

THE BEECHER BULLETIN

"Your Village Newsletter"

Spring 2022

Inside this issue:

Behind the Badge	4
Board Meeting Highlights	6,7
Brush Collection	9
Code Enforcement	3
Concert Series (Insert)	
Farmer's Market (Insert)	8
4th of July Festival (Insert)	
Gould/Penfield Projects	1
Lock Your Car	3
Severe Weather	2
Upcoming Events	10
Village President's Corner	2
Water/Sewer Rate Increase	5
Yard Waste	9

Village of Beecher

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Marcy Meyer **President**

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Donna Rooney *Treasurer*

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Terrence Lemming Chief of Police

Matt Conner Supt. of Public Works

GOULD STREET AND PENFIELD STREET PROJECT UPDATES

GOULD STREET WATERMAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT BEGINS THIS SUMMER

(120 year old steel pipe to be replaced)

After being on the drawing board since 2018, this project is finally set to begin this summer. M&J Underground of Monee was awarded the \$1,222,000 contract and the project is mostly funded with a \$967,000 grant from the State of Illinois Fast Track Infrastructure Grant Program. This project also involves replacing the old mains located underneath the railroad tracks with new pipe in a steel casing. This will add to the safety

and integrity of the rail crossings. The water tower will not be taken out of service during construction; a bypass main will be used to keep pressure in the system during the replacement project. Water quality, reliability and water flows will be greatly enhanced in this area once the project is completed. The Village will be using \$341,000 in income received from watermain replacement charges and COVID 19 grant funds to pay for its portion of the project and construction management. The project is expected to be completed later this year.



PENFIELD STREET REHABILITATION PROJECT TO BE LET FOR BIDS

(full construction may not be complete until the Fall of 2023)

This project began with a Phase I environmental assessment in 2013 and after ten years of federal procurement requirements for obtaining easements and rights of way, Army Corp. of Engineers and IEPA sign off, historic preservation approvals for the bridge replacement, and the securing of a total of \$5.5 million in funding, this project is finally going to bid in June. Once the lowest compliant bid is approved the bridge will have to be ordered and will then be shipped in sections to the site



by truck. The old bridge will then be removed and replaced. This process may take six months which means the remainder of the project may not begin until the Spring of 2023. In the Summer of 2022, ComEd, Nicor and AT+T will be moving their utilities further off the roadway to accommodate the new roadway. The new parking lot east of the post office will also be constructed perhaps by this Fall. This project now includes the resurfacing of Gould Street from Penfield to Indiana.

There are many moving pieces to this project but it will get done. Many residents who live along the road have put up with crumbling or uneven sidewalks and bumpy road conditions and have heard nothing but promises and delays. Then there are the many inconveniences that construction brings. However, the finished product will greatly improve the appearance of Penfield Street and should improve property values as well.



VILLAGE PRESIDENT'S CORNER.

Happy Spring! Even though it doesn't feel like Spring right now, we are hard at work planning for the Spring and Summer.

First of all, our Facebook page is undergoing a change! Due to Facebook's change to Meta Business Suite, we must reconfigure the page. As a result, our page address will change and we are asking everyone to Like it again. You can search for it under "Village of Beecher, IL". We are forced to make the change before the end of April, but we will post links on all the local Beecher pages so you can find it and follow it more easily.

It's been a busy year. Our Village Board sponsored the first concert in the park last October and the concert series will continue this year. We have chosen a large variety of music for the park such as: rock, country, Latin jazz fusion, big band, and polka music. Our concert series is described in greater detail later in this newsletter and will focus on "Something for Everyone." Please come out for every concert and provide your feedback for next year.

We are happy to announce that we have a new Code Enforcement Officer, Dave Harrison. Dave is extremely knowledgeable and thorough and is diligently enforcing our codes, but he is a great guy and if he sees a violation, he is happy to explain why it is a violation and to work with the property owner to achieve compliance. Give him a wave when you see his car (or hide, depending on what's in your driveway)!

