



Special points of interest:

- Possible Water Rate Increase.
- Village Retreat Update.
- Betsy Drive Annexation Meeting.
- New Elizabeth Chamber Board of Directors

Check out our new web-site!

http://www.villageofelizabethil.com

DOLLAR GENERAL

The Village is also organizing a "list your house rental program"

Village of Elizabeth Newsletter

Michael Dittmar, President

Message from the Mayor

Sorry it has taken so long to write a newsletter. We have been very busy the last six-months.

First, I would like to thank Diane Sipiera and Pat Tierney for their work as the Elizabeth Chamber President and Vice President. Their hard work is one of the reasons our downtown has become busier. We will miss their leadership. Congratulations to Merri Sevey the new Chamber President and good luck!

In case you have not noticed, it is OFFICIAL...the Dollar General is breaking ground in Elizabeth. I hear they are planning on an October 1st open date. Hopefully, the rain will not slow them down too much. We have many people to thank for our town's Dollar General. First, the biggest thanks goes to Sharon Pepin and her staff at Community Funding and Planning for working over two years to get Dollar General to come to Elizabeth. Another big thanks goes to Chris Allendorf and all of the other people that helped at Jo Carroll Energy to close the deal. Thank you very much! As I reported in the last Newsletter, the Village did give a TIF incentive of \$250,000 to Dollar General. Further proof the TIF district is an important economic development tool.

The budget for FY 2015-2016 has been completed and will be officially passed on July 22nd at

the regular Board meeting. The budget is almost perfectly balanced, with a little room on the positive side. There are some important decisions the Village Board will be considering before passing it on the 22nd. One such consideration budgeted for this year, is building a new salt shed behind the Municipal Building/school, which would continue to consolidate all our operations at one location. Also, the Village has saved over \$100,000 in Motor Fuel Tax money for the last 5 years. That allows us to start seal coating as many streets as possible this year. Hopefully this fall, public bathrooms will be added to the exterior of the Community Building. Finally, we will be fixing the retaining wall by the square parking lot and Law-Jones, plus many other infrastructural odds and ends.

The Village is pleased to announce that we just finished a major repair at the Sewer Plant by replacing a weir. The cost was \$20,000 and we paid for it through our sewer savings. It replaced a weir that was 30 years old. The new steel weir should also have a lifespan of 30 years.

The Village had their bi-annual Retreat in June. Many good ideas came from it. Please read on for more information.

I have talked to FS and asked about their gas station. The

current plan is to start in the spring of 2016.

Sometime in August we will be starting the emergency sewer repair work on Myrtle Street near The Holy Mackerel. We have a collapsing sewer pipe that is causing one of the bumps on Route 20. The project will block that side of Myrtle Street for approximately 4-6 weeks. We are sorry for the inconvenience, but it has to be done.

Speaking of Highway 20, as soon as Springfield figures out the state budget, we will get Representative Stewart here for some office hours so we can discuss the state of Highway 20. A representative from the Village attended an IDOT meeting and was told that Elizabeth is a priority, but with the state you never know.

The Village is also organizing a "list your house rental program" for the Village and TCEDA web-pages. Many of the new people coming to Thomson Prison will be looking for rental properties. The Village is collecting info for houses in Elizabeth whose owners may be interested in renting their property. We will then list them on our (and TCEDA's) web-page. Please contact the Village, if interested.

As always, my door is open so please don't hesitate to call for any reason.

Michael Dittmar



**HAPPY RETIREMENT
"BOMMER"**

Public Works Report

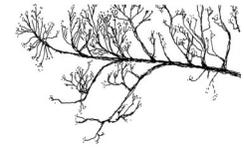
The Village would like to thank Ron Temperly for his years of service to the Village. "Bommer" officially retired July 1st. Bommer will be sticking around in a part-time capacity. Congratulations to James Mensendike who took over as Public Works Superintendent.

The Village is also pleased to welcome Justin Bauer as the new Public Works Employee.



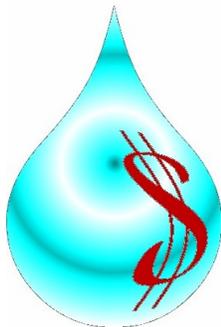
A couple of notes...please don't put your garbage out too early, as cats and other animals are getting into it and causing a mess. Also, please help keep sidewalks clear by maintaining trees that obstruct people walking through.

Just a reminder...with all the storms we have been having, the Village does a tree debris pick-up every Monday morning.



Please stack limbs and other tree debris out by the street and we will pick it up. We ask that the limbs be in 4 foot sections or less and nicely tied up, if possible. Smaller debris needs to be in a bio-degradable bag. Major piles or large pieces are the responsibility of the home owner.

The Bad News—Water Fund Possible Rate Increase.



We have mentioned several times in the last couple of years that the water fund is not paying for itself and is in deficit. As you might remember, the Village has raised water rates 2% the last two years to try and catch up. The Village Board is looking at a 5% increase this year to finally balance it. No one wants to raise our water bills but the water fund is an Enterprise Fund and is supposed to pay for itself. The

Village has NOT approved this officially and we will be discussing it at our July 22nd meeting (7:00 in the Board Room 139). We welcome any resident that would like to be part of that discussion.

Here are some facts:

The water fund has not been balanced since (at least, that's as far back as data I could find) 2007-2008 fiscal year. In the 2007-2008 budget the Village

spent \$182,000 on the water fund. In an effort to keep costs as low as possible, we have cut the water fund "to the bone" so to speak. The estimated spending for the 2015-2016 budget year is \$147,800. \$35,200 less than 8 years ago.

