Town of Janesville

Annual Newsletter December 2021

REMINDER!!!

The most convenient, and COVID safe, way to pay your taxes is to mail them to or drop them off at the town hall. We have a new secure, red, white and blue, drop box located in front (west end) of our town hall.

The box will be checked daily and is secured. Payments "in person" are only accepted during the special collection hours listed on the back page of this newsletter.

The Clerk **DOES NOT** accept or receipt taxes at any time.

Town of Janesville Officials

Chairman	Bruce Schneider	751-1245	Clerk	Don Blakeney	754-1468
Supervisor	David Rebout	752-8253	Treasurer	Peggy Augustine	754-1468 or 201-2391
Supervisor	Gary Fox	289-4452	Constable	Archie Henkelmann	752-5474
Supervisor	Janet Kassel	876-6311	Bldg. Inspect	David Geraths	608-697-7776
Supervisor	Lon Coplien	756-1065	Assessor	Associated Appraisal	800-721-4157 (Myles)

Town of Janesville website: www.townofjanesville.org Town of Janesville E-Mail: tnclerk@litewire.net The Town Hall mailing address:

Town of Janesville 1628 N. Little Court Janesville, WI 53548 Emergency: Dial 911

Non-emergency fire/other: (608) 757-2244 John's Disposal Service: -1-262-473-4700

Town Hall: (608) 754-1468

Town Clerk Office Hours:

Monday-12 noon - 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday-Closed Wednesday- 12 noon - 5:00 p.m. Thursday- 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Friday- Closed ****PLEASE NOTE: THESE ARE NEW OFFICE HOURS STARTING 1/01/2022

<u>The Annual Meeting</u> will be held on Tuesday, April 19th, 2022, at 7:30 P.M. at the town hall. During the meeting the Town will be planning for 2022.

The Town Board consists of five elected members. One member is elected as Town Chairman and the other four are elected as Supervisors. Each position is elected to a two-year term. Two Supervisors are elected in April of even numbered years, and two Supervisors and the Chairman are elected in April of odd numbered years. Nominations for elected offices, including Town Board, Clerk, Treasurer, and Constable, are made at the Town Caucus to be scheduled in January at the Town Hall. Anyone interested in running for these offices, will need to be nominated at the caucus in order to get their name on the ballot for the spring election. Please visit our website or contact the Town Clerk for information regarding the town caucus. The date for the next Town Caucus is Tuesday, January 11th, 2022, at 7:30 P.M at the town hall.

The Town Board usually meets the first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall. Meetings may fall on another day of the week due to a Holiday or Election schedule. Please check the Town website for the exact date of all meetings. One of the first items on the agenda is "Citizen Participation" which allows residents an opportunity to address the Town Board on any subject of concern that is **not** on the agenda. Any matter where Town Board **action is desired**, must appear on the posted agenda. Anyone who wishes to have an issue placed on the agenda should make their request, in writing, to the Town Clerk by the last Monday of the month. Minutes of the Town Board meeting are available for public review during regular office hours and may be posted on the town website after final approval by the Town Board.

Mark your calendars: We are participating in an e-cycling event allowing you to bring in any electronic equipment to be recycled. The event will be held at our own Town Hall, 1628 N. Little Ct. Janesville, on June 18th, 2022 during the hours of 8:00 am – 11:00 am. If you have any questions, please contact our Town Hall at (608)754-1468 or visit our website for details.

<u>Public Notices:</u> Information concerning town meetings, agendas, or public notices are required to be posted at the following locations: Lions Quick Mart--Hwy 14, Consolidated Elem School--Co Rd F, and the Town Hall. Notices may also be on the town website.

Updates regarding agendas, minutes, notices, election notices, zoning ordinance changes, etc.
can be obtained by login in to website: townnnnofjanesville.org, select and click on the "subscribe to updates" button.