I've always been committed to better communication with the residents. Part of this, I feel, is explaining some of the issues that we vote on that aren't easily described. Due to the diligence of our board a few years ago, we established a Capital Equipment Sinking Fund for Public Works. Our Finance Committee is currently working out the details to implement one for our Police Department. As a small town it's difficult to finance large equipment and vehicles when they are needed. These Funds work as savings accounts. Surplus funds set up the initial account and when we need a large piece of equipment, we use the money set aside in that fund to purchase it. After the purchase, that department makes payments on the equipment but instead of having to pay a bank, they repay the fund to save up money for the next purchase. This way, the village is able to purchase equipment without raising taxes.

Lastly, we have procured a vehicle for the 4th of July Festival! Due to the lack of vehicles, we opted for something anyone can use, rather than a sports car. This year, we are raffling a Chevrolet Trailblazer and we have set up a website where you can purchase tickets remotely, as well as at the Village Hall and many local businesses. Follow our new Facebook page or the Beecher 4th of July Commission's Facebook page for details.

Enjoy your Summer!

Marcy Meyer

Village President

BEECHER EMA CORNER

With severe weather season approaching, it's important to pay attention to your local weather forecasts and alerts. The Beecher EMA (Emergency Management Agency) team will help as weather spotters on days that threatening weather is forecasted for our area. If conditions are right, Laraway Communications 911 Center (Our 911 Center) or the EMA team can set off the tornado siren. If you hear the siren, you need to seek shelter in a basement, a cellar, or a small interior room on the lowest level. Stay away from windows, doors and outside walls. If you are driving and need to take shelter, do not go under overpasses or bridges. You are safer in a low flat location. Be informed and stay safe!



DON'TBE AN EASY TARGET

LOCK YOUR CAR & TAKE YOUR KEYS

Never Leave Valuables In Sight

LOCK YOUR CAR, TAKE YOUR KEYS

One of the more recent trends that criminals are focusing on is burglaries to unlocked vehicles. Car burglars know that if they break a car window to enter a car, it might wake the homeowner, so they don't break the window, they target unlocked cars instead.

I know it's hard to believe in this day and age that some people don't lock their car doors, but many don't. This is why car burglaries are so prevalent in Northern Illinois and Indiana.

There now exists numerous organized groups that center on car burglaries in the late night and early morning hours. Many of these groups are from Chicago and they have been known to travel

as far as Beecher. They travel with four or more people in the same car and drop off two people on each block to pull on car door handles. If a car door is unlocked, they take all valuables. If the keys are in the car, they will steal the car. Guns left in unlocked cars have been used in crimes. Some of these car burglars carry guns in case they come upon an unsuspecting car owner.

Beecher is a very safe Village, but we are not safe from these invading crews. To avoid being a victim, simply lock your car doors, take your keys and never leave valuables in your car (especially in view). Don't make yourself an easy target.

Chief Terry Lemming Beecher Police Department

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Village has a new Code Enforcement Officer. David Harrison will be driving the streets of Beecher enforcing code violations including high grass/weeds, illegal parking of campers, boats, trailers as well as other violations. To report a code violation, David can be reached at his office in the Police Department at 708-231-2014 or emailed at dharrison@villageofbeecher.org. If he is out on the street and does not answer, leave him a message and he will call you back.



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Behind The Badge With Beecher Chief of Police Chief Terry Lemming, a man with four decades in law enforcement

Terry Lemming started his career as a police officer in Western Springs in March of 1982, before working with the Burbank Police Department for 7 years. Terry then spent 25 years with the Illinois State Police, starting as a trooper and working his way up to a Lieutenant Colonel managing field operations. After retiring, Terry became the Chief of Lockport for just under 8

years. Currently Terry serves as the Chief of Police in Beecher.

Terry grew up in Chicago and said he never wanted to be a police officer when he was growing up. One of his hobbies was motorcycles, and he would often be pulled over by police when he was a teenager. Knowing this I asked Chief Lemming, What made you choose to be a man of the law? "I didn't care for the police," he said. "I didn't care for the way I was treated." Chief Lemming further stated "I just fell into police work," adding that he didn't even know any police officers when growing up, but felt he could made a difference and being a Police Officer that could make an impact on people lives.

