



**JOHNSON CREEK**  
Crossroads With A Future

# The Creek

**News from the Crossroads**

Sept/Oct 2020

## VILLAGE PROJECTS



**SE Neighborhood Utility Reconstruction Project Area in Johnson Creek**

The Southeast Neighborhood Utility Reconstruction Project has been in the works for a long time and the Village Board is happy to share it is now coming to fruition.

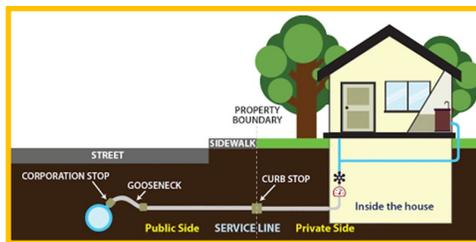
Because good things come to those who wait, residents

in the area will finally be receiving the utility and infrastructure upgrades they sorely need. Upgrades include roads, sidewalks, sewer pipes, water pipes, and more. The most recent construction of the roadway in the area was completed in the early 1980s and the deteriorated condition is what has prompted the need for the infrastructure replacement.

“We know the residents in southeast Johnson Creek have been hearing about utility upgrades for years,” said Village Board President John L. Swisher. “Learning the need and discussion for utility upgrades has been going on long before my tenure has made this opportunity to act even more of a priority,” Swisher continued.

Because the infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, sewer pipes, water pipes, etc.) of the project area has reached the end of their useful life, replacing the infrastructure now is best because the Village has the means to finance the project.

The Village is also able to take advantage of historically low borrowing rates. Plus, with the closure of the Village’s two TIF (Tax Incremental Finance) Districts, the Village can use the funds from those districts to help pay for the project and does not anticipate raising taxes. The project is expected to cost roughly \$4-4.25 million.



**Rendering of typical residential utility setup**



**Base Design: Includes replacement of existing sidewalk only**



**Alternative #1: Includes new proposed sidewalk on south/east sides of Cora, Swap, Shepherd, & S. Watertown Street**



**Alternative #2: Includes new proposed sidewalk on north/west sides of Cora, Swap, Shepherd, & S. Watertown Streets**

plans. During the meeting, residents

were able to hear the current options and offer feedback to help the Village Board and staff gain insights.

Residents were able to see renderings of possible options for the project components; which include a full depth pavement subgrade reconstruction, a full depth utility replacement, an addition and replacement of concrete curb & gutters throughout the project area, and an addition and replacement of existing sidewalk sections.

The estimated project start date is Spring 2021 and will go through the Fall 2021.

Village Leadership, along with representatives from Stantec, were able to answer questions from the public. Information about the project, including answers to frequently asked questions, may be found on our website, under the Department of Public Works, at [www.johnsoncreek-wi.us](http://www.johnsoncreek-wi.us).

The other notable Village project underway is the Bell Park restrooms. This project, similar to the SE Neighborhood Utility Reconstruction Project, has been in the works for some time; 10 years in fact.



**Photo of Bell Park Sign**

After open board meetings late last year and earlier this year, where residents in the Hunter’s Glen subdivision were able to share ideas and concerns, site work began in June.

“This project has been another labor of love,” said Swisher. “With the population and housing growth we’ve seen in the last 10 years, residents of this area can now benefit from restroom facilities at this popular park in Johnson Creek,” Swisher continued.

The prefabricated restroom building will be delivered mid-September and work on the site should be done by early Fall. Landscaping, including a reseeding of the area, is due to happen in 2021.

While this project has been a long time coming, now was the time the Village could fit it within their schedule of capital improvements. The cost of the project is roughly \$85,000, with the prefabricated unit coming from the Huffcutt Company of Chippewa Falls. As noted in the recent article from the *Watertown Daily Times*, several local companies, including Gallitz Grading of Jefferson, Jacob Wegner Enterprises LLC of Watertown, and Midwest Electric and Reindl Plumbing of Johnson Creek are contributing to the installation.

Once complete, we hope all residents and visitors may enjoy the park.



**Kevin Kimmes from Stantec presenting at 8/19/20 Pop Up Event**



The Village hosted a COVID-responsible open-to-the-public Pop Up Engagement Session on August 19, to present the project in tandem with engineering firm Stantec, who has been overseeing the project

## BUDGET 2021

By Brad Calder

It's hard to believe it is already fall, which means Village Staff is busy preparing the 2021 Budget. Looking back at 2020, it has been a challenging year with the impact of COVID-19. But there have been positives as well.



