

Countryside CONNECTIONS

FALL 2020

www.countryside-il.org



Patriot Day Remembrance

The American Legion Post 1941 held a National September 11th Commemoration at the City of Countryside Municipal Complex. Dignitaries and first responders participated from the Villages of Indian Head Park, La Grange, and Lyons, the Pleasantview Fire Protection District and the City of Countryside. The program included: Ringing the Bell-Return to Quarters by the La Grange Fire Chief, Posting of Colors, Invocation and Memorial Prayer by Betty Dempsey-King (Unit 1941 Chaplain) Keynote Address by Countryside Deputy Chief, Scott Novak, Placement of the Memorial Wreath by La Grange President Mark Kuchler and Countryside Mayor Sean McDermott, a Rifle Salute by Post 1941 Rifle Squad, musical performances by bagpiper, Steve LaRue and American Legion First Responder/Veteran Citations. It was a beautiful tribute led by Al Krenz, Adjunct and past Commander of Post 1941.



Important Election Dates for November 3, 2020

VOTE BY MAIL: Applications are available at the Countryside Municipal Complex in the Clerk's Office or by applying online at www.cookcountyclerk.il.gov/VoteByMail. Paper applications must be submitted to the Cook County Clerk's Office by October 29, 2020. Mail ballots must be postmarked by November 3rd.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

Online: October 18

By mail: Postmarked by October 6

In person: November 3

EARLY VOTING: October 19th through November 2nd at the following locations:

- Brookfield Village Hall, 8820 Brookfield Avenue, (708) 485-7344
- Hodgkins Village Hall, 8990 Lyons Street, (708) 579-6700
- Lyons Village Hall, 4200 S. Lawndale, (708) 442-4500



FALL / 2020

\$2 Million+ Savings Potential

The Finance Committee met on August 26th to discuss a potential bond refunding. Refunding municipal bonds is similar to refinancing your mortgage. Savings are achieved by taking advantage of lower interest rates. The City has taxable bonds on the books which are eligible to be called (i.e. paid off early). Todd Krsyskowski from Mesirow Financial presented a financial analysis to the committee whereby the City could recoup almost \$2 million in present value interest costs by issuing a combination of tax exempt and taxable bonds. At the recommendation of the Finance Committee, City Council approved a bond parameter ordinance which gives the authority to issues bonds within certain parameters to take advantage of market conditions. Staff is presently working with the financial consultant and bond counsel to complete the issuance. Market conditions continue to improve indicating a potential **savings to taxpayers in excess of \$2 million.**

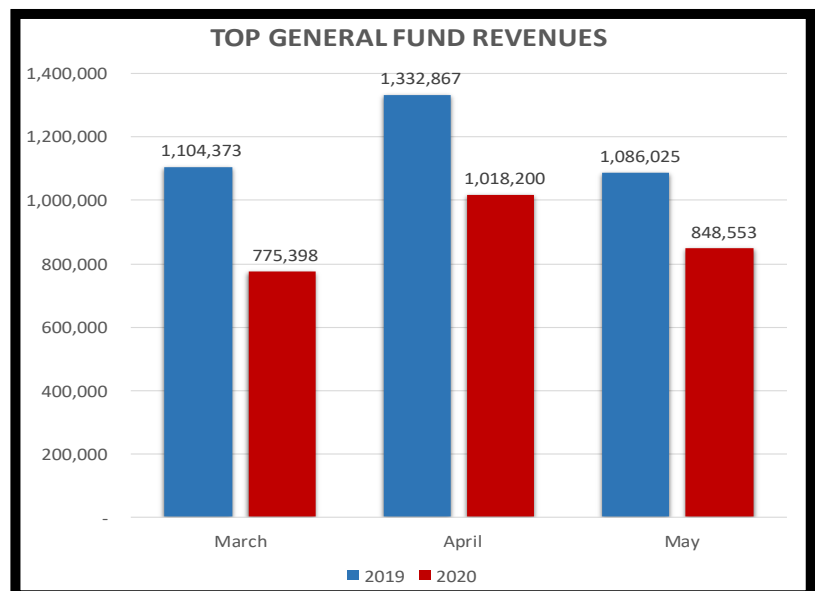
Navigating The Economic Climate Under COVID-19

City management was ready to present a final budget to the Finance Committee in March that reflected balanced operations for the next fiscal year (May 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021). However, the meeting was canceled due to the pandemic. At that time, management began analyzing the potential economic impact of the Emergency Declaration and Stay at Home Order on the City's finances. In particular, Finance Director Dave Schutter put together scenarios reflecting revenue loss projections for the City's primary revenue sources, as well as developing ideas with administration and elected officials to reduce services, programs, and other costs amid the falling revenue streams. Ultimately the City Council approved a conservative balanced budget in April under the uncertain conditions brought about by the COVID-19 business and operating restrictions. We are happy to report that no programs or services were reduced or eliminated.

