



MANAGING TAX DOLLARS WELL, IS ALWAYS OUR FIRST PRIORITY

As a former claims case manager for Wausau Insurance I am always interested in minimizing risk. I take a look at the benefits versus the exposure to problems and I make a decision. This philosophy has followed me in my career as a local official and I am happy to say this careful approach, especially with regard to the handling of tax dollars, is our way of doing business in Weston. But it is much more than that. In 2008, our staff has adopted a battle cry of **Above Reproach!** We want to be squeaky clean and transparent in all we say and do.

Long before the recent indiscretions in neighboring communities, we have had a strict credit card use policy in Weston. While other governments have tens to hundreds of credit cards, we have only three and use is strictly regulated and promptly receipted. Our cell phone and email use policy has been defined for several years and abuse may result in termination for non-represented employees. Page 26 of our Employee Handbook clearly states that "Department Heads and Supervisors are prohibited from having romantic...relationships with employees under their supervision...and shall be subject to disciplinary action including discharge." We simply have mitigated any risk of inappropriate behavior with sound policies upfront.

But being **above reproach** also means being transparent – and this is where we shine. We rarely go into closed session to do business. Our budget is online for all to view and no funds are comingled making it easy to see where we spend your taxes. We have a "tell them everything" policy with the media including the release of management memos. We go above and beyond financially by completing a rigorous Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, which has earned us four national awards. Our staff will give you answers if you ask and are all very approachable. This is your government and you have the right to know what is going on at all times.

I want to welcome back our snowbirds and gladly welcome back spring. Special thanks to our street crew who skillfully dealt with an eleven year high of snow accumulation and prepared us ably for an uneventful spring thaw.

God Bless,

Fred Schuster
Village President

VILLAGE OF WESTON OPEN BOOK AND BOARD OF REVIEW

The Village of Weston assessment roll will be open for public inspection at the Weston Municipal Center, 5500 Schofield Avenue, Weston, WI 54476, on Monday, June 2, 2008 and Wednesday, June 4, 2008. Office Hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on both days.

The Board of Review will meet on **Monday, June 9, 2008, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.** at the Weston Municipal Center, 5500 Schofield Avenue, Weston, WI 54476. All objections must be filed no later than Friday, June 6th, 2008 by 5:00 p.m. Appearance before the Board of Review will be by appointment only. Appointments can be made with the Village Clerk or Village Assessor by calling 359-6114.

VEOLIA RECYCLING CENTER REOPENS W/ SECURITY

The Village of Weston and Veolia Environmental Services have re-opened the community recycling facility located on Fuller Street after the site was re-fenced and security cameras were installed. The Village Board had allocated \$5,000 toward fencing that separates the recycling center from Veolia's equipment and headquarters due to recent theft and vandalism. The security cameras were installed to help prosecute persons illegally dumping non-recyclable materials such as antifreeze, furniture, and tires.

"Veolia has worked well with the Village of Weston for six years in our efforts to give taxpayers a place to recycle bulk cardboard, plastic and paper. But the site had become a place where people were dumping everything and causing a potential environmental hazard. The cameras will allow us to catch these individuals and fine them \$500 per action under Village ordinance," said Tim Vergara, Village Engineer & Recycling Coordinator.

The recycling center will be open Monday thru Saturday 6:AM – 7 PM, but will not be open on Sunday due to lack of supervision. Items that may be recycled include cardboard, paper, No.1 - No. 7 plastic, aluminum cans, tin cans, and glass bottles (all colors). Food & beverage containers need to be rinsed out. Absolutely no aerosol cans, no petroleum products or automobile fluids. Please go to www.westonwisconsin.org for more details. **It is up to Weston residents to help police the site to allow for this municipal recycling service (that other communities do not have) to remain open.**



PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITY NEWS

The Village is in the final stages of planning for its 2008 capital projects. With a compressed planning and design timeline, the final scope of work on 2008 projects has been in a state of change as information was

gathered. A current status report of the construction projects you can expect to see in 2008 follows.

