

CITY CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 4 • FALL 2017



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Let me start by saying happy holidays to you and your family. This time of year always reminds me of how fortunate I am to be able to call Keweenaw home. From Goodfellows, Key Club, and Kiwanis delivering Christmas baskets to Patchy's Toy Drive to the bell ringers assisting the Salvation Army, the generosity of this community shines as bright as the lights at Windmont Park. And to make things even better, a small group of people have added a light display at Northeast Park that will add to the holiday traditions in the community.

Looking back on the year we've had, I'm proud to say that the City has gotten a lot accomplished. We tore down a lot of old houses that needed it, but we helped fix up some downtown buildings that needed it, too, and our Minor Home Repair Pro-

gram helped fix up some houses, as well. We tackled a lot of sidewalks that needed it, and fixed a flooding problem that had been around for as long as I can remember. We had two more successful city-wide cleanups and have made some big strides in improving infrastructure and the appearance of our community.

We worked hard to keep some very important businesses in our community, we helped a few others to grow, and we received an award from the Governor for the investment that volunteers are making in our children. We bought new AEDs and upgraded our ambulances to ensure the safety of our residents, and gave our residents new ways to communicate with us through a smart phone app and social media. The first two things were a major investment and the last two were relatively minor, but both reflect a commitment to ensure a high level of service. The end of the year is a good time not just for reflection, but also for looking ahead to the future. I'm looking forward to a productive year for the City, with most of the work being focused on the things that residents and businesses have said matter the most to them. If we stay on

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track with working towards our goals and addressing our priorities, I'll be able to look back next year with the same sense of accomplishment. Of course, none of what we've done in the past year or will do in the coming one would be possible without the work of the City's staff and the City Council that supports and empowers them, so I'm both proud of and grateful for their efforts. To you and your families or businesses, I wish you a happy, healthy, and productive year, as well and I look forward to another year as your Mayor, working to make Keweenaw a better place to live and work.

Community & Economic Development

Business Retention & Expansion

The results of last year's Residential Survey pointed to Economic Development as the second highest area in need of improvement in the community. But Economic Development means different things to different people. Some question "What is the City doing to bring in new jobs?" The more important question, though, is "what is the City doing to keep the jobs that are already here?"

The City's 1960 Comprehensive Plan identified the community's top employers and discussed the consequences facing the area if one of them left. Over the next few decades, most of them did, and long-term residents know the consequences of losing Walworth, Kewanee Boiler, and Kewanee Machinery & Conveyor, and most everyone is familiar with the more recent loss of Bomag.

Nationally, we know that as much as 80% of all job growth comes from the expansion of existing

companies. More and more, communities are focusing on the retention and expansion of existing businesses in lieu of luring in new factories in a highly competitive and increasingly uncertain business environment.

In Kewanee, the Illinois Youth Center- Kewanee and Peoples Cleaners provide more recent examples of the importance of retention and expansion. The efforts to repurpose the IYC into an adult facility not only preserved jobs and economic activity in the community, but ongoing discussions with the Department of Corrections could result in the addition of a number of high paying jobs and additional facilities that add opportunities to the community.

People's Cleaners, on the other hand, shows that the loss of a small business can have a big impact. We know that when people take their dry cleaning to another community, they often use other services

when they're out of town. That results in a loss of more than just the business that was generated for dry cleaning, but other economic activity, sales and sales tax dollars, and potentially jobs.

Regular meetings held jointly by the City, Chamber of Commerce, and KEDC with the business community and frequent visits to existing businesses have helped to retain businesses that were contemplating relocation and have served as a catalyst for new investment and the creation of new jobs in the community. We're taking steps to encourage entrepreneurship and to recruit businesses that fit within certain market niches in the community, but not at the sake of keeping the businesses we have or helping them to expand.

Façade Improvements

In our last newsletter we reported the development of a façade improvement program for our downtown businesses. This program has proven to be a popular one, as it provides a 50% match for funds used to make improvements including painting, tuck pointing, new windows and doors, and awnings, among others. Peoples National Bank, The Gallery, Calvert Tax and Bookkeeping, and Spets Brothers have already used the program to give a facelift to their buildings, while several other businesses have expressed an interest in the program.