The Finance Committee met in August to discuss the City's financial performance during the pandemic. March, April and May carried heavy operating restrictions for businesses and the true tax revenue impact to the City was not fully known until several months later due to State reporting (i.e. sales taxes are reported at a three month delay so April sales taxes were not known until July). The City ended the fiscal year April 30th with a General Fund surplus of over \$100,000 while maintaining significant reserves in the General/Capital Funds despite the pandemic.

Director Schutter used the sales tax data to revise estimates given the current conditions. He explained the various business operating restrictions per month and presented comparative financial charts for the months of March – May for 2020 vs. 2019. Note in the following charts that sales taxes and the top 8 individual revenue sources account for about 68% and 90% of general fund totals respectively. As seen in the charts the City lost about \$230,000 – \$330,000 from these top revenue sources monthly. Understanding these trends in conjunction with projected operating restrictions provide a useful measure of expected general fund revenue performance as we continue through this year.

So how did the actual results for the City compare with projections? As noted in last quarter's newsletter, the Finance Director made detailed projections for April performance of the top General Fund revenues based on April business operating restrictions and their impact on local industry sectors. For example, non-essential retailers were closed, restaurants were carryout only, and essential retailers such as gas stations, convenience, and grocery stores remained open with restrictions. Given the Stay at Home Order and other factors, hotels and gas stations were severely impacted while hardware/home improvement stores and grocery stores actually thrived.



Navigating the Economic Climate, continued

When modeling the revenue impact to the City, the Finance Director gave an average, middle of the road, and a worst case projection after accounting for each industry sector in the City and their operating restrictions. When actual data was finally received for April (in July) the results were very similar to the midpoint between the average and worst case scenarios presented to the City Council at the budget hearing. See the summary chart below.

REVENUE	% OF FY21 BUDGET	ACTUAL APRIL 2020 VARIANCE	APRIL MEDIAN PROJECTION	APRIL WORST CASE PROJECTION	MIDPOINT MEDIAN VS. WORST
Sales Tax	68.17%	(242,912)	(191,446)	(295,147)	(243,297)
Income Tax	4.38%	(156)	(5,125)	(10,250)	(7,688)
Restaurant Tax	4.31%	(16,550)	(12,604)	(25,209)	(18,907)
Investment Income	3.47%	299	(10,152)	(20,304)	(15,228)
Vehicle Fuel Tax	3.10%	(16,539)	(9,062)	(18,125)	(13,594)
Electric Use Tax	2.85%	(2,263)	(3,333)	(8,333)	(5,833)
State Gaming Tax	2.17%	(26,546)	-	(25,417)	(12,709)
Transfer In (Hotel)	1.42%	(10,000)	(8,334)	(13,334)	(10,834)
TOTALS	89.87%	(314,667)	(240,056)	(416,119)	(328,088)

Given nearly identical operating conditions for April and May, the actual financial results for those two months were very comparable. **So how about June?** It should first be noted that June represented a very different operating environment. At the beginning of June, restaurants were allowed to have outdoor dining with restrictions, non-essential retailers could now open their doors at a 50% capacity limit, and indoor dining was allowed during the last week of June when the State moved into the Phase 4 Recovery. **These operating adjustments were enough to yield a positive sales tax variance for June of 2020 vs. June of 2019 in the amount of \$22,000 or 2.66%.** This compares very favorably to the three prior months (March – May) where the City lost between \$165,000-\$245,000 in monthly sales tax revenue.

Attention Businesses!

