2018 IN REVIEW

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM ADMINISTRATION

2018–2022 Strategic Plan

From April–July 2018, the River Falls City Council and senior management team engaged in a strategic planning process to set the course for guiding City work plans and resources for the next four years. On July 24, 2018, the City Council passed the 2018–2022 Strategic Plan, the City’s second adopted strategic plan.

The four strategic priorities of the plan are:
• Connected Community
• Economic Vitality
• Financial Sustainability
• Quality Municipal Services

The plan includes strategic initiatives that support each goal, specific key outcome indicators with measures and targets tied directly to the strategic initiatives. The list of goals, initiatives, and key outcome indicators are included on the next page.

Also included with the plan were the City’s values, vision and mission statements.

New Police Station

The City moved forward with the acquisition of the former River Falls Journal Building at 2815 Prairie Drive in Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park that will be renovated to become the new River Falls Police Station. The building was purchased for $1.5 million with approximately $3 million planned for the renovation of the building. The purchase will allow the Police to move into the building sooner and at a substantially reduced cost than if a new building were constructed. The new Police Station is projected to be completed by the end of 2020.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CITY CLERK

2018 Elections
FIVE ELECTIONS WERE HELD IN 2018, SPECIAL, SPRING PRIMARY, SPRING ELECTION, PARTISAN PRIMARY AND GENERAL ELECTION. NEW VOTING EQUIPMENT WAS PROVIDED BY ELECTION SYSTEMS & SOFTWARE. EACH POLLING LOCATION RECEIVED ONE DS200, THE TABULAR AND ONE EXPRESSVOTE, THE TOUCH SCREEN ADA COMPLIANT DEVICE. THE NEW VOTING EQUIPMENT BEGAN USE IN FEBRUARY 2018. CLERK STAFF SPENT A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME TRAINING AND DEVELOPING USER MANUALS FOR ELECTION WORKERS. IN FEBRUARY 2018, THE HOFFMAN PARK STORM SHELTER BEGAN USE AS A POLLING LOCATION IN LIEU OF MEYER MIDDLE SCHOOL. SOON AFTER IMPLEMENTATION IT WAS DETERMINED HOFFMAN PARK STORM SHELTER WAS NOT A SUITABLE LOCATION. CLERK STAFF SOUGHT OTHER OPTIONS AND MADE ADJUSTMENT WHICH LED TO MOVING DISTRICT 1, WARD 5 FROM CITY HALL TO THE LIBRARY ALLOWING DISTRICT 3 VOTERS TO USE CITY HALL AS THE NEW LOCATION.

Organizational Accomplishments
AMY WHITE BEGAN SUPERVISING THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STAFF IN JUNE 2018. ADDING STAFF TO HER TEAM ALLOWED FOR CROSS TRAINING BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS. ELLEN FREDRICH AND JACKIE SAHNOW BEGAN TRAINING IN MUNICIPAL COURT. JACKIE SAHNOW BEGAN TRAINING IN UTILITY PAYMENT PROCESSING. WENDY TOKHEIM HAS BEEN TRAINED IN CITY LICENSING AND WILL BEGIN ELECTIONS TRAINING IN 2019. THIS CROSS TRAINING HAS ALLOWED A MORE DIVERSE AND COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE TO OUR CUSTOMERS.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM COMMUNICATIONS

The following services were provided to departments:

- Completed recruitment video for Human Resources
- Completed State of the City video
- Kinni Corridor Project Engagement including marketing and open houses
- Received American Planning Association-Wisconsin Innovations in Planning Award, along with Buddy Lucero for Kinni Corridor Project community engagement
- Provided promotional support for the River Falls Dog Park opening
- Assisted in organizing the first three P3 planning meetings
- Worked with IT on year-long campaign to successfully dissolve RFC-TV
- Assisted with Special Events
- Facebook posting
HIGHLIGHTS FROM COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The following projects were completed:

- Kinni Corridor Plan was approved by Council January 2019. Nonprofit organization is in development to implement the plan.
- Received American Planning Association-Wisconsin Innovations in Planning Award for Kinni Corridor Project community engagement.
- City Council approved a Cooperative Boundary Agreement with the Town of Kinnickinnic in January 2019.
- Bike/Ped Planning - received WisDOT grant for 2021 Plan.
- Large Development Planning - the Depot & City Station; DeSanctis Park; 700 S Main; 1300 S Main; Sterling Ponds Rentals.
- Wayfinding Plan - completed, approved, and Phase 1 will be implemented in 2019.
- Rental Inspections - eliminated the City’s rental inspection program, based on State legislation.
- Records Management - continued progress, scanning paper files, and organizing/cleaning electronic files.
- Code Enforcement - began limited proactive code enforcement.

River Falls Dog Park

In June, City Council approved construction of the River Falls Dog Park located on County Road FF, approximately three miles from downtown and .75 miles from South Main Street. The 16-acre site includes a parking lot for 20 vehicles, fenced areas for large and small dogs, picnic tables, dog waste stations, and a Porta Potty. The park will be free for City residents with a current dog license; non-resident fees are $25 per year.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM EMS

- **New Full Time Employees:** The EMS department welcomed two new full-time paramedics during 2018, Tommy Ali and Crystal Thome. Both employees were also enrolled in, and completed, initial critical care education in 2018.

- **Medical Director:** The EMS department continues to benefit from the services of our Operational Medical Director (OMD), Dr. Joey Duren. Dr. Duren is an asset to this department and continues to be a supportive advocate of the staff and patients.

- **Allina Partnership:** A support services agreement was entered with Allina Health EMS in 2018. This agreement provides for a partnership between our two agencies and provides various services to our department. These services include, but are not limited to: data analysis, protocols, EMS education, chaplaincy, etc.

- **Equipment:** A new secure medication vending machine setup was acquired that allows medications to be accurately tracked and stored in conformance with appropriate regulations.

- **Scheduling:** Staffing levels were reduced during the non-peak periods of the day. One less ambulance is now staffed between the hours of midnight until 6:00am. This reduction should result in a $25,000 +/- cost avoidance annually.

- **New Fleet Rotation:** A new fleet management plan was put into place to balance mileage accruals and increase vehicle longevity...while also decreasing the fleet by one ambulance over time.

- **EMS Week:** A week of presenting safety and ambulance tours to each 3rd grade student in River Falls and Prescott, as well as an appreciation cookout for EMS staff.

- **Community Outreach:** Continual staff efforts to ensure interaction with various community groups and organizations. Efforts include CPR and First Aid education as well as emergency preparedness planning.

- **Billing Rates:** Billing rates were increased in 2018 to maximize revenue.

- **Member Accomplishments:** Two part time employees advanced their certification from EMT to paramedic and have remained with the department as part time paramedics.

- **Representation and Participation:** Continual staff participation with various RFAH committees, regional advisory groups, Pierce and St. Croix County committees and City workgroups.

- **Training:** Held member training one night every month, multiple American Heart Association classes and implemented a monthly competency verification program.
EMS Calls by Year: During 2018, River Falls EMS responded to 2,089 calls for service. The majority of EMS responses occur within the City at nursing homes, assisted living facilities, UWRF campus, and River Falls Hospital are the biggest users of our department within the city. EMS responded to 1,410 calls within the City of River of Falls in 2018. There were 306 responses to township calls in 2018.

Demand Summary: Our busiest service periods are between 8 a.m. and midnight, with our peak demand period occurring from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m.

Response Times: Average dispatch to enroute time for all calls in 2018 was 1 minute 53 seconds. Our average travel time in 2018 to an incident once an ambulance goes enroute is 5.04 minutes. This means that the average time it takes from an ambulance being dispatched, until the time that it arrives on scene, is less than 8 minutes. This is within industry accepted standards.

Revenue: Revenue received to date for 2018 is $1,458,264.07.
In 2018, the City Council approved a biennial budget for the City of River Falls. The budget covers a two-year fiscal period, 2019 through 2020. The five-year fiscal plan and established fiscal policies serve as the foundation for the City’s financial planning and control. The biennial budget is the presentation of the projected revenues and expenses for the fiscal year beginning January 1 and ending December 31. All City departments were required to submit departmental budget requests in June of 2018 to be reviewed for inclusion into the biennial budget.

