

VILLAGE OF ATHENS NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED AS A SERVICE TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGE OF ATHENS
DECEMBER 2021

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Board meetings held on the 4th Monday of the month at 7pm in the Village Board Room

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Another year is almost under our belts. Another unusual year with Covid still making an impact, but not as bad as the year prior. Hopefully, we're beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

A lot has happened Village-wise and a lot is still happening. The committee members did a good job informing you of what's happening in each of their departments, but if you have any questions, please reach out to them or me. Better to have the facts than to speculate. You should know that the board is doing a great job in maintaining and upgrading our Village and trying to make the least impact on your taxes. We have used some state and federal funds allocated to us wisely and reduced the cost of some major projects. We will continue to use your tax dollars wisely and continue to reach out for additional funding from State and Federal sources.

We strive to keep services available to you such as yard waste disposal and venues for celebration (Parks and Community Hall). For the majority of you, you appreciate and use these wisely. But we have a small portion of people who abuse these, mainly the illegal dumping of their garbage. We have to hire a company to grind and chip our refuse from the yard waste and to get rid of the remains. Because of the illegal and careless use by a few, it makes it more costly or impossible to get rid of. In other cases at parks, we have illegal dumping in the dumpster. This all costs the taxpayers and the Village dollars that could be used better in other areas. Please, if you see some of this, report it to the Village office or myself or one of the board members. Be assured that the board is giving this a lot of consideration and debate, which could include limited hours or complete closure of the yard waste site. We need your cooperation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who help out in the Village. I don't want to use names for fear I would miss someone and they would be offended. Just know that whoever you are or whatever you do, whether it is cleaning up, decorating, watching over our facilities, we and Villagers notice and appreciate what you do. We could not be who we are without your help. I want to thank all the who people who decorate during the holidays – you make our Village look very friendly and festive and though you may not realize it, you bring joy to a lot of people who see this.

I would like to thank our employees for all they do. I know they are paid workers, but what most of you don't see is all the extras that they do. They care for and take great pride in their jobs and the Village. They continually amaze me!

As most of you know, I had a great loss this year and feel like a part of me is gone. The reason I mention this to you is because I've always felt that Athens is a special, close, and caring community. At the time of my loss, I could not believe the outpouring of care and comfort provided to me by the people of this community. This just reinforces my belief that we are close, caring community and that we are the best community to live and raise a family.

Merry Christmas to all and hoping for a happy and prosperous New Year. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the holidays. Enjoy friends and family and remember the reason for the season.

I have been honored to serve you as Village President. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Chuck Kornack, Village President

VILLAGE OFFICIALS PHONE GUIDE

Village President: Chuck Kornack 715-257-7657

Trustees:

Dwight Lenhard	715-257-9922	Randy Decker	715-571-6503	Chris Perkins	715-574-6435
Jessica McCord	715-571-0615	Tami Schreiner	715-218-0329	Tracy Westfall	715-257-2072



The Village has created a Facebook page...please be sure to "like us" to get up to date information on happenings around the Village!

To contact the Police Department

If there is no one in the office and you wish to leave a message...please call **257-7611** and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

If you wish to speak to an officer immediately, please contact the Marathon County Sheriff's Dept. @ **261-7794**

PARKS & PUBLIC WELFARE

Great things happened with the Parks Committee this year! Thank you to the Athens Lions Club for their large donation to purchase new playground equipment for Memorial Park. Thank you to Tami Schreiner for going to pick it up!

The committee also approved using the old Ice Road trail located in Erbach Park as a potential ATV/UTV trail. However, recently Marathon County opened up Hwy M to ATV/UTV use so this eliminates the need for the Erbach Park trail.

The Park Committee has also been working with the AATA in regards to a bike trail that will be going through Athens called The Big Poniatowski trail. Iron Bull approached the committees earlier in the year with this great idea. The trail should be live in spring/summer of 2022!

Thank you to AATA for all the work you do in maintaining the trails throughout the parks and beyond, you are appreciated! There are some wonderful things in the works for the upcoming year, so be on the lookout!
Jessica McCord, Committee Chairman
Tracy Westfall & Dwight Lenhard, Committee Member

WATER & SEWER

James Orr Coating Inspection was hired to facilitate the bidding and oversee the Interior Wet, Dry Interior and Exterior Painting and Modifications of the Village's 150,000 Gallon Water Tower. The project includes exterior tower work (spot blast rusted areas on tank bowl and coat), Interior wet work (full blast and coat), Interior dry work (partial blast and coat), Pit piping (blast and coat), modifying over-flow pipe and furnishing and installing a wet roof hatch gasket. Other work will include furnishing and installing chlorine injector into fill pipe in base bell area, furnish and installing safety boiler plugs in roof, demo of existing concrete sidewalk and installing new concrete to slope away from tank. New aviation wiring, outlets, led lights will also be furnished.

The construction start date is anticipated on or before May 15, 2022. The final completion date is October 31, 2022 but the total number of days the water tower maybe out of service is for 60 days. You may experience low water pressure from time to time during this time period but water quality will not be affected.

