

VILLAGE OF FONTANA-ON-GENEVA LAKE

Summer Issue 2008

Villages Investigating Joint Service Options

By **Kelly E. Hayden-Staggs**
Village Administrator

The Village of Fontana and the Village of Walworth recently formed a Joint Services Ad Hoc Committee to investigate possible ways to enhance the services offered by each municipality and provide an economic benefit to the taxpayers.

To date the committee's focus has been primarily on municipal court and fire and rescue services;

however, the committee intends to focus on police, public works and general government as well.

There are many ways that commu-

nities can work together to enhance services, and it is the committee's belief that all aspects should be investigated. This does not necessarily mean that all aspects will result in a merger. The two communities have already achieved success in combining our building and zoning departments and a wastewater treatment facility.

Committee Consults With Firm

In November of 2007, the committee contacted a consulting firm that specializes in combining services and also interviewed officials from local municipalities who have successfully completed service mergers. Both sources were insightful on how the process should ideally work and answered the prevalent questions. For example, most consolidations are driven by the perception that the end result will produce a cost savings, and while this is feasible, the greatest saving is avoiding redundancy.

The consultant and municipalities also pointed out a common obstacle, which is the perception of loss of autonomy and control. When organized prop-



erly there is no need for municipalities to lose either, and both the consultants and the experienced municipalities were abundantly clear that the key to a successful consolidation, resulting in achieving economic benefit, increasing service level and avoiding redundancy, is communication.

Daytime Volunteers Difficult to Recruit

Both Fontana and Walworth are finding it increasingly difficult to have volunteers staff their daytime needs for fire and rescue services. The departments recognize the need for consistent staffing to ensure uninterrupted service for the residents of the respective communities. Both Fontana and Walworth's fire and rescue leadership worked together to research full-time staffing through a company called METRO.

METRO subcontracts full-time employees to guarantee coverage during the daytime hours, but still relies on volunteers to cover the evening calls. Another perk with METRO is that their employees are potentially hired from the volunteer roster and actually complete their shifts in the fire and rescue stations.

This item definitely met one of the committee's goals by increasing service, but was far more expensive than volunteers, which brought the committee's focus to merging the two departments as one potentially sharing equipment, staff, service area, and expenses.

The verdict is still out, but many believe that organized correctly the METRO staffing along with department mergers could be the answer in solving all of the goals and objectives of the committee.

Fire and rescue seems to be the most crucial area of municipal government that needs to be addressed,

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President's Report: Projects Improve Village

By Ron Pollitt
Village President

Summer is finally here! We have survived a long, cold, snowy winter and a very wet spring, but it appears that the warm days of summer have now arrived. The Village will look a little different if you have just arrived from parts south.



President Ron Pollitt

Most prominent is the beautiful new beach fence that has been receiving favorable comments. It was funded by Tax Increment Financing through the Community Development Authority. Along with the new lifeguard stands built by our Public Works Department and some added landscaping coordinated by the Park Commission, our beach house project is now complete.

There are a couple of other CDA projects that I personally like that will beautify the Village. First is the Porter Court Plaza located across from the new Fontana Corner Market gas station and next to the new restaurant in town, Georgie B's. When the plaza is completed, it will have attractive plantings and a fountain for all to enjoy.

Another CDA project you will notice is the pedestrian and bike path going up to the Duck Pond Recreation Area. Take a walk with your family through the new fieldstone underpass on the way to the park. Consider playing a game of Frisbee golf on the new course that the Park Commission has installed up there. Discs are available for purchase at the Village Hall.

Finally, the historic Douglas-Montague Mill Pavilion across from the Fontana Elementary School is now under construction. This pavilion will serve as an outdoor education center and will have exhibits to display Village historical information. It will also serve as a resting spot at the end of the Hildebrand Conservancy nature trail.

The pavilion is being constructed from donated funds, primarily from Par Development, the developer of the Cliffs of Fontana subdivision. Individuals and the CDA have contributed donations as well. We still need more donations for landscaping and exhibits, so please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to the project if you haven't already. I

thank you in advance.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer this year in Fontana. A lot of activities are planned including the Fourth of July events, the Big Foot Lions Lobster Boil/Steak Fry, Music in the Park, Fontana Community Church's Country Fair, the Little Foot Playground benefit pig roast, the Triathlon, and the always beautiful Fontana beach. Village Harbormaster Bill Morrison's car license plate says "FUNTANA." I think that says it all! Enjoy!