The 2019-20 budget totals $91,355,642 which is an increase of 10 percent from the 2017-2018 budget of $82,985,116. Much of this increase is related to capital projects, such as the Glen Park improvements and the upgrade of the Division Street-Highway 35 intersection.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM FINANCE

2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan
The CIP proposes funding projects with a cost of $44,725,575 over the next five years. Of this amount, 24 percent is funded by user-based fees including electric, water, wastewater, and storm water; five percent is funded by the State of Wisconsin, and 30 percent is expected to be paid through the issuance of debt. The tax levy is set at $1,680,722 or four percent of the total CIP. Some major CIP expenditures included in the CIP include the Glen Park improvements, the Community Signage program, and the North SewerInterceptor rerouting and rehabilitation.

Debt Issuance for City Projects
In 2018, the City issued two major bonds for ongoing City projects. The Glen Park renovation had a $3,460,000 General Obligation Bond issued to be paid back over the course of the next 15 years at an interest rate of three percent annually. Additionally, the City bonded the Electric Substation for $2,500,000 in Electric System Revenue Bonds to be paid back over the course of the next 10 years at three percent annual interest. By issuing bonds for these projects, the City can move the projects forward and provide residents with improved recreation and utility services that can be utilized sooner than if the City paid for these projects directly with City funds.

TID 13&14 Creation
Tax Increment District (TID) 13 and 14 were created in 2018 to continue development in Whitetail Ridge Corporate Park and the Depot location north of City Hall. The creation of the TIDs include the costs and implementation for planned projects within the district, including improvements to infrastructure. Other possible project costs include land acquisition and development incentives.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM FIRE

Membership
In 2018, there were 44 paid on call members and one full time Chief.

2018 Firefighter of the Year
Justin Wilson, a five year veteran, was named 2018 Firefighter of the Year.

Fire Calls
In 2018, there were 278 calls compared with 253 in 2017. Fifty-nine percent of the calls were within the city limits.

Partnerships
In 2018, the Rural Association (comprised of townships Clifton, Kinnickinnic, Pleasant Valley, River Falls and Troy, contributed $293,788 (35 percent) to the department’s budget.

Training
Training is held every Monday except for holidays.

Safety and Inspections
The department has three inspectors. During 2018, there were over properties inspected. There were at least 100 meetings pertaining to construction projects.

Public Education
RFFD was out educating the community on numerous occasions through tours, visits to schools, participation in recreation programs, appearances during community events and much more.

Special Events
The annual Open House was held on September 24. The Family Picnic was held on July 18. Members of the Department participated in the 911 Memorial Emergency Vehicle Salute that crossed the I-94 Bridge meant to remember victims of 911.

Future Department Goals
Future goals include developing short and long-term strategic/work plans and researching funding opportunities.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM HR

Staffing and Workforce Planning
Partnering with our communications team, we created and introduced a new recruitment video for the employment website.

In 2018, 72 new hires and 141 terminations were processed. Terminations processed were exceptionally high in 2018 due to moving Election Workers pay process to accounts payable. These numbers also include seasonal, temporary and paid on-call volunteers in addition to regular full-time and part-time employees.

Recruitments: Calendar year comparison for total job postings and number of applicants per posting.

Training and Development
The City is committed to a program of staff development based on a goal of creating a climate of and opportunities for employee growth which will benefit the City and the individual.

Human Resources coordinates some compliance and best practice training for all employees. Our safety consultant manages safety/risk management compliance and best practice training. Specific departments such as Police, EMS, Fire, Utilities, and Public Works manage other compliance and license required trainings within their respective departments.

The City target for training and development activities as a percentage of total hours is .5% annually or 10.5 hours per year per full-time employee. This goal was met for 2018.