RECONSTRUCTION OF BIRCH STREET (SCHOFIELD AVE. TO JELINEK AVE.), JELINEK AVENUE (BIRCH ST. TO ALDERSON ST.) AND ALDERSON STREET (SCHOFIELD AVE. TO JELINEK AVE.)

– The Village retained CWE, Inc. to both evaluate the problems with the existing pavement and design a new pavement section for these streets. The contributing factors to the pavement deterioration include mixing of the pavement base course (gravel) with the natural material below, gravel layer being too thin, and pavement layer being too thin. Also as expected, the recommendation is to construct a thicker base course (10" instead of 8"), a thicker pavement (4" instead of 3"), and use of a special fabric to keep the gravel separated from the material below. Along with the pavement evaluation and design, the Village made its own assessment of the condition of the underground utility facilities on these streets using records and television inspection of the sanitary sewer and storm sewer mains. Highlights of the conclusions reached include abandonment of a redundant sewer main on Jelinek Avenue, replacement and increased size for some segments of the storm sewer on Jelinek Avenue, replacement of the cast iron water main on Alderson Street, and spot repairs on the storm sewers and sanitary sewers in all areas. With the melting of most of the snow, the curb & gutter condition is revealed to be much worse than expected. Rather than piecemeal large sections of new curb & gutter it appears that the prudent thing to do is replace all the curb & gutter with the exception of the east side of Alderson along the Target property and the west side of Birch along the Kwik Trip property. The public hearing for special assessments applicable to the street reconstruction, curb & gutter, drive approaches, and limited sidewalk replacement was conducted on April 16. A May 20 bid opening date is anticipated to enable an early June construction start. The total project cost is currently estimated at \$1.5 M. The original estimate of \$1.0 M was based on pavement and curb replacement only. Unless bid prices are significantly higher than expected, the project should still move forward. The work will be performed in two phases with Jelinek and Birch as one phase and Alderson as the other. The intention is to accomplish both phases consecutively in 2008 with

Jelinek & Birch first, followed by Alderson. The Alderson Street/Jelinek Avenue intersection will be closed early in the project and re-opened until the first phase of work is complete. An additional closure of the intersection will likely occur as the Alderson phase of the project begins. Another possibility that won't be ruled out yet is to construct only one phase in 2008 and the other in 2009. That decision will be made before construction begins.

BUSINESS HIGHWAY 51 RE-SURFACING FROM STH 29 (ROTHSCHILD) TO DROTT STREET (SCHOFIELD) BY WISCONSIN DOT

– Repeating much of the message from February - the scope of this project is to pulverize the existing pavement between the curbs, remove part of the pulverized pavement, add base course, and re-pave with asphalt for the entire length of the project, which includes all of Business 51 within the Village of Weston. Disruptions to local traffic will include closure of the STH 29 ramps for re-paving and lane closures on Business 51. The DOT has informed the Village that project has been let with American Asphalt being the low bidder. Work will begin at the Metro Drive/Business 51 intersection in mid-May. Motorists will need to pay close attention to signing on the project as the work zones and traffic control change.

Metro Drive will be closed to traffic in the initial phases so truck traffic will need to find alternate routes to the Schofield industrial park north of Ross Avenue. Closure of the STH 29 interchange ramps



will not be occurring until later in the project, though a prediction as to the date that will occur is impossible to know at this time. Traffic will be detoured to the Camp Phillips and STH 29 ramps during the construction when the Business 51 and STH 29 ramps are closed. Although a detour will be marked on Camp Phillips to Schofield Avenue to Business 51, local traffic will no doubt find other routes like Weston Avenue for the shortest routes dependent on their destination. The Birch-Jelinek-Alderson reconstruction will be taking place concurrently so alternate routes will be somewhat limited. The Village will be performing some maintenance work on its sanitary sewers and manholes concurrently with the street work. Construction is expected to take place through October.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS): RECONFIGURATION OF DROP-OFF AREA AND SIDEWALKS AROUND DC EVEREST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL and MACHMUELLER STREET RECONSTRUCTION

– A preliminary plan has been approved for the parking lot/drop-off reconfiguration off Machmueller Street to separate bus traffic from

vehicles and improve safety for pedestrians. The work on the school side will also include the addition of curb and sidewalk on the east side of Machmueller between Jelinek and East Everest Avenues. An estimate of the cost for the parking lot, curb and sidewalk work on the east side of the street was not available at press time. If sufficient grant funds are available, the project will include sidewalks on the north side of East Everest Avenue from Machmueller to Normandy, the west side of Normandy between Jelinek and Everest, and a paved walk from Normandy to the east side of the school parking lot. Available grant funds total \$232,500 and the ability to complete all of the desired improvements will depend on bid prices and whether the DC Everest School District elects to fund any project costs in excess of the grant amount.