Parks Project Restoring Trout Habitat in Creek

By Park Commissioner Jill Wegner

Many residents may not be aware of the rare "jewel" that our Village possesses in Van Slyke Creek, which flows through the Hildebrand Nature Conservancy and provides water to Geneva Lake. This spring-fed stream provides excellent year-round habitat for brown trout, whose numbers increase during the fall when the fish travel upstream from the lake for spawning.

In June 2006 the DNR performed an electroshocking survey and found a large, healthy population of brown trout (some in the 11- to 12-inch range) and abundant food production for these fish. Southeastern Wisconsin contains mostly warm-water fisheries, so a high-quality, cold-water resource such as Van Slyke Creek is a treasure in our part of the state.

The Village is working together with Trout Unlimited to improve the water flow and habitat in the Conservancy by clearing debris and blockages and removing several old wooden dams near the headwaters which have restricted the flow for many years. To date, we have applied for and obtained a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program and are in the process of investigating possible grants from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Wisconsin trout stamp funds. All of these organizations have reviewed this project and expressed an interest.

This is a project we are very proud of and we encourage citizens to become involved. This stream can become a showcase and provide incentives to others to become more involved in habitat improvement of all kinds. We have scheduled a work day together with volunteers from two chapters of Trout Unlimited for Saturday, July 19, 2008, beginning at 9:00 AM. We will be removing some of the wooden dams in the headwaters and remove debris throughout the remainder of the stream. All are welcome. Please contact Jill Wegner at (262) 275-5882 if you are interested in joining.

"The Village will look a little different if you just arrived from parts south."

"The Village is working together with Trout Unlimited to improve the water flow and habitat in the Conservancy."

The Cop Shop ...

Summer Brings Traffic Increase

By Chief Steve Olson



Summer is here and we can expect the usual increase in pedestrian traffic and bicyclists, so please be extra careful while driving.

So far this year we have handled 1,201 calls for service compared with 1,209 calls during the same time in 2007.

Based on information provided by citizens and other police investigation methods, Fontana police officers obtained and executed a search warrant in May seizing drugs, cash and drug paraphernalia. Five subjects were charged with various felonies and misdemeanors including drug sales. Remember, if you see something suspicious, don't hesitate to call us.

We are routinely asked about the legality of certain vehicles on public streets, sidewalks and parking lots. Electric bikes, motorized scooters (not mopeds), golf carts and pocket bikes (mini motorcycles) are illegal to operate in public since they can not be registered by the state. If you are in doubt call us first. Neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV) are now legal except on State Highway 67 and County Highway B.

The possession or use of fireworks within the Village limits is prohibited unless a permit has been obtained from the Village Board. Please contact the Village Hall for more information on how to apply.

After completing the selection process, Ryan Halsted was hired as our newest part-time officer. He graduated from the police academy in May, is married, has three children and lives in Clinton. He began his field training May.

The Department obtained a free four-wheel ATV from the federal Department of Defense. It has been painted and will be used for search/rescue and patrol. Through this program the Village has received thousands of dollars in free equipment that can be used by the police, fire and public works departments.

Our summer community service officer is Josh Moore, who is married with one child. He has a degree in criminal justice and will be attending the police academy this fall.

Be sure to visit our Website at www.fontanawipolice.com for all the latest in police related information regarding Fontana and for other important links.

Telephone Numbers

Non-emergency Police Department office number: (262) 275-2275; Non-emergency dispatch number: 275-2135; Emergency number: 911.

Cross Connection Inspections Underway

The Village of Fontana Building and Zoning Department has hired Elkhorn resident Tim Yorgey to assist with the state required cross-connection inspections and with stormwater infiltration inspections. Yorgey is contacting residential property owners to schedule and conduct the inspections throughout the summer.