Planning and Zoning Committee

The Planning and Zoning Committee consists of seven appointed members and one alternate member. One of the seven is also a member of the Town Board. The Town Chairman appoints members for a term of either one, two, or three years. Citizens interested in serving on the committee should contact the Town Chairman. Meetings, if necessary, are the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the town hall. Current members of the committee are:

Doug Rebout, Chairman	290-5928	Dennis Thiele	751-3353
Julia Donahue, Secretary	752-5153	Edward Quaerna	752-1165
Janet Kassel	876-6311	Bill Curtis	756-1087
Lon Coplien	756-1065	David Henkelmann	752-5474

Snow Plowing

Per State Statute 346.94(5), It is illegal to plow or blow any ice or snow from your driveway out into the roadway or into the road right of way including the ditch. We have had several complaints of residents pushing the snow from their driveway, across the road and into the ditch on the other side. Any person violating this statute may be fined \$50 per offense.

Elections

Voter ID will be required for all Elections in 2022. A driver's license is the most common form of ID, but many other documents are acceptable. The Town Clerk can answer questions about acceptable forms of ID. The town voting place is the Town Hall. You may register to vote prior to the election at the Town Hall during regular office hours or on the day of the election at myvote.wi.gov. If you are new to the Town, or have a name/address change, you are encouraged to register with the Clerk ASAP to ensure that you are in the poll book on election day. Voters must be residents of the town for at least 28 days before an election. The Town of Janesville is looking for poll workers, if you are interested, please contact the Town Clerk. Please visit myvote.wi.gov for useful voter information.

Building Permits

A building permit is required for new construction and for any structural alterations, remodeling, additions, deck or swimming pools. A permit is also required for razing or wrecking a structure. Please call or email our Building Inspector, David Geraths at 608-697-7776 or Dgeraths@generalengineering.net for a building permit or if you have a question.

Town Ordinances: The Town of Janesville, along with many other municipalities in the state, does its own land zoning. We have ordinances, or laws, that govern the rules in our Township such as building set-back requirements, permitted uses in your zoning district, animal definitions and laws per zoning district, pool fencing requirements, etc. How your property is zoned, will dictate the rules or ordinances that you will be required to obey. For example, someone living in a single family-rural residential zoning will have different ordinances and permitted uses than someone living in an agricultural district. The Town of Janesville ordinances are posted on our town website, or you may request a copy of the ordinances at the town hall-(copy charge is \$0.25 per page). It is the responsibility of the property owner to read and understand the ordinances as they apply to their property zoning. Because times and circumstances change, our ordinances evolve and change too. If you have a question regarding the ordinances, you may bring it up at any of the regularly scheduled Town Board meetings (usually held on the first Monday of the month). It is important to note that the Town Board will not give you any legal advice, and you may need to consult with your attorney, if there is a question on legal issues involving the ordinances.

Fire Calls and the Town Burning Ordinance:

The town contracts with the City of Janesville for fire protection and ambulance services.

**A burning permit is needed for an Outdoor Burning Area. An Outdoor Burning Area means a fire which is intentionally set and which is intended to travel outwards to seek its source of fuel. An example of an outdoor area burn is the burning of grass, weeds and prairie grasses where it is intended that the fire will travel to such items to burn them. To obtain burning permits contact the Town Clerk, Don Blakeney, at the town hall during posted business hours. (Citizens MUST call the non-emergency number, 757-2244, before and after a burn). Do not call the fire department or 911.

**A burning permit is not required when burning leaves, brush, wood, other vegetative debris, camp fires, or burns that are intended to take place in an area where the materials to be burned are brought to the location of the fire, such as a brush pile. (Citizens MUST call the non-emergency number, 757-2244, before and after a burn). By calling this number, you will let the fire department know that you have a "controlled burn" in case someone passing by sees smoke and calls "911"-- and protect yourself from getting a \$500 bill if the fire department is dispatched by mistake. Professional burning companies are not required to obtain a burning permit.

*** The WI-DNR website has important information regarding open burning, including the health risks of smoke, chemical contamination of soil and air, and alternatives to burning. Smoke from wet leaves can create a toxic environment for some people. Please think of your neighbors when burning any debris. We have had complaints of residents burning toxic material and/or allowing smoke to travel onto their neighbor's property causing concern for people with certain health conditions. If burning becomes a problem, please talk to your neighbors or call the Town Clerk.