As with many projects, an initial concept of scope can soon expand to something different once details are considered. That is the case with this project. It

was initially anticipated that the SRTS project would be done independently of any other work. However, the Village was planning to rebuild Machmueller Street in 2008. Both projects must be coordinated and made compatible with each other. The bottom line is that rather than simply reconstruct Machmueller to its existing configuration between Jelinek and East Everest, it is prudent to construct curb & gutter on the west side as well to address proper street grades and drainage. **One implication of this change is that there will be special assessments associated with both the street reconstruction and the curb & gutter.** The Village has retained Short-Elliott-Hendrickson to complete the necessary design for the curbed portion of Machmueller. The re-configuration of the drop off area and any work on Machmueller Street in front of the Jr. High will be accomplished during the school's summer recess. The remainder of the sidewalk and Machmueller Street reconstruction work may continue after school resumes this fall.

MAINTENANCE PROJECTS – With the extended winter weather it has been difficult to assess whether there should be any modifications to the proposed 2008 street maintenance plan to address problems that were unforeseen last year. The maintenance planned this year on specific streets remains as follows:

Rebuild the pavement base and surface; re-establish proper drainage - Machmueller Street (Jelinek Avenue to Foothill Avenue) and Shepherd Lane. *(In uniformly and consistently applying the Village's special assessment ordinance, a street rebuild project will involve special assessments.*

Affected residents will be notified as to the time and date of a public hearing related to these projects.)

Chip Seal – Linda Street, Lee Avenue, Scott Street, Jean Ellen, Sternberg (Von Kanel to Lora Lee), James Lee Street, Pat Street, Powers, Kiowa, Apache, River Bend, and Trotzer.

COMPLETION OF 2007 PROJECTS – Projects with uncompleted work carried into 2007 were reported on in the February issue of “The Weston FOCUS.” Those projects include **HIGHLAND BOULEVARD (from Alta Verde to Normandy) and COMMUNITY CENTER DRIVE.** Judging by the performance of the drainage in the vicinity of Birch Street and Jelinek Avenue, it appears there is no need for further work related to the **DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS ON BIRCH STREET SOUTH OF JELINEK.** An additional mitigating factor will be the storm sewer work to be done on Jelinek Avenue between Birch and Alderson as described above.

SUBDIVISION PROJECTS – There has been no change in the status of the LINDEN GROVE SUBDIVISION (Karl Matthews) project. The Village was expecting the project to move forward this spring, which would include a water main extension on Weston Avenue from Von Kanel to the subdivision entrance. The developer has not announced his plans yet. Work on the MOUNT VIEW MIXED DEVELOPMENT (Arden Emmerich and Rick Drewek) is picking up. The Drewek's have started several of their multi-family buildings and the privacy fence around the property boundaries. The remaining public infrastructure work will be completed later this spring when weather permits. A water main loop remains to be completed extending west to RichFlex Street along with the street paving and detention pond. Kentucky Fried Chicken should begin constructing their restaurant later this spring on the northwest corner of the new intersection of Mount View and Schofield Avenue.



SANITARY SEWER AND WATER SERVICE TO UNSERVED AREAS – The neighborhood meetings for the three developed areas of the Village not currently served by municipal sanitary sewer and water have been delayed. If meetings are not conducted before June 10, they will likely be deferred to the fall. **SANDY LANE (EXTENDED) NORTH CORRIDOR STUDY** – Graef, Anhalt & Schloemer has updated the Village with some initial concepts for the location of a bridge over the Big Sandy Creek (from Sandy Meadows to Northwestern Ave.) and a master street plan on the north side of the creek. The Village and or GAS will be contacting stakeholders to discuss preferred options later this summer.