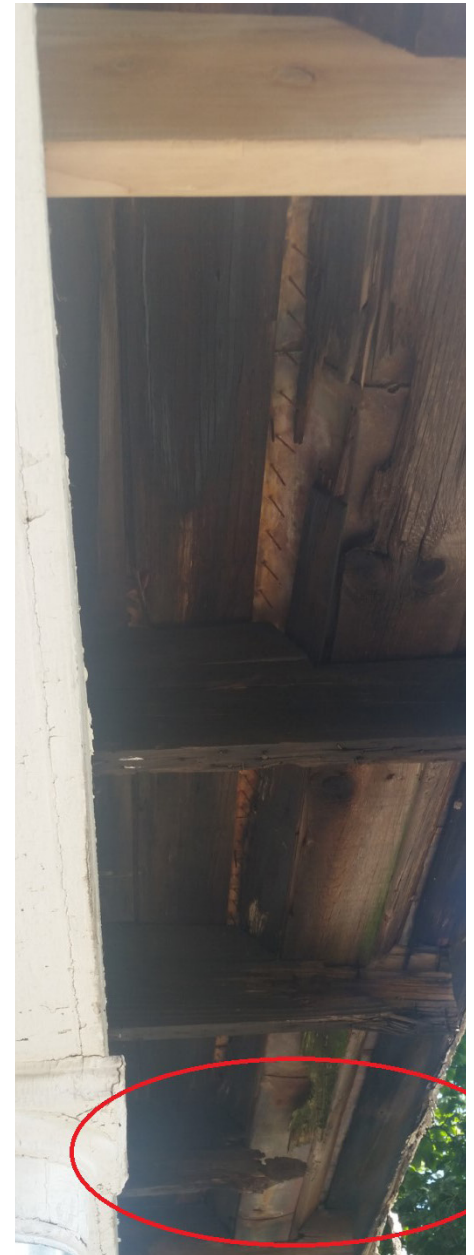


Neighborhood Improvements

The 2016 residential survey identified Street Maintenance as the city's greatest area for improvement. But with a limited amount of financial resources the city cannot maintain every street to the level that we would prefer or you might expect. So how do we decide which streets receive maintenance in any given year? In the past we conducted an annual review and assessment of streets to identify their maintenance needs, then made sure to spread out the work fairly evenly to different parts of town to ensure everyone could see something being done in their neighborhood. The current approach starts out the same, with a verification of the maintenance needs and a numerical grade assigned to the streets based on their current condition. It also takes into account the type of repairs that are needed and the projected cost for such repairs. Consideration is then given to the amount of traffic that each street carries, because providing improvements to high traffic areas provides the greatest benefit to the highest number of people. It's important to note that a main component of our new approach is identifying maintenance methods that are designed to extend the useful life of existing road surfaces and coordinating subsurface infrastructure improvements in order to avoid fixing streets only to see them torn up within a few years to make water or sewer repairs.

Targeted Minor Home Repair Program

In our efforts to improve the appearance of the community and help create reinvestment in our neighborhoods, the City of Kewanee developed the Targeted Minor Home Repair Program. The program is targeted in that it is limited to certain areas where our funds can be leveraged to help bring additional investment. As the name might imply, it's for minor repairs, not a major reconstruction or home additions. Funding is limited to \$7,500 per home, but the funds can be combined with other programs such as USDA Rural Development loans or grants if the applicants qualify. Only owner occupied homes qualify for the program, which can provide funding for a variety of projects, including but not limited to: painting, guttering, window or roof repair or replacement, or plumbing. Earlier this year, Rebuilding Together Henry County-Kewanee Housing Coalition coupled program funds with volunteer labor to complete home improvements in the community.



Picture of a recent project made possible by the Targeted Minor Home Repair Program. The project included replacement of rotted boards and repair of the front porch and will include painting the house, as well.

