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Village of Beecher

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MEET GREG SMITH *Your new Chief of Police*

At the regular Village Board meeting on Monday, February 12th, the Village Board unanimously approved the appointment of Gregory D. Smith, previously a Commander of the Lemont, IL Police Department, as the new Chief of Police of the Village of Beecher effective March 1st. Chief Smith was selected from a field of 63 candidates applying for the position. Chief Smith, currently of Plainfield, IL, will be relocating to the Beecher area in the coming year. Chief Smith's formal oath of office and pinning ceremony occurred at the March 12th Village Board meeting. Chief Smith has 27 years of law enforcement experience and obtained his bachelor's degree from Benedictine University in 2010 and graduated magna cum laude. He is also a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command and the FBI National Academy.

"I am honored to be your Chief of Police and I look forward to working with the community," commented Chief Smith at his swearing in ceremony. He and his wife Lisa have four children. Smith commented after his short stint in Beecher, that he observed one of the main strengths of the Police Department was its community. The community is a tight knit group that supports law enforcement. They are diligent to report suspicious activity in the community.

Welcome Chief Smith!

VILLAGE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I hope everyone had a good winter holiday season as we welcome spring. Or I think it's spring..... It's snowing again!!!

NEW CHIEF

I am proud to announce and welcome Greg Smith as our new Police Chief and we are looking forward to working with him. Please take a moment to read about him above. We also welcome our new Fire Chief, Joe Falaschetti and his new command staff.

NEW BUSINESSES

I'm sure you have noticed that Subway will be moving into the building in front of Walt's Foods. More important, Dunkin' Donuts is planned to open in the unit north of Subway. Quik Scripts is opening a pharmacy to replace the Fagen Pharmacy in Dr. Deforest's building at 715 Dixie Highway. We are hoping the new pharmacy will solve some issues our residents have been having with prescriptions and insurance since Fagan closed.

Continued on next page

**KEEP UPDATED ON TIMELY INFORMATION
FROM THE VILLAGE OF BEECHER
AND POLICE DEPARTMENT:**



VILLAGE OF BEECHER



**BEECHER POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

Continued from previous page



**WHAT'S NEW ON THE CSX
AND THEIR INTERMODAL?**

We are not sure. We have learned that the ground for the intermodal in Crete has been leased this year for farming. So it appears there are no immediate plans to build the intermodal, at least for this year. We have been asking for financial help from CSX on our quiet zone. The last conversation on that very issue CSX responded by saying they have no idea when that decision would be made. This may be another indicator, although there are no immediate plans to build it. Things may change at a moment's notice.

**WHEN WILL YOU START
WORK ON THE QUIET ZONE?**

We have discussed this at length during several meetings and it is currently in the 2018-2019 budget. If it remains in the budget, which I think it will, we will begin the process shortly after May 1st. It is our belief we may be done in about 1 year.

**WILL TRUCK TRAFFIC BE
INCREASING IN THE AREA.... AND
ARE WE DOING ANYTHING ABOUT IT?**

Yes, we have been meeting with county, local and state officials and have expressed our concerns on this very issue and will continue to do so. While everyone acknowledges the problem, a short term solution may be developing truck routes and getting those routes onto GPS systems. The long term solution involves local, state and federal dollars being spent on improving, replacing and creating roads.

Have a great summer!

Greg Szymanski
Village President



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WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT REHAB ABOUT TO GET UNDERWAY

Will be the Largest Public Works Project in the Village's History

Yes, we get it, a sewer plant is a boring (and even a little disgusting) topic. It is just easy to flush the toilet and not worry about where it goes. But when \$10 million of your money is being spent, you have a right to know what is going on. So, without all of the biology lessons and engineering terms, we will do our best to lay it on you.

First, the good news. The Village has spent several years getting ready for this project, and made a commitment to our residents that if the sales tax was raised by 1/2%, the Village would not raise sewer rates to cover sewer plant debt. As costs continued to rise, this commitment began to make some of us at Village Hall a little nervous. However, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency was so pleased with our efforts and willingness to improve the plant that it has offered Beecher a \$10 million loan for 30 years at 1.12% from its Revolving Loan Fund. This has reduced our loan payments to the point where debt service revenue will equal debt payments.

The Village opened bids late last Fall and the lowest bidder was IHC Construction of Elgin, Illinois in the amount of \$8,696,500. About \$1.2 million is needed for the design and construction management of the project being provided by Baxter and Woodman Engineers. Construction is expected to begin by May 1st. All work will occur on the current site at the south end of town.

