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THE SWANSEA REPORT

VOLUME 35, ISSUE 1

January 2020

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REFERENCE THE COMMUNITY CALENDARS ON PAGES 10 & 11 TO REFERENCE EVENTS, IMPORTANT DATES AND MEETINGS.

Village Board Adopts Property Tax Levy For Fiscal Year 2021

On December 23rd, the Village Board passed an ordinance establishing tax levies for all corporate purposes to be levied against all property subject to taxation within the Village for the purpose of providing funds for the fiscal year commencing May 1, 2020 and ending April 30, 2021. Property taxes for the next year are totaling slightly more than \$2.10 million. In the prior years, Swansea began levying for Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) pension costs. The actual annual cost of those pensions is over \$90,000 and, prior to last year, was funded from the General Corporate Fund and other revenue sources. The Village requested \$97,500 in taxes towards the cost of IMRF pensions. Based upon recommendations provided by the Village's actuary, an additional \$151,847.00 was levied towards Police Pensions, while the Fire Pension levy increased by \$1,685.00.

For the third year, the Village has requested \$25,500 in taxes specifically for Public Parks. These funds are intended to be used for capital expenditures for park projects, not for operational costs.

The following is a listing of all property taxes to be levied by the Village of Swansea for the fiscal year commencing May 1, 2020 and ending April 30, 2021:

- General Corporate Purposes: \$217,200.00
- Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund: \$97,500.00
- Municipal Fire Protection: \$155,000.00
- Municipal Fire Pension Fund: \$81,800.00
- Municipal Police Protection: \$203,000.00
- Municipal Police Pension Fund: \$1,301,893.00
- Municipal Auditing Tax: \$10,500.00
- Tort Judgments General and Liability Insurance: \$46,800.00
- Public Parks Tax: \$25,500.00
- Total: \$2,139,193.00

While some might be critical, the Village Board deliberated over the levy at length, and did not take this increase lightly. The Village has consistently tightened its budget and lowered operational costs where it can, balancing that against the need for new revenue streams to fund the ever increasing cost of providing efficient and effective public services.

News Briefs

Govt. Center Closed Jan. 1st & Jan. 20th

Refuse Collection Also Delayed

The Swansea Government Center and all non-emergency services of the Village will be closed on Wed., Jan 1st in observance of New Years Day, and on Monday January 20th, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The New Year's day holiday will also affect trash and recycling collection for residents. Those with a normal collection day on Wednesday, will have collection on Thursday instead. In turn, Thursday routes will be picked up on Friday, Friday routes will be picked up on Saturday.



Christmas Tree Collection

Christmas trees can be dropped off at Melvin Price Park and Schranz Park until January 17. Village staff will collect them until then.



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Republic's 2020 Holiday Schedule

MEMORIAL DAY - May 25, 2020
Residential - Service will run one day behind throughout the holiday week, beginning with services scheduled for the holiday.

INDEPENDENCE DAY - July 04, 2020
Residential - Service will run one day behind throughout the holiday week, beginning with services scheduled for the holiday

LABOR DAY - September 07, 2020
Residential - Service will run one day behind throughout the holiday week, beginning with services scheduled for the holiday.

THANKSGIVING DAY - November 28, 2020
Residential - Service will run one day behind throughout the holiday week, beginning with services scheduled for the holiday.

CHRISTMAS DAY - December 25, 2020
Residential - Service will run one day behind throughout the holiday week, beginning with services scheduled for the holiday.

Swansea Fire Department Lighted Christmas Parade

The Swansea Fire Department Lighted Christmas Parade was a huge success and the Fire Department was glad they could give back to the community with this event. It would have not been possible with out the help of the volunteers and those who had floats in the parade.

Swansea Christmas Program Helps 62 Families

This year the Swansea Family Christmas Program was able to help 62 local families in need. We were able to give the families gift cards from local grocery stores as well as toys that were donated by generous citizens, families, organizations and local businesses. Joel Pierce's local Edward Jones office ran their own toy drive and donated all collected toys for our program. The Metro East Regional Chamber collected toys and donated half to our program and the other half to Caseyville Township. We cannot thank these organizations enough along with Christ Church (Fairview Heights), The Moose Lodge (Swansea), Swansea Women's Fire Auxiliary, and The Senior Van Drivers for Swansea along with so many more generous donors. This event is coordinated and handled through the Village of Swansea but we could not do it without the help of our wonderful volunteers. We'd like to wish abundant blessings in 2020 to those that donated time, money and their expertise. We are forever grateful and appreciative and hope to continue this for many years to come!