Snow Removal Partnership

The temperature has dropped signaling winter is around the corner. Soon snow will blanket our community. Unfortunately that snow coverage also includes streets, sidewalks, and driveways. With snow comes snow removal. We know we have room for improvement on snow removal. We are working to improve that service, while continuing our focus on stewardship of public funds. As we work to improve, we are hoping for a partnership with our residents and businesses.

What does the ideal partnership with residents and businesses look like?

During, snow events and for twelve hours following or until the street has been cleared there would be no cars parked on the city streets. If you do not have a driveway and the snow plows are out maybe make plans to visit a friend, do a little shopping in town – the business district roads are cleared before yours- or run other errands. We need the roads clear of vehicles to effectively remove the snow and not leave a path of snow around parked vehicles. Also, when snow is removed from parking lots the snow is not deposited on any city streets or right-of-ways (the curb or the space between the sidewalk and the road); and when driveways and sidewalks are cleared, the snow is piled on grassy areas and not pushed, piled, or blown into the street. Another helpful item would be the snow piles no higher than 3 feet in height on the right-of-way.

During a snow event, how does the City decide whether to send out salt trucks or snow plows?

Generally speaking, a snow event with less than 2 inches

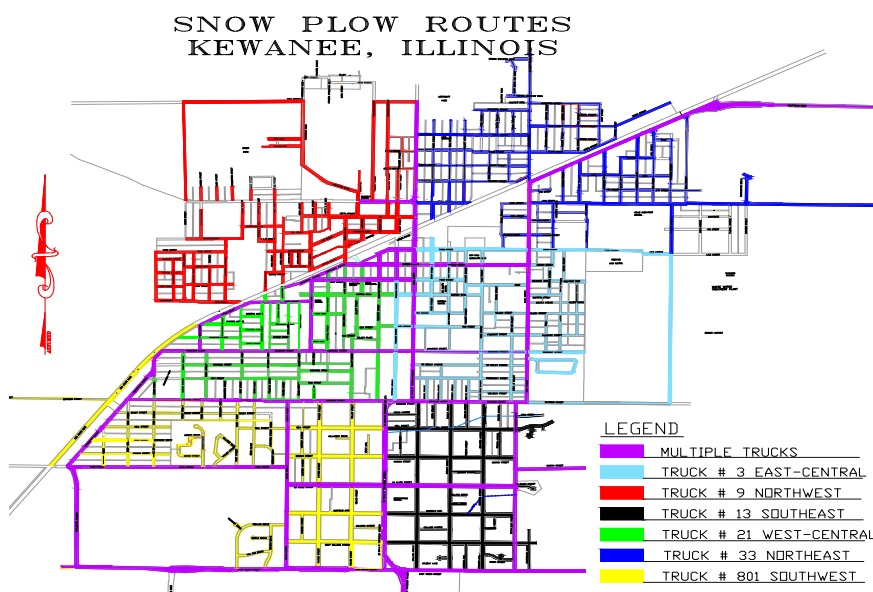
of accumulation will lead to City streets being treated with road salt only. However, there are several variables to consider; for instance the current weather conditions, existing surface conditions, and the projected forecast.

When we experience a snow event that requires the roads to be plowed, City crews utilize a snow removal plan, as depicted above. The City has six designated snow plow routes and sufficient equipment to complete the operations. The first streets plowed are the emergency routes which include the main highways and roads leading to and surrounding schools, City Hall, Fire Station 2, the nursing homes, and the hospital. After the emergency routes are plowed the trucks move on to main neighborhood thorough-

fares, followed by the secondary residential streets. The predetermined improved alleys on the route are done after all of the streets are clear.

The blades on our snow

plows are floating blades and therefore do not scrape down to the road surface in every case. In some instances the driver purposefully lifts the blade to avoid damage to the plow blade on areas of streets with raised manholes.



What is the City doing with the extra money from the increase in rates and extra bags going from 50 cents to one Dollar?

We had to raise our rates just to cover the cost of operations. We weren't charging enough to cover our full costs in 2012, the last time rates went up, and our costs have only gone up since then. It's also important to note that we stopped subsidizing the solid waste fund with property tax revenues, which has allowed Kewanee to be one of the few cities in the state that has lowered its property tax rate each of the last two years.