Major Accomplishments
Records Management: A goal for Human Resources was to move all personnel files from paper files into the scanned Laserfiche system. Working with the consultant, we came up with best practice records management automated workflow for River Falls. This includes the personnel file, payroll file, benefit file and medical files
Phase 1: Active regular status employee files (Completed in 2018)
Phase 2: Review feasibility of moving other files into Laserfiche (Workers Compensation/FMLA, Safety/Risk Management records and other non-regular employee files)

Challenges
Demographic changes: Population changes will have a mounting impact on many aspects of employment and HR practices. These changes include the aging workforce, different generations working together, the nature of family and parental roles, and increased cultural diversity.
Succession Planning: The City has several long-time employees that will be able to retire in the next 1 to 5 years so succession planning will be crucial to our organization.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LIBRARY

2018 Highlights
We welcomed authors David Housewright, Kate Moore, Lisa Jewell, Jason Mott, Karen Robards, Susan Wiggs, Jen Mann, Allen Eskins, William Kent Krueger, Kyle Mills, and others, thanks, in part, to a strong relationship with Chapter2Books in Hudson.

In August, Author Michael Perry entertained audiences at Rush River Brewing. More than 300 community members were in attendance.

A nationally-touring exhibit of photography, Awkward Family Photos, showed in the gallery throughout the summer thanks, in part, to support from the River Falls Library Foundation.

Library staff hosted more than 500 community programs in 2018. More than 235 were for children. More than 50 were for teens and more than 215 were for adults. There were 900+ local youth who were served by our 2019 summer reading program, Libraries Rock.

In 2018, the River Falls Public Library’s Kleinpell Gallery welcomed nearly 9,000 visitors to 10 diverse exhibits designed with the community’s interests and talents in mind.

By the Numbers
- Books and non-print material check-out 286,219
- Patron cards issued 1,095
- Total new materials added 5,081
- Total items loaned to MORE Libraries 43,568
- Total teen program offerings 51
- Total children’s program offerings 257
- Class visits (groups to the library/outreach) 151+
- Summer Reading Program participants 906
- Total youth program attendance 5,579
- Public computer users 21,429
- Meeting room uses 1,254
- Gallery Visitors 8,852
- Door count 173,577
- Volunteer hours 1,811
- Number of adult programs 217
- Total adult program attendance 4,457

Unmet Needs
Parking is still an issue. Updates to library spaces, carpet, paint, and furniture are needed. The Library Director and staff are researching funding possibilities.

2019 Goals
Develop efficiencies in processes and use of staff time to improve quality of collections and services as well as open up staff time for community engagement.
Projects:

- **Glen Park Pavilion Project**: Contract Awarded by the City Council on April 10 to Ross Associates in the amount of $1,639,000. Construction began after Labor Day. Completion expected in fall 2019.

- **Glen Park Renovation Project**: Approval of preliminary plans and final design services for additional park renovations were authorized by the City Council on April 10. Proposals for furnishing splash pad equipment were presented to the Park Board on September 19 where Vortex was chosen as the equipment supplier. A final review of other park renovations was held between staff and the designers on December 19. Completion expected in Fall 2019.

- **North Interceptor Sewer Project**: A Relocation Order was re-adopted by the City Council on December 12, 2017. Appraisals to support offers to property owners regarding necessary easements were conducted. A meeting to discuss recommended compensation was held between City staff and our land acquisition consultant on April 18. Offer letters have gone out and property acquisitions were completed with four property owners. Property acquisitions remain to be completed for three properties. Surveying for the North Interceptor sewer extension project was completed in December and a P.O. was issued for final design.

- **Paulson Road Water & Sewer Extension Plans**: This project includes water main looping to Sterling Ponds corporate park along with sewer lines, curb, gutter, and trail along Paulson Road. Staff worked with SEH to complete final design work.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM OPERATIONS

- **STH 35/CTH M Jug Handle:** WisDOT continues with preliminary design of this project slated for construction in 2020 or 2021. On April 17, City staff and other local officials met with WisDOT and their consultant to review preliminary plans for the project and address questions on various issues. The City is funding acquisition of additional right-of-way needed to implement the project. The City Council adopted a Relocation Order on May 8. Offers have been made for two properties affected by the work.

