



THE VILLAGE AND TOWN OF SOMERS

7511 12th Street— Somers, Wisconsin 53171

NEWSLETTER

Issue 3: December, 2015

Promises Made—Promises Kept Community of Somers Reunited by Unanimous Vote Six Months After Incorporation

At a joint public hearing on October 20, 2015, the Somers Village Board of Trustees and the Somers Town Board of Supervisors unanimously approved an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement which fulfills promises made to citizens during the incorporation process. The promises relate to annexation and property taxes.

What does this mean to the citizens of Somers?

- (1) The Agreement will annex all the remaining Town property into the Village on December 31, 2015, with the exception of the Town “B” area, which annexes into the City of Kenosha in 2035 per a boundary agreement. Borders will be permanently protected from forced annexation from bordering municipalities. Equally important, when the 2035 boundary agreement with the City of Kenosha expires, Somers residents will not be required to negotiate and pay for a new boundary agreement.

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**SOMERS VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AND SOMERS TOWN BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Left to Right Mark Molinaro (Town), Alan Ferber (Town), Ben Harbach (Town), Joe Cardinali (Village) George Stoner (Village) Jack Aupperle (Village) Judy Schantek (Town), Dave Geertsen (Village) Al Brokmeier (Village) Karl Ostby (Village) and Rich Heinisch (Village)

Happy Holidays



**VILLAGE/TOWN HALL
HOLIDAY HOURS AND INFORMATION**
December 24, Christmas Eve—CLOSED
December 25, Christmas Day—CLOSED
December 31 and January 1st New Year’s Day—CLOSED
Questions? Call Village/Town Hall at 262-859-2822

**PROMISES
MADE—PROMISES KEPT**
...continued from page 1

- (2) All residents, Village and Town “B” area, will pay the same tax rate. This eliminates a “we” and “they” budget where the Village would pay a different rate than the Town. Under the new Agreement, Somers will operate in unity as one community.
- (3) All residents, Village and Town “B” area, will continue to receive the same delivery of municipal services, without interruption, and without the doubling of staff or creating extra layers of government administration.
- (4) Property owners in the remaining Town who will annex into the Village will be brought into a larger, stronger financial Village municipality than if they remained a Town. All new commercial and industrial development, together with the benefits of increased revenue that reduces the stress of rising expenses, have occurred in the Village. Lacking development in the Town could mean the existing taxpayers would face increased expenses, making it difficult to keep taxes in check.



GEORGE STONER, VILLAGE PRESIDENT AND BEN HARBACH, TOWN CHAIRMAN, SIGN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT ON OCTOBER 20, 2015 AFTER A UNANIMOUS VOTE BY BOTH TOWN AND VILLAGE BOARDS

Any taxpayers who have questions about how this Agreement impacts them personally, are encouraged to contact any Town or Village Board member, or Bill Morris, Village/Town Administrator at 262-859-2822.

**SOMERS AND KENOSHA COUNTY
ENTER INTO AGREEMENT FOR
IT (INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY) SERVICES**

Somers has entered into an agreement with Kenosha County for IT services relating to computer network support, telephone support, and cloud back-ups. Additionally, the County will host the Village website, provide direction and strategy for technology acquisitions and upgrades, provide temporary hardware replacement in the event of a catastrophic failure, assist in an IT budget, and other services.

**NEW FINANCIAL POLICIES
ADOPTED BY VILLAGE
POSITIVE IMPACT FOR ALL TAXPAYERS**

Three key financial policies that will have a positive impact on the Village budget were recently adopted by the Village Board of Trustees. David Geersten, Village Trustee stated, “these policies will provide consistency, stability, and continuity in the financial operations of the Village of Somers. Written policies provide a framework to guide and educate Trustees in carrying out their fiduciary responsibilities, while at the same time, guide staff in executing their financial duties. Adopting these policies is just a good, sound business practice.”

KEY FEATURES

- Goal of earning an A bond rating at major rating agencies means the Village may borrow at a preferred interest rate, resulting in reducing interest expense.
- Maintain a general fund balance at levels sufficient to address unforeseeable emergencies.
- Formalize a long-term plan for the replacement of aging assets, which reduces budget stress of reacting on a year-to-year basis.
- Create a program for repayment of short and long-term debt, ensuring the Village of Somers’ credit worthiness and a reputation for managing debt in a prudent manner.



SOMERS BUILDING PERMIT FEES collected January-September, 2015 totaled \$240,327, representing an 86% increase over those collected January-September, 2014.