Is the City going to automate the trash service?

We have money allocated for new trash trucks and are exploring the use of automated system, but there are some challenges that need to be addressed before we could make such a change.

Cost

Cost is an important consideration for our customers. The cost of durable containers that can be lifted by an automated arm is around \$600,000.

Q & A

Parking

Some areas in town have a lack of off street parking. In order to make automation work, we'd have to eliminate on-street parking in several areas, which would require some adjustments by our residents.

Placement of Containers

If the funding and parking were taken care of, there's still the issue of where the trash containers go. A lot of places don't have a level spot to put the cans so that the arm can lift them. If they're on a slope, they tip over. There are as many as 1,000 homes that would require grading and/or the installation of a retaining wall to make it feasible at those locations. Once that's addressed, we know that there are a lot of trees in the right-of-way that have canopies that would interfere with the operation of the arm that dumps the trash into the truck.

None of these are reasons not to automate our service, but are things that need to be considered or addressed in order for the City to be able to move forward with automation.

Why are our water rates so high?

The City's water rates are set to cover all costs including the debt service for the bonds used to build the two water treatment plants. Our monthly cost for the consumption of 5000 gallons per month is \$39.16. In comparison to other local communities we are in the bottom half, as shown in the table below.

Peoria	\$71.68
Streator	\$71.68
Pontiac	\$68.17
Sterling	\$62.49
Lincoln	\$60.71
Princeton	\$59.40
Pekin	\$51.05
Monmouth	\$45.90
LaSalle	\$45.20
Canton	\$44.91
Rock Island	\$42.08
KEWANEE	\$39.16
Moline	\$30.71
Galesburg	\$29.69
Geneseo	\$28.74
Rock Falls	\$28.34
Dixon	\$25.50
Peru	\$22.65

How much salt should I be using per month for my water softener?

The City's water supply following treatment through the R/O system only contains 50 – 60 ppm of hardness and is considered Soft. Further reducing the softness of the water is not recommended by the City since water near zero in hardness can be corrosive and have a salty taste. Should you prefer to have near zero hardness tap water it should only require 5 – 10 lbs of salt to reduce 5000 gallons of water from 60 ppm to 0 ppm.

Who's Who at the City?

Contacts

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Mike Yaklich 854-2982

Steve Faber 883-1072

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City Clerk Melinda Edwards Ext 226

Director of Finance Debbie Johnson
Ext 227

Grounds Maint Mgr Kevin Newton
Ext 228

Public Works Mgr Rod Johnson Ext 229

Engineering Asst: Terri Hill Ext 230

Engineer Dale Nobel Ext 231

Director of Community
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Police Chief Troy Ainley: Ext 255

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reached at:
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Police

With the retirement this year of two longtime patrolman, the city has added a couple of new faces to the police department. Alexander Paulsen and Rosamaria Lopez graduated from the University of Illinois Police Training Institute on 11/16/17. They participated in 14 weeks of training that included criminal law, police tactics, community relations, and various other aspects of training. Next, they'll complete an approximately 12 week long field training program before being assigned to their regular shifts.



Fire

Following retirements in the Fire Department, the top three recruits from our most recent testing were offered full-time positions in the Fire Department in March 2017. In October 2017, a fireman left Kewanee to return to his hometown, and the highest available recruit was offered a full-time job.

We would like to introduce your new firefighters:

Zack Clark began employment with the City on March 27, 2017. He is currently a Firefighter/EMT. He is 28 and came to Kewanee from his hometown of Peoria. He has a degree in Fire Science from Illinois Central College and has 9 years experience in structural firefighting and 5 years as an EMT. Zack is married with 1 daughter, and 1 on the way.

Rob Horn began his employment with the City on March 28, 2017. He is currently an Ambulance Attendant/EMT. He is 35 and came to Kewanee from his hometown of Alpha. He has 6 years firefighting experience and 5 years as an EMT. Rob has 4 children.