Since the pandemic began, the City shifted its focus from code enforcement to assisting businesses with waivers of late penalties and fees, adopting new ordinances for outdoor dining and running the Countryside Cares Restaurant Promotion. During the last few months, many illegal signs have appeared. Please be aware **NO signs are permitted in the public right-of-way.** They must be on the business's property. In addition, Ordinance 13-57-O PROHIBITS:

Airdancers – large inflatable devices comprising a long tube attached to a fan which causes the tube to move in a dancing or flailing motion. Airdancers are generally called an inflatable tube or a moving figure, such as "windyman", "skydancer", "tube man", "wacky waving inflatable arm flailing tube man", and "flyguy". Variants of an Airdancer may resemble humans with tube arms. Airdancers are generally about 20 feet in total height and are often used in advertising and at personal events.



Feather Flags – A sign with or without characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentations applied to cloth, paper, flexible plastic, or fabric of any kind with only such material for backing. Feather flags are generally a single sign attached to a support post and typically having a dimensional ratio of 4 feet high to 1 foot wide. This definition also applies to Tear Drop Flags, Windfeather Flags, Bow Flags, Falcon Flags, Dance Flags, and other similar type signs.

Air dancers and Feather Flags are prohibited in the City of Countryside as they are a distraction to drivers and are not aesthetically pleasing. We ask all businesses to remove illegal signs as the Code Enforcement of signs will ramp back up in October.

Economic Development Updates

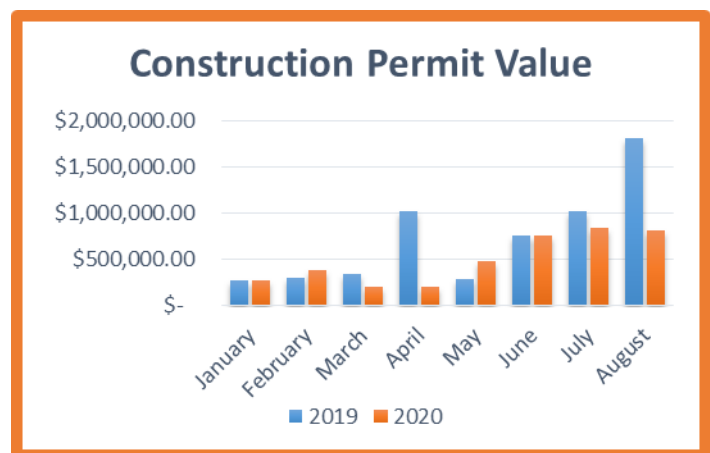
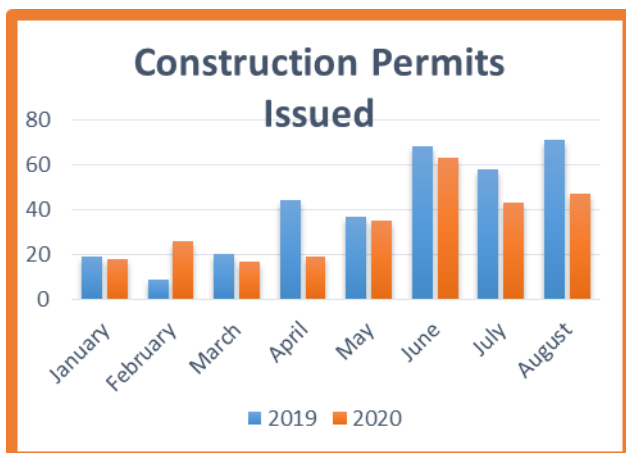
The Economic Development Committee (EDC) recommended entering into a Redevelopment Agreement with LaGrange Road Partners, LLC. The City Council approved this agreement at their meeting on September 23, 2020. The agreement includes the purchase of 20 Plainfield Road (**former Boston Market Property**). A portion of this building will be demolished to accommodate their site plan for a Buona Beef restaurant, double drive-thru lanes and outdoor dining area. They will also be purchasing the adjacent property located at 5396-5400 S. LaGrange Road. They plan to demolish this building to create additional parking. The City has agreed to participate in the purchase and development of the additional parking as long as it remains a public parking lot for use by all the businesses. IDOT has plans to expand the intersection of 55th Street and LaGrange Road. This expansion will result in the loss of parking for the businesses on LaGrange from 55th Street to Plainfield Road. The total estimated development costs for the entire project is \$3.7 million. The City will reimburse LaGrange Road Partners, LLC \$600,000 after the purchase, development and inspection of the public parking lot.