Russ Nolan, Building Inspector for the Village/Town of Somers, expects the upward trend of new development in the Village to continue. Nolan, who conducts inspections of all new or remodeled residential, industrial and commercial buildings, is responsible for public safety as it relates to the enforcement of building codes. He holds the following certified credentials issued by the State of Wisconsin: Commercial Building, Residential Building, Residential Electrical, Plumbing, and HVAC.

NEW HIGH TECH –THERMAL CAMERA HELPS FIND PEOPLE AND PETS IN THICK SMOKE



On September 9, 2015, a Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the Tom and Donna Giles family by Ben Harbach, Chairman of the Town Board of Supervisors for donating funds toward the purchase of a new thermal camera for the Fire & Rescue Department. This generous donation will benefit the entire community of Somers today and in the future. Thank you Giles family!

SOMERS FIRE & RESCUE ASSOCIATION 2015 FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Winterfest Chili Cook-Off was held at Roma Lodge in Racine. Proceeds benefited the Kenosha History Center.

Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser benefited the Somers Fire Department and Association needs. Net proceeds raised \$1,582.83.

Fill the Boot fundraiser was held on behalf of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. \$3,753.79 was collected at the intersections of Highways S & H and 22nd Avenue and Highway E.

Climb for Air fundraiser benefited the American Lung Assn.

Photo Event fundraiser collected net proceeds of \$2,011.91. Funds were used toward the purchase of a thermal imaging camera and related equipment for the Somers Fire & Rescue Department.

Somers July 4th Celebration fundraiser resulted in net proceeds of \$266.56 which benefited the Somers Fire Department and Association needs.

SOMERS FIRE & RESCUE WATER TRAINING

The Somers area has approximately 30 areas of bodies of water where firefighter/EMT personnel may be called to respond to an emergency. This summer, a water rescue training session was held in a pond near Highway E where participants practiced water rescue techniques. The training for our dive team first responders provided hands-on experience replicating an actual rescue situation.

353 PLAYERS ENJOYED SOMERS 2015 SOFTBALL SEASON

With a total of 353 players making up 27 teams spread out over six divisions, Somers Memorial Park ball diamonds were the place to be on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings during the summer.

We would like to express our gratitude to the 54 coaches who volunteered their time to mentor these young athletes. Additionally,



thank you to our Softball Director, Kevin Griffin and the six umpires for their dedicated service, as well as all of the parents and family members who brought and encouraged their children to countless games and practices. We can't wait until next year! Pre-kindergarten through high school 12th grade are all welcome. April, 2016 is the sign up time for next season.



FIREFIIGHTERS EDUCATE CHILDREN DURING FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

Somers firefighters used Fire Prevention Month to meet with children at Somers Elementary School and Bee's Child Care on Highway E and 100th Avenue to teach them about fire safety and to not be afraid of firefighters with masks and full gear. Children were allowed to explore apparatus and a firefighter's gear, rescue squads, tour fire vehicles, tour the fire safety smoke house, learn about the dangers of fireworks, how to use a fire extinguisher, and much more. Sparky the Dog also made an appearance! The highlight of the day for firefighters was to eat lunch with the children in the cafeteria.

Development News

“FIRST PARK 94” SOMERS FIRST INDUSTRIAL PARK TARGETS SUMMER 2016 COMPLETION OF BUILDING ONE



Somers first industrial park, located on the corner of Highways S and H, is making substantial progress on phase one of the project. First Park 94’s first 600,000 square foot building clears 36’ high and will accommodate single or multiple tenants. In August, Reesman Construction began demolition of existing structures, grading, silt fence installation, building interior roads used during construction, and prepared several storm water management facilities. The developer, First Industrial Realty Trust, has targeted June, 2016 as a completion date for phase one of this industrial park.

(Image courtesy of Partners in Design, Architect)



JLA SOMERS MULTI-FAMILY
20 Unit - Front View
29 SEPT 2015

BEAR DEVELOPMENT PLANS 280-UNIT RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

Bear Development of Kenosha, Wisconsin is in the final planning stages of a 280-unit residential development that would be located north of Sam’s Club in the Village of Somers. The development includes 14 residential buildings that contain studio, one, two, and three bedroom units. It will feature a wide array of amenities such as a fenced pet area, playground, community garden, walking path, outdoor pool, clubhouse, fitness center and more. Further details will be available following the Village Plan Commission and Board approval. *(Image courtesy of JLA)*

MAJOR WATER AND SEWER PROJECT SLATED FOR SOMERS IN 2016

The “142 Interceptor Project” will provide sanitary and storm water sewer and water to the new 309-acre First Park 94 industrial development located on the corner of Highways S and H. The new utilities have the capacity to provide services west of Highway H.

