



2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

Key accomplishments and future goals and priorities



I would like to start by thanking all of our city personnel and elected officials for working together to serve the residents of Rockwood in the best way possible for the past year. These accomplishments are just a small testament to what we can do as a team to better our community. I would also like to personally thank our staff who work our day-to-day operations within the city, and I want the residents to know that this city could not operate without their dedicated work and diligence. Your work is appreciated and acknowledged.

- Savings - \$260,000 in savings (e.g. \$120,000 budgeted savings from dispatch consolidation; \$90,000 changes in insurance/will be seen in 2025; \$10,000 Stevens's Disposal refund ; \$20,000 Operation Services Contract Negotiation; \$20,000 Redistribution of duties savings)
- Instituted open/transparent communication lines to ensure all city personnel have clear picture of goals:

- Implemented bi-weekly city department head meetings for updates and goal-oriented conversations
- Make sure every council meeting is recorded live and shared on a website with the community
- Given city projects/tasks to council members who give their updates at the meetings
- Updating information sharing (on-going) to our residents through digital/print methods, including active postings of all applicable information for Residents on social media and city websites.
- Hired and executed a contract for our new City Administrator
- Executed a contract for our Police Chief
- Executed a contract for our DPW Team
- Executed a contract for our City Assessor
- Opened the Police contract in good faith and agreed to positive changes (tremendous morale booster)
- Made numerous appointments and professional service decisions:
 - 2 new city council members (Jeremy Joquan and Aimee Mercure)
 - New Planning commission personnel
 - New Board of Review personnel
 - Numerous appointments to the Housing Commission
 - Hired new police officer
 - Hired new fire personnel
 - Wage reviews for our Water Dept, Building Dept, Community Center personnel and Fire Chief
 - Other appointments include: 33rd District Court, DCC/DMA
 - Continuing training for City Administrator and Police/Fire, Treasurer
- Training for newly elected officials:
 - MML virtual Newly Elected Officials Training
 - Regularly incorporated training when offered
- Identifying a clear strategy for addressing the immediate needs of our city:
 - Waste Water Treatment Plant (updates, aging infrastructure, money saving tactics)
 - Capital improvement projects for our water and sewer systems
 - Public Presentation on water billing and associated finances (i.e. short falls)

- Road projects (we have been awarded \$750,000 for road projects through HUD and are waiting for the money to be released to the city; \$150,000 awarded through MDOT TEDF for Olmstead road project)
- Creating a team culture and positive morale building within city personnel:
 - Holiday celebrations (including our city council team members)
 - Cross city BBQ's with Gibraltar
 - Birthday acknowledgments of city employees
 - Memorial Day and Christmas festivities
- City survey created to engage residents on their opinions/needs within the city (Thank you Councilwoman Grzywacz and Councilman Joaquin)
 - Results shared with the council and discussed
- Review of procedures/policies for enhancement/streamline purposes:
 - New Purchasing Policy
 - Streamlined approach for Electronic Payment options (Approved new ACH/EFT policy)
 - New form created to be submitted by Dept heads to create more budget accountability through a fund verification process on purchases.
- Procured new election equipment and ran successful elections/early voting (Thank you Clerk Colleen Oney)
- Procured new laptop for city clerk to assist with elections
- Acquisition of a new Senior bus with CDBG grant funds which provides transportation for our residents
- New LED lighting in the community center (DTE donated lights at no cost)
- Updated the International Property Maintenance codes; adopted by council
- Updated our outdated Building Fee schedule (Thank You Tara and Amy)
- Got all council members city email addresses
- Finished IT server updates
- Budget adopted
 - Public presentation was discussed along with future objectives, along with an overview of revenues, expenditures, and the proposed budget itself.
- Partnered with Gibraltar to engage in a combined dispatch (which was unsustainable) center with a 3-year contract. The savings to our city was approx. \$360,000 over the life of the agreement.

- Board of Representatives for Dispatch created, with 2 seats belonging to Rockwood for future input/decisions.
- Reevaluated the community center fee schedule for better pricing and rentals (Thank you Nataliya Musick).
 - Raise provided for part-time employees.
- Approved DPW support by hiring part time/seasonal employees.
- Brought back the Memorial Day parade along with Memorial Day festivities in the park (Helicopter rides, food truck vendors, classic cars, Veterans presentation at memorial).
- Created Rockwood's first free Veterans Day breakfast (Free to all Vets and spouses)
- Updated new hours of operation for the city hall after dispatch exit, including one day with later hours to accommodate people who work later.
- Approved the sale of DPW old dump truck with sealed bid process
- Approved the sale of the old senior van with sealed bid process
- Procured a new permanent "City Christmas Tree" planted in Mercure Park
- Replaced the memorial trees/plaques destroyed in Mercure Park in a timely fashion
- Approved the creation of a Beautification Committee
- Outside of the Community Center was decorated by the Beautification Committee for Christmas (Thank you Councilwoman Grzywacz for organizing).
- Traffic Study/Investigation into possible changes at the Woodruff/Fort St. intersection (on-going)
- Upgrades for the Police Dept including: In-car camera's, 2 laptop computers, video server for cameras within the city; (\$40,000 Bryne Grant through DCC; Thanks, Chief Randy Krauss)
- Upgrades for the Fire Dept including: updated technology on the trucks, was awarded a \$45,000 hose grant, and the new utility Truck was put into service (Thanks Chief Dan Mercure)
- Approved transfers of fund money to be invested into different accounts with a higher yielding percentage/Joined MI Class investment Fund for better investment opportunities (Thanks Treasurer McCoy)
- Community Partnerships
 - Made renewed partnerships with new mayors from our neighboring cities (Gibraltar/Flat Rock/Brownstown), future projects together are anticipated.
 - Made renewed partnership with new plant manager for Silica and they have already partnered with our DPW team on a clean-up project on Huron River Drive.
 - Strengthening relationships with local Rotary and Lions clubs

- Met with many state and county officials to try to secure funding for infrastructure and capital improvement projects.
- Had an updated appraisal on the 60 acres of vacant property at Woodruff/Fort St. to market it better.
- Worked with local businesses to increase the “optics” of our beautiful city (i.e., New curbs, paint, exterior work at the Sav A Lot complex; exterior work at other businesses’).



FORWARD LOOKING GOALS (2025 AND BEYOND):

- 1). Infrastructure improvements (i.e. water/sewer/roads, WWTP upgrades, HVAC upgrades/Parks)
- 2). Bring more tax revenue/business to the city (selling vacant land for tax revenue)
- 3). Procedure/policy updates and financial planning (streamlining services/spending, inventory purchasing, etc)
- 4). Funding for a new Fire Engine
- 5). Implementing new insurance coverage for retirees
- 6). New Master Plan