



7511 12th Street, Somers, Wisconsin, 53171

NEWSLETTER

Connecting with Your Community

Issue 18: January 2023



Happy New Year

It has been another exciting year in Somers. We have seen more growth and are welcoming new businesses and residents to our community.

From the Village and the Town, we wish all residents a happy, healthy and prosperous 2023.

Somers Fire and Rescue Department updates

The Somers Fire and Rescue Department took delivery of a new ambulance in November. The rig was built by Life Line Emergency Vehicles of Sumner, Iowa. It is built on a 2022 Ford F-550 chassis and replaces an ambulance from 2000. The typical life span of an ambulance used full time is 10 years. With this acquisition, all ambulances in the department are now up to date.

The vehicle is four-wheel drive and has liquid spring suspension for a more comfortable ride for the patients. It is outfitted with full LED emergency lights and a search light to illuminate accident scenes. The back has an automatic loading stretcher system to reduce the risk of injuries to firefighters.



It closely matches the other two ambulances in the department.

The Village Board funded a new position in the department: Deputy Fire Chief. That position is expected to be filled early this year.



Somers Fire and Rescue Department Capt. Scott Schoenfeld, above, demonstrates how the automatic loading stretcher works. The new ambulance can be seen at left.

The Somers newsletter is now online and is published quarterly to make the information more timely. You can find current and past newsletters in pdf format which can be printed or read easily [online](#). A few hard copies are available in the lobby of the Town/Village Hall.

We hope you like it!

Reminders

■ Carbon monoxide detectors are available free to Somers residents.

If interested, call the Somers Fire and Rescue department at 262-620-3285 or email apisula@somers.org and firefighters will gladly come to your home and install a new alarm.

■ If you live near a fire hydrant, please make sure it is clear and accessible to firefighters.

For your safety and that of your neighbors, snow should be kept three feet away.



■ Keep Somers looking good.

As a reminder, there are Village/Town ordinances regulating the upkeep of your property. The ordinances address items such as grass cutting, junk cars and how a trailer should be kept.

Look to Chapter 9 of the ordinances for information about junk and abandoned vehicles, Chapter 10 addresses public nuisances and Chapter 21 outlines requirements about property maintenance.

For more information, Village/Town ordinances can be found under the Government tab on the Somers [website](#).

■ Garbage calendar available.

The 2023 garbage and recycle collection is available on the Somers [website](#).

■ Keep water systems from freezing during subzero temperatures.

Let a faucet run. A trickle the size of a pencil lead is all that is needed.



The "Making a Difference" award plaques are on display inside the newly remodeled Village/Town Hall Lobby.

Residents are recognized

Four Somers residents were recognized at the Nov. 9 Village Board meeting with the "Making a Difference" award.

The award was created last year. Betty Edquist was the first recipient. To nominate someone for the award, fill out the [submission form](#) available on the Somers website. The following were recognized:

Minnie G. Ozanne

Minnie Ozanne started her career in journalism in 1896 and covered the Town of Somers for the Kenosha News, Racine Journal Times and Milwaukee Journal for 63 years. She featured Somers pioneer families and the building of our community.

She was also a teacher at Burr Oak and Bullamore Forks elementary schools from the late 1800s to the early 1900s.

Ozanne wrote and published a book titled "My Memories" in which she chronicled early settlement history, first churches, mail service, original pioneers, sawmills, butter factories, barns and the original Somers schools.

Larry Gitzlaff

In 2007, Larry Gitzlaff donated 24 acres located on Highway E for a future Town Park.

At that time, the land appraised for \$657,500 and increased Somers park land by 33 percent.

Village Attorney Jeff Davidson pointed out that this was the largest land donation by an individual in Kenosha County's history.

Ernest & Dolores Tabbert

Ernest "Bunk" Tabbert Jr. served on the Somers Fire Department for 51 years, including 17 as Chief. He followed his father's footsteps, who was the Department's first Chief serving from 1934 to 1961.