Tim Yorgey

The Village is required to develop and implement a comprehensive cross-connection control program to ensure that there is not a risk of contamination of the drinking water supply that could be caused by back-siphonage or back flow. Yorgey will assist property owners in identifying actual or potential cross-connection problems on their property.

A cross-connection inspection consists of an on-site visual inspection of appliances and fixtures that utilize and are connected to a water source. Yorgey will inspect dishwashers, humidifiers, water softeners, hose bibbs, faucets, washing machines, boilers, icemakers, lawn irrigation, swimming pools and water closets for proper back-flow prevention devices and connections. The inspection takes from 10 to 20 minutes to complete. Following the inspection, property owners will receive a written report which will note any cross-connection hazards and the method for bringing the system into compliance.

The state requires commercial and industrial services to be inspected once every two years, and all residential properties to be inspected every 10 years.

Assessors Completing Market Revaluation

Assessors from Accurate Appraisal, LLC commenced field work in mid-June for the Village of Fontana Market Revaluation Project.

Following the mailing of the Assessment Change Notices, Open Book sessions will be held at the Village Hall on Sept. 3, 4 and 6, 2008.

If, after the Open Book session, a property wishes to object to the assessment, they must file a "Form of Objection" with the Village Clerk to schedule an appointment before the Board of Review.

An Intent to Object Form must be filed with the Municipal Clerk at least 48 hours prior to the Board of Review.

"A cross-connection inspection is an inspection of a home or business water supply system."

"Assessors from Accurate Appraisal, LLC commenced field work in mid-June for the Village of Fontana Market Revaluation Project."

CDA Projects Will Commence in Fall

"Summer afternoon ... the two most beautiful words in the English language."

-Henry James (American expatriate writer/1843-1916)

By Joseph A. McHugh
CDA Executive Director

Residents of the Midwest have long been teased that we only really experience two seasons: Winter and Road Construction. However, here in the wonderful little Village of Fontana, thanks to the ultimate importance placed on enjoying our summers, for both economic and psychological reasons, we cram all of our construction into the fall and spring.

Last fall, two projects were initiated in the Village of Fontana's Tax Increment Financing District - TID No. 1. The first project included the complete reconstruction of Wild Duck Road, including the Dade Road intersection, and the construction of a new Pedestrian Path up to the Duck Pond Recreation Area. The project was substantially completed last fall, and the final asphalt road surface, as well as the landscaping, is being installed this spring and early summer. The new path, with its striking stone underpass, makes for a very enjoyable and safe stroll up to the Duck Pond Recreation Area - perfect for a summer evening. The second project was Fontana's newest outdoor public space - Porter Court Plaza. The project originally started in the fall of 2007, but was ultimately delayed due to DNR permitting issues. The work was resumed as soon as the snow melted, and the plaza is now nearing completion. The project is scheduled to be substantially complete by the Fourth of July holiday, and will provide residents and visitors alike with a beautiful outdoor plaza for summer enjoyment. While you visit the Plaza, you can also check out the latest business to move in to the Mill Street Plaza Development - Georgie B's Restaurant, which promises "Midwest Hospitality with a Southern Flair."

Just as we finish closing out last year's round of construction, we now set our sights on the future, and finalize the execution plans for the three primary projects scheduled to commence this fall: Third Avenue, Kinzie Avenue and Utility Burial (east of Highway 67).

The Third Avenue Project was approved via referen-

dum by the public on April 1, 2008. The core project is scheduled to commence immediately after the Labor Day holiday, in order to avoid any conflicts with summer activities, although minor preparation alongside the roadway will begin toward the end of August. The project includes the complete reconstruction of Third Avenue, including new paving from Highway 67 to Lake Street. Between Third Avenue and Fontana Boulevard, both Reid Street and High Street will be reconstructed as well.

In addition, the project includes improvements to the Little Foot Playground, such as a new wrought iron fence. It will match the new fence along the beach and will keep children safer by separating them from traffic. And finally, the boat trailer parking lot will be completely rebuilt and reconfigured to create clear travel lanes and accessible parking stalls.