This led Terry to Western Illinois University, where he eventually picked a law enforcement administration major. "I found that I had that degree, and thought, 'what am I going to do now?'," he said. He decided he might as well try to find a job as a police officer.

Chief Lemming said. "I think police are treated really unfairly, 40 years in police work, I've never had an excessive force complaint. There are a very small minority of bad police officers, but the majority of us are doing the right thing all the time."

One accomplishment Chief Lemming says he may be most proud of is developing Lockport Love, a nonprofit that provides temporary assistance to Lockport residents in need. Chief Lemming said. "It drew the community closer to the police and the police closer to the community." Some of Chief Lemming's goals for the Beecher Police Department is to prevent crime and how residents perceive the fear of crime, through better communication. Because Beecher has a very low crime rate, service to the community is very important. Chief Lemming said, "Our residents are our customers and we aim to provide exceptional customer service." He wants to make the department more efficient by utilizing the most modern equipment and increase the training of our officers, which will better serve our residents. Chief Lemming is strong on community relations he wants to have our officers be more involved in the community. He would like residents to know at least one officer by their first name. (PS- and not because they received a ticket).

During our discussion, I asked Chief Lemming to tell me something I may not know about him. "I don't hunt, fish, bowl or golf. When I am not with family or friends, my obsession is motorcycles, riding them in warm weather and building or repairing them in cold weather. I had a motorcycle long before I owned a car. "I have a deep faith in God and Jesus is my guiding light." Before the pandemic, the last time Chief Lemming missed Sunday church service was when his Harley motorcycle broke down at the Michigan Sand Dunes in 1975. "This proves two things beyond my faith, #1, my obsession with motorcycles and #2, I'm old."

Chief Lemming referred to some of the best advice given him was from Major Mark Henry, Illinois State Police: "Always make decisions based upon the

entire unit or department, not based upon one officer's needs or your own." I asked Chief Lemming some more important questions like white shirt or blue shirt. BLUE for sure. "I will work with the officers and learn with them and lead by example. White gets dirty while working and ring around the collar every day you wear it."

Most importantly, Chief Lemming is a very approachable man. So if you are out and about, please take the opportunity to chat with him and learn more. I believe in Terry's dedication to the Village of Beecher and am pleased to have him as our Chief.

ANNUAL WATER & SEWER RATE INCREASES ON MAY, 2022 WATER BILL

WATER



\$64.20 minimum bill for 8,000 gallons of water \$6.40 per 1,000 gallons after 8,000 gallons \$7.40 per 1,000 gallons after 30,000 gallons* (*high capacity user charge)

SEWER \$37.60 minimum bill for 8,000 gallons

\$4.70 per 1,000 gallons over 8,000 gallons

SEWER DEBT SERVICE \$10.00 Flat Fee

REFUSE & RECYCLING \$39.50 (Star Disposal Service)

MOSOUITO ABATEMENT \$2.00

TOTAL MINIMUM BILL FOR NON-LIFT STATION CUSTOMERS: \$153.30

LIFT STATION SURCHARGE \$5.36 minimum bill for 8,000 gallons

\$0.67 per 1,000 gallons over 8,000 gallons (applies to all customers served by a lift station which pumps to the sewer plant)

TOTAL MINIMUM BILL FOR LIFT STATION CUSTOMERS: \$158.66

If you have any questions regarding these rates and fees please contact the Village Hall. Also, if you believe your metered water usage is higher than normal you may have leak. Contact the Village Hall and we can help you go through some steps to verify your usage. A more detailed meter reading may also be required.



