

## From the Desk of the Mayor – September 28, 2020

I wanted to give updates on the City departments and operations since the last From the Desk letter.

**POLICE:** Our Police Department recently placed a new squad car in service. The new 2020 Ford Explorer squad car was possible thanks to a donation from the Fred G. Harrison Foundation.

**FIRE:** With the purchase of a new ambulance earlier in the year, this allowed time to make repairs and upgrades to the two remaining ambulances. Now, with the repairs nearing completion, the department will soon have three licensed ambulances. CFD makes around 1200 calls per year and provides Paramedic ambulance coverage to the City of Carterville, Village of Crainville, and the surrounding unincorporated areas of Williamson County.

**PARKS:** Because the Restore Illinois Phase 4 guidelines limit groups to 50 people or 50% capacity (whichever is least), the City continues to schedule reservations for the Community Center, Gazebo, and Pavilion. With the Community Center, the reservations must be less than 50 people per side. With the pavilion and gazebo, we are using the 50% capacity rules and rely on the requesting parties to gather the necessary information. Feel free to contact City Hall with any questions.

Water service has been established at the dog park (Carterville Bark Park) at Cannon Park. Thanks to the labor and expertise provided by the Water Department staff, water is now available for the canines visiting the Bark Park.

The main piece of playground equipment at James Street Park is damaged and the top portion is closed. The City is seeking a replacement part for the damaged section and it will remain closed until the part is acquired and replaced.

**STREETS:** The Street Department has completed the annual MFT (motor fuel tax) maintenance program. The largest single piece of the MFT program was the east end of Sycamore Road. This year on East Sycamore, we attempted a new technique of leveling the existing surface before placing the oil and chip sealing layer. It seems to have provided a smoother surface than previous years attempts and we are looking towards using the technique on other secondary roads in the future. The cost of the East Sycamore project, which spanned from the creek bridge east to Hafer Road intersection, was \$73,000. The asphalt option of the same area was estimated near \$180,000. The City always considers asphalt and concrete options for street repairs and upgrades, when financially capable.

The drainage work is now completed on West Grand near Zimmerman Street. An additional drainage pipe was placed across West Grand towards the large ditch on the south side. Previously, storm water would have to make a ninety degree turn at Grand

and another ninety degree turn past Zimmerman to get to the south side of West Grand. Now, there is an additional route to reach the south side of Grand before reaching Zimmerman Street. This should prevent water covering the intersection of West Grand and Zimmerman Street during large rain events in the future.

**WATER:** The Water Department continues to work with the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development program to install two new water towers, a new ground storage tank, and new water main on Division Street from Howerton Street north to Anderson Street. This project will nearly triple the City's water storage capacity. I recently signed the documents that secured nearly \$4.5M to fund the project with a USDA loan for a 40 year term at 1.5% interest. This amount of money over the term and interest rate secured will have very little, if any effect on the residents water bills. We hope the process will allow for bid letting on the projects in the next three to five months.

**SEWER:** The Sewer Department has hired Adam Decker as our full-time wastewater treatment plant operator and Sewer Superintendent. We also welcome David Miller as a maintenance/laborer. Adam and David joined in with our existing staff of Mark Grant and Logan Halstead. We continue to seek another licensed wastewater plant operator to increase our sewer staff to five. The additional licensed staff are being added to keep our existing wastewater plant in operation and maintain EPA compliance while we move towards building a new facility.

We continue to move towards securing a long term \$18M loan to build a new wastewater treatment plant. Our existing plant is nearing 35 years old and our community has grown significantly in those years, outgrowing our current plant capacity. We have a preliminary plan, the location chosen, and core samples are being taken from the site now. The new plant location will be on a 40 acre tract owned by the City on Hafer Road, north east of Peach Street.

**WATER AND SEWER OFFICE:** The Governor's Office released the moratorium on utility disconnections for municipal utility providers a few months ago. The Carterville Water and Sewer Board voted to initiate delinquent water shut-offs, but with favorable conditions for those adversely effected by COVID-19. All past due penalties have been waived since the beginning of the moratorium in March. Also, those with delinquent balances are encouraged to contact the Water Office to make a payment arrangement. For those renting, the payment arrangement must also be approved by the landlord. When payment arrangements are made and followed, the Water Department will not disconnect water service for the delinquent amount. Please contact the Water and Sewer Office with any questions.

**CITY HALL:** For the foreseeable future, the Carterville City Council will be meeting at the Carterville Community Center to facilitate social distancing requirements. The regularly scheduled City Council meetings are the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm. Special Meetings, if needed, will also occur at the Community Center and all meetings will be advertised on the City's website.

The Carterville Chamber of Commerce informed the City they have cancelled the 2020 Pumpkin Path due to COVID-19. The Carterville City Council did set city wide trick or treat times as 6pm-9pm on October 31, 2020. Even though the City set the times, we strongly encourage every family to follow the CDC, IDPH, and local health department's guidelines on mask wearing, distancing, and all other guidelines related to trick or treating activities.

The City is also working on a plan for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas in Carterville. Because of COVID-19, it will not look like the previous years. The planning is in the initial phases but it revolves around a drive through option. Watch the Christmas in Carterville Facebook page for more information.

The Carterville Community Thanksgiving Dinner will occur this year with a few changes. Due to COVID-19, there will be no dine-in option this year. The meals will be take-out and delivery only. For additional information, contact City Hall.

I wanted to say farewell to former Police Chief Bill Davis, who died September 18, 2020. The Chief's funeral was September 21, 2020. The City flags were dropped to half-staff and the Fire Department draped the large American flag from Aerial 902, to fly over the funeral procession. Our sympathies are with the family of Chief Davis.

Our Public Works Director, Garry Wiggs, will be officially retired on Wednesday, September 30, 2020. Garry has been a dedicated staple of the City of Carterville for many years. Not only will his knowledge and expertise be missed, but so will his big smile and infectious laugh. Enjoy your retirement, Garry!

The Carterville City Hall is keeping a "giving table" outside the back entrance. This table is a place to visit for people needing food or people wanting to donate food. Feel free to call City Hall with any questions about the giving table.

If anyone has any questions for me, feel free to call the Mayor's Office at 618-985-2700 or send an email to [brobenson@visitcarterville.com](mailto:brobenson@visitcarterville.com).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bradley Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.