

CITY CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 3 • SPRING 2017



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I hope this Mayor's Message finds you doing well. We've gotten quite a bit accomplished since my last message. One thing that's sure to help residents and businesses alike is the development of new incentive programs. They're designed to assist homeowners with sidewalk replacement, demolition of dilapidated structures, and even minor home repairs. They can help businesses with façade improvements, help them with the purchase of new equipment, a building expansion, or any number of other things. Our incentive programs stack up well against those of any other city in Illinois and reflect our willingness to invest in the future of Kewanee.

The future of Kewanee depends on reinvestment, and it also depends on working to keep the businesses that are a part of this community. We are in the early stages of a program, in Partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Kewanee Economic Development Corporation, that works to retain

and expand existing businesses. We're hopeful that the renewed focus on existing businesses will pay long-term dividends. A great example of the impact of job retention is available right here in town, with the conversion of the Illinois Youth Center - Kewanee to an adult facility in the Department of Corrections. Keeping our friends, families, and neighbors employed locally at the facility is a huge benefit to the entire community.

You may have noticed that we're also working hard to improve the image of our community. Sidewalks are being fixed, major thoroughfares are being repaired, and eyesores are being cleaned up or removed.

One program that helped last year, thanks to some help from our partners, volunteers, and participating residents, was the City-wide clean-up. The event was such a huge success that we're already making plans for the next one which will be held May 20th. You can find more information about the event in this newsletter. Be on the lookout for more information about the event as that date draws closer, and be sure to mark it on your calendar (we're even looking for volunteers).

We've got more improvements to streets, storm drainage, water, sewer, and other infrastructure

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planned for both the near and long-term future. Other less visible but equally important work takes place in areas involving the fire department and police department every day, and when they're called upon in emergency situations, their work is even more difficult. They've dealt with some difficult challenges of late and have handled them with a professionalism that makes me proud. I'm glad that I can count on them and all other City employees to provide our customers with the highest level of service.

On behalf of everyone with the City, thanks for allowing us to serve you.

Community & Economic Development

“It sure would be nice if Kewanee had _____.”

You can fill in the blank with a lot of different things, from your favorite restaurant to your favorite stores in larger locales. Some of the options seem like no brainers. Geneseo has this one, Princeton has that one, Canton has another, and somebody else has something, too.

The reality with how economic development works, though, makes all of the options a lot easier to talk about than actually get. Here's how it works, in a nutshell.

First, there has to be a market for whatever it is. The market is determined by the number of people who live in an area, drive to or through an area, their disposable income that can be spent on a particular type of goods and services, and in some cases the ages of the people in the given area. For Kewanee, we've established what gaps exist in our market and how much money leaves our community each year for each sector of the retail market.

That helps to identify a list of specific brands to market to or types of stores to attract. Second, of the national/regional stores that are in that target group, two different models exist; corporate stores and franchises.

With franchises, you have to find someone from the area who has the resources to invest in putting a store here, or someone who's not from here that is willing to invest their money in the area. In either case, the person has to have not just the money for the franchise, but the ability to make sure that the business is run properly.

With corporate stores, we have to be able to show not just that we can sustain a store, but that we can sustain their store better than most of the other communities that are options for store development. If a department store is opening twenty stores in a given year, for instance, you have to be able to show that you are in the top twenty of the fifty sites they are considering.

Of course, there's the option of developing local concepts that don't have the national name, but they still need an entrepreneur with the resources to start the business; the knowledge, skills, and ability to operate it; and the desire to take on the risks that come with business ownership. Without the brand recognition that comes from a national name, it's even harder for such businesses to survive because their market is smaller than it otherwise would be.

That's a short explanation of why it's sometimes hard to create, attract, or even retain businesses; not just in this community, but in other places, as well. All that said, we're doing everything we can to overcome those challenges and improve the economic climate in our community. You can learn more about those efforts on the City's website, cityofkewanee.com

Façade Improvements

Studies have shown that in the service and retail sectors, the physical appearance of a business has an impact on revenues. That's no surprise, especially when it comes to a downtown area. An inviting downtown helps to draw people to the area. To that end, the City has developed a façade improvement program that will help to improve the vitality of the downtown. Under the program, the City will match a property owner's investment up to \$10,000 per building. Grant proceeds under the program can be used for awnings, canopies, and shutters, exterior lighting, painting, restoration of original architectural features, tuck-pointing, and improvements to windows and doorways. One project has been completed under the program, and we're expecting several more applications once the weather warms up. For more information, visit the City's website and keep your eye on the downtown for the improvements.