Thank you!

Swansea Community Calendar - February 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3 Committee Meetings 6:00pm Govt. Center Village Board Meeting 7:00pm Govt. Center	4	5	6 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center—	7	8 Swansea Park Board Mtg. 7:00am - Norman Lehr Swansea Patriots Mtg. 8:00am—Norman Lehr
9	10	11 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting 6:00pm Govt. Center	12	13 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center—	14	15
16	17 Committee Meetings 6:00pm Govt. Center Village Board Meeting 7:00pm Govt. Center	18	19	20 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center—	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center—	28	29

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1/4 page horizontal = 2" high x 7.5" wide:	\$ 120.00
1/2 page horizontal = 4.1" high x 7.5" wide:	\$ 240.00

Swansea Community Calendar - January 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Govt. Center Closed New Year's Day	2 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center	3	4
5	6 Committee Meetings 6:00pm Govt. Center Village Board Meeting 7:00pm Govt. Center	7	8	9 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center	10	11 Swansea Park Board Mtg. 7:00am - Norman Lehr Swansea Patriots Mtg. 8:00am—Norman Lehr
12	13	14 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting 6:00pm Govt. Center	15	16 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center	17	18
19	20 Govt. Center Closed MLK JR. DAY	21 Committee Meetings 6:00pm Govt. Center Village Board Meeting 7:00pm Govt. Center	22	23 Swansea Rotary Club 7:30am - 8:30am; Thompson Center	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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Village Organizes Memorial Tree Program At Melvin Price Park

Swansea residents may be aware of the construction taking place at Melvin Price Park to create the new Fitness Trail and Exercise Equipment Area. During construction contractors removed large quantities of dead and diseased trees. With the construction project nearing completion now is your opportunity to help beautify this area of the park while memorializing a loved one. The Melvin Price Park Fitness Trail Memorial Tree Program will allow for the purchase and planting of a tree, shrub, or perennial plant in this beautiful park setting. A memorial tree or plant is a living remembrance of a loved one. It provides a sense of belonging and community. They will improve the quality of life for residents of Swansea, while providing a benefit and enjoyment to people who use Swansea parks. In addition, trees are a growing and living symbol of the individuals they represent. A memorial

tree is a wonderful honor for the individual or organization to make in someone's name and it is a gift that keeps on growing and giving to the community.

Village staff, with input from the Heartlands Conservancy, has selected native species and have selected locations that are proper for each variety, which include Flowering Dogwood, Redbud, White Oak, Bald Cypress, Oakleaf Hydrangea, Sweetbay Magnolia, Purple Coneflower, New England Aster, and many more species. Memorial Trees and Plants will be planted in spring and fall, and after planting will be watered, pruned, and mulched by Swansea Public Works Staff and volunteers. In addition, during the design of the Melvin Price Fitness Trail and Exercise Area a special section was identified that will

serve as a memorial garden specifically for pets.

Forms for this program can be found on the Swansea website, social media, and at the Village Government Center. The cost for Memorial plantings ranges from \$45.00 to \$150.00, and memorial plaques will be placed with all plantings. Donations in lieu of a planting can also be made.

For further information or to volunteer to plant or maintain plantings you can call the Swansea Building and Zoning Department at 618-234-0044.



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News Briefs

Designated Snow Routes for the Village of Swansea

When it snows, it's a good idea to move all vehicles off Village streets before snow plows come through. Not doing so will hamper the Village's ability to effectively clear the streets.

However, there are streets in the Village specifically designated as snow routes. Section 72.40 (A) of the Swansea Municipal Codes states: "Within the village, whenever there is an accumulation of three inches or more of snow, no person, firm, or corporation shall park or allow any motor vehicle to remain parked, on any designated snow route ...for a period of 24 hours following said accumulation, or until said route has been sufficiently cleared of snow."

There is a very logical reason for this regulation. Designated snow routes are those primary arterials for moving traffic in or out of residential areas and as such they are cleared first to make it easier for you to get to or from your home. The Village needs to do so as

quickly as possible - without having to navigate around parked vehicles - in order to move on to residential streets that don't carry as much traffic.

Designated snow routes in Swansea are as follows.

