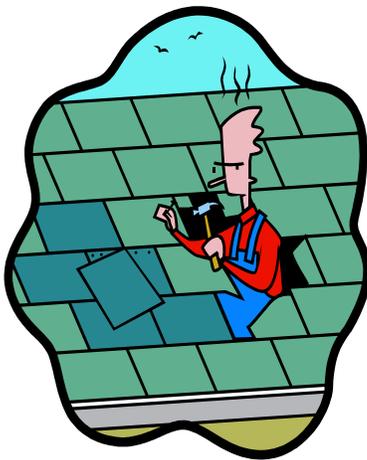


Special points of interest:

- **Balanced Budget**
- **Roof Update**
- **Energizing Elizabeth!**
- **Water Rate Raise**
- **Burn Permits**



Village of Elizabeth Quarterly Newsletter

Michael Dittmar, President

Balanced Budget, New Park, Mapping, Roof Update

This summer the Village accomplished quite a bit. First I am proud to announce that the Village passed the first balanced budget in at least four years (last years budget was not balanced but came in positive because of increased revenue, less expenses, and tough decisions). The Village Board was able to accomplish this years balanced budget by making some very tough decisions. The Village Board eliminated a full time employee to a part time position (\$17,000 in savings), eliminated some insurance perks for new employees (\$10,000 in savings), raised water rates (\$4500 revenue/more info inside the newsletter), and went through the budget again with a fine tooth comb. Also, the Village Board will work for no salary, as we did last year (\$10,000 in savings). Remember, the Village passed a resolution stating that new revenue from the tax referendum must go to the maintenance of the school building (roof), so it had no effect on the budget.

One of the things that helped the budget this year (and last) is that our sales tax revenue has been increasing. In 2008 we had an all time high as sales tax revenue was \$114,000. That means over 10 million dollars of goods were sold in our Village. In 2009, because of the recession, that number dropped to \$83,000. That drop, plus a deficit in the water fund, was

the main culprit of the negative budget the last four years. The numbers from 2012 show that the Village received \$97,000 in sales tax revenue, a good increase but not quite back to where we were. Please continue to shop local as much as possible!

At the August 21st Board meeting, the Village approved Freeport Industrial Roofing as the contractor for the roof repair at a cost of \$266,000. This price includes a contingency of \$20,000 for decking repair of the gym. I am pleased to announce that the Village will be pitching about 75% of the roof to help prevent future leaks. The remainder of the \$300,000 project will be to repair the back wall of the school, as the bricks are deteriorating badly and some are falling down. The Board approved Earl Thompson Masonry to do the brickwork at a base cost of \$23,789.50. The Village plans to borrow the money and use the increase of tax revenue to pay off a 10 year loan. The life of the roof is estimated to be 30 years. The contract with Freeport Industrial roofing says all must be completed by November 15th.

Monday August 26th is the first meeting of the Village's MAPPING project to help plan the future of Elizabeth. I will forever remain optimistic about the future of Elizabeth, but the last several years has not been good to our Village. MAPPING is

a community project that can help the Village get back a grocery store, bring a pharmacy to town, an industrial park to create jobs, a sub-division, grants to fix our infrastructure or maybe even a bike path to the new school. A simple explanation of MAPPING is that a super committee of people from the Village and the surrounding area will identify 100 goals/items that the Village needs. Over the course of 5 weeks, we will narrow that down to our top choices and be trained and supported by Western Illinois University to accomplish them. Then the real work begins, as we form separate committees to see the goals through. I strongly believe that the future of our Village is at a crossroads and we need good people to help choose the right path. Please read the article in the pages of this newsletter for more info.

A big thanks to all the Volunteers and Village employees for making the park project a big success. Hopefully soon, we will be announcing a grand opening. Also, a big thanks to the Fair Board for a great fair and to all their time and dedication. As always, my door is always open.

Michael Dittmar

Village, President

815-858-9823

Public Works Report



Please remember that when putting yard waste out for the Village to pick up, it cannot be in a plastic bag. It must be tied by string or in a paper bag.

Please also remember to not blow grass clippings in to the street. The clippings end up getting washed down the storm drains and plugs them up. This could cause some flooding or pooling and cause damage.

Some people have wondered what is allowed at the municipal dump. There are two piles, one

for organic matter that we can burn and one for rock and solid fill only. Dirt erodes down the hill and fills in the new retention pond so we ask you to not dump dirt.

Lastly, if you have a water break, the home owner is responsible for fixing and paying for the line from their house to the buffalo box/shut off valve. The Village is responsible from the box to the main. The sewer ordinance is similar, the home owner is responsible from their house to the curb/property line

and the Village is responsible from the line to the main. If you need the Village to repair any part of the water or sewer line, you must fill out a permit (no fee) with the Public Works department. The reason is we have had people dig up Village streets without any prior notification to the Village. Digging on the streets must have barricades and other safety issues met. Also, we have requirements that must be met including hiring a licensed plumber.

Ron Temperly—Public Works



Burn Permits

For the last four years, no one asked for a burn permit in the Village. In the last month, it seems that everyone has.

The Village has a burn ordinance that forbids burning inside the Village limits. As we all know, the main reason for the ordinance is for safety (don't want the fire to spread) and to be considerate (don't want smoke bothering residents).