Rock County Towns Education and Outreach-Water Management

As a town on the Rock River, we are working with other townships along the river to promote beneficial storm water and clean water management practices. More information about this topic is available at the Town Hall.

Boat Launch Fees

The Town of Janesville enforces a boat launch fee of \$3.00/daily or \$20.00/annual at the town owned boat launch on North River Road/Hwy 14. Launch permits, whether daily or annual, may be purchased at the box on the launch or at the Town Hall.

Garbage and Recycling Totes:

All Town residents will receive one tote each for garbage and recycling. Town residents who choose to leave their garbage and recycling bins out by the road may face problems this winter. If your tote is damaged by a snowplow, you will be billed for the replacement.

Town Hall Rentals

The town hall may be rented for personal events. The hall has a refrigerator and microwave in the kitchen as well as a few tables and chairs that may be used. The rental fee is \$125.00 and a security deposit of \$125.00 will be required. If the hall is left in good order after your event, you will be refunded the deposit at the next regularly scheduled town board meeting. Please note that there are no alcoholic beverages or smoking allowed in or at the town hall or on any town property. You may contact the town clerk for availability and information. Rates are subject to change.

Primary Residence

If your primary residence is in the Town of Janesville, your driver's license, vehicle registration and your Wisconsin Income Tax Return should say "County of Rock" and "Town of Janesville" to ensure that the town receives its full amount of the Shared Revenue taxes from the State of Wisconsin.

Driveways

Both the Rock Co Public Works Department and Town of Janesville, have ordinances that **do not allow cement** approaches for driveways. Where a driveway meets the road, there should be asphalt or gravel, **not cement**, 10 ft back from roadway.

Weeds and Brush

It is mandatory for all property owners, adjacent to town roads, to cut or trim to ground level, clear and remove all brush, shrubbery and trees within 10 feet of the edge of the pavement of any town road. This requirement includes the trimming of overhanging brush to a height of 16' and removing any debris, rocks or other obstacles within 10' from the edge of the pavement. If the ordinance requirements are not met within 30 days of receiving notice, the Town will cut and trim, as required, at the expense of the property owner. A property owner may request an exemption of specific trees/shrubs. Please keep in mind that the town right-of-way is 33 ft. --measured straight from center of road. This area may be trimmed by the County when they are cutting the roadside weeds in the spring and fall.

Dogs and Dog Licenses

The number of dogs allowed, per home, in the town, is dependent upon the zoning district. Parcels zoned Rural Residential or zoned Single Family Rural Residential may have two dogs. Three dogs are allowed only on parcels zoned Agriculture, whether it is A-1, A-2 or A-3. More than three dogs require a kennel license and kennel permit. A kennel permit requires a parcel greater than 10 acres with Agriculture zoning and also requires a conditional use permit. State Statute prohibit dogs from running at large and require every dog over five months old must be licensed annually and have a rabies vaccination. Proof of rabies vaccination, not an invoice, must accompany the license application and will be returned to you with the dog license(s) and tag(s). There is a \$5.00 late payment penalty for dog licenses issued after March 31st, 2021.

2022 Dog Fees are as follows:

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Unaltered male/female	\$8.00	Puppies-five months old after July 1st	\$4.00
Neutered male/spayed female	\$3.00	Neutered puppies-five months old	
Kennel Licenses	\$35.00	after July 1st	\$1.50
Kennel Permit	\$100.00		

Please mail the correct amount, proof of vaccination-not an invoice from the veterinarian, and proof of spay/neuter to the Town Treasurer. A telephone number & self-addressed stamped envelope, along with the application below, must be included for the application to be processed.