On September 23, 2020, the EDC heard presentations from two developers regarding the development of the **old City Hall property** located at 5500-5550 East Avenue. One proposal included a fueling station at 55th and East Avenue and the renovation of the old City Hall/Police Station. The second project also included a fueling station with a convenience store and a restaurant equipped with a double drive-thru. This developer also wants to locate a Moretti's restaurant and banquet facility on an adjacent property with relocation of the current tenant. Staff is currently running estimates of taxes to be generated from each project. This information will be reported back to the EDC for their review.

Construction permits

The pandemic is having an effect on construction. The Community Development Department is seeing a significant drop in construction permit applications since April. As of August 31st, 58 fewer permits have been processed with a 32% decrease in value or \$1.9 million. The good news is the decrease in value for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2021 will be eliminated when Buona Beef applies for construction permits in the spring. In addition, a few developers have approached the City about potential developments. We are very optimistic that construction will pick up once again in 2021.



Police Department

Overnight Parking and Vacation Watch Requests Online



The Countryside Police Department now offers residents of Countryside the convenience of submitting their overnight parking and vacation watch requests online at <https://www.frontlinepss.com/countryside>. While this web-based software helps streamline the process, residents may still request overnight parking and vacation watches by calling the police department non-emergency number at (708) 352-2171.

Countryside Police Department Welcomes 2 New Officers

Gage Brunke was sworn in by Mayor Sean McDermott at the City Council meeting on July 8, 2020. Officer Brunke spent his first 2 weeks with the department in orientation. Currently he is completing the 14- week police academy at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville where he is scheduled to graduate on November 2, 2020. Juan Cahue was sworn in by Mayor Sean McDermott at the City Council meeting on September 9, 2020. Officer Cahue joins our department as a lateral transfer with prior police experience. He will spend his first 4 weeks completing field training with Countryside police Officers while learning the streets of Countryside.



Departmental Awards

Several Countryside Police Department awards were presented at the City Council meeting on Wednesday, September 9, 2020. The following officers were recognized: Officer Rojas (Honorable Mention Award); Officer Batzel, Officer Kalker, Officer Lanzi, and Sergeant Stern (Life Saving Awards); Officer Gleespen and Officer Venem (Meritorious Awards). Public Recognition awards were also presented to citizens Bridget and Shannon Flynn for their assistance during a recent medical emergency. Pictured in the photos below from left to right are Mayor Sean McDermott, Officer Venem, Chief Ford, Bridget Flynn, Shannon Flynn, Officer Rojas and Sergeant Stern.



We are sure all the ghosts, goblins, princesses, and superheroes in Countryside are anxiously awaiting Halloween. At this time, the City is reviewing guidance as it is received from public health officials. Once guidelines regarding Trick-or-Treating in Countryside are finalized, the information will be posted on the homepage of the City's website at www.countryside-il.org, or you can call the Clerk's office at (708) 354-7270 the week of Halloween for more details.

Public Works Reminds You . . .

Fall Leaf Pick-Up (October 12 - December 4)

Crews will be collecting leaves on a continuous cycle throughout the entire program period. The leaf collection program provides residents with an alternative way to dispose of leaves. Instead of bagging or mulching, residents may rake leaves onto the parkway.

In order for this program to be successful, we ask all residents to observe these guidelines:

- Leaves **SHOULD** be raked onto the parkway near the street..
- Leaves should **NOT** be raked into the street.
- Do **NOT** deposit branches, sticks, garbage, or other debris into the leaf pile. This can damage the equipment and cause a dangerous situation for our employees.

Please allow 7 to 10 working days between pick-ups as it typically takes a week or more to do a full cycle of the City.

Brush Pick-Up

Branch and brush pick-up will be provided through **October 30th**. Crews will be covering the City on a weekly basis. If you have questions, please call the Public Works Department at (708) 354-3390.

Code Corner

The City would like to notify all residents and businesses of these newly passed ordinances which are effective immediately.

20-24-O: Title 6 - Chapter 3 - Section 1

- **Item 1.39 Ground Feeding** - Ground feeding of food scraps to wild animals and birds is strictly prohibited. Pre-fabricated bird feeders are allowed.

20-23-O: Title 8 - Chapter 1

- **Section 302.3.1** - Illumination requirements state that all commercial and residential multi-family parking lots shall be illuminated.
- **Section 302.4.1** - Continuous maintenance requires periodic cutting, trimming and edging of all plants, shrubs, trees, bushes etc.
- **Appendix A101.2** - Any broken doors or windows on commercial or residential property shall be replaced or repaired within 30 days.



