

# THE BEECHER BULLETIN

"Your Village Newsletter"

Fall 2018

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## PENFIELD STREET RECONSTRUCTION PLANS (Project still scheduled for a Summer, 2020 start)

The Village has applied for a grant to use federal funds to reconstruct Penfield Street from Dixie Highway west to the railroad tracks. The project is expected to cost \$6 million and includes additional off street parking, the elimination of several pull in parking spaces along the roadway, replacing the bridge over Trim Creek, decorative street lighting, and new sidewalks and curbs. This project has been in the planning stages for years, and the first part of the project was to replace the watermain under the roadway first. This was completed in 2017. Federal funding will provide \$5 million for the project, with the Village having to provide a 20% match of \$1 million. The Village's portion of funding is coming from the 1/2% local sales tax approved in 2008.

To qualify for the grant funding, the Village has been jumping through several hoops that have delayed the design work on this project. For example, the Illinois Department

*Continued on Page 3*

## BEECHER WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

**(\$10 million investment in the future to be completed in September, 2019)**

The largest public works project in Beecher's history began in June with the complete reconstruction of the Beecher Wastewater Treatment Plant which will double its capacity (from 600,000 gallons per day to 1.2 million gallons per day) and be modernized to meet the new effluent standards required by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). This massive \$10 million project was awarded to the lowest bidder, IHC of Elgin, Illinois, will take over one year to complete, and will add several more steps to the treatment process. The Village has hired a new Class I Operator to run the new plant; John Hernandez of Momence, Illinois.

The Village was able to borrow the \$10 million from the IEPA's low interest loan program for 30 years at 1.12%. This loan produces an annual payment which can be made by the Village with existing debt service charges and the additional 1/2% sales tax added by voters in 2016. This means that a rate increase is not required to finance the project.



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## VILLAGE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As we begin the transition from a very hot Summer to hopefully an easy Winter, let me be the first to wish you a Happy Halloween, Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays.

**Dunkin Donuts** is still scheduled to open. The Village does not have any control as to when.

**The Railroad Quiet Zone Project** is progressing but we are now on the time-line of the Federal Railroad Administration. Just another example of hurry up and wait. Welcome to government.

We have been told by IDOT to expect **Route #1 (Dixie Highway) to be resurfaced** from Goodenow Road south to the County Line in the Summer of 2021.

No new news on the **Crete Intermodal** project. When we hear more we will let you know.

**Dunbar Street watermain replacement** is nearing completion. Restoration is to begin soon. Bids came in so low on this project that there may be funds to replace the watermain on Gould Street next year. Stay tuned.

Thank you and enjoy your Fall!

*Greg Szymanski*  
Village President



## MEET YOUR NEW PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT MATT CONNER

Matt Conner was born and raised in Beecher, and has been with the Public Works Department for 15 years. He started his career in Public Works as a part time/summer employee after graduating from Beecher High School in 2003. A position became available and Matt became a fulltime employee in early 2004. In 2016, Matt was promoted to Crew Leader, which is second in charge of the Department. He was then appointed Superintendent in July, 2018. He currently lives in Cedar Lake, Indiana with his wife Amanda and one-year old son Grayson. Matt is also a POC Lieutenant/EMT on Cedar Lake Fire Department. Matt is taking over for Harold "Bud" Cowger, who was with the Village for 20 years, 17 of those as Superintendent.

"I want to be accessible to the public, and yet be able to work along with the guys in our department. We are a small crew, and there is nothing I would ask them to do that I have not already done or am not willing to do myself. I still plan on plowing snow and being with the crew when things get tough; like during water main breaks, flooding, or severe storms if needed", Conner stated.

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*Penfield Street continued from Page 1*

of Transportation (IDOT) tagged the bridge over Trim Creek on Penfield as a possible historic structure, and that it may not be easily replaced. It was up to the Village to prove to IDOT that it was not historically significant. This required a good deal of research and a separate report filed and reviewed by the State. This alone delayed the planning for the project by six months.

The Phase I Planning Report is now nearing completion and the next step is to hold a public workshop with all interested Village residents, but especially those that live or own a business along Penfield Street to unveil the details of the project and to receive comments that can help with the final design of the project and to lessen the impact of the construction phase. This meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 7th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Beecher Village Hall, 625 Dixie Highway. All of the plan renderings will be made available for inspection at this workshop and residents will be encouraged to ask questions of the engineers and to provide comments. Letters of invitation will be sent out to property owners along Penfield.