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VILLAGE BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were taken by the Beecher Village Board since the Fall of 2021:

- ✓ Approved a contract with Terry Lemming to be the Chief of Police through December 30, 2023.
- ✓ Appointed David Harrison of Beecher as the Code Enforcement Officer.
- ✓ Approved the appointments by the Chief of Police of Aaron Dacorte to the rank of Sergeant and Brian Fravel to the rank of Corporal.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of computer network upgrades for the Police Department from Todd's Techies in the amount of \$3,643.44.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of a new evidence tracking and auditing software system for \$5,249.
- ✓ Authorized the lease-purchase of five new in-car video systems for the patrol cars that can be connected with body cameras at a future date. The total cost of this project is \$46,732.
- ✓ Applied for \$250,000 in IDOT Safe Routes to Schools grant funds for installing new sidewalk in residential subdivisions where there are gaps.
- ✓ Approved a Summer concert series in Firemen's Park for 2022.
- ✓ Authorized a loan agreement in the amount of \$254,000 at 1.91% for 10 years from First Community Bank and Trust for the splash pad project in Firemen's Park.
- ✓ Entered into a new four-year intergovernmental agreement for the joint purchase of fuel with the Fire District, School District and Washington Township. These taxing bodies share a fuel system located at the Washington Township Highway Department.
- ✓ Approved an intergovernmental agreement with the Trim Creek Drainage District #3 for the installation, operation and maintenance of a new bridge for Penfield Street.
- ✓ Learned that the new population of the Village is 4,713 which is 354 more than the 2010 Census count of 4,359.
- ✓ Approved the installation of license plate readers at all entrances to the Village for the safety and security of Village residents. The readers are automatically connected to all patrol cars and officer phones. Other agencies will be sharing the information as well. A two-year agreement was approved for the system with a three-year extension at the discretion of the Village at a cost of \$27,500 per year.
- ✓ Recognized Detective Andy Leroy for his 20 years of service to the Village.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of a 2022 Ford Utility Police Interceptor for \$39,000 in hopes that it would arrive during the next budget cycle.
- ✓ Approved the installation of a new video monitoring system in Firemen's Park, giving police officers a bird's eye view of most of the property.
- ✓ Adopted a strategic plan for the Village of Beecher for the years 2022 through 2025.
- ✓ Approved a 10-year extension of a development agreement with the successor owner for the Preserve at Cardinal Creek Subdivision.

- ✓ Approved a tax levy for 2021 collectible in 2022 which included a 2% increase.
- ✓ Approved a financing plan to pay for the Village's 20% share of the Penfield street STP Project which includes a combination of borrowing from future motor fuel tax revenues and the use of motor fuel tax reserves.
- ✓ Accepted the audit for the year ending April 30, 2021 with an unqualified opinion and no adverse findings.
- ✓ Approved an upgrade to the Beecher weather warning siren system allowing for direct activation by the National Weather Service IPAWS system.
- ✓ Approved a five-year financial plan for the Village for fiscal years 2022-2026.
- ✓ Learned that the Village's IMRF pension fund was over-funded allowing for a rate decrease from 8.16% to 4.57% of total full-time payroll for 2022.
- ✓ Authorized the purchase of a water operator pick-up truck in the amount of \$38,829 from Terry's Ford to replace the 1984 P30 van purchased from the Village of Flossmoor in 1992.
- ✓ Approved an application in the amount of \$11,970 for a DCEO grant of \$1.3 million to rehab the Gould Street downtown area. The project will require a 20% local match.
- ✓ Approved the purchase of a 2017 Ford Explorer for use by EMA. Proceeds from the sale of several older vehicles will be used to make this purchase.
- ✓ Approved the application for a special use permit to the PZC for an animated LED monument sign to be located in front of the Village Hall. The estimated cost of this project is \$70,000 and will be funded with federal ARPA funds.
- ✓ Approved the purchase of a golf cart for the police and EMA for \$10,000. The cart will be paid for with asset forfeiture funds.
- ✓ Indefinitely tabled consideration of a home rule referendum after much discussion.
- ✓ Approved a monthly stipend of \$150 for the Code Enforcement Officer to use his own car for Village business.
- ✓ Approved the lowest bid submitted by M+J Underground of Monee in the amount of \$1,222,300 for the replacement of mains on Gould Street and under the railroad tracks.
- ✓ Amended the video gaming ordinance in the Village to conform with state law and adopted a \$250 annual fee per device.
- ✓ Selected Groskreutz, Abraham, Eshleman and Gerretse, LLC of Kankakee as auditing firm for the next three years. Eight firms submitted proposals.
- ✓ Purchased the vacant lot at 652 Penfield Street for \$3,500 since a portion was needed for an easement for the new bridge in the Penfield Street STP project and seller owed back taxes on the parcel. The delays on the project were costing more than the Village's purchase price and adjusting the project to accommodate no further easements would cost over \$30,000.
- ✓ Purchased 5.81 acres on Church Road from east of the car wash on Dixie to Saddle Run in the amount of \$125,000 for planning a new police station on the property to serve the current and future needs of the Village.