The Village's assessed value continued to grow to the highest value it has ever been. The Village also saw the completion of several projects including The View and JWR expansion, and the board also approved a second Kwik Trip (currently under construction). The Village also has 10 newly completed homes along with 22 acres under contract on Resort Drive.

As I go through my inaugural Johnson Creek budget, I have been working with department heads through the process to their end of August submissions. As we continue through the process, the Village Board reviews the budget at the September and October Committee of the Whole and Village Board meetings. The goal is to approve the 2021 budget in early- to mid-November.

Working through the 2021 budget, the Village is looking at COVID-19 impacts. Early estimates indicate it should not have a major impact on the 2021 budget. While it will not have a major impact on the overall budget, there are three areas where COVID will have impacts.

The first area is Tourism which receives its funding from Room Tax revenues. These revenues are projected to be down 60% next year as the travel sector continues to see huge impacts from the pandemic. The other impacted areas are the county aid to the Library which is decreasing for the fourth year in a row. One final impacted area is revenue collected from use of the Village's Community Center. While these impacts should not have a significant impact on the overall budget, the Village will continue to monitor revenues and make recommendations and adjustments when necessary. Despite these lost revenue streams, the Village will continue to provide the same great services residents have always received throughout 2021.

Although the Southeast Neighborhood Utility Reconstruction Project is a large and must-needed upgrade for part of the Village, it will not affect the budget. This effort will complete utility and street reconstruction along Watertown (South), Swap, Shepard, Cora, Clark and South Streets. This project is estimated to cost \$4-\$4.25 million.

"The Village is committed to completing this project without increasing property taxes or having special assessments to property owners in the area," said Village Board President John L. Swisher. The Village is still evaluating several other small wastewater projects to upgrade a lift station and some small capital equipment purchases.

If you are interested in learning more about the 2021 budget, please feel free to contact myself either in-person at Village Hall or at 920-699-2296 or [villageadministrator@johnsoncreekwi.org](mailto:villageadministrator@johnsoncreekwi.org). You may also contact any of the Village Board Trustees and are welcome to attend public Village meetings. A listing of our Trustees and public meeting information may be found at our Village website: [johnsoncreek-wi.us](http://johnsoncreek-wi.us).

## RESIDENT SURVEY



The Village of Johnson Creek is currently finalizing a village-wide survey of residents to help identify areas where Village Board and Staff could streamline projects and note future opportunities. The surveys will be emailed to residents later this year, as well as be available to take online from our Village website.

Stay tuned to our Facebook page for updates.

## ADMINISTRATOR INSIGHTS

It's hard to believe I have been with the Village for two months because that time has flown by. During my tenure with the Village, it has been a whirlwind of getting up to speed on current projects, learning the nuances of the budget, and having the wonderful chance of meeting residents and business leaders.



Village Administrator  
Brad Calder

I have been spending time learning and researching current projects to have a good understanding of their scope, including the new restroom project at Bell Park that has come together. I know this has been a project that has been discussed for the last 10 years, so it's great to see it coming together. The Village is also seeing the construction of a second Kwik Trip, which is scheduled to be completed in November/December. There are also several small projects including Wayne Transport on Linmar Lane constructing a new parking lot, and JC Truck wash on Rimmel Drive constructing a storage building.

Another major project in the Village is the Southeast Neighborhood Utility Reconstruction Project. The Village held a public participation meeting in mid-August that included Village Staff and our engineering firm, Stantec, providing information and designs to the 20 residents in attendance. The residents were also able to offer input on the project and ask questions. Plus, the Village is also beginning to plan for Well #4 in Centennial Park to be online in 2022.

While I have been addressing and learning current projects, I have also been busy responding to inquiries regarding available vacant land for the relocation of businesses looking to expand. This interest is good news for the Village as new businesses will bring more jobs and revenue to the Village.

Thinking of how new revenue could help the Village after seeing the affects of COVID-19 are top of mind as department directors and I tackle the budget. The budget is a guiding document for the Village as it directs how funds will be spent, which in turn guides what the Village does in that budget year.

As I start to settle in, I am excited by the level of energy and enthusiasm from staff and residents. With all the projects, budget, and the General Election on November 3, I know things will keep me busy and I look forward to learning more and getting to know more of you. My door is always open and you may reach me at 920-699-2296 or [villageadministrator@johnsoncreekwi.org](mailto:villageadministrator@johnsoncreekwi.org).