- **STH 29, CTH FF to Cemetery Road, Pavement Replacement/Reconstruct:** Staff continues to work with WisDOT regarding plans for this project. Four staff members met with WisDOT staff on March 9 to discuss WisDOT stance regarding this segment of road. City staff has asked that STH 29/35 within the Corporate boundary be designed as a ¾ mile transitionary roadway designed with traffic calming measures to achieve a 45-mph speed. Furthermore, the City has provided conceptual drawings to WisDOT after being encouraged to do so; and offered $1M or more possible funding for the project. Staff’s meeting did not result in any significant change from WisDOT’s approach other than a commitment from them to include traffic calming features approaching Cemetery Road where a current 45 mph speed zone exists in an effort to influence slower speeds. The existing 55 mph portion of this road will be rebuilt and designed to operate at 55mph. Staff compiled outline of communications between City and WisDOT regarding this project beginning in May 2014.

- **STH 29/35 CTH FF Intersection:** City staff has been working with WisDot to come up with solutions to this intersection.

- **Official Map Update:** Staff worked with Community Development in identifying Official Map changes.

- Numerous other street projects, maintenance, presentations and trainings.

- **Presentations:** Gave 8-10 presentations on GIS, storm water, and other services to various community and campus groups. Presented to 8th Grade Leadership River Falls group. Had third Annual Public Works Awareness Week held for all River Falls 2nd Graders.
**Safe Community**

River Falls remains a safe community; in 2018 River Falls experienced a 12 percent decrease in Group A crimes (i.e. murder, robbery, assault, arson, etc.) and a six percent increase in Group B crimes (i.e. DWI, disorderly conduct, trespassing, etc.). It is important to note, since 2014 Group A crimes have been reduced by 12 percent and Group B by six percent.

**Honor Guard**

Officers of the River Falls Police Department worked together to form an Honor Guard. The officers selected for the Honor Guard attended training and helped design their uniform. They marched in the Memorial Day Parade, River Falls Days Parade, and participated in the St. Croix Valley Law Enforcement Officer’s Memorial Service. The Honor Guard also presented colors at a City Council meeting and high school football game. They also were honored to serve in the December 27 memorial service for retired patrol officer and investigator Dennis Kreuziger, who served our department from 1992 to 2006.

**2018 Officer of the Year**

Officer Christopher Kober has been named the Officer of the Year for 2018. Officer Kober has been with the department since 2011 and is currently assigned to the patrol division. He is a field training officer, Glock armorer, tactical fitness instructor and is also a member of our uniform and equipment committee. Officer Kober goes above and beyond what is expected. He quickly answers calls, never complains about call load, and does more than his fair share. He is always willing to assist on calls without taking over.

**Campaigns/Speed Enforcement**

In 2018, we continued to participate in the national Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign. The campaign dates were August 18-September 4 and December 14-January 1, 2019. The Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign is intended to help reduce the number of impaired drivers on the roads and reduce alcohol related crashes causing injury or death.

The police department deploys two speed monitoring awareness radar trailers that are used to check that vehicles are complying with the posted speed limits. The speed trailers are deployed between the months of April and November, weather permitting. Listed below you can find the results (all locations are 25 MPH posted limit except Wasson Lane).
School Resource Officers
Officers Chris Gottfredsen and Bryan Jensen serve the community as the school resource officers (SROs). Their main priority during the school year is the safety and security of students and staff to ensure a desirable learning environment. Besides dealing with traditional law enforcement issues during the school day, they continue to serve in a proactive manner. Building relationships with students and dealing with potential problems at early-stages they work to minimize criminal activity. This year, the SROs gave numerous presentations around the school district.

Community Policing Specialists
In 2018, Officers Paul Jensen and Elizabeth Posel served as the department’s Community Policing Specialists (CPS). They have a wide range of responsibilities including parking enforcement, animal complaints, abandoned vehicles, alcohol compliance, business liaison, special event coordinator, social media analyst, along with many other duties. Both officers worked to coordinate events that help officers interact with the community.

Parking Enforcement
Parking enforcement within the city is an ongoing important function of the police department. The Community Policing Specialist, (CPS), is the lead officer overseen by the Deputy Chief. Patrol officers, reserve officers, and the CPS provide most of the enforcement. The CPS manages the parking citation using the contracted parking management system. When available, the CPS manages parking citation issues that need to be resolved.