The current sewer plant, last upgraded in 1996, has a capacity of 600,000 gallons per day but is operating at about 700,000 gallons per day. The new plant will be capable of handling 1.2 million gallons per day and have a peak capacity of 3.5 million gallons per day. The treatment process currently does not involve the use of chemicals and is completely organic. The new process will require the use of a polymer in order to remove excessive phosphorous levels out of the wastewater during sludge thickening. Ultra-violet lighting will also be used to kill harmful bacteria as the wastewater flows through what are called "black light chambers." All the rest of the work is done by "friendly" bacteria that nurture and grow in the oxidation ditches. Big paddle wheels keep the sewage flowing in these ditches and provide the needed oxygen to break down the sewage.

Wastewater finally passes through a clarifier chamber that allows heavier particles to settle and the clear water to rise to the top. This clear water at the top is allowed to flow to the creek while the heavy water at the bottom is returned back into the plant for more treatment.

The newest addition to the plant will be a \$1 million belt press. This press will squeeze the treated sludge out of the water to form dried cakes of nitrogen which can be either land filled or land applied to farm ground. This press will be located in the old public works garage which is on the sewer plant property. The press will have to operate for several hours each work day.

Operating this new treatment plant will be a big challenge, but our public works team is making plans for a smooth transition. Operating costs of the new facility will also increase to some extent, but it is hard to get an exact figure since there will be a few efficiencies to compensate for some of the cost increases. There will have to be a year or two of operation before the Village gets an exact handle on the operating costs. In 1996, sewer plant operating costs actually went down with the new plant due to more efficient electric motors.

So, there you have it. Sewage is certainly not "sexy", but it is very expensive to deal with. The Village believes that this investment is not only critical to our environment but also to the future economic development of our community.



SPRING CLEANING ??



***IF YOU FIND ANYTHING HISTORICAL,
DON'T THROW IT AWAY! DONATE IT TO
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY***

It's Spring cleaning time! Beecher has a lot of old homes and a lot of interesting history. In your quest to clean out the clutter, if you happen to find anything you think may tell a story of Beecher-past history, contact the Village Hall and see if it could be donated to the Beecher Historical Society Museum located at 620 Reed Street. Last year, a resident found some metal vehicle tags from the early 1900's in their wall when rehabbing their home and donated them to the museum. One person's trash is another person's treasure!

WATERMAIN REPLACEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE: *Dunbar Street is Next!*

The Village Board has determined that replacing the watermain on Dunbar Street from Hodges to Indiana Avenue should be the next project to complete this Summer, even though few watermain breaks have occurred in this area. That sure does not sound right, but there is a good explanation.

Several homes on this street have reported low water pressure. Public Works has investigated this problem and has determined that corrosion inside the old lead and steel pipe service lines are clogging the service lines and the meters. Replacing the service line from the main to the buffalo box or service line valve was costing \$5,000 per repair. By the time the Village replaced all of the old service lines it could have also replaced the main. The decision was made to do it all at once.

The engineer's estimate of the project is \$458,825 including engineering. The Village has \$502,000 available in its Watermain Replacement Account for the work. Work can be completed without further borrowing but will delay other watermain replacement projects from getting completed by one more year based on current revenue collection. Bids will be let in May and the project should begin right after the Fourth of July. There will be minimal interruption of water service and no driveway will be blocked for more than a day. Residents will be notified in advance of any inconvenience.



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VILLAGE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were taken by the Beecher Village Board since the Fall of 2017:

- ✓ Adopted rules for the use and rental of Firemen's Park. These regulations can be found on the Village's website.
- ✓ Referred amendments to the zoning code pertaining to the parking of campers, trailers and boats to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission recommended no changes to the code and deferred the matter for one year.
- ✓ Adopted regulations for the proper maintenance of dry and wet basin retention ponds for both the Village and homeowner's associations.
- ✓ Learned that eighteen golf carts have been certified in the Village for residential street use since the ordinance permitting their use was adopted last Spring.
- ✓ Authorized the delivery of a letter from the Village to IDOT requesting resurfacing improvements to Dixie Highway from Goodenow to the County line. IDOT responded that only the shoulders would be paved.
- ✓ Approved a new agreement for the composting of leaves with Smits Farms. This guarantees that the Village will be able to properly dispose of its leaves cost-effectively for the next five years.
- ✓ Approved the creation and use of a Village of Beecher Facebook page.
- ✓ Grandfathered a legal non-conforming use as a single-family home in a B-3 District at 1220 Dixie Highway.
- ✓ Authorized a security deposit for purchase of beer for the 2018 Fourth of July festival since the festival account is projected to have insufficient funds for the deposit due to ongoing projects. This deposit will be returned to the Village in full.
- ✓ Approved a program that allows residents to receive their water bills by e-mail.
- ✓ Accepted the audit for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2017.
- ✓ Approved an ordinance extending the \$2,000 water bill credit to the purchaser of a newly-constructed home until November 1, 2019 with a cap of 50 credits.
- ✓ Approved the purchase of portable truck scales in the amount of \$8,400 for use by the Police Department.
- ✓ Approved a tax levy with a 0% increase. The Village's levy has not increased since 2011.
- ✓ Approved a special use permit for a drive-thru at Dunkin' Donuts, 1121 Dixie.

