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CITY HALL
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Phone: 515-981-0228
Open 8:00am – 4:30pm, Monday – Friday

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FIRE AND EMS SERVICES
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Norwalk, IA 50211
Emergencies: 911
Non-emergency: 515-222-3321
Administrative: 515-981-0666

Fire Chief
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POLICE DEPARTMENT
1100 Chatham Avenue
Norwalk, IA 50211
Emergencies: 911
Non-emergency: 515-222-3321
Administrative: 515-981-0666

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Norwalk, IA 50211
Phone: 515-981-9206

Parks and Recreation Director
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Norwalk, IA 50211
Phone: 515-981-0217

Library Director
Holly Sealine
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MAYOR'S MOMENT

In the February 14, 2013 issue of the Warren Town and County newspaper, Marketa Oliver (City Manager) summarized the FY 13/14 City of Norwalk Budget. I would like to further highlight a section of her summary and talk about Per Capita General Fund Expenditures. We have taken criticism from some Norwalk residents in the past in that they feel that the City of Norwalk is not as efficient as it could be with their tax dollars.

In her article, Marketa created a graph that compared the three major cities in Warren County as well as against five other comparable cities. In both of those comparisons, Norwalk is the lowest in the amount of money spent per citizen. Therefore, it should be concluded that Norwalk is "thrifty" with its tax dollars and is still able to provide quality services for its citizens at a very reasonable cost.

Between Norwalk, Carlisle and Indianola, the respective per capita expenditures are \$442.98, \$451.52 and \$553.68. When you compare Norwalk (\$442.98) with comparable communities such as Nevada (\$472.51), Hiawatha (\$479.59), Pleasant Hill (\$526.77), Grimes (\$575.20) and North Liberty (\$590.75), the results are the same – Norwalk is the lowest.

I want to demonstrate/emphasize that the City Council, City Manager and Staff are providing the "best bang for the buck" but continue to look for ways to enhance efficiencies and reduce costs. I know that this is not the most exciting topic for discussion, but it does "sting" a bit when everyone is trying their hardest to be good stewards of our tax dollars, and yet take criticism for being too "frivolous".

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

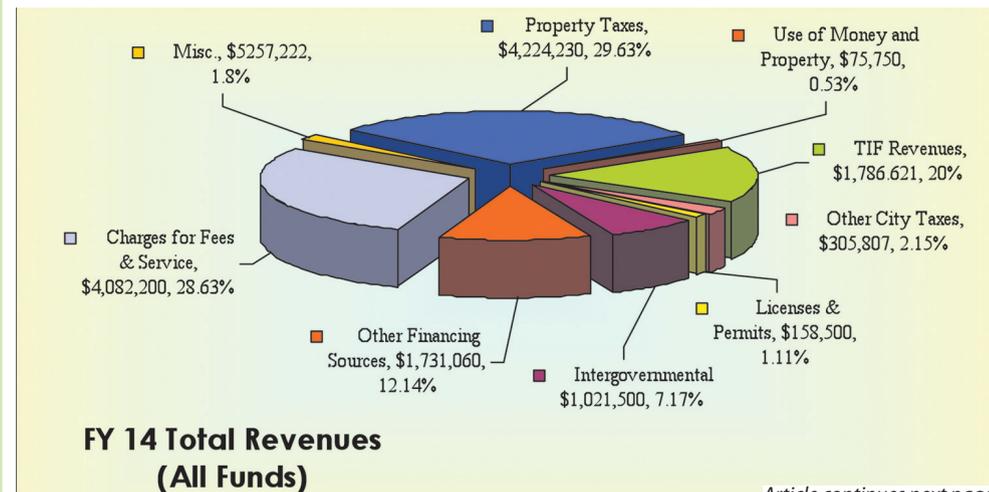


Doug Pierce,
Mayor

FY 14 BUDGET LEVY PROPOSED TO BE THE SAME

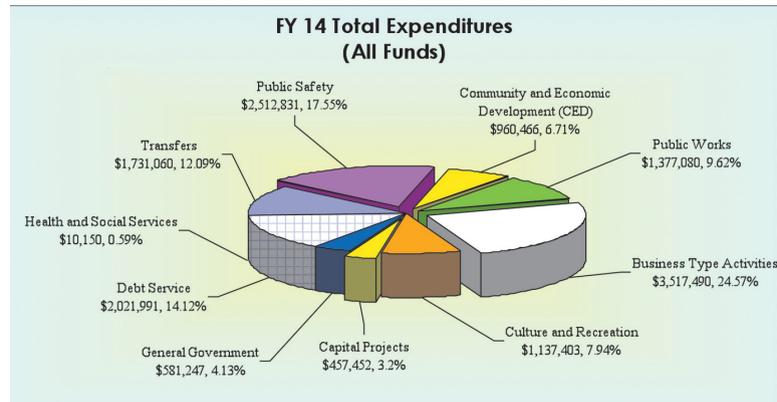
The 2013–2014 proposed budget for the City of Norwalk was recently presented to the Mayor and City Council members and the public at a special meeting. The proposed budget is also available on the City's website, www.ci.norwalk.ia.us, under "City Financial Information." The budget provides the financial plan for all City funds and activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2014. The tax levy rate is proposed to be \$15.69000 per thousand dollars of taxable valuation, which is the same as the current levy.