The ordinance does allow some exceptions. (clearing land is one)

If you have a small amount to burn, please remember that by binding it in string/twine or putting it in a paper sack and placing it out in front of your yard, the Village will dispose of it for you. If it is a sizeable amount, you are responsible for removing it on your own. Re-

member that behind the fair buildings the Village has a place to dumb brush. Please feel free to place your brush there (we will light the pile).

In the rare occasion that trucking it or hauling it is not feasible, and you qualify for one of the exceptions in the ordinance, you may apply for a burn permit at no cost. Please contact the Village Hall for more info.

For the last four years, no one asked for a burn permit in the Village. In the last month, it seems that everyone has.

Water Rate Raise = Balance Budget

During the July regular Board meeting. The Village Board voted to raise the water rate by 2%. Instead of \$14 for the minimum charge it will be \$14.28 for a 28 cent raise.

What this means is, if you only pay the minimum you will have a 28 cent raise per month. If you use around 4500 gallons (average user) it will be around

50 cents per month.

As unpopular as this might be, it was essential in order to pass a balanced budget. As we have stated in the Newsletter many times, the water fund has been in deficit for the last 10 years and that is unacceptable. We are proud to announce with 4 years of cuts and this small raise, the water fund will be

balanced for the first time in 10 years.

As we have stated before, as insurance, wear and tear, and other expenses increase every year, expect a small rate increase in the water rates for the foreseeable future. On a good note, the sewer fund is doing very well and no increases are expected in the next 3-5 years.



Police Chief Report

With the start of school, remember that buses will be picking up and dropping off students each school day. Please be aware of the school buses and watch for the children when they are getting on and off the buses. Children don't always remember to look both ways and watch for traffic, especially at the end of the school day. It is up to us, as drivers, to watch out for them.

On another note, last year Woodbine Township extended the 30 MPH speed limit

on Apple River Road. This now puts the 30 MPH speed limit well before the Village limits. I have been running radar in this area and want to remind everyone that the speed limit is 25 MPH and 30 MPH on Myrtle Street and South Apple River Road near the village. Many cars do not slow down as they come into town and are leaving town. There is a natural tendency because of the topography of the road for cars to build up speed. Please be aware of the speed limit and the need for

safety. In conclusion, remember that I am always available for questions or concerns from citizens. Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Chief of Police

Scott Toot.



Energize Elizabeth!

By: Molly Mensendike

Perhaps you saw us wearing our "Energize Elizabeth" t-shirts; *perhaps* you saw our booth near the entrance to the fair; *perhaps* you stopped and talked to one of us; *perhaps...* you want to participate.

The Village of Elizabeth has enlisted the help of Western Illinois' MAPPING program to help improve our community, or as we like to put it, "Energize Elizabeth!" Currently, we have a small steering committee made up of Mike Dittmar, Judy Meyerhofer, Helen Kilgore, Codie Geisz, Lara Walters, and myself, Molly Mensendike, to help recruit other community members to step up, participate, and commit themselves to improving our community. So what does that look like? Well, we need a variety of people: young, old, new residents, business owners, couples, etc. We need "thinkers" to help us brainstorm ideas that will bene-

fit a large population, and we need "doers" to put those ideas into action.

Your commitment consists of five Monday nights:

Monday, August 26th 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Monday, September 9th 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Monday, September 16th 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Monday, September 23rd 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Monday, September 30th 5:30-8:30 p.m.

In these five meetings, Western's program provides us guidance. It will keep us looking forward and help us in executing our plans. As a group, we will be brainstorming 100 or so ideas of ways to improve our community. Then, we will nar-

row them down to the few most important ones. The large group will be broken into smaller groups, so individuals can work on developing an action plan for a goal that he/she is passionate about.

So, how do we improve Elizabeth? I wish I had that one magical answer; I wish I could say what the goals of our community are. But, I can't, because they haven't been set yet. That's where community members come in. We set the goals for our community, together. This is about being proud of Elizabeth and wanting the community to grow and be better and stronger for many years to come.

Please RSVP to participate and be a part of what a "better" Elizabeth will look like. RSVP to me, the contact person, at mollyamcgovern@yahoo.com or call me at 815-291-5761. I'd be happy to answer your questions, too, if you have any.

Even though the first night may have passed, it is still not too late to join!





The Village of Elizabeth

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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!

(Village Municipal web-page) <http://villageofelizabeth.pbworks.com>

(Relocation web-page) <http://www.riverridge210.org/welcome/Elizabeth.html>

Facebook—Village of Elizabeth, Illinois

Upcoming Dates and Community Events

School Starts August 21st - 1:30 dismissal

MAPPING Dates
Monday, August 26th 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Monday, September 9th 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Monday, September 16th 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Monday, September 23rd 5:30-8:30 p.m.
Monday, September 30th 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Upcoming Village Meetings
Public Works—September 3rd - 4:00
Administrative—Sept 4th 7:00
Regular Board Meeting—Sept 18th - 7:00
Public Works Oct 1—4:00
Administrative—Oct 2nd 7:00
Regular Board Meeting—Sept 16th - 7:00

Need us to advertise or announce dates and events?

Please contact us and we will put it here. Thanks!