There are many logistic concerns that have to be addressed. For example, the Fire Department will have to come up with a different way to respond to fire and ambulance calls when the road in front of the station is completely torn out. Access to the post office will also have to be provided during construction. Businesses along Penfield will have to remain open. Students and teachers have to get to the elementary school. Residents living along Penfield need access to their homes.

**THE TABLE BELOW PROVIDES A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR THE PROJECT:**

<b>November 7, 2018 at 7pm</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>Public Information Workshop at the Village Hall (open to the public)</b>
<b>December, 2018</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>Submit Phase I Plan Report to IDOT</b>
<b>January, 2019</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>Selection Process for Design Engineer</b>
<b>April, 2019</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>IDOT approves Phase I Report and Engineer for Design</b>
<b>October, 2019</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>Design of Project submitted to IDOT for approval</b>
<b>January 2020</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>IDOT approves project for bid letting</b>
<b>March, 26, 2020</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>IDOT's bid letting date for projects</b>
<b>April, 2020</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>Project bid awarded</b>
<b>June, 2020</b>	<b>→</b>	<b>Construction commences</b>

This schedule is contingent on the State's approval process and the ability of the federal government to provide the funding at the time it is needed. For example, the Village may get bumped a year if another project on the list is delayed or pushed forward since only a certain dollar amount can be spent on projects each year. In other words, the Village is guaranteed to receive the funding but on the federal government's schedule.



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## **VILLAGE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

*The following actions were taken by the Beecher Village Board since the Spring of 2018:*

- ✓ Learned of the retirement of Floyd Burger in the Public Works Department effective May 4, 2018.
- ✓ Appointed Dawn Bruno to the Youth Commission replacing Phil Salmen.
- ✓ Approved a five-year agreement with Backflow Solutions, Inc. In the amount of \$495 per year for the administration of the cross-connection backflow prevention program in the water system. There are approximately 300 such connections that have to be tested and inspected annually.
- ✓ Adopted a balanced budget for FY 2018/2019.
- ✓ Rescinded an intergovernmental agreement with Monee and Peotone regarding the cable government access channel by mutual consent of all parties due to changes in technology. Board meetings can now be viewed for free on YouTube.
- ✓ Obtained a \$10,000 grant from the CSX Railroad and a \$5,000 grant from the Village's insurance carrier to install a generator at the police station. The station currently does not have a reliable back-up power source.
- ✓ Approved the concept of a playground/tot lot in Firemen's Park and the creation of a special account for fund raising purposes.
- ✓ Received a grant of \$130,000 from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) to conduct a comprehensive planning process. Hired Teska and Associates to complete this work. The finished product is expected in the Spring of 2019.
- ✓ Filed letters of no objection to Will County for two solar farms located within 1.5 miles of the Village limits: on both sides of Indiana Avenue west of Stoney Island and on the north side Corning 1/2 mile east of Dixie Highway.
- ✓ Approved an agreement with IDOT for the replacement of sidewalk ramps at Pasadena and Dixie.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of two tandem-axle trailers for hauling Public Works equipment in the amount of \$5,853.
- ✓ Approved an ordinance updating the 2005 building codes of the Village to the 2015 International Code.
- ✓ Approved \$1,500 for the creation of the Village Facebook page. As a result, the Village's smart phone application was discontinued.
- ✓ Approved a contract in the amount of \$20,000 from Teska and Associates to conduct a tax increment finance district study for an area designated by the Board for such a district.
- ✓ Re-appointed Bill Hearn, George Schuitema and Phil Serviss to the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- ✓ Adopted an updated personnel manual for all Village employees.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of a 2019 F-250 XL 4x4 super cab in the amount of \$40,641 from Currie Motors of Frankfort. Currie was the lowest bid from the Suburban Purchasing Cooperative. The truck will replace the 2004 Chevy 3/4 ton. Delivery is expected in October.

