
Edwin P. Hettermann
Village President

Claudett Sofiakis
Village Administrator



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Dear Johnsburg Resident,

Happy New Year! I hope you had an opportunity to spend time with family and friends while enjoying the holiday season. It's a wonderful time to count our blessings and reflect on the past year while we look to the year ahead.

2023 was another fantastic year in the Village of Johnsburg. We kicked off the year focusing on strategic planning initiatives which were identified as priorities during the last strategic planning session. Those include developing a comprehensive park plan, expanding our non-highway vehicle path system and advancing our marketing efforts. Progress was made on those initiatives and which will continue in 2024.

Last May, we welcomed two new faces to the Village Board - Mike Fouke and Jamie Morris. In addition to their role as Village trustees, Mike is chairing the Community Affairs Committee and Jamie is chairing the Ordinance Committee. Both Mike and Jamie have already accomplished a lot in their short time on the board and I look forward to working with them and Trustees Beth Foreman, Josh Hagen, Greg Klemstein and Scott Letzter in the New Year.

In 2023, we made progress on several infrastructure projects, many of which have been in the planning stages for several years. The first is the extension of sewers under the river. Easement agreements and final engineering were finalized last year and bids will be awarded shortly. Getting sewers to the east side of the river has been an important goal for many years and thanks to nearly \$1.4 million in grants secured for the project, construction will finally be underway this year.

Over the past several years, traffic over the Johnsburg Road bridge was becoming increasingly impacted by delineators and lane limitations in an effort to direct traffic away from deteriorating support beams. Last summer, the McHenry County Division of Transportation proceeded with the replacement of the entire bridge deck which required a complete closure of the bridge for several weeks. The bridge reopened in July allowing for unrestricted travel and the full left turn lane was restored. We realize the bridge closure created many inconveniences and I thank our residents for the patience and cooperation they exhibited throughout the construction.

Another long awaited project that proceeded in 2023 was the Church Street realignment project. The previous alignment and site distance at the intersection of Church Street and Johnsburg Road created challenges and increased the risk of accidents. Thanks to a \$750,000 grant, the intersection has been realigned and will soon be improved with a crosswalk signals to aid in getting pedestrians across Johnsburg Road safely. The signals will be especially helpful for children traveling to and from school.

Beth Foreman

Mike Fouke

Joshua Hagen

Greg Klemstein

Scott Letzter

Jamie Morris

Village Trustees

A Hometown with Spirit

The residents on Sunnyside Beach Drive have been contemplating the improvement of their private road for many years. In 2021 they decided to move forward with the project and worked with the Village to establish a Special Service Area (SSA) so that the Village could pursue bonds on their behalf to fund the project. In turn, the residents pay down the debt through an added assessment on their property tax bill. The project got underway last year and is now substantially complete. In the spring, contractors will address any outstanding punch list items and perform landscape restoration after which, the road will be turned over to the Village for future maintenance. The Village has utilized SSA's for nearly 30 years to enable residents to finance the cost of major infrastructure improvements such as private road upgrades and sewer extensions into neighborhoods. In doing so, residents benefit from low interest bonds secured by the Village. If you live on a private road and want to upgrade the road so that the Village will take over maintenance, or your neighborhood is in proximity to the Village's sewer system and wish to connect, contact Village Administrator Claudett Sofiakis for more information on how SSA's may be able to help you and your neighbors.

Each year the Village pursues a road program to patch and resurface roads. Roads are inspected and ranked each year to insure that maintenance improvements are pursued in a timely manner. Last year the Village resurfaced nearly 3 miles of road including Weingart Road, Carol Court, Francis Avenue, Rolling Lane, Grand Ridge Court, Lower Pitzen and Bald Knob Road at a cost of \$753,560. In association with the program, several culverts were in need of replacement. The work was performed in house saving the Village more than \$100,000. Additionally, our public works crew completed 32 road patches to help extend the life of our roadways.

Progress was made last year on the Dutch Creek Aquatic Restoration Project. The Village has been working to secure funding to clean up and restore the Dutch Creek Bay through the Army Corp of Engineers since 2013. Last year, the project received a Federal Interest Determination qualifying it for federal funding. We will be working closely with the Army Corp in 2024 to move this important project forward.

Two exciting new housing developments were approved in 2023. General Capital Group will soon begin construction on a townhome development at the intersection of Johnsburg Road and Route 31. The development consists of 49 townhome rental units marketed towards working families. Additionally, Redwood Apartments received approval for a ranch housing development in the downtown area behind Valmar Center. The development consists of 110 ranch rental homes marketed towards empty nesters. Both of these developments provide a home product not currently available in Johnsburg. They will also help to encourage business development and expand our sewer and water infrastructure. Additionally, the Redwood development will help fund a water tower in our downtown which has been a high priority for many years.

In 2023 we experienced several changes in personnel at the Village. We welcomed Cindy Koch as our new administrative assistance/collector and David Bartik as our new part-time building plan reviewer and inspector. We also welcomed Omar Morales and Mark Wenrich as full-time police officers and Taylor Riggs as a part-time police officers. In turn, we bid sad farewell to Chief Keith VonAllmen upon his retirement in October as we swore in Jason Greenwald as the Village's new Chief of Police. Police Officer Jennifer Jones also retired in September but will

remain with the Village as a part-time community service officer handling the Village's safe-sitter and CPR/AED training.

Looking ahead, 2024 promises to be another busy and productive year. Several infrastructure projects will be underway including the sewer extension under the river and the long awaited Riverside Drive improvement project. We will also be finalizing engineering and bonding for the downtown water tower project and forging ahead with additional non-highway vehicle paths improvements. Thanks to a donation from the Johnsburg Lions Club, a shelter will be constructed at Lions Park on Hickory Way Drive and aerators will be installed in the pond.

Marketing advancements will be underway in 2024 which will likely include a new website design for the Village. Additionally, discussions are ongoing with several business interests that hope to make Johnsburg their new home.

In the new year we hope to see the return of some family fun events that took off in 2023 including the Markets at Remington Farm farmers market and the Wednesday night food truck event.

The Village experienced a great year in 2023 and we have much for which to be grateful. Despite challenges that arise, we will overcome and learn from those challenges, helping to strengthen our community. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Village President. I look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Edwin P. Hettermann".

Edwin P. Hettermann
Village President