EVEREST METRO POLICE NEWS

Chief Dan Vergin

POLICE MERGER TALKS ARE ONLY TALKS

The recent talk of police mergers and shared services between the Everest Metro Police Department and the Wausau Police Department caught many people off guard. These talks started because Chief Hardel and I realized that we both have diminishing resources to do our jobs and combining some or all of our resources may have some advantages. The first concern that I hear is that this will cost us more money. One of the clear mandates that I have from the governing bodies is that if it costs us more money or we lose services, not to go ahead with any merger talks. The bottom line is that there is a lot more that we don't know than what we do know. We are in the very infancy of this idea, and no one is sure of the end result.

As we look at the idea, we do know that we can functionally make this work. We can combine our patrol, investigative and support services into cohesive units. In a joint venture, we would be operating a department with 96 sworn officers, and this creates the possibility of having specialized groups to support our patrol divisions; **we could have a traffic division that could attack the number one complaint in all communities – traffic problems.** We could have a street crimes unit that could focus their attention on the 10% of the population that causes 90% of the police calls.

One of the unexpected results of the attention this has drawn is the support we have received from the community. I have been overwhelmed by the calls, letters, and e-mails from people saying how much they enjoy the police service they get from Everest Metro. P. D. and that they do not want to lose that. **If, and that is a big if,** we combine forces, that service will not change. If I cannot guarantee that, we will not merge. We are currently examining the finances of both departments and making a concerted effort to determine if this is financially possible.

On another note, the Everest Men Respect campaign has garnered over 500 signatures from local men pledging to combat domestic abuse in our community. I also want to express a debt of gratitude to our high school students – especially the editors, reporters and Len Fike, the advisor of the *The Jet*, our student newspaper for the fine job they did in raising awareness of the issue. Kudos go out to the DCE Football Leadership Team and Coach Bohm & Coach Boswell for their efforts in gender respect training.

WESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Weston residents planning on burning brush, having backyard campfires, or cooking over wood in 2008 should review the restrictions for each type of fire.

Cooking fires are allowed at any time and do not require a permit. Cooking fires can be in a fire pit no larger than four (4) feet in diameter, a cooking grill, an outdoor barbecue, or an outdoor fireplace. Cooking fires may be fueled with charcoal briquets, commercially prepared wood, clean dry wood, or gas (propane or natural). Cooking fires must be used to prepare a substantial part of the meal or they are defined as "recreational fires".

Recreational fires, often termed "campfires", do not require a permit. Commercially prepared wood or clean dry wood are the allowable fuels for this type of fire. Recreational fires can be in a fire pit no larger than four (4) feet in diameter, a cooking grill, an outdoor barbecue, or an outdoor fireplace. The fire must be under control at all times and extinguished by midnight. Recreational fires are allowed in the Village of Weston from noon until midnight on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Town of Weston, recreational fires information can be found on page 7 of this newsletter.



Brush and woody debris from clearing land for construction of residential and commercial structures or from the clearing of croplands for farming may be burned by permit only. Brush and branches two (2) inches in diameter and less may be burned. Stumps, logs, and construction scrap may not be burned. Burning permits can be issued for up to three (3) days in a row, excluding Sundays and holidays. Cost of a burning permit is \$25.00 for Village of Weston locations. There is no permit fee for Town of Weston locations. Citizens applying for a permit are urged to call the fire department at 355-5419 at least 24 hours before their desired burn date to assure their use qualifies for a permit and to secure issue of the permit in time for the desired burn dates.

The burning of leaves, grass, plastics, trash, paper, cardboard, and other refuse is specifically prohibited in both the Village and Town of Weston. Village and Town residents can dispose of these items at the yard waste drop off center behind the municipal center and the recycling center for non-yard waste at the Veolia plant on Fuller Street. Questions on burning? Burning info can be obtained from the fire department at 355-5419.