The reconstruction of Kinzie Avenue, beginning at the intersection with Highway 67 and continuing approximately 500 feet to the middle of the 100 block, is an extension of the State Highway 67 improvement project, and was primarily conceived as an effort to address storm water drainage issues. The street is to be upgraded to an "Urban Section," which simply refers to the installation of curb and gutter along the street, as well as an underground storm water sewer infrastructure. The project also includes upgraded street lights to match those planned for Third Avenue, as well as those already installed along the highway.

Finally, the third principal project on the docket this year is the underground conversion of the primary overhead utilities in the Village Center. Following the approval of the project by referendum last April, the Village has been busy coordinating with each of the utility companies to finalize the burial plans. The preliminary groundwork will begin late summer and will initially focus on the overhead lines running along Third Avenue, in order to clear the path for the upcoming road project.

Each of the road reconstruction projects, in addition to the next phase of the utility burial, is anticipated for final completion in the spring of 2009. By scheduling projects so that they start in the fall and close-out in the spring of the following year, we get to enjoy the unique luxury of actually having three seasons here in Fontana: Winter, Road Construction and Summer. Considering the winter we just had, we have earned this one. Have a fantastic summer and enjoy every minute of it.



Image of Third Avenue/Reid Street intersection



Image of intersection with power lines removed

"Each of the road reconstruction projects, in addition to the next phase of the utility burial, is anticipated for final completion in the spring of 2009."

"The core project is scheduled to commence immediately after the Labor Day holiday."



DPW Report: The Path of Least Resistance

By Craig Workman
Director of Public Works

John F. Kennedy once said, “Anyone who can solve the problems of water will be worthy of two Nobel prizes - one for peace and one for science.” Although the Village of Fontana is not out to win a Nobel Prize this year, we are attempting to solve some of the stormwater issues that have arisen in the Village during the past couple of decades.

The problem is really quite simple when you break it down - the amount of impermeable surface has increased dramatically in the past 30 years with little to no consideration of where the increased volume of runoff will go. Current engineering practices require a stormwater management plan be designed and approved before platting a subdivision; however, since the majority of Fontana was platted well over 50 years ago, these practices were not employed when the Village was originally laid out.

Like most things in life, water seeks the path of least resistance. In simplified terms, water will take the most direct path to the pond at the bottom of the hill. In Fontana’s case, the pond happens to be the most pristine body of water in the Midwest. Whether it flows through a defined stream, or goes directly through your garage, about 95 percent of the water in Fontana is trying to make it to the lake. Unfortunately, we are now dealing with a cauldron that is boiling over, literally!

In an attempt to reduce the temperature of the water in the pot, so to speak, the Village Board is currently considering two proposals from Ruekert-Mielke, the Village engineering firm. The first proposal is to create a village-wide Stormwater Management Plan. The goal of the plan is to identify capital improvements and establish stormwater management practices to help control flooding and improve the quality of water making its way to Geneva Lake. The second proposal involves the creation of a Storm Water Utility.

A stormwater utility is essentially a special assessment district set up to generate funding specifically for stormwater management projects. Once created, this new utility will assist in the implementation of the Stormwater Management Plan by enabling the Village to bill customers for the benefits which are realized from the improvements. Unlike a stormwater program that draws on the general tax fund, using property taxes for revenue, the people who benefit from a stormwater utility are the only ones who pay. The up side of the stormwater utility

concept is that it provides a degree of fairness, which is often lacking in tax-based systems. Property taxes are based on assessed property value, which does not necessarily correlate to the amount of runoff a parcel of land contributes to the overall stormwater problem. Depending on how the utility is set up, property owners may have the alternative to subsidize a portion of their utility bill by simply decreasing the amount of runoff their property contributes to the system.

Upon completion, I see a refined stormwater management system in Fontana that uses a variety of stormwater management techniques. Grassy swales can be constructed in many areas throughout the Village to direct runoff downstream while still controlling flows to keep it away from building foundations. Vegetation in the swales can slow the rate of runoff in order to reduce erosion, while promoting infiltration and nutrient consumption. Infiltration and bio-retention structures, such as rain gardens, can be used more broadly. Even something as simple as a rain barrel to collect rooftop runoff can help considerably.

At the end of the day, a Nobel Peace Prize may be unrealistic, but perhaps we’ll at least win a little “Peace of Mind.”

