Message from the Mayor

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Happy New Year! All of us in the village wish you and yours all of the best this year! We also want you to know that the village is entering the New Year with high hopes and expectations.

Our Holiday Basket Program was very successful and I would like to thank all who spent a lot of hours selecting, sorting and putting together Holiday packages to the needy. Special thanks to EMA and Bridgeview Auxiliary, as usual they stood up to the task and delivered the baskets to our residents.

The Triangle Project is in the final stages, with the owner negotiating with potential tenants and new businesses opening in the spring time. The sidewalk project is done, residents can walk safely along Frontage Road and not be forced to walk on the street. The cleanup of the gas station on 84th and Cork Avenue is in the final stage. We expect IEPA to issue certificate sometime in April. The village will then start making plans to develop the site for the benefit of our residents.

The village received CDBG grant for reconstruction of 83rd Street west of Roberts Road. This is one of worst streets in the village and we finally got the funds to take care of that street. I promised years ago, that I will find the way to improve our streets and infrastructure and have kept my promise. Our streets are getting paved, reconstructed and are maintained constantly. There is still a lot to do, but we are moving forward and we will make sure our residents will be proud of their village.

The Tollway Project is moving forward and we are noticing more and more businesses who are interested in opening in our village. With increased activity, there will be more jobs and opportunities for our residents. That is what Economic Development is bringing. With additional revenue, we can further improve services and provide better amenities to make life in the village easier and better.

Code Enforcement is keeping a watchful eye on cleanliness and the complaints about rodents have decreased significantly. The whole village has become cleaner and better maintained. Five old dilapidated properties were demolished by court order and the remaining few are being addressed.

We are doing our best to rid the village of the eyesores.

Winter is in full swing, we are glad that we have plenty of salt. Our trucks and equipment are well maintained and ready. The village is part of the Cook County Hazard Mitigation Program, a few elected officials, employees and myself went through training and we prepared the village readiness program. That will give us priority in the event of any disaster and it makes the village eligible for grants and loans to help our residents recover in the event of a calamity.

Our finances are in order. We finished 2019 on the high note. Our budget is ready and balanced. For the first time since I can remember, our 2020 budget was done before the end of the year. Thanks to all Department Heads and our Finance Department! This is a good sign of things to come. Important in all of this is the fact, that we are becoming more efficient and effective. We maintain tight controls over expenses and are able to do things that were impossible to accomplish before. We strive to be good stewards of our resident’s hard earned money and we hope to deliver to you a good value in return.

Yours sincerely,

Kris Wasowicz,
Mayor/Village President
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Welcome to 2020! As a “boomer” and as a kid sooooooo long ago, 2020 seemed sooooo far away! By the time you read this, the New Years Resolutions more than likely have been broken by more than 50% of us. At the time of print, the Bears still have a small chance of making it to the play-offs.

What is on the menu for 2020? Some of the upcoming highlights for this year include political unrest in the federal government. (Maybe by the time you read this, the government will have decided what to do about our president.) There are tons of questions about the government in the State of Illinois as we look to go to the polls in March to start figuring out who we will elect to lead us in this new decade. As your clerk, I encourage everyone to vote. As always, if you need help getting registered or getting a ballot, call or email me and I’m happy to help (ssmall@villageofjustice.org).

250 new laws took effect on January 1st in Illinois. A complete list is available at stateofillinois.gov but thought I’d give you some of the most important; In my opinion anyway!

- Recreational Marijuana: The Village of Justice voted to allow recreational marijuana to be sold here
- Illinois minimum wage increases; $9.25 per hour on January 1st - $10.00 per hour on July 1st.
- Wage history questions are now prohibited: The law prohibits an employer from seeking the salary, including benefits or other compensation or salary history, of a job applicant from any current or former employer, with some exceptions. Potential employees may freely provide past salary information, but employers must not ask for it.
- Illinois Discrimination Law expands; 8 new protective laws for employees have been added
- Pet cats need to get rabies shots
- It is illegal to watch or stream videos while driving
- Vehicles with smoked or tinted lens covers are now completely illegal
- Passing a stopped school bus could get you a $300 fine for the first offense and $1,000 for the second offense.

That’s it for now; Hoping Spring gets here soon! Thanks Sue!

**Economic Development**

**Roundtable on Expanding I&M Canal Bike Trail Hosted in Justice**

Congressman Lipinski in conjunction with the Active Transportation Alliance hosted a roundtable meeting in the Lipinski Community Center in Justice to discuss closing the gap in the I&M Canal Trail between Willow Springs and the Chicago Portage National Historic Site. Local officials who participated in the discussion included our Mayor Kris Wasowicz, Mayor David Brady of Bedford Park and Mayor Sergio Rodriguez of Summit. Additional participants included the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Ride Illinois, Cook County, Illinois Department of Transportation, Southwest and West Central Conference of Mayors and additional advocacy groups. The discussion included an update on the feasibility study that was completed for the project and it was determined that the project is ready for a Phase I Engineering Study and ways to advance the project. More information related to this project can be found on the village website, [www.villageofjustice.org](http://www.villageofjustice.org), under the tab for I&M Canal Trail Extension.