Neighborhood Improvements

Did you notice the dilapidated houses coming down? In the past, the City generally demolished three to four houses per year, which was clearly not enough.

Community Development is a priority of the residents according to the survey responses received last year. With the responses, City staff recommended the budget for demolitions this year be significantly increased, which was approved by the City Council. So far this year, we have contracted with vendors



to demolish buildings and cleanup 14 properties. The City Council also approved a demolition grant program for property owners. The program is designed to assist property owners with the demolition of vacant, dilapidated, unfit, and unsafe residential or commercial structures within the city limits. The City will participate jointly with property owners on a 50/50 shared cost basis, up to a maximum of \$4,000 paid by the City. This program has

already been utilized twice in the five months since it has been adopted.

If you have a building on your property and are interested in the demolition grant program or know of a building that may be unsafe, please contact the Director of Community Development, Keith Edwards by email kedwards@cityofkewanee.net or by phone at 309-852-2611 ext 267. The City has a list of potential demolitions or distressed properties. Those properties are prioritized based on the condition and/or location.

Distressed Properties?

Some properties might actually be candidates for the newly adopted Distressed Property Reinvestment Program. The goal of the program is to assist individuals and families in achieving the "American Dream" of home ownership through loan guarantees that facilitate the renovation/rehabilitation of distressed properties that would otherwise be potential candidates for demolition. Through bank financed "sweat-equity" or small contractor improvement projects, the program is designed to encourage reinvestment in and preservation of target neighborhoods and existing houses. Applicants eligible for consideration would meet the low to moderate income guidelines, and the property must be owner occupied with a clean title. Eligible uses of guaranteed loan proceeds include but are not limited to: repair and replacement of windows and doors, roof repair and replacement of roof covering, exterior paint, foundation repair,

drywall, interior paint and finishing, cabinetry, flooring, electrical, plumbing, repair to porches and steps, repair to exterior foundation walls, exterior walls and trim, flashing /guttering, and private sanitary sewer repairs. Loan guarantees are limited to \$40,000 per single family owner occupied structure.

Program funding on an annual basis is limited to funding availability and outstanding loan guarantee liabilities. For further information regarding this program, please contact City Manager Gary Bradley at gbradley@cityofkewanee.net or 309-852-2611 ext 232.

[Brighten up the City!](#)
When you recycle your aluminum cans in the container located behind the Star Courier building, the proceeds help to fund the annual fireworks display.



Facilities & Grounds Maintenance...

Cemetery Clean Up of Decorations

Spring is right around the corner. At the Cemetery Department that means we will be conducting our spring clean up. Every year we are always asked the same questions: "When is the clean up?" "What is or is not thrown away?" and "When can we put decorations back out?"

Cemetery staff spring clean-up starts March 20th every year and will be complete by March 31st. So if you, a family member, or someone you know maintains decorations at a loved one's gravesite, we ask that any or all decorations you want to keep are removed from the cemetery prior to March 20th.

During the clean-up 90% of disposed items are artificial flowers and dead potted plants. The other 10% is made up of decorations that are no longer appropriate for cemetery display; this includes things such as concrete plaques, clay pots and/or benches that have become cracked, broken or started to crumble from weather exposure, any season specific past holiday decoration, any bracket or decoration frame missing the decoration, weathered or torn flags, toys, and plush animals.

We understand that this could be an inconvenience at times. For example, someone may not live locally or may have health concerns keeping them from daily activities. If you have

concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Cemetery Department at (309)853-4649, and we will happily do our best to accommodate your requests.

Decorations can be placed at a gravesite after the last day of the clean-up. As a reminder, all plants should be potted, as planting in the ground is prohibited. Also, we respectfully request all decorations be placed as close as possible to headstones and monuments, to keep the mowing lanes open. Please keep in mind that each additional decoration placed on display creates an additional challenge in cemetery maintenance. If you have any questions or concerns about the City of Kewanee's cemeteries, cemetery operation, pricing, or services, please don't hesitate to call or stop by.

West Clarifier On Line

In June 2015 the City passed a \$3.2 million bond issue for Water and Sewer Improvements. One of the projects included the complete rebuild of the City's two clarifiers at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The clarifiers were well over thirty years old, and the internal operating mechanism was nearly inoperable. Plans were prepared in late 2015, bids received, contract awarded, and a notice to proceed issued to Leander Construction, Inc. with a contract price of \$948,900. After the design was completed, it took nearly 5 months for the equipment to be manufactured.