STATE OF WISCONSIN					
OFFICIAL APPLICATION/ DOG LIC	ENSE	YEAR:	2022	COUNTY OF ROCK	
MUNICIPALITY: Town of Janesville DATE ISSUED: LICENSE NUMBER: OWNER'S NAME: ADDRESS: ADDRESS: CITY/STATE/ZIP: PHONE NUMBER: MUNICIPAL TREASURER SIGNATURE:	_	VACCINA VACCINA NEXT VA NAME OI BREED O COLOR O BIRTH YI	ATION NU ATION DA CCINATI F DOG: F DOG: F DOG:	TE FEE: MBER: TE: ON DATE:	
	tered/spayed	Puppy _	<u> </u>	New Resident	

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Tax Collection

The tax bills provided and printed by Rock County, are a laser print, single copy form. The top portion tears off to become a coupon to send with your payment. The first installment or payment in full of real estate tax and all personal property tax, is due by January 31st 2022. Payments may be mailed to the town hall address and must be postmarked by January 31st 2022 to be considered paid on time. Payments should be mailed early due to changes at the US Postal Service. Please provide a phone number on your check in case there is a problem processing your payment.

Make checks payable to: Town of Janesville, Treasurer

Mail your payments to: Town of Janesville Treasurer, Peggy Augustine

1628 N. Little Court Janesville, WI 53548

The most convenient, and COVID safe, way to pay your taxes is to mail them to the town hall or use our new secure red, white, and blue drop box in front of the town hall. Payments are receipted by postmark or drop off date. If you are requesting a receipt, you <u>must</u> provide a self-addressed <u>stamped</u> envelope. Your payment history is available online at www.co.rock.wi.us —see info below.

To pay in person: The Town Treasurer will collect at the Town Hall, 1628 N. Little Court, at these times ONLY:

 Saturday December 18th
 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 Saturday January 22nd
 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

 Saturday December 31st
 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 Saturday January 29th
 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Payments in person will not be accepted or processed at any other time except for those listed above. The Town

Clerk <u>DOES NOT</u> receipt or accept tax payments.

Receipts for taxes paid may be printed at www.co.rock.wi.us. Click on the tax database search and enter your tax ID or parcel ID-making sure to enter all spaces- or you may enter all/part of your address. You can then view your complete payment history, parcel details or print a copy of your tax bill. Please allow 3-5 days for payments to post.

Please make your payments for the exact amount as no cash is on hand and no change will be given. Refunds will be authorized at the next month's Town Board meeting. If a refund is less than \$5.00, the town will not issue a check or mail a refund unless a written request for the refund is received. If your escrow check is made out to you, or to you and the town, please endorse the check. There is a \$25.00 fee for all returned checks. The town does not redeposit NSF checks. If you receive an NSF check notice from your financial institution, please contact the Town Treasurer ASAP, especially if you have an unlisted phone number. Any parcel with "past due" taxes must be taken to the courthouse for processing prior to coming to the town hall. Due to COVID, please call 757-5670 before going to the courthouse to see if they are open.

All Personal Property tax bills, whether paid timely or delinquent, should be paid to the Town Treasurer. At no time are personal property tax bills paid to the Rock County Treasurer. For Personal Property (improvements on leased land only), we cannot process both the taxes and garbage charges that are paid together on one check. If you own Personal Property and have received a separate billing for your 2022 garbage and recycling, then please send a separate check for the garbage charges. If your garbage is on your tax bill, then one check for both tax and garbage is fine.

All Real Estate tax bill payments paid or postmarked after January 31st, as well as any second installment payments paid in July, are to be paid to the Rock County Treasurer. Due to COVID, please call the Treasurer's office at 757-5670 to see if they are open. The Rock County Treasurer's office hours are 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. 'The Rock County courthouse will be closed on Thursday December 23rd, Friday December 24th, 2021, and Friday December 31st, 2021. Notify the Town or County Treasurer of any address changes or changes in a tax parcel such as a split. Notification must be received by November 1st for any changes to take effect on the current tax bill.