*Continued on next page*

*Board Meeting Highlights Continued*

- ✓ Approved a contract in the amount of \$30,270 with HR Green to conduct a feasibility study required for approval of a quiet zone through the Village.
- ✓ Approved a four year collective bargaining agreement with Teamsters #700 for the Village's police officers.
- ✓ Approved an amendment to the PUD for Prairie Park Subdivision (Castletown) allowing for the conversion of 12 duplex lots into six single family lots as long as the water and sanitary sewer service lines are properly disconnected.
- ✓ Approved an expansion of a special use for a beer garden at The Gould Vault, 618 Gould Street.
- ✓ Approved a contract with John Hernandez of Momence, IL to provide Class I Wastewater Treatment Operator services for the Village's plant for the next five years.
- ✓ Approved an ordinance allowing for the proper dissolution of EASTCOM, the Eastern Will County Regional Dispatch Center, since all agencies are now dispatched out of LARAWAY Center. Proceeds will be divided evenly amongst the members.
- ✓ Approved an emergency repair at the Miller Street lift station (Miller and Donoho) in the amount of \$22,865 after receiving a proposal from Superior Pump.
- ✓ Approved an ordinance dissolving the Ribbon of Hope Commission and establishing a perpetual care fund for the maintenance of the memorial.
- ✓ Awarded a contract to the lowest of six bids; Bisping Construction of Frankfort, IL, in the amount of \$220,046.64 for replacing watermain and service lines on Dunbar from Hodges to Indiana Avenue.
- ✓ Passed an ordinance regulating small cell wireless facilities installed on Village rights of way.
- ✓ Approved an agreement with the Will County Aggregation Group for another bid process for a three year price on electric rates. The lowest bid was from Constellation Energy at about 6% lower than the new Com Ed rates.
- ✓ Entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Beecher Fire Protection District for the use of Village property for a Fire Department training facility at the Northeast corner of Indiana and Town Center Road.
- ✓ Terminated a contract to allow Public Works Superintendent Harold Cowger to retire. Appointed Crew Leader Matt Conner as Superintendent and Jim Pratl as Crew Leader. Steven Zellner was also made the Water Operator in Charge.
- ✓ Approved new technology to be incorporated into the water system operations by approving a contract with Energenecs in the amount of \$26,190.
- ✓ Approved the purchase of a second leaf loader (a 2001 ODB trailer unit) for front line use in the amount of \$7,000. The 1994 unit the Village currently owns will be used a spare. The Village did not have a back-up unit.

The Village Board meets on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Beecher Village Hall, 625 Dixie Highway. Residents are always invited to attend these meetings.

Board meetings can also be viewed on the [Village's YouTube Channel](#) and are posted on the Village of Beecher Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/beecher.illinois/>.





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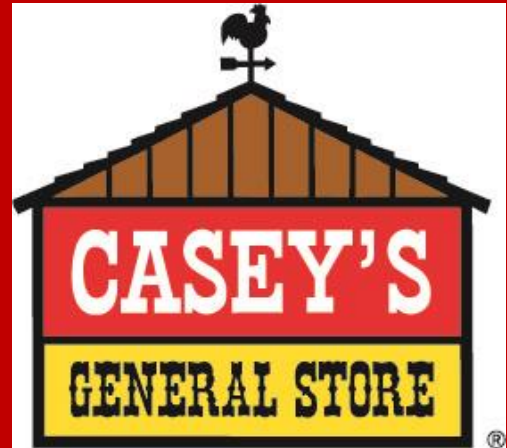
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- Pretzel



### **VILLAGE BRUSH COLLECTION PROGRAM TO CONTINUE THROUGH NOVEMBER**

Brush pick-up will be conducted every Monday through November, and begin again in April, 2019. This summer the Village returned to weekly brush pick-up. Brush will not be picked up during the winter months unless there is a storm and then the crews will go out on an as-needed basis. Brush pick-up is not intended for collection of entire trees taken down by a contractor or homeowner. Only routine trimming and storm damage will be picked up.

### **BE AWARE OF SNOW REGULATIONS DURING WINTER WEATHER**



With winter approaching, the Village wants to remind residents that for a period of twenty-four (24) hours after a snowfall of two inches or more, it is illegal to park on any residential Village street or in any business district public parking space commonly maintained by the Village between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. This includes curbed streets and driving lanes but does not include parkways maintained by residents.

