

Special points of interest:

- **Water rate increase**
- **Special Service Tax Meeting October 19th**
- **Elizabeth 150 years old**
- **County Health Department News**
- **Sand Prairie I fiber initiative**

Check out
ordinances
online

<http://www.villageofelizabetheil.com>



Village of Elizabeth Newsletter

Michael Dittmar, President

Message from the Mayor

Wow, Elizabeth is having a great 2017. The Village's sales tax receipts are up. In June alone, over \$1 million dollars was spent in Elizabeth. We have had several new businesses come to Elizabeth and we want to welcome them, Cajun Jacks and Galena Jeep Rental! There are a couple of more coming but we will wait until they are ready before we announce them.

In the last newsletter, we mentioned that the newly formed Economic Development subcommittee was formed and they were working on bringing a pharmacy to Elizabeth. We have had some really good results and should have something to announce in the next couple of months.

We do have three new board members, Brian Engle, Melody Landwer, and Judy Glew. I would like to welcome them to the Elizabeth Board. Don't forget our returning board members are Jason Thomasson, Preston Taylor, and Denise Anderson.

As many of you might know, Melody Landwer and our clerk Barb Brown worked hard to allow Village residents to pay their water/sewer bills online. If you are interested, please go to GOVPAYNET.com. The code for the Village of Elizabeth is a0013s. It is case sensitive.

On October 4th, Village representatives met with IDOT on a grant to replace our sidewalks uptown. This is the third time we have applied for the grant and we think we have a great shot at getting it this time. Whether we get it or not, the Village is committed to improving our infrastructure and to continue to create a business friendly climate.

Speaking of grants, the Village will be turning in our first submission to get a grant to help fix the sewer issue under Locust Street. We are looking at a 75% project cost grant. That would leave a little more than \$200,000 to pay out. The Village would pay for our share using the BDD tax dollars. There should not be any additional cost to Village residents. Any questions on this, please don't hesitate to call me.

One of the biggest problems the Village is currently working on is closing the two municipal dumps. Currently, we spend a decent amount of money testing these dumps every year. If we can close them, then we can save money. Dump one is located down at the sewer plant and was used many years ago to bury sludge from our treatment facility. Dump two is located underneath the little ball field at Terrapin Park. To get the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to close them, it takes a more intense round of testing to do. This round of

testing is extremely costly. The first two rounds of testing, the Village failed. We are currently working on a third round for dump one, only. We are confident that this round will allow us to close one dump and then move on to the second. Closing the dumps are mandated by the IEPA.

The Village is looking for volunteers to help plan our 150th Anniversary next year. Currently the Village is looking at a big celebration on Labor Day weekend in 2018. We would like to have our first meeting by January of 2018. As of now, I have two people who volunteered to help. We need many more. We would love to have people who helped with the centennial in 1966, lend us your expertise. If anyone is interested, please contact the Village Hall or myself and we will get you on the list to be ready in January.

Lastly, the Village is always looking at ways to improve our infrastructure. Unfortunately, that costs money. Recently we had a special meeting to learn about a special tax assessment that would levy a temporary property tax on an area of the Village to improve, curb, gutter, water, sewer, alleyways, etc. We have identified a possible project on Myrtle Street. We are looking at having another informational meeting on the special tax district and want to invite all interested to attend. Please read further for more details. As always, my door is open.

Michael Dittmar



Please!!!

No grass clippings in the street.

Public Works Report

Just a couple of reminders. Please do not mow lawn clippings into the streets. Also, please do not use the storm gutters for garbage or lawn refuse. The reason is so our storm sewers don't plug and cause flooding somewhere in town that could result in damage to resident's houses.

Also, don't forget that we have a new digging ordinance in town.

If you are planning on digging in the Village right of way or in our streets, you must get a permit from the Village. The permit is free, we just need to coordinate work to ensure that our codes and the state's are being followed. We also want to make sure that Village property is put back correctly.

Lastly, please remember not to park where the Village usually

piles snow. Also, don't forget that shoveling and clearing sidewalks is the homeowners responsibility.

Sincerely,

James Mensendike, Public Works Superintendent.

Water Rate Increase at 5%.

In July of 2017 the Village raised water rates 5%. As we have said in past newsletters, we are trying to get the water fund to balance. The good news is....we are very close.

Last year we were actually in surplus because we had zero water main breaks. We waited several months to hire a new employee, thus balancing the water fund for the first time in over a decade. The bad news is that we can't count on having

"zero" water main breaks every year.

The Village anticipates finally balancing the water budget next budget year (if our estimates prove correct). It will not be the last of the water raises. The Village is considering budgeting every year to have a \$10,000 surplus saved for emergencies. Once we balance the budget, we will still have small raises until we reach that surplus.

The Village does not take raising water rates lightly. We would not be doing it if the water fund weren't as lean and mean as possible, already. The average increase for the 5% increase was 60 cents a household per month.