“Building Justice Together” means that it takes a community to make things happen. We encourage you to shop and use the business services in Justice! We would like to welcome the following new business to the Village of Justice: Tatry Construction, a home office for a Painting Contractor/(773) 809-0305

**2020 Pet Tags**

2020 Animal Licenses may be purchased now at Village Hall – 7800 Archer Road. The fee is $5.00 per animal license. The application must be accompanied by a valid rabies vaccination certificate.
Building Department

CODE ENFORCEMENT:
Our code enforcement officer will continue to issue tickets for any code violations that are brought to our attention. A few examples are listed below:
- Garbage cans in front of the property
- Vehicles that are not registered
- Vehicles that do not have license plates
- Address not visible from the street
- Garbage and debris around the building
- Wood not stacked correctly or in front of the property

PLEASE REMEMBER:
- Electronics/televisions will not be picked up by Public Works or our refuse company, Groot. If you have these items, please call Groot for a special pick up. Groot will charge for the electronic pickup service to the resident/business. Groot’s phone number is 1-888-485-0900.
- Do not leave furniture/garbage or debris at curb until your designated refuse day.

WINTER SAFETY TIPS:
Now that the cold weather has finally arrived, have your furnaces and fireplaces serviced in order to avoid any problems. Problems left undetected can cause fires, injuries and even death. Also, service your dryer vents as even a light buildup of lint can cause a fire.

2019 Winter Wonderland
The Village of Justice Winter Wonderland Event was held on Saturday, December 7, 2019 and was coordinated in conjunction with the Justice Park District and the Justice Library. Local organizations were invited to decorate a tree that represents their district, department or group. The event was full of activities for children where they could enjoy a cup of apple cider at the library while taking pictures in the photo booth, write letters to Santa at the Park District, and/or build a snowman, get their face painted and/or save the misfit toys at Village Hall, all while riding the Holiday Wagon to get to each location. The Justice Police Department had the most difficult job keeping an eye on The Grinch to make sure he didn’t ruin the day! Santa Claus arrived to light the Village Tree and gave an opportunity for all the children to make their Christmas wish! While the children had all this good fun, the adults were able to enjoy viewing all the goodies at the Craft Fair. The day ended with a raffle that sent every child home with a toy!

We sincerely thank our partners the Justice Park District and the Justice Library District, Village of Justice Police, Finance, Building and Public Works Departments for all their hard work and energy making this event a success! A special thank you to Walgreens for helping sponsor the event and to Mariusz Turza for providing the transportation for the day!
Public Works

CHIPPING REMINDER: Branch chipping is now completely over for the season. The Public Works trucks are now prepared for the winter snow plowing.

COLD WEATHER AND SNOW SEASON HAS ARRIVED...
FOR THE SAFETY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND OUR RESIDENTS PLEASE ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS:
1.) PLEASE do NOT run out to or next to the snow plows as they are driving by, this is a dangerous situation, not only for you, the resident, but also for our snow plow drivers.

2.) Public Works Department spends long hours making sure our streets are clean of snow.
PLEASE REMEMBER: Shoveling or plowing snow into village streets is **against the law** (a ticket could possibly be issued). In the past, we have noticed several residents that snow blow or shovel snow onto the village streets soon after the snow plows have gone by. We have also had several complaints by motorists driving by as they get hit with snow or come very close to running into snow blowers. Again, this is not only dangerous for the resident, but also for the snow plow/drivers and also for vehicles driving on that street.

3.) Make sure when shoveling or plowing driveways and sidewalks that all snow is disposed of onto grassy areas, **NOT ON VILLAGE STREETS**. Also, be considerate of neighbors, do not shovel or plow snow onto their sidewalks and driveways.

4.) PARKING: For safe and effective plowed streets be sure not to park on village streets after a 1 inch snowfall, until streets are plowed.

5.) GARBAGE CANS: Place garbage cans, mobile basketball nets and all miscellaneous toys or equipment **ONLY** on the driveway or remove all together.

6.) MAILBOX/DRIVEWAYS: Be sure your mailbox is secured properly to the post to prevent plowed snow from dislodging it. Unfortunately, when plowing the streets, Public Works cannot direct the snow away from the mail boxes or driveways. It is the homeowner’s responsibility to make sure to clean all snow away from the front of your mailbox to ensure timely mail delivery. Public Works will not clean plowed snow away from mailboxes and will not come back and plow out driveways.

7.) FIRE HYDRANT: In case of a heavy accumulation of snow, please help the fire department and make sure all fire hydrants are exposed for emergency use.

8.) SENIOR DRIVEWAY PLOWING: If you are a Senior Citizen, age 62 or older, handicapped, living alone and would like your driveway plowed, you must come to the Public Works office and complete the “Snow Plow Waiver”, without this waiver your driveway will not be plowed.

9.) FLUSHABLE WIPES: Please DO NOT flush wipes of any kind down your toilet. They do not decompose and are clogging our sewer system causing excessive flooding, expense and man hours to also repair the lift stations. If in doubt, throw it out.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK UP FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES ONLY: Our disposal service, Groot, will be picking up discarded Christmas trees during the first two weeks of January only and only on your regular service day. Public Works will not be picking up discarded Christmas trees.
Justice Park District invites you to put on your dancing shoes, find your Special Little Someone and join us for a Delightful Evening at our Sweetheart Ball.

Friday, February 14
6:30-8:30 pm

Appetizers, Sweet Treats, Refreshments, the Ultimate DJ Dance Party, & Photo Booth for the entire family to enjoy!

$20 per Couple,
$10 each additional Sweetheart

Community Center
7747 S. Oak Grove Ave.

*Pre-registration is required  *Register by February 7