St. Patrick's Day Parade Beneficiary Checks



Pictured L to R: Mayor Sean McDermott, Alderman John Finn, Amy Carroll, District 105 Foundation President, Chuck Herbst, and Patty Herbst, Executive Director of the Center for Independence through Conductive Education.

At the July 8, 2020 City Council meeting, Mayor Sean McDermott and Parade Chairman John Finn presented

a beneficiary check to the District 105 Foundation and the Center for Independence through Conductive Education. Every year, with the funds raised from the parade, donation checks are given to local charities and presented at a City Council meeting following the parade.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were not able to present the checks in person until the July meeting.

Welcome to Countryside

Brittany Lynn Studios
6502 Joliet Road, Unit G
Photography studio



Chicago Tent
5340 East Avenue
Tent, table, chair, and party rentals

Creed Transport
6502 Joliet Road, Unit F
Transport service

Gelato D'Oro Wholesale Manufacturing
9620 Joliet Road
Gelato, sorbet, and frozen desserts

Hallett McCann Law Group
5504 S. Brainard Avenue, Apt. B
Immigration law practice



Iron Mountain Information Management
5320 Dansher Road
Storage facility

The Home 2 Home Project
5316 East Avenue
Furniture and household items restoration

The Jubilee Salon
23 Countryside Plaza, Suite 115
Hair, nails, make-up and beauty services



Pay Your Bills Online

Go to our website today to access our online billing and payment service that allows customers greater flexibility to view and pay their water bills and building permits online.

Additionally, the easy-to-use payment portal provides customers with quick access to their account to view bills, check their balance, and email reminders.

Water Bill

- 1 Go to www.countryside-il.org and click on the Pay Online button to access the payment portal.
- 2 Click on Register Now to create an account or click on Pay Now to make a one-time payment.
- 3 Enter your information and select the invoice that you would like to pay. Add it to your cart or click the option to register.
- 4 Follow the steps to complete your payment. You may also choose to go paperless and sign up for pay by text during this time. **OR, to pay by phone 24/7, call (855) 329-4908.**

Building Permit

- 1 Go to www.countryside-il.org and click on "Departments" and select "The Community Development Department."
- 2 Click on "Online Building Permits." Review the listed instructions. Click on "Online Permit Link" to begin the permitting process.
- 3 Type the numbers of the Countryside address, and select your address from the listed results.
- 4 Check the owner information and under the permit tab click on "Apply for a Permit".
- 5 Upon permit approval, you will be notified via email to click on a link to pay your permit.

Programs/Special Events Cancellations



We don't mean to be a Grinch, but we must inform you that the following programs and special events have been canceled due to the pandemic. The City plans to reinstate these events bigger and better but only when it is safe to do so. We appreciate your understanding.

Aging Care Connection's Leaf Raking sponsored by Countryside Aging Well

Countryside's Children's Christmas Party

Flagg Creek Golf Course's Breakfast with Santa

Countryside Winterfest at Flagg Creek Golf Course

Driveway Apron Snow Removal Program

Citizens 62 and older and disabled residents may sign up each year to have their driveway aprons plowed if more than 2-inches of snow falls. This removal will be done **ONLY** after all City streets are cleared. Please note that the City is **NOT** responsible for any driveway damage. To receive this service, please fill out the form below and return to the City Clerk's office. Allow 48 hours for processing.

City of Countryside Senior/Disability Snow Removal Program Application

Name: _____

Address: _____, Countryside, IL 60525

Home Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Email: _____

Basis of Application (Initial where applicable):

_____ I am 62 years or older.

_____ I have enclosed: (1) A medical certification from my doctor confirming my disability and inability to shovel/remove snow; or (2) A copy of Secretary of State License Disability Placard or registration of disability through Social Security.

***Please note that once we receive your form, it will take up to 48 hours to be registered.**

By submitting this documentation, I hereby voluntarily release protected health information to the City of Countryside that is otherwise protected by law, including but not limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

The resident(s) hereby releases and holds the City, its officers, officials, and employees harmless from any damage to property or other liability which arises directly or indirectly from the City's snow removal program. The resident(s) hereby releases and holds the City, its officers, officials, and employees harmless for any injuries or liabilities sustained by the resident(s) or others caused, directly or indirectly by the removal or non-removal of any snow or ice from the resident(s) property.