Without sewer and water utilities, development will go elsewhere; therefore, when First Industrial Realty Trust of Illinois became interested in acquiring the Charles Tunkieicz 309-acre property for industrial development, Somers worked in unison

with the developers to parallel the installation of new sewer and water services with the construction and completion of the First Park 94 project.

To finance the cost of this project, the Village Board approved a municipal financing tool called a Tax Increment District. The District includes any development within the 309-acre First Park 94 development. The revenues generated by the development in the District will be dedicated to pay for the debt service of utilities and other costs. No taxpayer money will be used to pay for the sewer and water service to this District.

The Village Board expects to approve and award a contract December 2015, allowing

the construction project to commence January 2016. The project is expected to be completed by May, 2016, a date that parallels with the completion of the first 600,000 square foot building in First Park 94.

DEVELOPMENT TRIGGERS HIGHWAY S RECONSTRUCTION

Highway S is scheduled for a four-lane improvement in the years 2018/2019. Although still in the concept stage, it appears the current lanes of Highway S will remain and new westbound lanes will be added on the north side of Highway S. Additionally, the railroad overpass bridge on Highway S will also be reconstructed.

Development News

UNITED HOSPITAL'S SOMERS MEDICAL OFFICE OPEN FOR BUSINESS



On Friday, August 15, 2015, the welcome door was open for many to tour the new completed 3-story 31,000 square foot facility located on the corner of Highway 31 and Highway S, just east of Sam's Club.

The new facility features occupational and physical therapy services, and internal medicine and family practice physician offices. The lower level includes a physical therapy pool with in-water treadmills, underwater cameras, changing rooms, and lockers. The third floor is unfinished at this time but will easily accommodate added services as demand increases.



CINNABON OPENS NEW BAKERY IN SOMERS

On October 30, 2015, Cinnabon opened their new bakery in the Somers. It is located within the BP Kenosha Travel Plaza on the northeast corner of Highway S and I-94. Attending the ribbon cutting ceremony were Ben Harbach and Ann Brumback, who expressed a warm welcome on behalf of the Somers community.

Guests of the grand opening were treated to a variety of Cinnabon baked favorites included breakfast sandwiches, and made-to-order hot beverages and blended beverages.

Cinnabon, founded in Seattle in 1985, is the market leader among cinnamon roll bakeries. It currently operates over 1,000 franchised locations worldwide. On behalf of the community of Somers, welcome Cinnabon!



Festival Foods announced its intent to open a new grocery store in Somers. The proposed site is located north of Sam's Club near the corner of Highway 31 and 31st Street. The company plans to open the new store in the summer of 2016. The store would be open 24 hours a day and it expects to employ 250-275 associates. Festival Foods is a family and employee-owned company. More information to follow Plan Commission approval.



SUNSET RIDGE MAUSOLEUM, Green Bay Road, located in the Village of Somers, has a completion date targeted for Spring 2016.

Sunset's new 3,400 square foot building will include 48 new crypts, 64 exterior granite urn niches, dedicated space for customer meetings, and new administrative offices.



HANSEN'S POOL & SPA, Green Bay Road, located in the Village of Somers, has a completion date targeted for Spring 2016.

Hansen's new facility will feature an expanded retail store and warehouse, and an improved pool and spa water testing facility. It offers the largest pool and spa parts department in the Midwest along with expanded in-shop repair services.

**SOMERS COMMUNITY LEADER
A LASTING TRIBUTE HONORING LEON T. DREGER**

On September 22, 2015, the Dreger family along with Village and Town officials and members of the community attended the dedication ceremony where a commemorative plaque was unveiled of the new Leon T. Dreger Hall. At the April 23, 2015



Somers Annual Meeting, the citizens voted unanimously in favor of making a lasting tribute to honor Dreger by naming its auditorium the Leon T. Dreger Hall.

Dreger served on the Somers Plan Commission starting in 1968, serving as chairman for twenty years. In addition, Dreger was a member of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the Kenosha County Farm Bureau, and the Kiwanis. He held leadership positions in numerous agricultural and

veteran’s organizations, and was president of the Kenosha County Mutual Insurance Company as well as a director of two local banks. Leon served as chairman of the committee which drafted Kenosha County’s first county-wide zoning ordinance. He was admired by many for giving his time and talent to helping people in the community and to his country.