## DRUG TAKE BACK: OCT 24, 9AM-3 PM

The Johnson Creek Police Department is again participating in the WI Department of Justice's (DOJ) Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, October 24, from 9 am – 3 p.m.



The goal is to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposal of prescription medications, while also educating the public about potential abuse.

The police station will have a drop box available to deposit: prescription (controlled & non-controlled) and over-the-counter medications, ointments, patches, non-aerosol sprays, inhalers, creams, vials, and pet medications. Please visit the DOJ's website for info: [www.doj.state.wi.us](http://www.doj.state.wi.us).

## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT: JAMES HAMMES & MICHAEL VAN KLEUNEN



James Hammes

James Hammes has been serving Johnson Creek as legal counsel for 40 years. And in that time, he has seen tremendous residential and economic growth. But now Hammes is retiring.

The Village population in 1980 was roughly 1,100 and has nearly tripled. Hammes attributes that residential growth to the tremendous economic development over the years.

“The first TIF was to expand water and sewer along 26 to Saelens,” said Hammes. “This allowed Johnson Creek to offer expansion opportunities along those exits. So when the Mall came in, the next TIF was to help extend water and sewer along I-94. This helped not only the Mall to develop, but also Menards, Kohls, the car dealership, and more. With that growth, it allowed more residential development.”

During that growth and development, Hammes notes the thing that has impressed him is how the influx of more residents has provided opportunities for more perspectives and talent to join community efforts, while also keeping a strong sense of small town community values. “When more people started living in Johnson Creek they brought new ideas, but at the same time people continued to embrace small town values and have an inherent sense of civil duty,” said Hammes. “This was really wonderful to see, along with the active nature of residents to attend Village Board meetings,” Hammes continued. “Attending board meetings is a way for people to gain more insight into an issue they may have heard about, but want more information. This is a change in the way the board operates from when I started and it’s a good thing.”

And although many things have been accomplished during Hammes’ tenure, there are still projects that need to be addressed in the future in his opinion. “The idea to connect the east and west sides of Johnson Creek has been discussed for at least 20 years,” noted Hammes. “The need to have a connector road to help spur more residential growth will be needed in the future, as well as other community connectors in Johnson Creek.”

In these past 40 years, Hammes has been a part several major projects and worked with many individuals and brings a depth of knowledge that has proven so valuable even outside of legal matters. “Because of Jim’s institutional knowledge, we on the board have relied on both his wonderful expertise and his experience with past

and current Village projects,” said Village Board President John L. Swisher. “While we know it’s time for Jim to spend more time with his family, we thank him for his years of service and know he will be available from time to time. We also welcome Michael to Johnson Creek and look forward to a continued and seamless partnership,” Swisher continued.



Board presents proclamation to Hammes at Aug board meeting

Before his law career, Hammes was in the Army and spent time as a clerk stationed in the U.S., Germany, and Vietnam. When he returned to Wisconsin in May of 1970, he went back to school and earned his Bachelor’s Degree in political science and business from UW-Platteville in 1972. He then worked for the Wisconsin State Department of Veterans Affairs and graduated Marquette Law in 1977. He married his wife, Pam in 1973, and has three children, Molly, Chris, and Annie, and nine grandchildren.



Michael Van Kleunen

Michael Van Kleunen joined Cramer, Multhauf, & Hammes in July 2019 after clerking for the firm for six months and graduating from Marquette University Law in 2019. He has been working with Hammes on Johnson Creek matters since late fall/early winter of 2019.

“Jim has been immensely helpful as I continue to learn from him and broaden my experience,” said Van Kleunen. “His knowledge of project history and relationships within Johnson Creek are great for me to know not only from a legal standpoint, but to also help with other problem solving opportunities,” Van Kleunen continued.

Van Kleunen earned his undergraduate degree from Hanover College in Hanover, Indiana, where he played basketball for four years. He grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, but his family moved to Pewaukee when both he and his younger sister, Lauren, were both at Marquette. Lauren is a senior and plays for Marquette University’s Women’s Basketball team.

“I am looking forward to serving and representing the Village and helping the leadership team problem solve and achieve their goals,” said Van Kleunen. “Johnson Creek has a ton of potential on the horizon for growth and I look forward to being a part of it.”

## GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Shaping the Future of  
**YOUR**  
Johnson Creek



Our residents’ generosity and commitment to our community are what make Johnson Creek so unique. The investments of time, talent, and treasure of so many help ensure the continued success and growth of our community. We want to thank and remind such individuals of how important they are to the Village.