This increase will not produce extra money for new projects or savings for emergencies, only enough to balance the estimated budget. Again, 7:00 meeting on the 22nd if interested in joining the discussion.

Retreat Update



The Village Board held its bi-annual retreat last month. It was attended by several community members and Village personnel. It was a very productive meeting. Some of the subjects brought up were:

Find renters for the rest of the downtown empty store fronts.

Paint the downtown light poles black and put new light fixtures on them.

Village asked to re-double efforts to fix downtown sidewalks

and find out if store owners can fix the sidewalk themselves.

Discussion of what to do with the water fund.

Discussion of moving the water line under Highway 20 to the back alley. Would help prevent a town wide water outage if that broke (also major traffic issue)

Discussion of how to pay for it, as well.

Reaffirmed Village initiatives (and come up with new ones) to grow the Village including recruiting Thomson Prison. Village spon-

sored rental database came from this.

Look at creating and/or recruiting investors for a 7-12 house subdivision and a separate industrial park.

Discussion of growth by annexing Betsy Drive.

Continue promoting the Community Fund.

Prioritize list of improvements at Terrapin Park including bathrooms, new fence, pavilion, and band shell.

Police Chief Report

Every year we come together as a nation and celebrate Independence Day on July 4th. Part of this tradition is Fireworks. The displays put on by towns and organizations are a sight to look forward to each summer. However, Fireworks are dangerous and can cause death, injury, and property damage. Some states allow Fireworks to be used by everyone, such as in Wisconsin. Illinois does not allow private citizens, who are not licensed by the DNR to use Fireworks. I am reminding everyone that Fireworks are illegal in Illinois, it is not something that the Village can legalize, and we are

all governed by state law. If people choose to shoot off Fireworks and ignore the law, they risk arrest, fine, and possible civil liability. Why take the chance of having someone hurt or of doing damage to property?

Chief Scott Toot



Annex Betsy Drive informational meeting July 29th

The Village will be having an informational meeting on July 29th at 7:00 for a discussion with Betsy Drive residents to see if they would be interested in annexing to the Village. Many of you might not know that Betsy Drive residents are not officially in the town limits, but fall under county jurisdiction.

The main reason the Village is looking toward annexation is because it will increase our population number, which would thus increase our multiplier number with the state. State money we receive is all

based on our population. The bigger our population, the more state sales tax, MFT, replacement tax, and other money we will get. The Village would also get increased property taxes.

The reasons the homeowners might consider joining is that they will get Elizabeth police protection (which is now provided by the county), voting rights, easier zoning laws, and reduced water rates. Residents of Betsy Drive receive Village water but because they are not officially in the Village they get charged 1.5 times higher than residents.

Reasons that Betsy Drive residents might not want to annex is, they will have to pay an added Village property tax. Of course, there might be other reasons as well.

All Betsy Drive residents are invited to attend the informational meeting on July 29th at the Village Board room for a round table discussion.

The meeting is also open to the general public.



Odds and Ends

- Don't forget the Elizabeth Fair will be July 24th, 25th, and 26th. We want to thank the Lions Club for all the years of organizing the parade. This year, the Village will be sponsoring the fair and the Chamber will be organizing it.

- The Village still has money left for this year's beautification program (\$250 grant to paint your house). The Village has expanded it to include siding and major landscaping. Please apply at the Village Hall.
- The Village of Elizabeth continues to make improvements to the School.

We have re-carpeted 2 rooms, waxed all the floors, had some asbestos tile removed and had to fix the heat exchanger for the boiler (which was also covered in asbestos).

This year's Color Run (Paint the Barn Yard Run) will be Saturday July 18th. Hope to see you for lots of color fun!

Community Fund

The Village is still looking for people to donate to the Elizabeth Community Fund. We need to get to \$10,000 to officially start it. Once it gets going, Elizabeth area organizations will be able to apply for grants.

Many of our Northern neighboring towns have one and it works great. The Community Fund is a good idea for estates and memorials to give back to Elizabeth.



The Village of Elizabeth

310 West Street
PO Box 236
Elizabeth, IL 61028
Phone: 815-858-3911
Fax: 815-858-9212
E-mail: villageofelizabeth@aeroinc.net
Mike's E-mail: mikedittmar210@yahoo.com

The Village Board of Elizabeth published this newsletter in an effort to better communicate with the residents of the Village of Elizabeth. We intend to continue a tri-annual newsletter and will do our best to keep it up to date. The Village welcomes any organization that would like to use the newsletter or the Village websites to help advertise/communicate local events. Please contact Michael Dittmar or the Village Hall at 815-858-3911 if interested.

*Sincerely,
The Village Board of Elizabeth*

We're on the Web!

<http://www.villageofelizabethil.com>
(Relocation web-page) <http://www.riverridge210.org/welcome/Elizabeth.html>
Facebook—Village of Elizabeth, Illinois

Chamber Update and Community Events

Congrats to the new Chamber Board.
President—Merrie Sevey
Vice President—Tammy Trebian
Secretary—Shellie Callan
Treasure—Lisa Walters
Public Relations—Peggy Francomb
Sergeant at Arms—Ed Amstutz
Advisor(s) - Lara Walters and Anna Pintozzi

Don't forget about the First Fridays where downtown is open until 8:00 pm on the First Friday of the month. The next one is August 7th. Please like the Energize Elizabeth Facebook Page for shop local facts and news about businesses in Elizabeth. Don't forget that the Midwest Garlic Festival will be held in Elizabeth August 15th!

Elizabeth
Community
Fair
July 24th,
25th, 26th.

Hope to see
you!

Energize
Elizabeth
Color Run
Saturday
July 18th
7:30 am

Midwest
Garlic
Festival
August
15th
Terrapin
Park