Kyle Blair began his employment at the City on March 29, 2017. He is currently a Firefighter/EMT. He is 24 and his hometown is Kewanee. He has a Nursing Bachelors from OSF Saint Francis College of Nursing and EMT license from Carl Sandburg Community College. He has 8 months of experience in firefighting and 9 months as an EMT. Kyle is engaged to be married in 2018 and has 2 dogs.

Chris Hogue began his employment with the City on October 30, 2017. He is currently a Firefighter/Paramedic. He is 27 and comes to Kewanee from his hometown of Pekin. He received his EMT-B license from Illinois Central College and recently received his Paramedic license through AMT Medical Service. He has 6 years of firefighting experience and 4 years as EMT. Chris is married with 3 children.

The mission of the City of Kewanee is to provide the highest level of service to our residents, businesses, and visitors by ensuring professional municipal management in the areas of police and fire protection, emergency medical services, community and economic development, water, sewer, storm water, transportation, and solid waste removal, the maintenance of parks, cemeteries, and public facilities, communication, transparency, and the stewardship of public funds.

How to Become a Firefighter in Kewanee



The City of Kewanee accepts applications for the position of Firefighter every two years. Applicants are required to meet the following conditions to be invited to participate in the testing process.

- Candidate must be between the ages of 21 and 35 years old unless otherwise allowed by State Statute.
- Candidates must have a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Candidates must have a clean criminal background.

Applicants who meet these requirements are invited to work through a process to earn a place on the hiring list. The process includes a written aptitude test, a physical agility test, a criminal background check, and an interview with the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners. The applicants must pass each step to advance to the next step in the process.

The physical agility test includes maintaining contact with a fire hose while advancing forward with a mask covering your field of vision, carrying a fire hose to the fourth floor landing, raising an extension ladder, stretching and dragging a charged or water filled hose line, and dragging a 185 pound

training mannequin in a series of events done back to back and completed within a specified time.

Following the physical agility test, all candidates are required to climb the aerial ladder to ascertain their fear of heights. Kewanee also accepts the CPAT card which is proof of a physical assessment done at one of various locations throughout the state at different times during the year. Candidates with a CPAT card are not required to take the physical agility test. These cards are normally good for one year from the date of issue.

Candidates are ranked by the numerical score they receive in each portion of the process. Candidates can obtain additional points to raise their scores on the eligibility list through having current State Fire Marshall certifications, an EMT or paramedic license, an associate's or bachelor's degree (not necessarily in fire science), or military experience.

When the results are finalized, all

of the successful candidates are listed in the order of their total scores. When a position needs filled, a candidate will be given a conditional offer of employment pending the results of a polygraph examination, a psychological evaluation, a physical, and a FBI and State Police fingerprint background check. Successful recruits are required to attend training classes to become a certified firefighter, as well as a licensed paramedic.

The Fire Department will be accepting applications for the next eligibility list this winter with applications expected to be out in January and testing to take place in February and March.



One of two 2011 Foster Coach Med-tech ambulances recently purchased from Byron Fire Protection District. These units were purchased earlier this fall and have been undergoing some minor repairs and outfitting before placing them into service. They will be replacing a 2001 and a 2006 ambulance in Kewanee's Emergency Fleet.



How do we communicate with you:
We are City of Kewanee, Illinois on Facebook
Visit our website at: www.cityofkewanee.com
Channel 13 on Comcast Cablevision
Press Releases to the Radio and Newspaper
and this newsletter.

Para leer esta letra informativa en español, visite
www.cityofkewanee.com

Other upcoming events:

11/29: Last day of the fall landscape waste burn season (weather permitting)

12/02: YMCA Annual Christmas Auction

12/03: Windmont Park lighting, lighted parade & fireworks display

12/04 Last day for landscape waste collection

12/22: City Hall offices closed; no changes to the trash collection schedule.

12/25: City Hall offices closed - Merry Christmas; no changes to the trash collection schedule. 5 extra bags of trash allowed on regular collection day.

12/31: Hard Core Run Your Ice Off 5K

01/01: City Hall offices closed - Happy New Year; no changes to the trash collection schedule.