This budget reflects the City's priorities of maintaining strong core services of public safety and public works. The budget includes operational funding to maintain current staffing levels as well as upgrade capital equipment. It also includes funding for several capital improvement projects in the public works, parks and utilities areas and to purchase necessary capital equipment, such as motorized cots for the ambulances, computer equipment, a scanner to archive plans, etc. The following graphs show where the City's money comes from and where it goes.



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...FY 14 BUDGET LEVY PROPOSED TO BE THE SAME



The total expenditures in all funds and all categories proposed for Fiscal Year 2014 are \$14,317,170. This includes \$906,764 for capital improvements and \$438,175 for capital equipment.

CAPITAL UPDATES

This City is winding down a number of large capital projects but gearing up to work on others. The fiber project was a unique opportunity the City had to become connected and partner with the schools. This process saves our local taxpayers the cost of an entirely duplicated system. The new fiber system also accomplished another couple of challenges including that of connecting the new Public Works facility to the school as well as other City facilities and connecting the communication system for the upgraded emergency dispatch project. The project is substantially complete and the punch list has been finished.

The Westcom project is also winding down. The transition has occurred as planned and with only one major milestone left, the project should wrap up in May or June. All Police cars and Fire apparatus have added mobile data and now have access to call and map information.

Included in the FY 14 budget are projects such as seal coating County Line Road, continued support of sump pump removal, manhole rehabilitation, Lakewood lift station building, High Road water loop, meter pit maintenance/replacement, Fire hydrant replacement, water meter change out, replacement of street lights, traffic light street name project, basketball court resurfacing, adult sports field resurfacing and irrigation and the much-needed reconstruction of Sunset trail. There is also funding to begin the Sunset (Highway 28) Streetscaping effort to beautify the City's entryways, design and build an entryway sign and undertake tree replacement on Cherry Parkway and Ash Tree replacement.

The City anticipates nearly a \$35,000 reduction in health care costs for the plan year. Please note the savings was approximately \$90,000 over what we would have paid had the City not made some plan design changes. Because the health care plan year is from December to December, a portion of the savings would be realized in both FY 13 and FY 14. The City's wellness committee works on programming to educate employees on healthy lifestyle choices to reduce insurance usage and \$12,000 is budgeted for wellness programs, including funds for capital equipment.

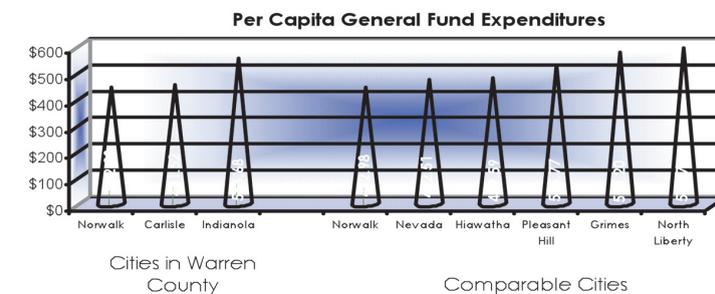
POLICY INITIATIVES

One of the major policy initiatives included in this budget is the implementation of a rental inspection program. This program would require rental properties to be inspected on a regular basis for life, health and safety issues. This program would be administered and handled through the Fire Department, who has also recently begun commercial inspections.

The budget has funding to begin a focused beautification effort and do some planning for community aesthetic enhancement along our entryways and along the City's main transportation corridor.

BENCHMARKING

City staff members are continually looking for ways to enhance efficiency and reduce costs. Following is a graph benchmarking Norwalk's budgeted General Fund expenditures for FY 13 compared to those of surrounding and comparable communities.



TAX RATE/RESIDENTIAL ROLLBACK

The projected tax rate is \$15.69000 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. This rate is the same as last year. Combined with the residential rollback rate of 52.8166%, the average homeowner in Norwalk will pay a total of \$1,458.90 in City property taxes, which is \$36.83 above the 2013 amount of \$1,421.57. The stability of the City levy rate and the amount of taxes a property owner will actually pay is a primary objective in our budgeting. With the City property taxes of \$1,458.90, this means that for approximately \$121 per month, the citizens and visitors of Norwalk receive 24 hour Police and Fire protection; emergency medical services; renovated recreational facilities and additional parks programming; road repair and reconstruction; utility assistance for those in need; capital projects upgrading the infrastructure they use every day; snow removal; and a host of other services and protections.

The most common question received about the City's budget is a misconception that the City can use any of its funds for any project it wishes. The opposite is actually the reality. Most of the City's funds are "restricted" and can be used only for specific purposes. The City's "General Fund" is the fund that is the largest, unrestricted fund and supports the City's public safety and planning operations.

If you have questions about the City's proposed budget, please do not hesitate to contact the City Manager, Marketa Oliver or the City Clerk, Jeff Rosien at 981-0228.