Continued on next page

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BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

- ✓ Extended a loan for a period of one year from First Community Bank and Trust in the amount of \$350,000 at an interest rate of 1.85%. This loan will be repaid once the IEPA releases funds for the sewer plant project in July of 2018.
- ✓ Approved a loan request to the IEPA for 30 years instead of 20 years for the rehab of the wastewater treatment plant at the south edge of town. This will drop the payments considerably and not require any type of rate increase to fund debt. The interest rate on the \$10,000,000 loan will be 1.12%.
- ✓ Awarded a bid to IHC of Elgin, IL in the amount of \$8,696,500 for the rehab of the Beecher Wastewater Treatment Plant. It was noted that this is the largest public works project in the history of the Village.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of a used 2003 International 4700 dump truck with spreader, plow and wingplow and to have it fitted for municipal use at a cost not to exceed \$45,000. This truck will replace the 1988 Ford F800 which will be assigned to the sewer plant for sludge hauling.
- ✓ Attended an intergovernmental meeting hosted by the Village to discuss a possible Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District for the old downtown area and some vacant land for industrial development.
- ✓ Appointed Brad Johnson to the Beecher Fourth of July Commission.
- ✓ Approved a letter of no objection to Will County for a 34 acre solar farm located on either side of Indiana Avenue between Cottage Grove and Stoney Island Avenue.
- ✓ Approved a four-year strategic plan (2018-2021) and a five year financial plan (FY2018-FY2022) as guidelines for the Village.
- ✓ Approved contracts for the design, bidding and construction management of the Dunbar Street watermain replacement project between Hodges and Indiana Avenue in the amount of \$64,025 to Baxter and Woodman Engineers. Watermain replacement funds will be used for this project.
- ✓ Approved a fuel contract in the amount of \$0.10 over OPIS low rack FOB Chicago for unleaded and diesel fuel for use by all local taxing bodies in Beecher for the coming year. The fuel committee was also given the authority to lock in prices for one year in the event fuel prices start to rise dramatically.
- ✓ Approved a partnership agreement with the Will County Forest Preserve for the 2018 season.

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 YouTube.

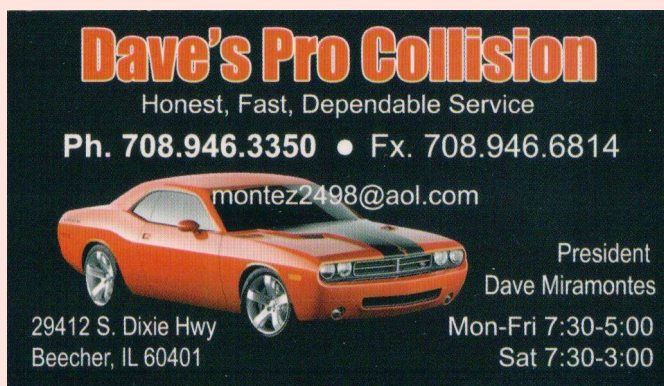


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VILLAGE BRUSH COLLECTION PROGRAM

The 2018 brush collection program began on April 2nd. Brush pick-up will occur every Monday and will continue through November. To ensure your brush is collected by the Village, you are asked to follow the rules below:

1. Brush is to be placed out to the roadside by 7:30 a.m. on collection day. Brush put out the same day of pick-up is not guaranteed to be collected that week.
2. Grass clippings, leaves or mulch mixed with brush WILL NOT BE PICKED UP. Grass clippings, leaves and mulch should be disposed of in yard waste bags except in the fall when the Village collects leaves with a leaf machine.
3. Brush pick-up is intended for branches removed during routine trimming or due to storm damage. Entire trees that have been taken down by a private resident or contractor will not be picked up by the Village.

These rules are set in place to provide an efficient and cost effective brush collection program for Village residents. Any questions about this program should be directed to the Village Hall. Thank you for your cooperation!