Dreger entered the Army in 1943, landing on Normandy’s Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Of the 75-man demolition team in his landing craft, he was one of the only five soldiers to make it to the beach alive. He served in the Normandy, Northern France, and the Rhineland campaigns until being wounded on October 8, 1944. He returned directly from the hospital to his unit to fight in the Battle of the Bulge. For his distinguished service, Mr. Dreger received the Silver Star, a Purple Heart and five Bronze Battle Stars. Following his military service, Mr. Dreger started farming.

The commemorative plaque was unveiled by Somers Village President, George Stoner and Somers Town Chairman, Ben Harbach. Said Stoner, “may the people of Somers gather in the new Leon T. Dreger Hall with the spirit of friendship, learning, and serving others.” We should all be inspired by how Leon conducted his everyday life as a farmer, father, and neighbor, in addition to his commitment to serving his community and his country.”

**KENOSHA COUNTY WILL ADMINISTER
NEW VILLAGE ZONING ORDINANCE 27**

In 2015, the Village of Somers adopted a new Chapter 27 “General Zoning and Shoreland/Floodplain Zoning Ordinance”, which is substantively identical to Kenosha County’s ordinance. As a result, the Village and Kenosha County have entered into an agreement where Kenosha County will provide the Village with zoning professional services. Kenosha County shall have the authority to enforce the Village of Somers zoning codes, including but not limited to, notices of zoning violations. The County will service Village customers by telephone, and on a walk-in basis. New fillable zoning applications and forms specifically for the Village of Somers are posted on the Kenosha County website as well as web links provided on the Somers website. The best place for developers and residents to start with questions about a specific parcel relating to zoning is to contact our representative at Kenosha County.

Ben Fiebelkorn,
Senior Land Use Planner
(262) 857-1901
Ben.fiebelkorn@kenoshacounty.org

**HWY E SEWER PROJECT
UNLOCKS PATH FOR
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
TO I-94**

The Highway E Sewer Relief Project was completed in June, 2015. It includes a new sewer line in the area of Highway H one-half mile south of Highway E, east to Highway EA, north to Highway E, and east to the Somers Elementary School. The new sewer will (1) resolve flooding problems, (2) allow for sub-dividing of property within this previously restricted area and, (3) will have sufficient capacity to accommodate new development west to I-94. On March 24, 2015, the Somers Town Board repealed the 1997 sewer moratorium by adopting Resolution No. 15-002 which opens opportunity for new development that has been restricted since 1997.

HONORABLE MENTION: PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

THANK YOU SHIRLEY FOR 34 YEARS OF SERVICE TO SOMERS!



On behalf of the entire community of Somers, we would like to honor Shirley Mandernack who recently retired in 2015 from the Town of

Somers Plan Commission after serving 34 years. She has demonstrated what it means to serve her community in many ways and

believes that dedicating time to your community helps make it a better place.

Shirley Ingrouille, born in Racine, moved to her great-grandfather's farm in Somers when she was six years old. The Ingrouille family emigrated from the Isle of Guernsey to Somers in 1870. Sixty-one years ago, Shirley married Ralph Mandernack at Somers Congregational Church. Ralph's family immigrated to Somers in 1857, being one of the first pioneer families in Somers. The Mandernack family settled first on Wood Road from 1857 - 1875 and then moved to Corbett Road.

Shirley's dedication to her community over the years is noteworthy. She has dedicated

her time to her church, the Somers Community Church, serving on several committees, most recently the 175th anniversary committee, as a former Sunday School teacher, and as a member of the pastor search committee. She was also an active member of the Somers Elementary and Berryville School PTA/PTO, and a den mother for the Somers Cub Scout Pack 36.

She currently volunteers at the Kenosha Public Museums, is a long time board member of the Friends of Hawthorn Hollow, chaired a committee to explore the pros and cons of hiring a Town administrator, and a Somers poll worker for approximately 14 years.

MYRTLE JOHNSON SOMERS PARADE MARSHALL 1965 AND 2015



This year's Somers July 4th Independence Day Parade celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Somers parade with a theme of "Remembering our Past", inspiring every-

one to honor and remember the rich history of our community. The first parade debuted in 1965 with Mrs. Myrtle Johnson as Parade Marshall. It was only fitting to invite and honor Mrs. Johnson to be our 2015 parade Grand Marshall for our 50th anniversary!