### Lloyd Schultz

- A musician, having played the upright bass, was a Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra member, alumni, parent, volunteer, photo team member, and guest conductor.
- Contributing writer for the Watertown Daily Times.
- Public Information Officer (PIO) and Photographer for the Village of Johnson Creek Fire & EMS Department for many years.



*“Some PIO work is photography to share with media and others - it serves the public, it shows the value of the work the department provides with their tax dollars and most importantly it is an effort to show the sort of dedication these volunteers put into their contribution to community.” - Lloyd Schultz*

Above: Schultz conducting WYSO practice in preparation for the March 2, 2019 concert.



## LIBRARY UPDATES

### UPCOMING PROGRAMMING AT THE JOHNSON CREEK PUBLIC LIBRARY

**September 21 (via Zoom):** News, Fake News, and Spin with Michael Edmonds, a former research librarian at the WI Historical Society and teacher of information studies at the University of Wisconsin.

**September 24 (via Zoom):** Ask the Experts: Homeschool Q&A, learn about homeschooling options from local homeschoolers. A partnership with Johnson Creek, Lake Mills, Watertown, and Oconomowoc Public Libraries.



### Coming Soon

**Storytime at Home Kits:** Bring home books, shakers, and scarves to make virtual storytime come to life at home!

Visit the Library on Facebook and [johnsoncreeklibrary.org](http://johnsoncreeklibrary.org) for info!

## COMPOST, BRUSH, & LEAF PICK UP

The remaining compost & brush dates are the following:

Brush Dates	Compost Dates
September 14th	September 21st
October 12th	October 5th
	October 19th



\*Brush **MUST** be placed at the backside of the curb and ends **MUST** face the flow of traffic. **NO** branches over 8" in diameter are allowed and won't be picked up.

\*Compost (yard waste) is to be placed in **BIO DEGRADABLE BAGS** (no garbage bags) or in open containers and cannot weigh more than 35 pounds. These bags are available for purchase at most hardware stores.

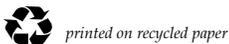
\*All compost and brush must be out at the curb **before 6:00 a.m.**

\*The Village will not pick up brush left by contractors on private property resulting from tree removal. You or your contractor may take the brush to the brush site at 110 Aztalan Street. No branches over 8" in diameter, tree trunks may be dumped at the site. **NO stumps are accepted at the dump site.** If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Department at (920) 699-3752.



## Village of Johnson Creek

[www.johnsoncreek-wi.us](http://www.johnsoncreek-wi.us)



## TOURISM UPDATES



As the COVID pandemic continues, tourism across the state remains deeply affected.

In Johnson Creek, we have been working with the Jefferson County Tourism Council to find ways to work together to promote all our

wonderful outdoor recreational tourism amenities that naturally provide social distancing; such as paddling on our great waterways, biking and hiking on our wonderful trails, and discovering history and nature at our fantastic parks.

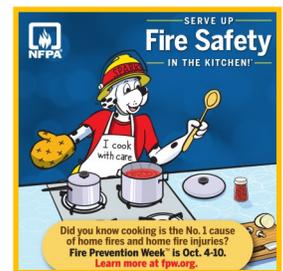
With our ideal location between Madison & Milwaukee, we are able to utilize these partnerships to provide safe and drivable travel options for those who may not want to go too far from home, but still seek adventure.

If you have events happening in Johnson Creek, please share information with Tourism Director Katie Newcomb at [katien@johnsoncreekwi.org](mailto:katien@johnsoncreekwi.org). Be sure to check out our website, [visitjohnsoncreek.org](http://visitjohnsoncreek.org), and Facebook page for up-to-date calendar of events information and news.

## FIRE SAFETY WEEK: OCTOBER 4-10

Fire safety education isn't just for school children. Teenagers, adults, and the elderly are also at risk in fires, making it important for every member of our community to take some time each October during **Fire Prevention Week** to make sure they understand how to stay safe in case of fire.

This year, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is sharing the importance of cooking safety because cooking is the #1 cause of home fires and home fire injuries and unattended cooking is the leading cause of fires in the kitchen. Scald burns are the second leading cause of all burn injuries. Hot liquids from coffee and even microwaved soup can cause devastating injuries. Here are four cooking safety categories from their website: [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org). While there, you'll find helpful cooking safety checklists too:



*Stay focused on the food Put a lid on it*

*Keep cooking areas clear Prevent scalds & burns*