He was a charter member of the Somers rescue squad, organized in 1977, where he quickly enlisted his wife "Dee" who joined him as a volunteer for many years.

She has served as a Somers Poll Worker, in addition to Chief Election Inspector for many years.

Ruth N. Teuscher

Ruth Teuscher purchased 40 acres on Green Bay Road just west of Petrifying Springs Park in 1935.

Together with her sister Margaret, they spent years preserving and improving the land. In 1966, Ruth donated her home and land to the Chris Hyslop Foundation to be preserved as the Hawthorn Hollow Nature Sanctuary & Arboretum.

She was instrumental in offering a place to preserve and care for three historical buildings: the 1847 Pike River School, the 1859 Somers Town Hall and the 1906 Pike River school.

Staff news

■ Long-time Accounts Payable Clerk Janet Martin announced she will retire early this year. She has been with the Village/Town of Somers for over a decade.

Janet has been a valuable member of the Somers front office team. Staff and residents will miss her friendly demeanor. She plans on spending more time with her grandchildren and family. We wish her the very best in her retirement.

The Village/Town is currently taking applications for that position.

■ Building Inspector Russ Nolen has announced he will retire early this year as well. Russ has been with Somers since 2003. His wealth of knowledge with the Town and Village will be missed. Russ and his wife Deb plan on spending a lot more time camping with this retirement. We wish him the very best.

The Inspector's position has been posted on the Somers website.

■ Kevin Poirier was hired as the Assistant to the Administrator/Communications Specialist. He started Jan. 16.

Poirier has been working for the Village as a contractor updating the website and creating the newsletter.

"I am looking forward to this new opportunity to work closely with the Somers Administration," he said.

His new role will include the communications work he performed as a consultant.

■ Administrator Jason Peters took part in a discussion titled "Fixing the Development Approvals Process" at the National Commercial Real Estate Development Association annual convention in Chicago on Oct. 11.

■ The contract for the Village of Somers Administrator was renewed until 2025.

For information on all available positions with the Village or Town of Somers, check our [website](#).

Street lights

For power outage, street lights out or a downed power line, call We Energies at: 800-662-4797 or visit the outage map on the [website](#).

Winter Pot Holes

Just a reminder...

Residents can help determine where we need to focus our efforts during our winter road maintenance work by reporting potholes. We want to repair them promptly.

Call Village/Town Hall at
262-859-2822

Somers Zip code

The Village Administration and the Village Board submitted an application for a Zip code boundary review to the United States Postal Service on Nov. 17, 2022.

No answer was received within the expected 60 days from its receipt. The application can be submitted only once every 10 years.

U.S. Congressman Bryan Steil and U.S. Senator Ron Johnson are helping by proposing a bill aimed to help some communities get a unique Zip code.

Root-Pike WIN projects

Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) was awarded a \$70,000 grant to help build a regenerative stormwater conveyance system along University Drive on the University of Wisconsin – Parkside campus.

The system filters out pollutants from runoff resulting in improved water quality for the Pike River.

It also reduces suspended solids, nitrogen and phosphorus by 50 percent more than a standard stormwater pond at a similar cost.

Road salt, another major impairment to lakes and rivers, is also reduced by the system through infiltration. It needs minimal maintenance compared to traditional stormwater ponds.

Traffic pattern change



Signs have been posted since the turning lane was closed.

After a spate of fatal accidents involving vehicles turning west on 35th Street from the Green Bay Road turning lane, the Somers Village board passed a resolution on Jan. 25, 2022, for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to review the traffic pattern.

Village staff met with WisDOT Safety Engineer Rodrigo Martinez on Jan 11, 2022.

To increase safety, WisDOT decided to eliminate the northbound left turn lane from Green Bay Road onto 35th Street and it was closed on Sept. 26.

Over the past year there have been four fatalities at this crossing.

