



Welcome to the 2024 State of the Village! Thank you for granting me the opportunity to speak with you tonight. It is a pleasure to be here once again sharing this past years accomplishments and the exciting things planned for the year ahead.



Before we begin, I would like to recognize the Johnsburg Area Business Association for hosting this 13<sup>th</sup> Annual State of the Village event and for their efforts in coordinating the arrangements. Special thanks is also extended to the Village's Parks, Public Works and Administration employees for their help in preparing for the event and to Amy Hodges and Denny Norton and their team at the Cullom Knoll Restaurant for preparing our dinner tonight. Amy has always been a great supporter of the Village contributing much through her Johnsburg business, Sunnyside Tavern.

I thank the Pistakee Yacht Club for the use of this historic facility and especially both Cheryl and Joe Twomey who have for years been much help with this event. Let's please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.



For those of you that regularly attend this event, you know that my presentations are developed around a specific theme that relates to topics and events significant in our community. In reflecting on this past year the one thing that truly stood out was the many challenges we overcame by remaining committed, applying inventive thinking and implementing strategic solutions.

Over the past couple of years increased construction costs have resulted in project delays, and in some cases, required projects to be redesigned, or phased to stay within budget. In addition, material supply chains have been slow, creating further delays and added costs. When faced with challenges such as these, it can be easy to dwell on the negative and lose sight of the overall goal. It's important that we view obstacles as opportunities and instead focus on what needs to be done. We do this by accepting the challenge, determining what we can control, and having contingency plans that enable us to adapt and succeed.

# Volunteer välən'tir

## Definition:

- A volunteer is someone who gives their time and labor to a community group, charity, nonprofit, or other organization for free, usually without any expectation of compensation.

When faced with challenges, the Village has a special weapon in its arsenal - we have a team of dedicated and talented individuals and organizations that help us overcome obstacles and help us achieve our goals. I'd like to take a moment and thank the many selfless men and women who contribute their time and talents serving on a Village committee or through a community organization.

I see several of our community volunteers and committee members in attendance tonight. Could you please stand. Thanks to you and countless others, Johnsburg has flourished. Thank you for your continued service to the Village.



In addition to the support we receive from committee members and community organizations, we engage stakeholders to voice their input when planning for the future and through those voices we obtain many different perspectives. All of that input acquired over decades of planning has helped us prepare for and overcome unforeseen challenges. Part of that planning includes establishing policies to insure that funding is available to support our long term capital needs. We've done that by establishing a Capital Plan which forecasts significant expenditures so that funds are set aside and available when they are needed in the future.



Our dedicated employees and contracted personnel are a crucial part of how we overcome obstacles. They are the front line defense we rely on to tackle challenges that come up on a daily basis, many of which require swift solutions. We are blessed to have so many creative, problem solving people on our team. Several of our employees and contracted personnel are here this evening. Could you please stand and be recognized.

These individuals are members of our A Team. They help make exceptional things happen and contribute greatly to our successes. I am grateful to all of our employees.



I also want to express my appreciation to my fellow elected officials serving on our Village Board. At times they have to make difficult decisions but armed with the input and expertise we receive from all of our stakeholders enables us to make the best decisions for the community. I would like to take a moment to introduce our Board of Trustees. If you could please stand as I call your name - Mike Fouke, Josh Hagen, Scott Letzter, Greg Klemstein and Jamie Morris. Trustee Beth Foreman was regrettably unable to join us tonight. As a Board we may not always agree, but focusing on what's best for our community helps to point us in the right direction.



Each year at this event, I take a moment to recognize people who have gone above and beyond in support of and in service to our community. This year I would like to recognize Harold May as our Johnsborg Hero. I feel this recognition is long overdue. Over the years, he has served our community in many different ways. Harry grew up in Johnsborg and attended St. Johns the Baptist Catholic Elementary School. He was very active in sports playing baseball, basketball and football while attending McHenry High School and earned all conference honors in baseball. Following high school, Harry attended Culver Stockton College in Canton Missouri where he starred in baseball all four years leading the team in batting average, total bases, stolen bases and extra base hits. He was an all conference selection twice during his college ball playing career and graduated with a BA in Education. Harry met his wife Marilynn while at college and returned to Johnsborg to live and raise their family. They have been married for 58 years and have two daughters, Cristina and Stephanie.

Upon returning to Johnsborg, Harry and Marilynn were both hired by Johnsborg School District where Harry taught science and gym and coached football, basketball and track. He also served as athletic director at Johnsborg Junior High for seven years. After teaching for five years,



Harry became principal of Bush, Ringwood and Johnsburg Middle Schools and later retired from the District with 33 years of service.