YARD WASTE BAGS



Collection of yard waste bags by Homewood/Star/A&J Disposal resumed April 2nd. Yard waste bags may be placed at the curb for regular Monday pick-up until the end of November. Yard waste bags should not be placed out to the curb for pick-up prior to 5:00 p.m. the day before pick-up. Residents must use bags with the Homewood/Star/A&J Disposal logo on them or purchase a sticker to put on other brands of yard waste bags. The cost of the bag includes the fee for disposal of the yard waste. Bags can be purchased at various local businesses and at the Village Hall. The Village Hall charges \$2.75 per bag and \$2.40 per sticker. Yard waste bags without the Homewood/Star/A&J Disposal logo/sticker will not be picked up.

MOSQUITO CONTROL PROGRAM

It's that time of the year again! The Public Works Department will begin spraying for mosquitos on Thursday evenings beginning at the end of April. Sprayings will begin around dusk and be completed by around 1:00 a.m. Spraying can only be conducted when the weather conditions meet certain criteria. Temperature, wind speed, and precipitation may prevent a spraying on Thursday evening. If this is the case, spraying may be delayed until Friday evening or pushed ahead to Wednesday evening. Weekly spraying will continue through September unless mosquito counts are low.

During mosquito spraying we want to remind you to keep children away from the spray fog cloud directly behind our spray trucks. If you have asthma or any other type of breathing problems, you may want to remain inside with doors and windows closed during application in your area. It is important to note that the chemicals used for the Village's mosquito program are non-toxic to humans and animals.

ANNUAL WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASE ON MAY WATER BILLING AND ANNUAL REFUSE RATE INCREASE ON JULY WATER BILLING



The annual water and sewer rate increase will be reflected on the May 2018 water bill. Water rates will be increased by 10 cents per thousand gallons and sewer rates by 10 cents per thousand gallons effective March 1st. These annual increases were previously implemented to keep up with rising costs for chemicals, testing supplies, electric, natural gas and other materials needed for keeping the water and sewer systems running. The overall increase for a resident who uses 8,000 gallons or less of water will be \$1.60 per billing period.

If you live in one of the newer subdivisions and pay a Lift Station (LS) charge on your water bill, the lift station charge will also increase by 2 cents per thousand gallons of water used.

An annual refuse rate increase will be reflected on the July 2018 water bill. The refuse rate will increase by \$1.00 per billing. In March of 2013 the Village negotiated a new 10-year contract with Star/Homewood Disposal for refuse and recycling collection services. These annual increases are necessary to keep up with rising landfill tipping fees, maintenance, and manpower costs associated with these services. However, entering into a 10-year agreement has enabled us to lock into fixed rates even if costs increase further than anticipated.

VILLAGE CONDUCTING WATER CONSUMER SURVEY

Village Required to Survey Effectiveness of Cross-Connection Prevention Program

The Village is required by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to provide its water customers an opportunity to answer some questions about their use of the Village water supply and internal plumbing connections. Please take a minute to circle the correct responses below and return it to the Village Hall at 625 Dixie Hwy/PO Box 1154, Beecher, IL 60401 or scan and email to drooney@villageofbeecher.org

If you have any questions about this survey, please call the Public Works Department at 946-3636 or the Village Hall at 946-2261. Thank you for your cooperation.

*Harold "Bud" Cowger
Supt. Of Public Works*

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SOURCE,
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WATER CONNECTION SURVEY

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

1. Is your home connected to another source of water other than the Village's water system, such as a private well or cistern, which shares the same plumbing? (Circle one)

Yes No
2. Do you have a boiler/hot water heat?

Yes No
3. Do you have a fire sprinkler system in your home or building?

Yes No
4. If you answered "no" to all the questions above, skip this question.
If you answered "yes" to any of the questions above, do you have a backflow prevention device installed on your plumbing which provides a fixed air gap separating the Village's water service from your internal plumbing?

Yes No

**Please return this survey to the Beecher Village Hall by May 30, 2018.
Return to 625 Dixie Highway/PO Box 1154, Beecher, IL 60401
or scan and email to drooney@villageofbeecher.org.**

Thanks again for your cooperation!



Do you Know Where the Water in Your Storm Drain Goes? To Your Local River or Stream...

Even though you live miles from a river or stream, you may be polluting it without knowing it. Before you pour anything into the gutter or down the drain, stop and think! Storm drains go directly into channels and creeks, rivers and streams.

Did You Know...

- that one pint of motor oil can produce an oil slick of approximately one acre on the surface of water?
- that dumping anything in the storm drain system is illegal and harmful to the environment?

How Does the Village of Beecher's Storm Drain System Work?