Bryan Steil

United States Congressman Bryan Steil has office hours at the Somers Village/Town Hall Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to noon and Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m. A representative from his office is available during those times to help constituents.



Warehouses break ground

Chicago-based HSA Commercial Real Estate broke ground on one of Wisconsin's largest speculative industrial buildings in November.

The Highland Commerce Center of Somers is a 918,844-square-foot distribution center that will be located directly off I-94 at 2655 113th Avenue.

"This development meets the critical need for large users seeking to meet the accelerating e-commerce demands of consumers throughout the Chicago and Milwaukee region," said Robert Smietana, vice chairman and CEO of HSA Commercial Real Estate.

The building will feature 40-foot clear heights, 109 dock doors, 165 truck trailer parking stalls and 511 employee parking spaces. The building is expected to be complete in third-quarter 2023. The space will be leased by Cushman & Wakefield.

HSA is working on four warehouses totaling 1.9 million square feet along the Interstate 94 corridor, between Chicago and Milwaukee. The Somers project is one of two in Kenosha County including another one in Bristol on the southeast corner of 136th Avenue and Wilmot Road.

"These projects represent continuations of successful HSA developments along the I-94 corridor, which has become an essential link in many supply chains," said Smietana. "We are proud to be one of the most active industrial developers in the area as we help businesses across industries grow their operations throughout Illinois, Wisconsin and beyond."



Somers and HSA representatives at the groundbreaking

Pay taxes, utilities

Residents can pay their **property taxes** in person at Tri City Bank, 5901 Washington Road.

Branch hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, closed Sunday.

Payment can also be made through the [Somers website](#).

Payments for **utilities** or **court fees** can also be made through the website.

Public Works upcoming projects: roads and lift stations

The Public Works department is testing a new mastic to fill expansion cracking along 100th Avenue.

After a resident brought the issue to the attention of the Village Board, the department concluded that the quality of the road was unacceptable, said Public Works Superintendent Jerry Smith.

Smith's crew fixed about 1/2 mile of the surface of the road south of Highway E at a cost of \$7,000.

"It helped," he said. "I am happy with it."

The department will monitor the new product and if it is found to hold up to the cold and plowing, the next 4.5 miles of the road will be repaired in the same fashion.



Somers Public Works department fixed several cracks on 100th Avenue with a new filler.

The Somers Estate repaving project was approved in the 2023 budget for a cost of \$1.5 million. It will go out to bid in 2023.

Funds were also approved to rebuild the Eaglewood and Licher lift stations. They are the last two that need work. When finished, they will match the Seawall and 7th Street lift stations and increase system capacity. The project is expected to cost \$1.5 million and will be paid by the sewer utility.

"This will bring our entire system up to current standard," said Smith. "Services will not be interrupted during the project."

The purchase of a new front-end loader has been approved to replace a 20-year-old backhoe.

The department is also looking at replacing water meters to improve capabilities and monitoring.

New development updates

■ **Mission 94** — The indoor firearm education center, part of the Pritzker Archives and Memorial Park Center was approved by the Village Board.

■ **Chipotle** — The restaurant is under construction on a one-acre parcel at Somers Market Center just south of the US Cellular store. It will feature a drive-thru and outside dining areas.

■ **Popeyes** — The restaurant is now open.

■ **Carthage College** — Work has started on the 18,000 sq.-ft. maintenance building located on the north end of campus along 17th Street. The houses located there have been torn down.

■ **Pub 94** — The Village Board approved an amendment to the Conditional Use Permit of the Golden Oil at the corner of Highway E and the interstate to allow for alcohol to be served at the facility. The establishment, called Pub 94 is now open.

■ **US Cellular** — US Cellular opened a store at Somers Market on the south side of the new Taco Bell.

■ **Savannah at Pike Creek** — Modifications to existing highways are complete for access to the 65-acre parcel on the northwest corner of Highway L (18th Street) and Green Bay Road. It is a multi-family development. The residential part of the development consists of 42 buildings with a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units for a total of 338 residences.