Harry's love for sports continued even after college, playing competitive softball for Hiller Hamm, during which the team won many state championships. He played with the Johnsburg Tiger baseball team from 1962-1980 and played league softball for Hettermann's Tavern. Harry coached girls softball with the Johnsburg Pigtail League and announced at high school basketball games, earning him the name the "Voice of the Skyhawks" in 2001.

Harry played an instrumental roll in the Johnsburg-Sunnyside Annexation and was actively involved in soliciting the signatures needed to annex the formerly unincorporated area of Johnsburg into the Village of Sunnyside. Following the annexation, he was elected to the Board in 1993 and continued to serve for 18 years until his retirement in December of 2011. During that time, Harry served as the chairman of both the Community Development and Public Works Committees and it was under his chairmanship that the Johnsburg Triangle was first envisioned.

Harry was a member of the Johnsburg Community Club for many years and also served as President for the Club. He was a member of the Johnsburg Rescue Squad and a lifelong member of St. Johns the Baptist Catholic Church. He was entered into the McHenry High School Athletic Hall of Fame and recognized as a McHenry High School Distinguished Graduate in 2000. Harry was an original Johnsburg Oldtimers ticket captain and organizer and honored by the Oldtimers for his outstanding service in 2023.

Harry and Marilynn are the proud grandparents of 8 grandchildren and are expecting two great grandchildren this year.

I am honored to recognize Harry as our Johnsburg Hero this year.

Harry if you could please join me at the podium. The photo on the screen is from Harry's retirement from the Board in 2011. As you can see from the photo, Harry and I haven't aged a bit.



I'd like to take some time now to reflect over the past year. Although we've had our share of challenges we still made progress on key initiatives and have much to be proud of.



This past year we bid farewell to some long standing employees. Officer Jennifer Jones retired from the Police Department this past fall after serving 25 years with the Village. She is staying on in a part-time capacity as a Community Service Office instructing the Safe Sitter, AED training and Safe at Home programs for the community. The programs are very popular and we are pleased that Jennifer has chosen to continue to serve the community.

Chief Keith VonAllmen also retired this past fall after serving 27 years with the Village. Keith served 11 years as a Police Officer and was promoted to Sergeant in 2007. In 2010 upon Chief Rydberg's retirement, Keith was appointed Acting Chief and then went on to be Chief of Police in 2011. Keith has gone on to work as an investigator with McHenry County and a polygraph examiner. We wish him all the best.



When choosing Keith's successor, we did not have to search long or far. We were very fortunate to have a highly qualified individual already on our team enabling us to promote from within. Jason Greenwald has been with the Village for more than 23 years, serving 18 years as a patrol officer and 5 years as a detective. Last August we promoted Jason to Deputy Chief of Police as a part of our succession planning, but we didn't let him get too comfortable in that roll. Just a few weeks later I had the pleasure of swearing Jason in as our Interim Chief of Police following Chief Vonallmen's retirement. At our Board meeting last week, we further ratified that action and appointed Jason as our Chief of Police. I am pleased to say that the transition has been smooth although Jason may characterize the experience as trial by fire. I look forward to working with Jason for years to come.



At this time last year, our daily travels were once again detoured due to the Johnsburg Road Bridge closure. Thanks to cooperative weather and a timely construction crew, the work was completed in record time and the bridge reopened before schedule. Thank you to the McHenry County Division of Transportation for addressing this much needed improvement



The Church Street Realignment Project was also just starting this time last year. Thanks to a \$750,000 grant, we were able to realign the intersection of Church Street and Johnsbury Road creating a safer means of travel for vehicles and pedestrians. The project, which will close out in a few weeks, also included the installation of 1540 feet of sanitary sewer main along Church Street and Johnsbury Road.



Along with the realignment of Church Street, the Sunnyside Beach Road Improvement Project also got underway last year. Landscape restoration and final punch list items are getting wrapped up, but residents are already experiencing the benefit of the drainage improvements which have been regularly tested thanks to the frequent rains and severe downpours we've experienced this Spring.

Sunnyside Beach Drive was a privately maintained road and now that it has been upgraded to meet Village road standards, the Village will take over future maintenance of the road. The project was funded by Special Service Area bonds that will be repaid by the residents over time on their tax bill.