Beau-Gon: for its full length within Village limits

Bettina Dr.: Lakeland Blvd. to Big Bend Blvd.

Big Bend Blvd.: Bettina Dr. to Leawood Dr.

Bobbie Dr.: Castle Dr. to Brian Dr.

Brian Dr.: Bobbie Dr. to Mary Jo Dr.

Caseyville Ave.: Gilbert St. to North Belt West

Castle Ct.: Route 161 to Castle Dr.

Castle Dr.: Castle Ct. to Bobbie Dr.

Creekside Ct.: Creekside Dr. to Old Collinsville Rd.

Fawn Meadows: Lake Lorraine Dr. to Old Collinsville Rd.

Fournie Dr.: Mary Jo Dr. to Josephine Dr.

Fullerton Road: Rte 161 to Rte 159

Gilbert St.: North Illinois St. to Kenwood Dr.

Green Haven Dr.: for its full length

Huntwood Road: for its full length

Josephine Dr.: Fournie Dr. to Rte 161

Kenwood Dr.: Gilbert St. to Kingsbury Dr.

Kingsbury Dr.: Kenwood Dr. to North 17th St

Kinsella Ave.: West "H" St. to Caseyville Ave

Lakeland Blvd.: Rte 159 to Bettina Dr.

Lake Lorraine Dr.: for its full length

Leawood Dr.: Big Bend Blvd to Twin Lake Dr.

Lyonshall Blvd.: w/in Village limits

Mary Jo Dr.: Brian Dr. to Fournie Dr.

Morgan St.: 17th St. to Rte 161

Polo Run: for its full length

Rand Lane: for its full length

Roger St.: 17th St. to Rte 161

Smelting Works Rd.: North Illinois St. to Frank Scott Pkwy. Rd. for those portions w/in the Swansea limits

Steinberg Farm Rd.: Rand Lane to William Lane

Twin Lake Dr.: Leawood Dr. to Huntwood Rd.

William Lane: Old Collinsville Rd to Steinberg Farm Rd.

News Briefs

If Your Sewer System Backs Up, Call The Village First

A friendly reminder to residents: call the Village first if your sewer system starts to backup.

Because storm water can infiltrate the sanitary sewer system during periods of heavy rain, that additional water can overload the system and cause it to slow down or backup. It generally will do so into low lying basements. Residents who have experienced that before probably recognize the signs, or have installed a check valve to prevent backups.

On non-holidays, Mon - Fri, 8:00am - 4:30pm, call 234-0044, and Government Center staff will dispatch Public Works. After hours and on weekends, call 233-8114. A police dispatcher will answer, but explain that you need Public Works to respond to a sewer backup and they will route your call or message.

Village Laws Require Dogs To Be On A Leash

By Village law, any dog not on its owner's property, must be under the complete control of its owner or keeper at all times.

When the owner or keeper takes that dog into one of Swansea's public parks, or on a public trail, they must specifically keep the dog on a leash that is six feet or less in length. The law defines "leash" as "...any rope, cord, chain or similar item which is capable of restraining a dog."

There is one exception: within the fenced in dog park at Melvin Price Memorial Park. While owners are still responsible for their dog and its behavior, dogs are allowed to run free within the dog park fence, without being on a leash. Last year the Village lifted the annual fee for use of the dog park so it is open and availa-

ble to all dog owners.

Because some people are allowing dogs to roam unleashed in parks, the Village Board is discussing the best approach to prompt compliance with the law.

Information On Solicitors

Note that Supreme Court rulings prohibit municipalities from regulating soliciting from specific individuals and organizations. This applies to religious groups, politicians, candidates for public office, or minors under the age of 18 who solicit for fundraising activities such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, or students selling high school-sponsored items.

Anyone who approaches your door who is not in one of the exempt groups and is not wearing the required ID pouch, has not registered with the Police Department.



First, you do not have to open your door to anyone you do not know. Second, if you ask any peddler or solicitor to leave your property, even if they are registered with the Village, they must do so. Residents should report anyone going door-to-door illegally to the Police by calling the non-emergency line 618-233-8114. Provide details to the dispatcher and they will dispatch an officer to investigate.

Finally, residents can post a sign that states: **NO SOLICITING**. By placing this in a front window or storm door so that it is clearly visible to those approaching your front door, you make your individual wishes known, and those individuals should turn around and leave your property.