It is also illegal to deposit snow onto public streets. When clearing your driveway, direct the snow into the yard and not the street. The Police Department may issue tickets to those that deposit their snow onto the street.



## **HALLOWEEN**

Trick-or-Treat hours are 4-7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>

The Lions Club Annual Weenie Roast will begin in Firemen's Park at 6 p.m. on Halloween.

In addition to the Weenie Roast, the Lions Club will be hosting a pumpkin smash & hayride in Firemen's Park (673 Penfield Street) from 6-8 p.m.



Have fun & be safe! \*\*\*\* Check candy before eating



### **DOG TAGS GO ON SALE MONDAY, DECEMBER 3RD**

Dog tags go on sale at the Village Hall on Monday, December 3rd. The price is \$10 per dog and the deadline for purchase is March 15, 2019. After the March 15th deadline, the price of dog tags increase to \$15 each. The dog's name, breed, color and date of last rabies vaccination will be required to purchase the tag. Dog tag fees are used to pay for the services provided by the Beecher Veterinary Clinic for picking up, feeding and boarding stray animals and lost pets.



### **CURBSIDE LEAF COLLECTION**

Leaf collection is now under way. Leaves raked in rows along the curbside are picked up by a large vacuum machine used by Public Works crews on a weekly basis until the week of Thanksgiving.

Residents should place leaves in a pile or row in the parkway between the sidewalk and curb as near to the street as possible. In areas without curbs, leaves should be placed on the grass or parkway at the edge of the street. The leaf machine will make at least one pass per week down each street in the Village.





## 2018 BEECHER FOURTH OF JULY FESTIVAL RESULTS

If you went to this year's festival, you know what the Amazon jungle feels like! First there was the heat, and boy was it hot! It did not even turn cool much in the evening like it usually does. Then came the Fourth of July monsoon. The parade was quite warm but at least it stayed dry. But in the evening the violent storms began and from 7 p.m. through 10 p.m. over three inches of rain fell. The fireworks were locked and loaded by 7 p.m. so there was really no turning back. It was decided to start the show early (8:50 p.m.) since another wave of storms was fast approaching. Attendance was down overall and so was the revenue.



The Fourth of July Commission always knew that a year like this would eventually happen; and this year it was the perfect storm. However, the Commission is happy to report that it still managed to pay its bills and stay financially afloat. The car raffle and beer sales still showed a profit, and of course the sponsors of the event (Beecher's businesses) are a dominant source of income for the festival. The Commission still had \$50,000 on account as of September 1st but there are still a few bills to pay. It takes about that much money to open the festival so the Commission will be working on ways to make it all happen for next year.



The Commission did recently approve a schedule for next year. The festival will be held from Wednesday, July 3rd through Saturday, July 6th. Lets hope the weather improves for next year!

Once again, thanks to all of our sponsors, volunteers and patrons for making the Fourth of July a memorable holiday for all.

## COMED REPLACING POLES ALONG DIXIE HIGHWAY (project to improve system reliability)



Over the past several years, ComEd has been replacing many of its overhead poles. The poles along Dixie Highway have been replaced from Homewood all the way south to Beecher. In Beecher, they are erecting larger poles and will be installing a larger electrical supply line through town. This will allow ComEd to eliminate the poles along the Old Milwaukee Railroad easement located 1/2 mile to the east since this line is becoming less reliable. The location of the new poles along the highway will provide ComEd better access to their distribution lines for maintenance and repair.

The bad news is that the Village can no longer hang its lit decorations on these new poles. That means no LED snowflakes along the highway this holiday season.

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## Village of Beecher

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Beecher Youth Commission Haunted Hallway • October 26/27 (tentative dates)**

**Trick or Treat hours • Wednesday, October 31st from 4-7 p.m.**

**Lions Club Halloween Weenie Roast • Wednesday, October 31st from 6-8 p.m.**

**Penfield Street Improvement Public Meeting • November 7th at 7 p.m. at Village Hall**

**Beecher Youth Commission Nerf Obstacle Course • November 11th**

**Lions Club Breakfast with Santa • Sunday, December 2nd beginning at 8 a.m.**

**Beecher Youth Commission MLK Bowling • January 21st from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

**Beecher Youth Commission Daddy-Daughter Dance • February 9th**

**Beecher Youth Commission Mother-Son Dance • April 6th**