Unlike the sewer system, which carries water from your indoor drains to wastewater treatment plants, the storm drain system releases untreated water into channels, streams and rivers. To insure the safety and enjoyment of our environment, everyone's help is needed to keep the storm drain system free from harmful pollutants. (Source: Orange County, California)

Healthy Household Habits for Clean Water

Lawn and Garden

- Use pesticides and fertilizers **sparingly**. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Avoid application if the forecast calls for rain; otherwise, chemicals will be washed into your local stream.
- Select **native** plants and grasses that are drought- and pest-resistant. Native plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.
- **Sweep up** yard debris, rather than hosing areas down. Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- Don't overwater your lawn. Water during the **cool** times of the day, and don't let water run off into the storm drain.
- Cover piles of dirt and mulch being used in landscaping projects to prevent these pollutants from blowing or washing off your yard and into local waterbodies. **Vegetate** bare spots in your yard to prevent soil erosion.

***Storm drains connect to waterbodies!
Remember: Only rain down the drain!***

To learn more or report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the *Village of Beecher* at 708-946-2261. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater or www.epa.gov/nps



BEECHER FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION JUST AROUND THE CORNER! Stage is set for "American Dream" Theme

It is hard to believe that this will be the 18th year since the Fourth of July Commission was formed to take over the reins of the festival from the Beecher Volunteer Fire Department. This will also be the 92nd year of the festival, which began in 1926. Same spot, same festival. A Beecher tradition; one of the few that remain. Grandparents who now take their grandkids to the carnival or the parade remember going when they were children. Research indicates that the festival may have started as early as 1905 when it was called the Firemen's Picnic, but the first official car giveaway happened in 1926. Were there even cars to give away in 1905?

Enough of the past, let's talk about the future. The parade theme this year is "The American Dream." Float designs will be using the best of imaginations to meet this theme. The Fourth of July is on a Wednesday this year, so the Commission has grudgingly agreed to a five day festival starting at 3pm on Saturday, June 30th. Please note the later afternoon openings this year. This was done to avoid the heat of the day, give the volunteers some time off and to keep the number of hours of the festival about the same even with the additional day. The entertainment schedule is also set, and the first Beecher appearance of the band "Sixteen Candles" will occur on Monday, July 2nd. The Commission has been trying for a long time to book this band and it is finally going to happen this year! More wristband times have been added by the carnival as well. Here is the schedule in more detail. Make your plans now to party in the park!

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

Saturday, June 30th - 3 pm to Midnight

2:45 pm - Kiddie and pet parade (line-up at 2:30 pm)
3-5 pm - June's Got the Cash on main stage
3-6 pm - Prairie 4-H Farm Expo
3-7 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
3-10 pm - Bingo
3-10 pm - Festival Market
7-11 pm - \$20 wrist bands
7-11 pm - Hat Guys on main stage
11 pm - Early bird car drawing

Sunday, July 1st - 3 pm to 11:30 p.m.

3-6 pm - Dixie Crush on main stage
3-6 pm - Prairie 4-H Farm Expo
3-7 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
3-7 pm - Will County Forest Preserve Reptile Exhibit
3-10 pm - Bingo
3-10 pm - Festival Market
4-7 pm - Chamber of Commerce Pork Chop Dinner
7-11 pm - \$20 wrist bands
7:45-11 pm - Final Say on main stage
11 pm - Early bird car drawing

Monday, July 2nd - 6 pm to 11 pm

6-10 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
6-10 pm - Bingo
6-10 pm - Festival Market
3-6 pm - Prairie 4-H Farm Expo
8-10 pm - Sixteen Candles on main stage
10 pm - Early bird car drawing

Tuesday, July 3rd - 6 pm to Midnight

6-10 pm - \$20 Wrist bands
6-10 pm - Bingo
6-10 pm - Festival Market
7:30-11 pm - ARRA on main stage
11 pm - Early bird car drawing

Wednesday, July 4th - 12 Noon to Midnight

7-7:50 am - Lions Club 5K Run/Walk Registration
8:15 am - Lions Club 5K Run/Walk begins
12 pm - Carnival, car stand and Festival Market open
(all other stands open after parade)
Noon-3 pm - \$20 wrist bands
2-3:30 pm - Parade line-up and registration
3 pm - Float judging
4 pm - Parade
6-9 pm - Bingo
7:30-11 pm - Kingfish on main stage
9:30 pm - Fireworks
11 pm - Car drawing



Kiddie & Pet Parade 2017



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UPCOMING EVENTS



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New Location: 600 block of Gould Street



Bicycle Rodeo • June 2nd in Firemen's Park

Chamber of Commerce Garage Sale Days • June 8-9

4th of July Celebration • June 30 - July 4 in Firemen's Park

Beecher Lions Club Annual Summerfest • August 4th in Firemen's Park