MSA Professional Services was hired to complete and submit this report to fulfill the WPDES permit requirement for a Preliminary Phosphorus Compliance Alternatives Plan (Year 3). This plan includes preliminary recommendation of a phosphorus compliance alternative for the Village of Athens WWTF. This Preliminary Compliance Alternatives Plan report evaluates several alternatives available to permittees to achieve compliance with water quality based effluent limits (WQBELs), including a Multi-Discharger Variance, an Individual Hardship (Economic) Variance, Mechanical Upgrade (Construction of a Tertiary Treatment unit at the WWTF or Chemical Addition), Watershed-Based Compliance Alternatives (Adaptive Management or Water Quality Trading) and Avoidance (Land/groundwater application)
Chris Perkins, Committee Chairman
Randy Decker & Jessica McCord, Committee Members

PUBLIC PROPERTY COMMITTEE

In last year's newsletter I reported limited spending for Public Property due to the reconstruction of Caroline Street. That all changed in September as the committee prepared for its 2022 budget. The plan was to replace the aging one ton truck and plow next year but after doing some research, it became evident that the availability for a new unit would be difficult to predict. With that information, it was decided to immediately purchase a 2021 Dodge 3500 with a stainless dump body that would meet our needs and was on a local dealerships lot. All that was needed was to have a plow and some accessories mounted.

This summer Randy Decker did an analysis of many of the village buildings and noted needed repairs. After discussing some priorities, the Board decided to renovate a well house, installing a new roof, siding and door, also a new roof on the blower building at the treatment plant and did various minor repairs on other buildings.

The upper windows on the east side of the Community Hall were finally replaced and look really good.

Most village residents may not know this, but a version of the Energizer Rabbit resides in Athens and is a first year trustee for the village. Tracy Westfall has been on a virtual crusade to clean up and spruce up our village with her painting and decorating. She began by scraping and painting the bandstand. Next she repainted the metal benches in front of the Municipal Building as well as the accents on the building's façade. After that was completed, she painted the large logo on the south end of the square and with some help from the Honor Society, cleaned and painted the concrete "Welcome to Athens" sign in the Athens Park. Tracy noted the condition of the bathrooms at the ball diamond and Memorial Park and in short order gave them all some new colors. Finally, she found time to repaint a large steel gate spanning the Ice Road at Erbach Park. Tracy deserves a big thanks for her dedicated service to the village.

Looking ahead to 2022, the committee proposes some repair work on the Jensen Street reservoir and well house down by the creek. There is also a possibility of replacing some doors on the Community Hall.

The last bit of noteworthy news is the villages involvement with Progress Athens, a group of area citizens, which would like to acquire the US Bank building and donate it to the village for the offices and library. The committee will be in communications with the organization to achieve a goal of putting a great building back to use and also modify the existing Municipal Building to provide accessible bathrooms and possibly other amenities to enhance the Community Hall.

Hopefully 2022 will be a good year allowing us to complete our various projects.

Dwight Lenhard, Public Property Chairman
Chris Perkins & Tami Schreiner, Committee Member

FIRE & POLICE COMMITTEE

The Athens Area Fire Commission consists of over 30 volunteer fire fighters. Your tax dollars go towards keeping the fire department operational right here in our Village and for the Townships of Bern, Halsey, Johnson, Rietbrock and Frankfort. They comprise of a very unique "cooperation" in having six entities all working together to serve our area communities.

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They take pride in their work and are truly small town proud. Our Ambulance crew is also top notch and continue to meet the demands of ongoing training requirements to remain operational locally. Any persons interested in pursuing the necessary training to assist and be a part of the fire or ambulance crews should contact Fire Chief Brian Lavicka or Ambulance Chief Tom Treweek or Assistant Chief Judy Weise. A new tanker was purchased--watch for it--should be arriving in early 2022.

The Athens police department currently consists of one full time and four part time officers. At this time, the police are appropriately staffed to serve the daily and weekend shifts. This year and for the next two years, new hand-held radios are being budgeted for purchase. Reserves are placed aside annually to pay for a new patrol car which will be replaced in a couple of years. The officers encourage anyone to report any suspicious or unwarranted activity. Let's keep the Village looking good and safe together.

I have a great deal of respect for these two departments and am honored to be a chairperson representing them on behalf of the Village. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve. I remain available to answer any questions, or address fire and police issues. You may contact the Village clerk, or me, directly at any time.

Tracy Westfall, Committee Chairman

Randy Decker & Jessica McCord, Committee Member

FINANCE & PERSONNEL

This is was my first year as being chair of the Finance & Personnel Committee. We had an opening for a part time lawn mowing position this summer. We held interviews and hired Dexter Niskanen. He did a great job and likes working in our community.

We had the task of reviewing the mil rate and discussion of tax increases. It was decided to implement a tax increase of 4.4% or \$0.3051/1000. This is necessary to keep up with the increase of costs, as well as looking into the future with the projects we have listed in our future plans.