Joint Services

Continued from page 1

but the committee is also looking into merging municipal courts.

Municipal Courts

The two communities currently run separate municipal court services, but are nearing completion of a draft agreement to operate the two courts as one. This would reduce the operational costs by sharing a judge, clerk, office space, technology expenses, insurance cost, and other minor court related costs, but leave each community’s municipal court revenue as their own.

It is the goal of the committee members to forward a completed draft agreement to both the Village of Fontana’s and the Village of Walworth’s Board of Trustees this fall.

The Joint Services Ad Hoc committee is working hard to produce possible solutions, but ultimately the agreements and final decisions are made by the Village Boards.

The committee members will all do their best to keep the lines of communication open and generate possible agreements that look out for the best interest of both communities and residents.

The possibility of merging services brings a whole new meaning to our motto of, “We all do better when we work together.”

“Like most things in life, water seeks the path of least resistance.”

“It is the goal of the committee members to forward a completed draft agreement to both the Village of Fontana’s and the Village of Walworth’s Board of Trustees this fall.”



VOF Calendar

In appreciation of the Village of Fontana's support of the Abbey Resort's new AVANI Spa, Fontana residents are cordially invited to attend an open house celebration Thursday, July 24, 2008 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM in the AVANI Spa.

- July 3, 2008** - Fontana Public Library Summer Storytime Program at 10:00 am
- July 4, 2008** - Fourth of July Fireworks Display at Dusk at Fontana Lakefront
- July 5, 2008** - Geneva Lake West Chamber Music in Reid Park Performances at 1:00, 3:30 & 6:00 pm
- July 7, 2008** - Joint Meeting of the Village Board, Plan Commission & CDA at 5:00 pm
- July 7, 2008** - Village Board Meets at 6:00 pm
- July 8, 15 & 22, 2008** - Lakeshores Library System Storywagon at the Fontana Village Hall at 9:30 am
- July 9, 2008** - CDA Board Meets at 6:00 pm
- July 17, 24 & 31, 2008** - Fontana Public Library Summer Storytime Program at 10:00 am
- July 18, 2008** - VOF Assessor Office Hours at the Village Hall, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
- July 19, 2008** - Park Commission Trout Restoration Project Clean-Up Event in Van Slyke Creek at 9:00 am
- July 24, 2008** - Abbey Resort's AVANI Spa open house event from 6:00 to 8:00 pm
- July 26, 2008** - Big Foot Lions Club Lobster Boil/Steak Fry in Reid Park
- July 26, 2008** - Fontana Community Church Country Fair, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
- July 28, 2008** - Plan Commission Meets at 5:30 pm

- August 2, 2008** - Fontana Library Summer Reading Program Conclusion Event
- August 4, 2008** - Village Board Meets at 6:00 pm
- August 6, 2008** - CDA Board Meets at 6:00 pm
- August 8, 2008** - VOF Assessor Office Hours at the Village Hall, 9:00 am to Noon
- August 9, 2008** - Great Lakes Naval Band Concert in Reid Park at 6:00 pm
- August 22, 2008** - VOF Assessor Office Hours at the Village Hall, Noon to 3:00 pm
- August 25, 2008** - Plan Commission Meets at 5:30 pm
- August 30, 2008** - "Pig in the Park" Little Foot Playground Fund-Raising Event at 4:00 pm
- Sept. 1, 2008** - Village Hall and Fontana Library Closed
- Sept. 2, 2008** - Village Board Meets at 6:00 pm
- Sept. 3, 2008** - Open Book at Village Hall, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
- Sept. 3, 2008** - CDA Board Meets at 6:00 pm
- Sept. 4, 2008** - Open Book at Village Hall, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- Sept. 6, 2008** - Annual Lake Geneva Triathlon
- Sept. 6, 2008** - Open Book at Village Hall, 9:00 am to Noon
- Sept. 11, 2008** - Fontana Public Library Toddler Time Program at 9:30 am
- Sept. 24, 2008** - 2008 Board of Review, 2:00 to 4:00 pm
- Sept. 29, 2008** - Plan Commission Meets at 5:30 pm

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