# Upgrading our Assets



At last year's presentation I announced that the Riverside Drive project was expected to be underway last winter. Unfortunately the project was delayed when the initial bids resulted in higher than anticipated costs. The project was then rebid, the results of which were unfortunately no better, however the Village needed to find a way to move forward with the project to prevent the potential loss of grant funding. Our team evaluated the project looking for ways to manage costs and determined that a phased approach would help us meet our goals. The project was awarded in January and tree removal work got underway in April. Riverside Drive was recently closed to thru traffic to accommodate the replacement of the storm structure under the Riverside Drive Bridge. Resurfacing of the road will be done this year and sidewalks and a bike path will be installed during the second phase of the project. The project, which is estimated to cost nearly \$4 million dollars, is partially supported by a \$1.5 million grant and \$400,000 in Rebuild Illinois Funds.



Soil borings were performed on Johnsbury Road this year in preparation for resurfacing next year. The work will include increased pavement thickness to extend the life of this heavily traveled roadway. This project is also supported by a \$1.5 million grant and will include a sidewalk extension along the east side of the road from Church Street to Raymond's Bowl. Providing accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclist is important for the safety of our citizens and promotes active lifestyles for a healthy community. We are also incorporating sidewalks in the Ringwood Road resurfacing project which is slated for the 2027 construction season.

I am pleased to report that since our last presentation we secured an additional \$1.5 million grant to resurface Running Brook Farms Boulevard, which is slated for the 2029 construction season. Our dedicated staff works proactively to plan for major road resurfacing projects and secures grants whenever possible to help fund these costly road improvements.



The Village's Public Works team works diligently to stay on top of our infrastructure maintenance. Doing so helps to extend their life resulting in overall lower costs now and in the future. Our team also looks for opportunities to partner with other agencies when pursuing paving projects. Last year we partnered with McHenry Township Road District on the paving of Woodlawn Park Drive and Pioneer Road since each agency has jurisdiction over portions of those roads. This year, the Village is working with the McHenry County Division of Transportation to pave the eastern portion of Church Street and Grouse Trail in conjunction with the County's resurfacing of Spring Grove Road. Partnering on projects such as these enables us to experience competitive pricing, helping us to do more with less.

# River Sewer Extension



The long awaited River Sewer Extension Project is about to get underway. Last year I announced that we finalized the acquisition of easements needed to accommodate the new infrastructure. Since then, we completed the engineering and solicited bids. The project, which includes a regional lift station and the extension of 1400 feet of carrier pipe and force main, was estimated to cost approximately \$1.8 million, but inflationary impacts resulted in the lowest bid being 35% greater than anticipated. Our team reviewed the project looking for costs savings and/or phasing opportunities and came up with a plan to bring the project within 10% of the original estimate. Thanks to nearly \$1,400,000 in grants and the Village's commitment to fund a capital plan, we have the funds on hand to cover the cost. The project was awarded to Joel Kennedy Constructing Corporation in February. Materials are on order and construction will begin in the next few weeks.



Continued progress is being made on the Dutch Creek Aquatic Restoration Project. After meeting with Village representatives and visiting the site, the Chicago District of the US Army Corp of Engineers has prepared a Federal Interest Determination recommending approval of the project for a feasibility study. They are also recommending to enlarge the project scope to capture additional properties adjacent to Dutch Creek which are owned by other agencies who have expressed an interest in participating in the project. Our team is reviewing the Determination and working with the Corp to coordinate efforts with those agencies so that we can proceed with the feasibility study.



Last year I reported that some improvements were planned for the Hickory Way Park and Fishing Pond thanks to the generosity of the Johnsburg Lion's Club. The Club made an initial donation of \$25,000 which was slated for pond treatments and the construction of a shelter at the park. The pond has been receiving treatments, and the shelter was ordered last fall, but unfortunately supply chain challenges have delayed delivery. In the meantime we are working to extend electric service to the site and secure concrete for the shelter floor. We are looking forward to completing the improvements and officially dedicating the park as Lions Park in honor of the Johnsburg Lions Club. I would like to again thank the Johnsburg Lions Club for their generous contribution and for their patience.

Mark your calendar for this year's Annual Fishing Derby event which will take place this weekend. Additional information about the event is available on your tables, on the Village's website or by calling the Village Hall. Don't miss out on this family fun event.



The Parks and Facilities Department, with help from our public works team, pursued several improvements at the Village's Chapel Hill Golf Course last year. Dead tree removal continued throughout the year and overgrown brush and old brush piles were chipped and removed from the course. A gate was installed at the back of the course to provide better maintenance access and a new well pump was installed to aid in irrigation. Thanks to favorable weather conditions, GolfVisions reported their best season yet. This year another irrigation well will be brought on line to help further improve course conditions. Plans are still underway to construct a shelter at the course to accommodate golf outings and other events.