I enjoy being a part of the Village Board and look forward to the next year!

Tami Schreiner, Committee Chairman

Dwight Lenhard & Chris Perkins, Committee Members

STREET COMMITTEE

It was a busy time on Streets in Spring. After several winter meetings, the committee decided to do Caroline Street from Hwy 97 to Kreutzer Street, replacing curb and gutter, sidewalk, new blacktop and narrow the street by 5' on the west side of the north block. We decided to narrow the street to lessen the steepness of the sidewalk on the north end which also widened the boulevard making lawn mowing easier for the owners. We changed the parking on this this street so that when 2 cars meet in front of Trinity Church, they can pass more safely. The Village received approx. \$40,000 grant through the Local Road Improvement Program to help with the cost of this street project.

The Board approved the street extension of High Street to the west for new home lots. The street extension was done per Village Ordinance including cul-de-sac, culverts and rip rap.

All costs for the street extension were paid for by the Developer. The street was extended approx.1,000 lineal feet to the west from the existing street that was in place before.

You may have noticed the trees that were removed by the Degner Street Bridge. The trees and brush were hanging over the street and the creek bed had a lot of dead trees that were blocking the 4 big culverts and the bridge opening that would affect water flow during a heavy rain so those were removed.

The Village did some ditching in the alley behind the Hardware Store which also included some new culverts that were paid for by the homeowners.

Plisch Street is the targeted street project for 2022. This would be a pulverize and pave project along with some curb repairs. Also in 2022 we hope to crush the concrete and blacktop pile by the old dump site on East Degner Street.

Randy Decker, Committee Chairman

Tami Schreiner & Tracy Westfall, Committee Member

****Garbage/Recycling monthly pickup rates will be increasing to \$13.35 on December 31, 2021****

****Effective January 1, 2022, water rates will be increasing by 3% and sewer rates will be increasing 5%.**

NOTICE

Village Tax Collection Hours

Monday thru Friday: 7:30AM TO 11:30AM AND 12:30PM TO 4PM. THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24TH, MONDAY, DECEMBER 27TH AND MONDAY, JANUARY 3RD.

If paying with cash, please bring exact amount! You can also mail your taxes to the Village of Athens, P.O. Box 220, Athens, WI 54411 or drop it in the payment drop box at the Municipal Building.

*****Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like a receipt returned to you**

RENTALS

Athens Community Hall

Resident: \$25/hr or \$250/day + \$100 deposit.

Non-Resident: \$30/hr or \$300/day + \$100 deposit.

(deposit is refundable if cleaned up after use)

Athens Village Park

Resident Rate: \$80/day

Non-Resident Rate: \$100/day

Erbach Park

Resident Rate: \$100/day

Non-Resident Rate: \$150/day

RESERVATIONS CAN BE MADE BY

CALLING/EMAILING THE CLERK'S OFFICE

VILLAGE OF ATHENS SNOW & ICE REMOVAL POLICY

Within 24 hours after the cessation of any fall of sleet or snow, it shall be the duty of the owners and/or the occupants of any lot or parcel of land to remove the snow or sleet from any and all sidewalks adjacent to the premises of such owner or occupant, and to keep the same free and clear of snow and ice for the **FULL** width of the sidewalk. If the owner/occupant fails to remove the snow or sleet (ice) from the sidewalks, Village employees shall remove the snow/ice and assess a fee of **\$75/hr with minimum charge of \$75** against the owner for the cost of removing the ice/snow.

Attention Dog Owners

Wisconsin State Law Requires All dogs to be vaccinated against rabies and to be licensed. Property owners may pay for dog license when paying property taxes or in Village Clerk's Office. Licenses will be issued after the fee and proof that the dog has been vaccinated has been furnished.

RATES For Dog Licenses Are:

Neutered/Spayed Dogs.....\$ 5.00
Males/Females 10.00
Puppy M or F\$2.50 or 5.00

BUILDING PERMITS

Anyone planning on building a new house or structure, remodeling or doing alterations to existing buildings in the Village of Athens, shall apply for a permit from Ben Brooks, (257-7183) to obtain such a permit. No work should proceed until the permit has been issued. No permit is required for construction or repair work with a value of \$1,000 or less. Remember, this dollar figure is based on material and labor costs. Even if you do your own labor, you must include at least a minimum labor cost along with the material cost for permit purposes. Permits are good for 6 months, and projects not having permits displayed for public view, or without permits, can be halted by the inspector or the Police Department.



Snowmobile Trail Access

As in the past, residents will be allowed to travel the roads and alleys to and from their houses, using the most direct route to the trail. The speed limit will be 10 mph and the snowmobiles must yield the right-of-way to other vehicles using the streets and alleys. Snowmobiles are prohibited from traveling on STH 97 (Pine St., Mueller St., and Alfred St.); however, snowmobiles are allowed to cross the highway.

Please realize it only takes one problem snowmobile rider to ruin this privilege for the residents. Therefore, it is important that if you see violations/abuse of this privilege, that you collect what information you can and report it to the Athens Police Department.