St. Croix Valley Drug Task Force
The River Falls Police Department continued its participation with the St. Croix Valley Drug Task Force. Investigator Ryan Miller was assigned to the unit in 2018. Throughout 2018, the St. Croix County Drug Task Force conducted operations within the city of River Falls and surrounding communities combating the trafficking, sale, and distribution of narcotics. The task force conducts narcotic-related investigations throughout Pierce, St. Croix, Polk counties, and at times, coordinates with Twin Cities Metro agencies.
**Powerplant Substation Project**
The Powerplant Substation Project was online, on-time, under budget and completed in 2018. This project also included significant coordination with other utility companies including WPPI Energy, Xcel Energy, DairyLand Power, as well as many internal departments. The Powerplant Substation had a transformer removed and it is being rebuilt for the South Fork Substation.

**2018 Electric Projects**
- Golfview Area Cable replacement
- Aldi project completed
- Culvers project completed
- Anchor Paper Company completed
- River Falls High School plan review
- Greenwood Elementary School plan review
- Sterling Ponds Corporate Park 1st Addition
- Power Plant project completed
- Winter Street Feed II extension started

**SCADA Project**
SCADA is a control system that monitors and controls our Electric, Water, and Wastewater systems. RFMU’s SCADA system has many data collecting nodes throughout our infrastructure. These nodes allow us to control our system remotely and collect data that aids in day-to-day operations.

Below are the 2018 updates for SCADA:
- Electric: Installation of the fiber network and software for the SCADA in the substations.
- Water: New operating system and master control installed. The programmable logic controllers are at remote sites and the radios for communication are connected to the master control. There is also a callout system with a cellular backup and remote access through a tablet.
- Wastewater: New operating platform with new controls for influent wet well. There is an intrinsically safe barrier for influent wet well and a callout system with cellular backup.

**Water Utility Business Plan**
The Water Utility Business Plan is a guide to help RFMU toward defining its water utility goals, strategies and identifying steps needed to work toward achieving those goals and strategies. It was completed in 2018.
**HIGHLIGHTS FROM RFMU**

**Other Items:**
- Well #5 coliform issue resolved
- Spring and fall hydrant flushing completed
- Wet dive completed on Sycamore water tower
- Manhole rehabilitation project completed fall of 2018
- Biosolids yielded positive result with energy savings
- Began sludge ditch demolition with completion scheduled in spring 2019
- Televised 15,000 feet of sewer
- Lift stations were cleaned
- Utility Advisory Board supported a Silver Level Sponsorship of $55,000 for light industrial and manufacturing space at the St. Croix Valley Business Innovation Center
- Craig Culver was the keynote speaker at the 5th Annual RFMU Corporate Leaders Breakfast
- At WPPI Energy’s Members Awards Program and Annual Meeting, Electric Operations Superintendent Wayne Silverling, won the shining star award; Utility Director Kevin Westhuis won the Volunteer Power Award and Conservation and Efficiency Coordinator Mike Noreen won the Individual Achievement Award.

**Focus on Energy**
- RFMU customers received a total of $169,625 from Focus on Energy
- RFMU contributed $53,000 to participate in the Focus on Energy programs
- Over 1,017,979 kWh was attributed to the first-year energy savings lowering customers utility bills
- $3 came back into the community for every $1 sent out

**Landlord Connections**
Landlord Connections is a successful quarterly series program for the City’s landlords. This meeting provides up-to-date rental law information and networking opportunities with fellow landlords and City staff. Each meeting has round table discussions and keynote speakers reviewing important topics in the rental industry.

In 2017, Management Analyst Fellow Brandt Johnson applied for the American Public Power Association (APPA) Demonstration of Energy & Efficiency Development (DEED) program grant. RFMU was awarded the $4,000 grant in late 2017. This grant has been used for the 2018 Landlord Connections meetings and provided an opportunity for Utility Program Coordinator Rhonda Davison to speak on RFMU’s various outreach programs at the 2018 APPA Customer Connect Conference in Orlando.