■ **Home Inspired II** — The plan commission approved a 40-bed assisted living facility on the parcel to the east of the Village/Town Hall. The 24,710-sq.-ft. building has been designed to match the existing facility located at 1201 Village Centre Drive.

■ **Bobcat** — A Bobcat dealership is planned in the Somers/Paris growth area. The 13,325-sq.-ft. building has been approved on a parcel at the southeast corner of 122nd Avenue and West Frontage Road.

■ **Hawthorn Apartments** — The second phase of the Hawthorn Apartments has been approved by the plan commission. The 19-building residential development on a 20-acre parcel north of the existing apartments will consist of a mix of studios, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments. The parcels facing Green Bay Road are zoned for retail.

■ **Mister Car Wash** — A new car wash is planned just west of the Chipotle restaurant currently under construction at Somers Market.



Mission 94



Chipotle



Popeye



Carthage



Home Inspired II



Bobcat



Hawthorn Apartments Phase II



Architectural rendering of the Mister Car Wash building

Highlights of the 2023 budget

The 2023 budget was adopted Nov. 29, 2022.

The total levy is \$4,773,216, an increase of \$30,103, or 0.63 percent.

The 2022 assessed value for the Village of Somers is \$979,910,200. This is an increase of \$13,462,400 (1.39 percent) from the prior year.

The 2022 assessed value for the Town is \$89,324,200. This is an decrease of \$1,343,600 (1.48 percent) from the prior year.

Tax levy for 2022

- Village — \$4,353,453 (91.65 percent of the total levy). This is an increase of \$100,465 from 2021.

- Town — \$419,763 (8.35 percent of the total levy). This is a decrease of \$70,363 from 2021.

Mill rate for 2022

- Village — \$5.31586 per thousand of assessed value (down from \$5.34359).
- Town — \$4.69932 per thousand of assessed value (down from \$5.40573).

Budget key points

- The Capital Improvement Plan budget came in at \$2,606,100 and will be mostly spent on the Somers

Estates repaving project. The rest is in large part to cover equipment for the fire and public works departments.

- Investment policies have been updated to leverage increasing interest rates for greater returns.

- The Somers Fire and Rescue Department has added the position of Deputy Chief.

- Revenues have increased in large part due to new developments coming to Somers.

A hard copy of the budget and information sheet is available to residents by request at the Village/Town Hall.

Voter turnout exceeds expectations

With four elections, 2022 was a busy year. The turnout for the November General Election was outstanding.

In the Village, out of 5,300 registered voters, about 4,000 voted.

In the Town, out of roughly 600 registered voters, 450 showed up to the polls.

The administration thanks all residents who cast their vote, and even with the record-breaking turnout, Election Day went very smoothly.

Getting ready for Spring elections

Several Somers elected positions will be on the Spring elections ballots:

- **Village Trustees:** Incumbents Jackie Klapproth Nelson and Jack Aupperle are seeking another term. Also running are Scott Fredrick and Dustin Thorpe. There are three Trustee positions open.

- **Village President:** Incumbent George Stoner is running for another term. He will face former Somers Fire Chief Carson Wilkinson.

- **Municipal Judge:** Incumbent Robert Kupfer is the only candidate on the ballot.

- **Town Chairman:** Incumbent Mark Molinaro is running unopposed.

- **Town Supervisor:** Incumbent Richard Lesko is the only candidate running for this position.

The Somers Town Board approved new [voting maps](#), which will increase the number of wards from two to four. This redistricting is due to the April 15, 2022, decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court to adopt the legislative redistricting plan.

Upcoming Elections

The Spring General Election is on April 4, 2023.

For more information on where to vote or how to get an absentee ballot, visit the My Vote Wisconsin [website](#).

Please remember that Town wards have changed following the April redistricting.