# Diversified Housing



You have likely noticed the construction activity taking place behind the Marathon gas station at Johnsburg Road and Route 31. That is the site of General Capital's new townhome development geared towards working families. The project which consists of 49 townhomes units is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

A new housing development was also approved this past year behind the Val-mar Center. The development, proposed by Redwood, incorporates an accessible design enabling its residents to age in place making it ideal for empty nesters. All of the units would be ranch homes with two bedrooms and a two car garage commanding higher than average rental rates. Unfortunately rising construction and financing costs resulted in Redwood's decision to put the project on hold but they're hopeful that market impacts will change, enabling them to proceed with the development.

The Village has also been approached by a builder to complete Phase II of the single family homes in Remington Grove subdivision. We expect to hear more about this opportunity in the coming months.





Last year I discussed plans for Pickle Ball courts and additional play equipment at Sunnyside Park which has been made possible thanks to a generous donor. We planned to move forward with those improvements in conjunction with the Redwood development so that park donations derived from the development could fund a road extension into the park and a parking lot needed to better accommodate park activities. Unfortunately the Redwood development has been put on hold at the moment, but plans for the park are still proceeding. We will be phasing the project and plan to start grading the site for the Pickle Ball Courts and play equipment this year.

We will also be moving forward with a half/court basketball court and swings in Remington Grove subdivision, utilizing Park Capital Improvement Fees collected from the subdivision to fund the project.

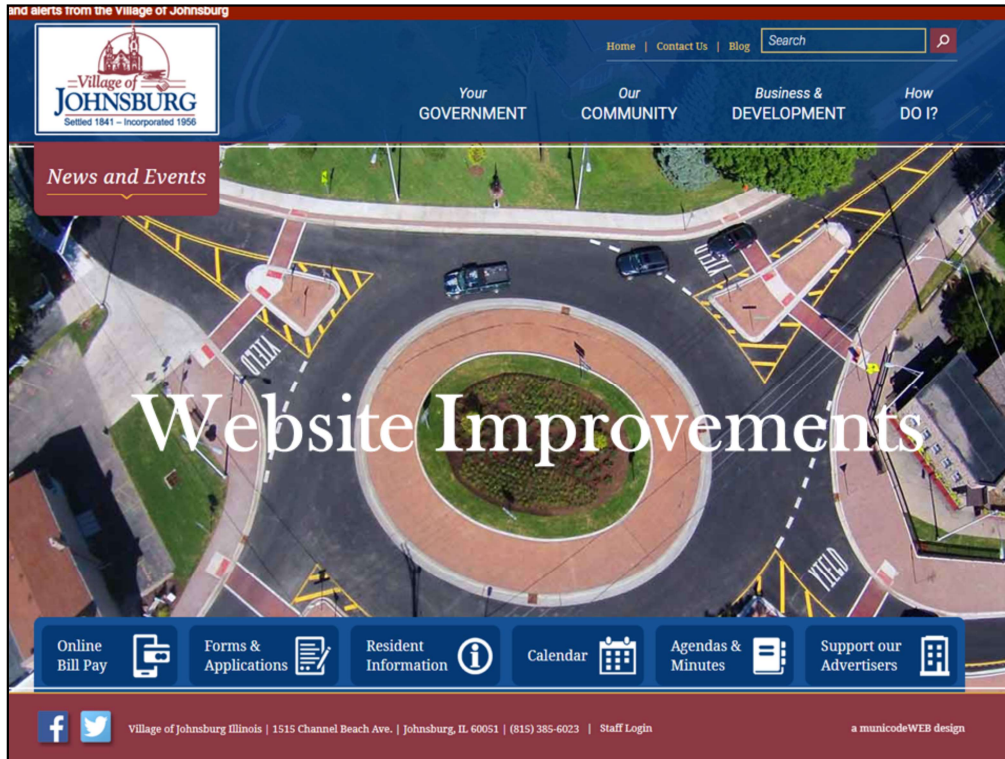
Unfortunately we have been experiencing a rash of vandalism at our concession stand facility in Hiller Park which has resulted in costly repairs. As a result, security upgrades are being pursued this year which will include additional security cameras and a new access management system.



Last year I reported that the Village was looking into the cost to construct a water tower in association with our Shiloh Ridge water system. The need for a fire rated system in our downtown area has been identified as an important priority for many years. The improvement will truly benefit existing businesses and will help draw new business interest in the downtown area.