VILLAGE TO VISIT MOODY'S INVESTOR SERVICE FOR BOND RATING UPGRADE



On May 23rd, Village management will be traveling to Chicago to request a bond rating upgrade on the Village's general obligation debt. The purpose for the trip is to provide an update for the Moody's analysts as to the continued economic development occurring in the Village of Weston. Moody's assigns the Village a bond rating (similar to a "credit rating") annually when the Village needs to borrow debt for its capital improvements program. If the Village continues to present itself as a fiscally responsible, well-managed, and economically thriving community, the Moody's analysts will continue to assign favorable bond ratings to the Village when it issues debt each year.

Village staff is striving to achieve an upgrade in the bond rating in 2008, which would further reduce the interest costs of the Village by thousands of dollars each year. The Village's present general obligation (G.O.) bond rating is an "A2+" (positive outlook), which is good for a community of our size. When a bond rating upgrade is awarded, a possible 0.10% - 0.25% reduction in our future borrowing interest rates may materialize. If our future interest costs were lower, this would assist the Village Board and Staff to continue to keep our tax rate "LOW", as we set our budget each year.

G.O. Debt Bond Rating Upgrades: 2003 – 2007

The Village was successful in receiving a bond rating upgrade from an "A3" to an "A2" in May 2003, after a Moody's visit had occurred. In addition, the Village received a ½-step upgrade from an "A2" to an "A2+" (positive outlook) in August 2007. Highlighted comments from the Moody's August 2007 rating included the following:

- Village of Weston's quickly growing tax base benefitting from its development strategies and proximity to the City of Wausau
- Well managed financial operations
- Sound, healthy reserve levels in place
- Somewhat above average debt burden is expected to remain manageable and enjoys significant non-tax levy support

G.O. Bond Rating Upgrade Expectation for 2008

When a ½-step upgrade occurs, Moody's is required to reexamine the bond rating within 12 months to either award the additional ½-step increase or to reverse the previous bond rating upgrade. Village staff feels confident that the Village is in an excellent position at this time to attain the next ½-step upgrade from an "A2+" to an "A1".

Other Bond Rating Upgrade Expectations for 2008

In addition to the "A1" rating request on the Village's general obligation debt, Village staff will be seeking other bond rating upgrades in the Village's Water Utility Revenue Bonds, Sewer Utility Revenue Bonds, and Community Development Authority/Tax Incremental Financing District (CDA/TIF) Lease Revenue Bonds.

All three of these types of debt are presently rated as an "A3". The Sewer Utility has not received a bond rating increase during the period of 2000-2008. However, the Sewer Utility has not issued revenue bond debt since 2002, and therefore, has not been required to seek a bond rating increase. The Water Utility bond rating was upgraded from "Baa1" to an "A3" in May 2001. Finally, the CDA/TIF lease revenue bonds received their very first bond rating in August 2007 as an "A3".

With the present one-notch differential in the bond ratings between the general obligation debt ("A2") and the various revenue bond debt types ("A3"), Village staff strongly believes that the one-notch differential in the bond ratings should be maintained once the general obligation debt is finally upgraded to the "A1" level. Once this does happen, the revenue bond issues previously mentioned should all be upgraded from an "A3" rating to an "A2". This would translate into interest savings across almost all type of debt issuances that the Village of Weston would pursue in future years.

The Chart below is a summary of all of the present bond ratings of the various types of debt that the Village has issued and the expected ratings after the Moody's visit in May 2008.

<u>TYPE OF DEBT</u>	<u>Present Rating</u>	<u>Expected Rating</u>
General Obligation Debt	A2+	A1
Water Revenue Debt	A3	A2
Sewer Revenue Debt	A3	A2
CDA/TIF Revenue Debt	A3	A2
Stormwater Revenue Debt	A3	A3

The Stormwater Utility revenue bonds received their very first bond rating in December 2007 as an "A3". No bond rating upgrade is expected for the Stormwater Utility during 2008.

Robert W. Baird & Company, who is the financial advisor for the Village, reports that there are only a handful of communities in the State of Wisconsin that have all of their various types of debt rated on the global market and under the microscope of the bond market today. The Village of Weston is proud to be one of those "fully-rated" communities among over 1,900 municipalities in the State of Wisconsin.