I state that, to the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is true, correct, and complete.

Applicant's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Brainard Avenue Multi-Use Path Update

The multi-use path was constructed this summer. It was nice to see residents using it even before the striping was applied and the pet waste eliminator stations were stocked with bags. Now that we are in fall season, the landscaper is on site. Bushes are being installed now. Trees and sod should be installed by the end of October. In addition, count down counters will be activated at Plainfield and Brainard for safety. This path is a big step for active transportation in Countryside.



Upcoming Holidays

Please note that City Hall will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

Veteran's Day - Wednesday, November 11, 2020
Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, November 26, 2020
Friday after Thanksgiving - November 27, 2020
Christmas Eve - Thursday, December 24, 2020
Christmas Day - Friday, December 25, 2020
New Year's Day - Friday, January 1, 2021

Upcoming Meetings

October

6	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
14	City Council	7:30 p.m.
21	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
28	City Council	7:30 p.m.

November

4	City Council	7:30 p.m.
10	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
18	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.

December

1	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
8	Fire & Police Commission	5:00 p.m.
9	City Council	7:30 p.m.
16	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.

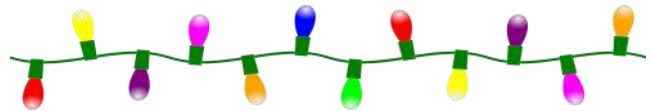
Angel Tree Program

Are you looking for an opportunity to make a difference in your community? Do you know of a Countryside resident or family that could use a little help this holiday season? After several years of success, the City of Countryside's Angel Tree Program is back again!

Beginning November 9th, our beautiful Angel Tree will be on display in the City Clerk's office. Generous sponsors are invited to select an individual or family from the tree. All gift recipients are anonymous.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions we are requesting that sponsors do not purchase gifts, only gift cards from local Countryside businesses. The donated gift cards should be returned to the Clerk's Office by December 11th. Gift cards will be distributed to families December 14 - 18.

The Angel Tree Program is a great opportunity for residents, families, community groups, and coworkers to spread holiday cheer to others who may not otherwise receive a gift this year. Check out our website at www.countryside-il.org/special-events or contact the Clerk's Office at (708) 354-7270 for additional information.



Countryside Chamber of Commerce News

All of our businesses are OPEN! Some businesses may have new hours. Please call or check websites for the latest information.

The Chamber has decided to cancel the 2020 Fall Pub Crawl. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in May 2021!

The Countryside Chamber of Commerce gift certificate program has been **expanded** to include even **more** local businesses. Countryside Chamber of Commerce Gift Certificates make the perfect gift for everyone and are an easy way to support local businesses. Available for purchase (\$10 or \$25) at the **City of Countryside Municipal Complex**.



Saturday, November 28, 2020, is Small Business Saturday which provides Countryside residents a great opportunity to join in and support the small businesses in our neighborhood and across our City by shopping small.



City of Countryside
803 Joliet Road
Countryside, IL 60525

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
So Suburban, IL
Permit No. 928

OFFICIALS

Mayor

Sean McDermott

Clerk

Elizabeth Kmet

Treasurer

Caryn Stancik

Aldermen

Mark Benson

John Finn

James Jasinski

Thomas Mikolyzk

Scott Musillami

John Von Drasek



Websites to Know

City of Countryside

www.countryside-il.org

Cook County Clerk

www.cookcountyclerk.com

Countryside Chamber of Commerce

www.countrysidechamber.org

Flagg Creek Golf Course

www.flaggcreekgolfcourse.org

Pleasantview Fire Protection

www.plvw.org

West Suburban Chamber

www.westsuburbanchamber.org

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS



City Hall:

Main: (708) 354-7270

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Police Department:

Main: (708) 352-2171 (non-emergency)

Fax: (708) 352-1032

Emergency: 911

Clerk's Office:

Main: (708) 354-7270

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Public Works:

Main: (708) 354-3390

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Water Billing:

Main: (708) 485-2465

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Community Development:

Main: (708) 354-1860

Fax: (708) 354-9445

Disclaimer: If you attend a local festival or City function and the event is photographed, your image may be used for news and promotional purposes.