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. The link to the Village YouTube Channel can be found on the Village Website.





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WE'RE GLOBAL



YARD WASTE BAG COLLECTION

Residents may use <u>any retail paper yard waste bags</u> as long as they display a green Homewood/Star Disposal sticker. The Village no longer sells Star Disposal bags. The green stickers are sold at Beecher Hardware, Walt's Food Center and the Beecher Village Hall. If you still have some Homewood/Star Disposal yard waste bags on hand, you can continue to use them and they do not require a green sticker.

If you'd prefer to not use the paper bags or have a lot of yard waste each year, Homewood/Star Disposal also offers yard waste cart rental. The price of the cart has been reduced to \$170 per year for unlimited yard waste. Contact Homewood/Star Disposal directly for cart rental. Their website is https://mydisposal.com/towns/beecher-garbage and their phone number is 708-748-8381. You will be billed directly from Homewood/Star Disposal for cart rental.

- ♦ Yard waste Season is April 1st thru November 30th
- ◆ Yard waste can be placed in brown paper yard waste bags with a Star Disposal Sticker or in yard waste carts.
- ♦ Yard waste cannot be placed inside plastic garbage bags.
- ♦ Yard waste bags and containers cannot exceed 50 pounds each and should be able to be reasonably lifted by one person.
- Yard waste will be picked up on regularly scheduled garbage days.



VILLAGE BRUSH COLLECTION PROGRAM

The 2022 brush collection program has begun. **Brush pick-up will occur every Tuesday** (weather permitting) and continue until the last Tuesday in September. To ensure your brush is collected by the Village, you are asked to follow the rules below:

- 1. Brush bundles are to be placed out to the roadside by 6:30 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, stones or mulch mixed with brush <u>WILL NOT BE PICKED UP</u>. Grass clippings, leaves, thorns and mulch should be disposed of in yard waste bags. Absolutely NO root balls on bushes or shrubs, as this will damage the equipment.
- 3. Brush bundles should not exceed 4' wide x 4' tall x 6' long. There must be 2' between each pile if more than one bundle is to be picked up. Brush is to be stacked in bundles in a neat manner. If brush is not stacked in a neat manner, it will NOT be picked up. All cut ends are to face street in the same direction. All smaller brush piles shall be tied with twine or placed in cans for the crew to dump into chipper.
- 4. 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 resident or private contractor will <u>NOT</u> 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. For more details visit https://www.villageofbeecher.org/residents/brush-collection-rules/

Thank you for your cooperation!









Village of Beecher

625 Dixle Highway / P.O. Box 1154 Beecher, IL 60401

Village Hall Hours

Monday thru Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Village Hall Phone

946-2261

Emergency Police & Fire 9-1-1

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Washington Township Center, 30200 Town Center Road

Community Clean Up Day Saturday, April 30th

Beecher Farmer's Market 2nd and 4th Saturdays - May thru October 625 Dixie Hwy (Village Hall parking lot)

Concert Series in Firemen's Park
(See details inside newsletter)

Chamber of Commerce Garage Sale DaysJune 2-4

(beecherchamber.org)