If anyone would like to look at the water fund budget, the Village Public Works Committee will be going over it at their November meeting at 5:30 on November 1st. You can always make an appointment with the Mayor if you can't make the Nov 1st meeting.

Special Service Area Tax meeting October 19th

On September 5th, the Village had a preliminary meeting to see how a Special Service Area tax works. The reason for this was because several people living between Madison St. and Highway 20 have asked to have their alleyway repaired. As many of you know, the Village does not have much money and fixing the alley, unfortunately, is low on the list of priorities. Several of the residents did say they would help pay extra for it.

The Village then looked at a Special Service Area tax to help facilitate this. We had an open meeting and invited the residents of the alley area. We

have decided to host another on October 19th at 5:30 at the Village Hall. All residents are invited to attend if interested. NO decision will be made at this meeting. It is an informative meeting only.

Here is a brief summary on how an SSA works. The Village will decide on a designated project, and will divide the cost fairly (equally or by frontage feet) by residents who use/border the project. Typically, the municipality does pay for a percentage of the property. The remainder is then divided up, a bond is taken out, and a special assessment on property tax will be levied for

a set number of years until the project is paid off. Then the tax automatically disappears. All of the power is with the citizens though. If 51% of the affected residents sign a petition of opposition, the Village, by law, CANNOT enact the SSA.

I want to be clear, the Village is doing this because we were asked by residents. The Village is interested in the SSA for a tool in the future, to fix or improve other problems that might arise. An SSA is a common tool used by municipalities across the nation for improvements/fixes.



Police Chief Report

Halloween is just around the corner and I would like to remind everyone to be safe during trick or treating. The Police Department, for the last several years, has provided a safe crosswalk across the highway. The manned crosswalk will be located at the corner of Main and Sycamore Streets. A police officer will stop traffic and make sure that anyone wanting to cross the highway will be able to do so safely. The crosswalk will be manned from 5PM until 7PM on Halloween during trick or treating. Another officer will be available in the squad car to

respond to any police calls that occur. Please remind your children to not dart out into the roadway anywhere in town and use the manned crosswalk to get from one side of town to the other.

On another note, IDOT recently changed the speed limit when coming into town from the East going west-bound. The speed limit now decreases from 55MPH to 45MPH and then finally 30 MPH. Please be aware of this change. As far as any complaints that anyone may have regarding US Route 20, please

contact IDOT directly at their Dixon office. The Village does not control the speed limit on the highway. The Police Department does enforce traffic law on US Route 20, but ultimately IDOT decides the speed limit, positioning of signs, and what is a passing or no passing zone. The Police Department and Village can only make suggestions and request changes on roadways not owned by Village of Elizabeth. Finally, have a safe and Happy Halloween.

Chief Scott Toot



Watch out! For trick or treaters



Odds and Ends

The Jo Daviess County Health Department is in the process of purchasing property to relocate to the Village of Elizabeth in hopes for a more centralized location. More info on this coming soon.

The Village is pleased to announce that it has increased its Beautification Grant to \$500 for improvements to the outside of your house. This money can be used for siding, paint, landscaping and concrete work to name a few. If interested, please get an application at the Village

Hall. This is done on a first come, first serve basis. Also, don't forget that if you are planning on fixing/replacing your concrete sidewalks, the Village will pay for all of the material. If it is a small job, please contact the Village Hall before you start the job. If it is a bigger job, like replacing your entire sidewalk, you need to give the Village more time for the notice so we can budget for it properly. If you are replacing your driveway approach to the Village street, that must be approved by the Village so it

conforms to ADA standards.

Please don't forget that fall leaves cannot be burned at your house. Please rake them up and take them to the Village dump. The Village does pick up leaves if they are in bags on Monday morning.



Want fiber internet in Elizabeth?

Sand Prairie, a service of Jo-Carroll Energy, is asking local residents if there is interest and a need for fiber optic internet service in their area. Where the cooperative builds its next fiber projects will be driven by where there is the most interest.

If you want Elizabeth to be at the top of that list, go to

<http://connectSP.com/iwantfiber>

to fill out a short survey showing your interest in fiber internet service.

Fiber provides faster speeds and reliability for your home or business. Help us bring fiber to our community by visiting connectSP.com to tell Sand Prairie we want fiber in Elizabeth.

Please feel free to share with your family, friends and neighbors.

Let's get everyone involved!



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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!

<http://www.villageofelizabethil.com>

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

Facebook—Village of Elizabeth, Illinois

More Odds and Ends and Community Events



Special Service
Area Tax
Meeting
Thursday
October 19th
At Village Hall
5:30 p.m.

Halloween
Tuesday
October 31st
5pm—7pm

In 2018 we will be celebrating the Village of Elizabeth's 150 year birthday.

We are looking for volunteers to help with the celebration. If interested, please contact Mayor Mike.