The West Clarifier was taken off line in November and workers began removing the old equipment and installing the new. The west clarifier work was completed and is now on line. After a few weeks of checking out the operation of the west clarifier, the east clarifier was taken off line. Workers are working to remove the old equipment and install the new as they did for the west clarifier. Both clarifiers should be back on line by May 1, 2017.



It's Time To Think About Spring Cleaning!

The Citywide Clean-Up last fall went so well we're doing it again! The City of Kewanee will hold a Citywide Clean-Up on

Saturday May 20th,
8:00 am to 2:00pm.

Mark your calendars!

Please note: this event is for Kewanee residents only. You will need to provide a utility bill and ID to show that you are a resident of Kewanee.

The following items
WILL NOT be accepted:

Electronic items, toxic materials, liquid paint, cleaning solvents, motor oil, liquid items of any sort, tires, landscape waste, slate siding, shingles, concrete, brick, masonry, railroad ties, construction or demolition materials.

The following items
WILL be accepted:

Mattresses, furniture, yard furniture, water heaters, appliances, metal junk items, scrap wood, paint with lids REMOVED (MUST BE DRIED), carpet, toilets, other misc junk and trash items that may be cluttering your yard or you've had stashed behind the garage or yard shed that you've been putting off taking to the transfer station.

**Any load being hauled
to the transfer station
for disposal must be
tarp and secure
while transporting the
load on City streets.**

**YOUR VEHICLE MUST BE HAND
UNLOADABLE!**

Questions about items
accepted, Call City Hall 852-2611

How to enter the Clean Up site:
Enter on to Elliott St. from West Prospect St. Drive South on Elliott St. and Stop at West Division St. Have Utility Bill and ID ready. Your ID will be checked at this intersection. If you do not have the required Utility Bill and ID, you will be directed in a safe direction out of the City Wide Clean-up area. Once your ID is verified you will be directed to the West on Division St. where you will enter into the parking lot to empty your vehicle into a trash container. You will then be directed to exit the parking lot and West down Pine St.

DO NOT enter the site from Pine St.

**Volunteers
are
needed!**

If you (or a group that you belong to) are interested in helping, please contact the Director of Community Development, Keith Edwards at 309-852-2611 ext 267.

Spring Burning

Before you know it Kewanee residents will be turning their focus to what they find in their yards. Some of you will bag up all your landscape waste and place it by the roadside for Monday morning collection which begins on March 20. For those that choose to burn your landscape waste, we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the burning regulations.

Burning is only permitted on Wednesdays and Saturdays, during the months of April, May and June in the spring time and September, October and November in the fall from 8:00 a.m. until sunset. You still need to call City Hall to see if it's a burn day because weather conditions may cause the burn day to be cancelled. For burn day verification call 852-2611 and selection option 6.

Only clean dry landscape waste generated from the property on which it is being burned is allowed; however, grass clippings may not be burned due to the large amount of smoke that is generated. Burning of grass clippings, trash, lumber or other unlawful materials can result in possible fines. If you have questions whether or not something you want to burn is lawful or not, please feel free to call the Director of Community Development, Keith Edwards at 852-2611 ext 267.

Credit or Debit

Kewanee Residents Will Soon Have New Payment Options

The City of Kewanee is pleased to announce that two new services—Water Bill Payments via telephone or mobile application and the ability to accept credit or debit card payments at City Hall will be available soon.

The City of Kewanee and Payment Service Network (PSN) are working on final preparations to the system and hope to have all the necessary equipment in place and active by April 1, 2017. Watch for future announcements on our website or Cable Channel 13 detailing when the system will go live.

Customers will be able to pay from anywhere, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. To pay, log onto www.cityofkewanee.com, download the "PSN Payments" app from the App Store or Google Play, or call toll-free (877-885-7968) to an automated phone payment service. Residents can make a payment by credit card, debit card, checking, or savings account. They can make an immediate payment, schedule

a payment or set up Auto-Pay and not have to worry about making a payment for each bill. There will be no charge to the customer for using the online payment system. By automating the payment process, we are saving time for our customers as well as City staff.

Electronic payments are easy to use. Once registered, the payment process is just three quick steps. Registration is simple requiring customers to enter a name and account number, then the system will locate their accounts. Customers can also print receipts, view current balances and view their electronic payment histories whether the payments were made online, on the mobile app or by phone. A handy tool is available to "group" accounts so that customers can pay multiple billing accounts in one visit for those owners with multiple properties.

