senior Project Manager, Carrie Warren says a reconfiguration of the 10th and Pine Grove intersection is likely to take place this summer. Along with the intersection, other work includes work to the Scott Avenue neighborhood, erecting a sound barrier and relocating the I-94 exit ramp.

Name: WSAQ News
Date: March 12, 2024

Run Time: 3 minutes
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

Port Huron City Council has approved a \$124,000 bid to repair the Lake State Railway crossing at Pine Grove Avenue and Whipple Street. City Manager James Freed says the funds will ultimately come from the Michigan Department of Transportation's local grade crossing program. Construction must be completed by the end of May. The city also expects to rebuild the crossing at 10th Avenue under a similar type of program.

Name: WSAQ News
Date: March 20, 2024

Run Time: 1 minute
Air Time: 6:05am, 7:05am, 8:05am

Another summer of Blue Water Bridge construction is on the way. The Michigan Department of Transportation is set to close the Eastbound, or Canadian-bound, bridge starting on May 29th in order to complete maintenance that was started last year. During construction, traffic will be diverted onto the US-bound bridge, with the center lane becoming available for all directions after the midway point, and outside lanes operating in both directions. Drivers can expect similar restrictions to those that were in place last year, with wide loads limited to less than ten feet across, and the removal of dedicated lanes for busses and commuter passholders. MDOT predicts the project will be completed sometime in October.

H. Community events and activities

Name: Public Service Announcements
Date: Jan. 1 - March 31, 2024

Run Time: 30 seconds
Air Time: 12 times per day 12am-12pm ROS

The station aired public service announcements for the following community events and activities:

- Marysville Knights of Columbus youth free throw competition January 12th
- Emmett youth baseball league tool raffle at Wadhams Equipment.
- One in Christ - MLK Service Sunday, January 14th at Restoration Community Church.
- St. Clair County Parks "Tree Hugger Hike" at Columbus County Park February 10th.
- Sanborn Gratiot Memorial Home dueling pianos fundraiser Friday, March 8th.
- Knights of Columbus Ira Township Council Breakfast for Babies fundraiser February 3rd and 4th.
- Port Huron Elks Lodge Daddy-Daughter Dance Friday, February 9th
- Sanilac County Historical Village and Museum online charity auction February 21st - 29th
- First United Methodist Church in Port Huron's Festival Concert Series March 16th

- St. Clair County Community Mental Health's "Face Off for Mental Health" fundraiser hockey game on March 15th
- Marysville business council's "A Night at the Races" dinner to benefit Hot Wheels Weekend March 16th.
- Sanilac County Humane Society Pictures with the Easter Bunny Saturday March 23rd.
- Dorsey House fundraiser for Mid City Nutrition March 12th.
- Open registration for the Blue Water Ducks youth football league and cheerleading squad.
- St. Clair County Community Mental Health's "Run for Recovery" 5k run May 11th.