Residents may contact our assessor, Associated Appraisal, anytime of the year regarding your assessed value. The phone number is 1-800-721-4157. There are several ways to question your assessed value. You may contact the assessor directly or attend Open Book, which is an opportunity to see every parcel's assessed value. The next step in the process is to make an appointment for our Board of Review, a time in which the assessor is present with the town board to hear any objections. Without a pre-scheduled appointment, you may not be heard at Board of Review. Both Open Book and Board of Review may be scheduled as early as May. Please watch our website for exact dates or contact the clerk.

Lottery and Gaming Credit

Please check your tax bill for the lottery credit. If you owned your home and used it as your **primary residence** as of January 1st 2021, you are entitled to a Lottery Tax Credit on your real estate tax bill. Vacation homes, rental properties or business properties do not qualify for this credit. Homeowners are required to sign a credit application form to initially receive the credit on their tax bill. If you qualify, and the Lottery Credit is not listed on your 2021 tax bill, you will need to come to the town office during the tax collection hours listed above or visit the Rock County Treasurer website to obtain a credit form. You have until January 31st, 2022 to claim the credit on your 2021 tax bill. **Please do not pay your property taxes in full prior to claiming the Lottery Tax Credit if you are entitled to the credit.** After filling out the application, your tax amount will be recalculated, and the Lottery Credit applied to your tax amount due.



Enclosed is your 2021 Real Estate Property tax bill. The Town Board would like to offer an explanation as to the significant increases in our Town Tax and our biggest budget challenge for our township—**Fire/EMS protection costs.** Many of our residents may have read in the *Janesville Gazette* last summer about the substantial increases in Fire/EMS protection for 2022-2024 for several municipalities that contract with the City of Janesville. Unfortunately, the Town of Janesville is one of the affected municipalities.

The Town Board has met with the City of Janesville, the City's legal counsel, other municipalities and fire districts, and members of our Town's Association to discuss this drastic increase. During these meetings and discussions, the Town Board members touched on many topics, including the City of Janesville's increase in payroll and benefits, the increase in cost of equipment and buildings, emergency response times, town representation on a committee that communicates with the City of Janesville on fire department related matters, and the billing structure itself.

Payroll and benefits are an important part of attracting and retaining well trained employees who are willing to be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. After discussions with not only the City of Janesville, but another fire district, we understand that there is a statewide shortage of people who want to get into the Firefighter or EMS fields. Premium pay and better benefits are a way to attract quality full time employees. The City of Janesville has hundreds of employees working full time to make sure we have the fastest response to our fire and EMS needs.

I think we can all relate to the increases we have seen in the general cost of things. When you are looking at big ticket items, such as a new fire truck or ambulance, then the increased cost is much higher. Construction of new buildings, including fire departments, are at an all-time high. The City of Janesville is working on keeping response times down by building more fire stations in expanding areas of the city, and the towns it serves.

Prior to 2012, the City of Janesville was billing us for the actual cost of providing fire protection to our Township. In 2012 a new billing structure was introduced that would limit the amount of increase we see each year to no more than 3%. Because the actual cost for each year was more than the 3% increase, the City continued to fall behind in recouping the cost of the fire protection provided to municipalities they were contracting with. A new administration with the City of Janesville, has determined that they can no longer continue this unsustainable budget practice and needed to go back to billing for actual costs associated with providing each municipality's Fire and EMS protection. As a Town, trying to balance our own budget, with levy limits in place that cannot increase with the cost of living, we do know how difficult it is to stay ahead of increases in cost when the levy limit is frozen. Until the levy limit structure changes at the state level, this will continue to be a problem for all counties, cities, villages, towns and school districts.

After meeting with the Towns who contract with the City of Janesville for fire protection, the City has agreed to set up a committee that will contain a member of each Township to communicate with them on matters related to the fire department. This will, in essence, give our Township a voice in fire department matters and improvements.

Our Town Board members have also reached out to our State of WI representatives to see if there is any help that could be provided to the cities, villages, and towns to help offset the increases we are seeing for state mandated fire protection. Hopefully a future bi-partisan committee will be looking into making changes or proposing bills.