VILLAGE OF SWANSEA CONTACT INFO

Swansea Government Center
1444 Boul Avenue
Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm, M-F
www.swanseail.org

Administration, Mayor's Office, Village Clerk, Utility Billing & Public Works
Phone: 618-234-0044
swanadm@swanseail.org

Building, Zoning, Permits
Phone: 618-355-0280
swanbnz@swanseail.org

Swansea Police Department
Emergency: 911
Non-emergency: 618-233-8114
swanseap@swanseail.org

Swansea Fire Department
Emergency: 911
Engine House: 618-234-3291

Village of Swansea Officials

President: Mike Leopold
mayor@swanseail.org
Village Clerk Lauren O'Neill
loNeill@swanseail.org
Treasurer John Walter
jwalter@swanseail.org
Trustee Matt Lanter
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Trustee Rocky McDonald
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Trustee Marilyn Neumeyer
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Trustee Jeff Parker
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Trustee Brian Wells
bwells@swanseail.org

If emailing multiple officials it may be best to also include swanadm@swanseail.org among those email addresses so staff can help coordinate any requested response.



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Continued From Page 6...Who Maintains Storm Water

surface water onto the property of an adjacent landowner and the Village, in its role as the public landowner, must comply the same as any private landowner.

Does the Village have to enter upon private property and use public employees and public funds to address storm water or drainage issues? Or should it?

No. Any required remedial action should be directed to, and undertaken by, the private property owner.

Can the Village voluntarily choose to address storm water drainage issues on private property?

Many are aware that on the St. Louis side of the river, the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) maintains both sanitary and storm water sewer systems. These systems cross municipal boundaries. The district is a separate public entity that levies taxes or charges fees, and that generate revenue to fund those specific services. The public, in that case, has decided that these are services they would like government to provide on their behalf, and they collectively pay MSD to do so.

In Illinois, municipalities have the authority, like MSD, to establish a storm water utility

system and charge a storm water fee to pay for that service, but only if they are "home rule". Swansea is not a home rule municipality, so it does not have that authority.

There are a few non-home rule municipalities in Illinois that have established similar storm water utilities. However, there is no specific statutory authority for them to do so, and those few have not yet been tested in the court system.

Illinois follows Dillon's Rule, which says that municipalities are creatures of the state and only have those powers granted to them by state statutes. Non-home rule municipalities therefore do not have the legal authority to take any action that is not specifically granted in those state statutes. And operating a storm water utility is not among those granted powers.

Our subdivision plat shows a "drainage easement" across our back yard. Doesn't that mean the Village must maintain that easement and the drainage through it?

No. The engineers who designed your subdivision needed to provide easements where utilities like potable water, sanitary sewer, gas, electric, phone and cable TV could be installed and maintained.

These are identified as utility easements and in newer subdivisions are typically for underground utilities. Engineers may also designate the same easements as "drainage easements", to allow for the flow of storm water over the surface of the property, or through pipes under the surface of the property.

But storm water is not a "utility". So while the Village of Swansea has a right and an obligation to enter upon that easement to maintain its sanitary sewer lines installed within the easement, absent some legal agreement or legal order to the contrary, it has no obligation to maintain the surface drainage or any storm water system underground on private property in a subdivision drainage easement.

Therefore, if there is a natural drainage way or storm sewer pipes across your property, you, and not the Village, must keep them clear and free flowing, so that storm water does not back up onto your neighbor's property or into the public streets.

Likewise, you as a property owner, cannot change the flow of storm water so that it leaves your property at a rate faster than it naturally would, because doing so might flood or otherwise negatively impact other properties downstream - making you liable for direct damages.

Welcome Deputy Chief Matt Blomberg

In our December issue we bid farewell to Deputy Chief Craig Coughlin, who retired after 27 years of dedicated service to the Swansea community. This month we would like to reintroduce you to the man that will be taking over his duties. Starting this month, Sergeant Matt Blomberg will be formally promoted to Deputy Chief, a well-earned accomplishment after 21 years of service with the department.

A Belleville native, Blomberg received his B.S. in Psychology from Tufts University before being hired by the Village in 1999. He quickly made a name for himself through his dedication and work ethic, earning multiple AAIM and IDOT Enforcement Awards. After spending much of his own time to assist with the K-9 and Firearms Programs, he was given the opportunity to join the Emergency Response Team. He was soon certified as a Firearms Instructor as well as a certified Taser Instructor.