The Redwood development I previously mentioned, presented us an opportunity to move forward with the project earlier than expected. Redwood was agreeable to paying their sewer and water impact fees upfront, enabling the Village to reduce the amount of funding needed for the project.

To move the project forward, we secured an easement for the water main from the proposed tower to Johnsborg Road, performed surveying and wetland delineation, completed concept design and took the actions needed to authorize bonds for the project. Because the Redwood development was put on hold the Board decided to delay the



Trustees Hagen and Morris recently worked with the Village’s staff to develop an RFP soliciting proposals to redesign the Village’s website. In response, we received 14 proposals and the team met with three of the vendors whose proposals best met the criteria established for the project. Last week, the Village Board awarded the project to Revize who will be working with us over the next few months designing the site and migrating data to the new site.

I want to take this opportunity to remind our business owners that the Village does have a Façade Improvement Program in place, which provides funding assistance to businesses in all four of the Village’s business districts. The program was developed to encourage improvements to properties in an effort to revitalize and enhance the character of our community. More information regarding the program is available on the Village’s website.



Each year recreational travel by golf carts and other non-highway vehicles continues to grow throughout our community. Last year I reported that when the program began in 2014, the Village had 18 registered non-highway vehicles. Today, we have nearly 550 and the number continues to grow. Thanks to generous donations received from the golf cart community and revenues derived from the sale of license plates, last year we constructed a non-highway vehicle path between the Johnsborg Community Club and Rescue Squad Park to insure that non-highway vehicles remain outside of the park and are separated from pedestrians. This year we are working to secure an additional path to enable east west travel between Claremont Hills, Johnsborg Farms and Dutch Creek Estates and the downtown area. In the coming year, Trustees Letzter and Klemstein will continue to work to secure additional easements on which we can extend our path network.

# Food Truck Event



I am pleased to announce that the Wednesday night Johnsborg Food Truck event returned for a second year. The event is again being spearheaded by Village residents Dave and Linda Winiarski with the help of Village staff and the Community Affairs Committee. The event takes place each Wednesday evening by the Johnsborg Community Club and Rescue Squad Park. If you haven't been to the event yet, you are missing a great opportunity to get together with friends and neighbors to enjoy good times, great food and live entertainment. I want to again thank Dave and Linda for making this event a reality.



Another event returning to Johnsburg for a second year is the Markets of Remington Farm Farmer's Market. On the first Saturday of each month, local vendors get together next to Prem Magnetics in downtown Johnsburg to share everything from fresh produce and seedlings to honey, jewelry and other locally sourced goods. Thank you Josh and Sarah Hagen for bringing this great opportunity to Johnsburg.

The next Farmer's Market will take place on Saturday, July 6th so mark your calendars and check out this fun event with the whole family.



We have a busy year ahead of us. The Village has already been buzzing with an abundance of construction activity. Both Spring Grove Road and Bay Road are being resurfaced by the McHenry County DOT. Riverside Drive is under construction and the sewer crossing under the river will be proceeding in the coming weeks. The Church Street Realignment and Sunnyside Beach Drive construction projects will soon be wrapped up and work will be underway on additional non-highway path improvements. The Parks and Facilities department employees will continue to spruce up our parks and improve the golf course while our public works crews are performing road patching, curb and sidewalk replacement, road shouldering, ditch work and street sign replacement.

Park improvements will soon be underway in several Village parks and new T-markers will be installed at the golf course.

Along with the many duties our administration team tackles, they will also be busy designing the new website, implementing additional resources to help our residents and business owners and pursuing more grants.



In closing, despite the challenges and delays we experienced this past year, progress continued to be made on the many projects and initiatives planned for the year. As I stated at the beginning of the presentation, its important that we view obstacles as opportunities. We will always be faced with challenges but by remaining committed, applying inventive thinking and implementing strategic solutions we can adapt and overcome. We have the key resources in place to overcome any obstacle that get's in the way of our goals. Overcoming challenges when they do occur can be just as rewarding as accomplishing the tasks.





We don't know for certain what lies ahead but diligent planning and a shared vision helps to insure that we will be prepared to take on the toughest challenges and make great things happen - that's the Johnsburg spirit.

You are here this evening because you are a part of this great community and are excited about its future. I thank you for your support and urge you to join us as we work to make sure Johnsburg continues to be the place we proudly call home.



I thank the Johnsburg Area Business Association for the opportunity to present to you this evening and all of our residents and business owners who have given me the honor of representing them as your Village President.

Thank you for sharing your time.