A breakdown of the proposed increases for our Township are listed below by tax year. The next 3 years will be a "phased in period" to get our Township up to paying the actual cost of our fire protection. As you can see, we are going to have some significant increases to our Town tax over the next 3-year period.

- 2021 We paid \$393,914.00 to the City of Janesville for our Fire/EMS contract.
- 2022 We are billed \$607,443.95. This is an increase of roughly 54.21% over the 2021 contract rate.
- 2023 Estimated contract --\$839,197.21. This is an increase of roughly 38.15% over the 2022 contract rate.
- 2024 Estimated contract -- \$1,077,903.77. This is an increase of roughly 28.44% over the 2023 estimated contract rate.



If you are new, or maybe not so new, to our Township, here are some helpful reminders.

- *** You can register to vote or request an absentee ballot online by going to the **MyVote.Wi.Gov** website. In person, or have a voting question, please contact our Clerk, Don Blakeney.
- *** We are always looking for smiling faces to join our poll worker team. If working at the elections sounds like something you would be interested in, please contact the Town Clerk, Don Blakeney, for more information and the training schedules for 2022.
- *** The State of WI, Rock County and our Town have completed the election redistricting process based on the last Census data received. Because of changes in the Congressional Districts, many people may have a new Ward Number and/or-Representative. Please keep this in mind when coming in to vote and if you have any questions, you can reach out to the Town Clerk or visit My Vote to see what is on your ballot.
- *** Both the Rock Co Public Works Department and Town of Janesville, have ordinances that **do not allow anything to be placed in the road right-of-way**. Wisconsin State Statute 86.04 governs fixed objects or obstructions in the right-of-way, such as cemented mailboxes, lights, walls, pillars, cement driveway aprons, and the removal and/or penalties for such encroachments. Any object or structure in the road right of way that could cause-damage to a car, if it were to leave the traveled portion of the road, is **not allowed**. A wooden post allows the structure to break away if struck cement, rock or brick could cause unnecessary damage. Where a driveway meets the road, there should be asphalt or gravel, **not cement**, 10 ft back from roadway. This is to protect the snow removal equipment from hitting any "heaved" cement in the cold months and damaging the plows or hurting the drivers.
- *** The <u>City of Janesville</u> has just increased their "Wheel Tax". This is a fee placed on vehicles registered in the City of Janesville and is added to the state registration fee when renewing. Even though this does not affect our Town residents, we are asking you to please review your vehicle registrations and make sure you have "County of Rock" and "Town of Janesville" listed in order to avoid this extra fee. Many times, when a car is registered, the municipality will default to City of Janesville if a Janesville address is registered.
- *** Because of changes with the US Postal Service, you may want to mail in your tax payments a bit earlier to make sure they are received by the deadline. If you would like a receipt, please provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we would be more than happy to mail one to you. You can also see your payment history on the Rock County Treasurer's website under the tax database tab. Please see the enclosed newsletter for "In-Person" tax collection hours. The Town Clerk <u>cannot</u> accept tax payments. You can always drop payments off in the red, white and blue box in front of the town hall anytime. This secure box is checked daily and is monitored by a security camera at all times.
- *** To receive the Lottery and Gaming credit on the tax bill for your new home, please contact our Treasurer, Peggy Augustine. It must be your primary home as of January 1st of the current tax year in order to qualify. Vacation or business properties do not qualify for the Lottery and Gaming credit. The Treasurer will need a form filled out and signed before the credit can be applied to your parcel.
- *** In 2023, our Township will be doing a complete reassessment of all real property. It has been a quite a few years since we have had this done, and we need to stay in compliance with the State of WI. Work will start in the fall of 2022 and you should receive a notice from our Assessors, Associated Appraisal Consultants. They will be scheduling a time to come and view your property and to adjust the assessed values if necessary. A final Notice of Assessment will be sent to you after they have visited the property. This process could take up most of the summer, so please be patient and work with our assessor to get a fair value of all property in the township. Some of our State aid payments are based on our Town's equalized value, so accurate numbers are very important. The assessor will be following COVID-19 protocols as necessary.