If customers have questions about using the online, mobile, or phone system, they can call the PSN Call Center, which operates during extended business hours, 365 days a year. Call Center representatives can also make payments on behalf of customers should the need arise. Call Center support and the automated phone system are available in Spanish and English.

Security of online information is always a concern, so when the City looked for a company to provide online and phone payments, that was a top consideration. We chose PSN which has the highest degree of security awarded by the industry.

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.

Contacts

Mayor Steve Looney: 852-5044

Council Members:

Andy Koehler 853-6690

Mike Yaklich 854-2982

Kellie Wallace-McKenna
852-0040

Deann Schweitzer
727-692-5641

City Hall: 309-852-2611

City Manager Gary Bradley Ext 232

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
Development

Keith Edwards: ext 267

Police Department: 309-853-1911

Police Chief Jim Dison: Ext 255

Fire Department: 309-852-2115

Fire Chief Kevin Shook Ext 275

Any person listed can be reached by email in the format of first initial last name@cityofkewanee.net

For Example: Mayor Looney may be reached at:
slooney@cityofkewanee.net

New Fire Engine placed in service

In early February Alexis Fire Equipment delivered a new fire engine to the City's Fire Department. This engine was ordered in February of 2016 and funded through a low interest revolving loan. It has a 1,250 gallon per minute pump capacity and an onboard water tank of 750 gallons with a total carrying capacity of 792 gallons of water including piping and the pump.

The new engine is powered by a Cummings diesel engine and was built in cooperation between HME Industries of Michigan and Alexis Fire Equipment of Alexis, Illinois.



Outdoor Warning Sirens

As we move into storm season it's important to understand how the outdoor warning sirens are intended to be used. Sirens are used to alert citizens who are outdoors of an imminent hazard and prompt them to go indoors and seek further information. Upon hearing outdoor warning sirens, it is important that all persons immediately go indoors and refer to local broadcast media (radio, TV, etc.) for additional information.

The outdoor warning sirens are not intended to be heard indoors. If you happen to live close enough that you are able to hear them indoors, that is great but it's not the intention. So what if you are indoors and are not able to hear the sirens.... How do you get notified? The answer is simple. It's always a good idea to be aware of severe weather in the forecast. If so, you should be sure to take note of any updates throughout the day, whether through news media, a NOAA All Hazards radio, or your cellular phone network. A NOAA radio can be set so that it will go off like a smoke alarm when the National Weather Service issues a Watch or Warning. If you have a smart phone there are numerous apps out there or your phone may have a setting that can be turned on to receive emergency broadcast messages.

It's also important to understand that the City does not issue an all clear signal. All clear signals never have been issued and never will. It's a common misunderstanding that a second sounding of the sirens is an all clear, this is not the case. If the sirens sound a second time it is an attempt to make sure everyone who's outside heard the first sounding.

Officer Award

Sgt. Justin Reed of the Kewanee Police Department was awarded the Illinois Elk's Enrique S. Camerena Award at their winter meeting held on January 28, 2017 in Springfield, Illinois. "The Enrique S. Camerena" Award was established by the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks to honor and recognize law enforcement officers who have made significant contributions in drug prevention and who personify Agent Camerena's belief that one person can make a difference."

Special Agent Enrique Camerena was assigned to the DEA when murdered by the Mexican Drug Cartel in 1985 while investigating drug trafficking into the United States.



Sgt. Reed was nominated for this award by Kewanee Police Chief Jim Dison, Lt. William Rivord and M/Sgt. Todd Shaver of the Illinois State Police Black Hawk Area Task Force.

Sgt. Reed joins fellow Kewanee officers, Lt. William Rivord and Sgt. Nicholas Welgat, who are past recipients of the award.

Alley Speed Limit is 10 mph.



City Wide Spring Clean Up
Saturday, May 20th, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: Old Hospital Site, 719 Elliott St
WATCH FOR DETAILS AT:
www.cityofkewanee.com
OR Call City Hall: 852-2611

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

Other upcoming events:

03/20: Curbside landscape waste collection begins

04/04: Election Day

04/14: City Hall offices closed

04/28: Francis Park opens for the season

05/14 Kewanee High School Graduation

05/18 Last day of student attendance - Kewanee

05/19 Black Hawk College East Campus Graduation

05/20 City wide cleanup

05/21 Wethersfield High School Graduation

05/24 - Last day of student attendance - Wethersfield

05/29: City Hall offices closed