In 2004 he attended the Illinois Police SWAT Academy, eventually leading to his designation of Team Leader in the newly formed ILEAS Region 8 Mobile Field Force. In 2007 the

Swansea Police Department implemented the rank of sergeant for the first time in its history. Blomberg, the youngest candidate, finished first in the written test and interview process. Upon his promotion to sergeant he became a certified Field Training Officer. In 2010 he joined the St. Clair County/Belleville PD Special Response Team. Most recently, he graduated from the Police Executive Role in the 21st Century program through Western Illinois University.

He has filled countless other roles for the department, including: serving as department liaison for districts 113 and 116, performing threat assessments and workplace violence trainings to local businesses, streamlining the Village's sex offender registration and recordkeeping processes, and more. Through his diverse and impressive record, he has achieved many special assignments, a SILEC Life Saving Award, and two Officer of the Year Awards.

Chief Steve Johnson, Village administration, and the Mayor and Board of Trustees all feel fortunate to have such a capable individual in such a vital role for the Village, and look forward to many more years of service from Deputy Chief Matt Blomberg.



It's never too early

No matter what stage of life you're in, it's never too early to start planning for retirement. Let us help you balance your need to protect what you have with your desire to build for the future.



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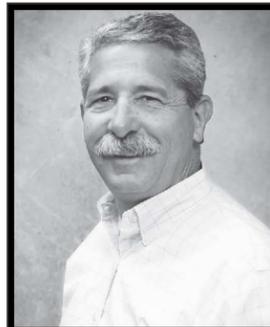
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Who Maintains Storm Water

In Swansea, as in most area municipalities, rain water drains along streets and across public and private properties as it makes its way into natural drainage areas and eventually to larger streams and rivers. In some cases, it travels through pipes, in other cases it travels through open ditches and drainage ways.

Some residents assume that all such pipes, ditches and drainage ways belong to the Village and are the Village's responsibility when it comes to maintenance, but that is almost never the case when that drainage is on someone else's property.

It's obvious that the Village would maintain its own parcels of property, such as the land where the Government Center or Police Department are located. The same is true for parks owned by the Village.

And it also makes sense that the Village has responsibility to maintain its streets and any drainage system on the street. But the street pavement lies within a specific width, most often 50 feet. This strip of land is called public right-of-way and when Swansea owns and has jurisdiction over right-of-way, it has the responsibility to maintain any ditch,

drainage structure or storm sewer pipe within that right of way.

Yet, what happens if a pipe or ditch does not run parallel to the roadway? What happens when a drainage system crosses under the road and continues into and across private property? As soon as the ditch, pipe or other storm sewer component enters upon private property, responsibility for its maintenance or repair almost always transfers to that property owner. This can be a surprise to some who assume that the Village has responsibility for all storm sewers. But it does not. Here are some common questions and answers in relation to the issue.

What are the Village's specific responsibilities in terms of storm water drainage?

The Village has a responsibility to keep that portion of the drainage system on public property working properly. Even under those circumstances liability is not absolute as to any certain properties that may have issues, since the Village owes a duty to the public at large rather than to individual landowners when it comes to handling storm water. The Village could be liable for direct damages, however, if

the Village itself made changes to the storm water flow and that action caused flooding on a specific property.

Other than in rare instances, the Village does not have responsibility for storm water drainage on private property. The private property owner is instead responsible for maintaining any portion of the drainage system that is located on their property and for solving localized drainage problems on their private property.

Isn't storm water drainage a "public issue" even on private property? If not, where is the dividing line between public and private responsibility?

The property line that divides the public right-of-way from the adjoining private property generally marks the end of the Village's responsibility. Nevertheless, the Village is no different than any other property owner in that the Village has a duty to avoid changing the course of water flowing onto adjacent properties so that damages to the adjacent property are avoided. Landowners bear a duty to not increase the natural flow of ...

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News Briefs



Swansea Fire Department Glo Bingo Is Back

Don't miss out on the Swansea Fire Department's Glo Bingo set for Friday, January 24, 2020 at the Swansea Moose Lodge, 2425 North Illinois St., Swansea, IL 62226. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Price includes 6 bingo cards, glow hat, and glow dabber (\$5 per additional card). For tickets contact Jason Whitaker @ (618) 978-8795 or purchase tickets online at glo-bingo.com (\$2 per ticket service fee). The proceeds benefit the Swansea Fire Department.

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