Starting in 1962, Mrs. Johnson was a teacher at Somers Elementary School for 30 years, served on the Somers Plan Commission, helping with elections, was a 4-H leader, and is a member of the Somers Community Church. *(Photo by Stolfi)*

HONORING EDNA HIGHLAND

It is with deep sorrow that we learned of the passing of Edna Highland on October 17, 2015. Edna was a long-time public servant and her dedication to her community was profound.



Edna served the community of Somers working as a poll worker, was appointed to the Town Plan Commission and Village Board of Appeals, and was elected to the Town Board of Supervisors. In addition, she also served as the County Clerk for Kenosha for 25 years and held board positions at Brookside Care Center, Shalom Center, First United Methodist Church, and was a member of the Ladies of the Moose.

After the Pledge of Allegiance was recited at the Village and Town Joint Public Hearing on October 20, 2015, a moment of silence was held in honor of Edna's service to the community of Somers.

(Photo used with permission by Proko Funeral Home)

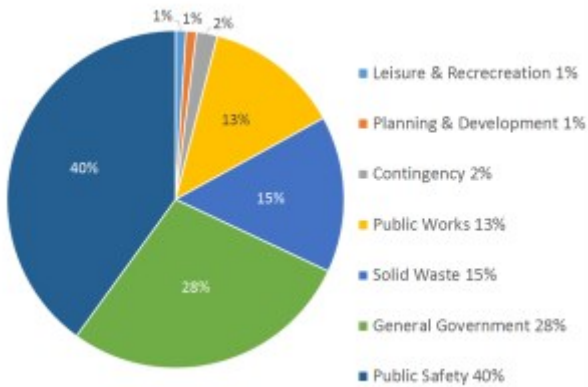
OUR DEDICATED POLL WORKERS

On March, 2015, all poll workers were trained on our new voting machines. "The Village/Town of Somers is fortunate to have such dedicated poll workers, some who have served for 40 years," said Tim Kitzman, Clerk-Treasurer. The 2016 voting calendar is shown below.

- February 16, 2016 — Spring Primary**
- April 5, 2016 — Spring Election**
- August 9, 2016 — Partisan Primary**
- November 8, 2015 — General Election**



HOW YOUR SOMERS TAX DOLLARS ARE SPENT



KEY TO CATEGORIES IN PIE CHART TO THE LEFT

- 40% - Somers Public Safety
Fire and Rescue, Building Inspection, Dog Catcher
- 28% - Somers General Government
Boards, Courts, Staff, Clerk/Treasurer, Elections, Assessors, Audit, Legal, Engineering, Membership Dues, Advertising, Publications, Buildings, Property & Liability Insurance, Debt Payments
- 15% - Somers Solid Waste —Garbage and Recycling
- 13% - Somers Public Works
Village/Town Roads and Streets, Storm and Sanitary Sewer, Water Utility, Street Lighting
- 2% - Contingency Reserve
- 1% - Somers Leisure Activities
Softball, Basketball, Soccer, and Touch Football Programs
- 1% - Somers Planning and Development
Plan Commissions, Boards of Appeals, Parks Committee

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William Morris, Village/Town Administrator, Managing Editor

Jacqueline Klapproth Nelson, News and Creative Editor

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SOMERS MASTER GARDENERS VOLUNTEER TIME

Master Gardeners Margie Hannes and Sharon Janusz, Somers residents, tackle the never-ending job of weeding a summer garden. Thank you Margie and Sharon for your dedicated volunteer hours keeping our Rain Garden in front of the Village/Town Hall looking spectacular!



1996 SOMERS QUILT HANGS IN LEON T. DREGER HALL VILLAGE/TOWN HALL

In the first issue of the *Somers Town Crier*, the Somers newsletter, a call went out for quilters to make a Somers quilt to depict the history of Somers. Eight quilters replied: Sandy Barrett, Nancy Girman, Laverne Goodman, Bev Hansen, Sandy Halmo, Rosemary Moenssen, Connie Syslack and June Williams. Thank you ladies!



1938 SOMERS GIRLS BASEBALL TEAM

(Photo courtesy of Red and Marcella Thomas Mueller)

Somers residents love their baseball! Seventy-seven years ago the girls team was very popular in the community. They played their home games at the ball diamond on the corner of Highways E and 31.

Back Row: Shirley Klapproth Damaschke, Marcella Thomas Mueller, Gerty Kremis Hapanowicz, Lorraine Schect, Unknown, Darlene Michelson

Front Row: Julie Kremis Covelli, Alice Thomas Yacukowicz, June Propson Bose, Margaret Ann Dorey Swensen, Dorothy Wallace, and Mary Ellen Thompson Werner.