

Countryside CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2021

www.countryside-il.org



Dear Countryside Resident:

Governor J.B. Pritzker increased restrictions on indoor dining and bar service, while allowing carryout and outdoor dining effective November 20, 2020. As the number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in our region continued to increase, these increased mitigations continued through December into the New Year.

As you would imagine, this is causing a severe financial hardship on our small business owners, employees and their families. During this difficult time in our community, ***I urge our residents to support Countryside establishments*** by ordering carryout meals whenever possible. Countryside residents have a long history of taking care of one another during hard times, and now is the perfect time to step up again.

The quickest way to reopen our businesses is for everyone to do their part by following public health guidance. Please continue to wear a mask, wash your hands frequently, and social distance as much as possible. If we all do our part, we can reduce COVID-19 infections and support our restaurants and bars who have been adversely affected by the pandemic.

Countryside is stronger when we all work together.

Sincerely,

Sean R. McDermott

Mayor



No Property Tax Levy for the 7th Consecutive Year!

City staff presented a proposed fiscal year 2022 budget to the Finance Committee in November of 2020 which concluded that all operating and capital costs could be funded without the use of a property tax on residents and commercial property owners in the City. "Due to our responsible approach to managing City finances, I am pleased to report that this marks the 7th consecutive year that the City will meet its budgetary obligations without the use of property taxes" said Mayor Sean McDermott. On December 9, 2020, the City Council voted to abate all debt service property tax levies automatically filed with the Cook County Clerk. The unanimous vote eliminated any property tax for fiscal year 2022. The Finance Committee will meet again in January to further discuss the fiscal year 2022 operating and capital budgets for all City funds. City staff expects to present a balanced budget to the City Council for consideration before the end of the current fiscal year (April 30, 2021) as related to the fiscal year 2022 budget.

Code Corner

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

20-41-O: Title 3 - Chapter 1 - Section 13

Contractor registration licenses will be increased from \$50.00 to \$100.00. Any licenses applied for after July 1 will be prorated at 50%.

20-40-O: Title 8 - Chapter 1 - Section 2

- H-4. The fine for not having a permit card placard displayed will be increased from \$25.00 to \$50.00 with one verbal warning.
- I-1.-f. A \$50.00 clerical administration fee will be included on residential permits.
- I-3.-g. The clerical administration fee on commercial permits will be increased from \$50.00 to \$100.00.

Economic Development

Home Sales Booming

The City's residential real estate market was recently highlighted in Crain's Chicago Business. The article by Dennis Rodkin reported a 7% increase in home sales across Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake and Will counties from January through October, 2020. However, they also highlighted 10 communities which were way above average, including Countryside at a 30% increase compared to the same period in 2019. They attribute the increase in home sales to low interest rates, the need for more space for working and schooling from home. A local real estate agent was quoted in the article stating, "Countryside is still an affordable place to live...That's why (buyers) have been coming out of the woodwork."

Top Ten Communities	Increase in Home Sales
Riverside	53%
Lake Forest	51%
Barringtons (South, Hills, etc.)	47%
Wayne	45%
Highland Park	35%
Kenilworth	32%
Batavia	31%
Countryside	30%
Clarendon Hills	28%
Willow Springs	28%

Providing top-notch services, keeping our business community vibrant, increasing recreational opportunities and maintaining low property taxes all contribute to a desirable real estate market. You can help by supporting our local businesses.

Jameson's Original Charhouse - The Holiday Inn Countryside completed a full renovation about one year ago. Included in the renovation plans was a new restaurant. Despite the pandemic they pushed forward to open a Jameson's Original Charhouse restaurant. Countryside will be their eighth restaurant in Illinois. Jameson's has been serving good quality food in a warm and inviting atmosphere since 1990. Their menu includes black angus aged beef, fresh fish, and a kids menu. Jameson's Charhouse plans to open for take-out in mid-January. They will open for indoor dining when restrictions are lifted.



Central Tri-State Expansion Project Update

This project is part of the Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program. More than 220,000 vehicles use this portion of the Tri-State Tollway daily. The reconstruction will increase capacity, reduce congestion, provide SmartRoad technology, address local noise concerns, integrate Flex Lanes and widen the Mile Long Bridge.

The Mile Long Bridge infrastructure is a major part of the Central Tri-State Tollway corridor. This bridge provides passage over two major railroads, three water resources, local roads and distribution operations for UPS and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway. The new north bound Mile Long Bridge was open to traffic in November, 2020 with four lanes available and the inside shoulder closed for additional work. Between 75th Street and I-55 and between Archer Avenue and the Des Plaines River, traffic in both directions remains shifted through the end of the year as work continues on the project. Hats off to all the men and women working on this project.

The next phase will include the new southbound bridge construction which will begin in 2021. The Central Tri-State Expansion Project is scheduled to continue through 2025.



Police Department Updates



Smart911™ Create Your Safety Profile Today!



In conjunction with the Lyons Township Area Communications Center (LTACC), the Countryside Police Department uses Smart911 to enhance our ability to respond to 9-1-1 calls. Smart911 is available to all of our residents as well as anyone that works in or visits the City of Countryside. Smart911 is a free service that allows individuals and families to sign up online to provide key information to 9-1-1 call takers during an emergency. The additional information provided in a Smart911 Safety Profile enables us to know exactly where we are going and who we are looking for when responding to a 9-1-1 call. Whether we are responding to a house fire or a vehicle accident, the details provided by Smart911 can help us respond faster and more effectively. Smart911 allows individuals to create a Safety Profile for their household at www.smart911.com or on the Smart911 App that includes any information they want 9-1-1 and response teams to have in the event of an emergency. When a citizen makes an emergency call, their Safety Profile is automatically displayed to the 9-1-1 call taker, allowing them to send the right response teams to the right location with the right information. The Smart911 App provides greater access to the lifesaving benefits of Smart911 and targeted location-based alerts to all individuals. The Smart911 App is available on the Apple Store or Google Play. With Smart911, individuals can link both home and work addresses to mobile phones, which can be passed on to responders in the field for more a detailed, rapid response. Additional information including pets in the home, vehicle details in the event of an accident, and even emergency contacts can all be included in a Safety Profile. All information is optional, and the citizen has the ability to choose what details they would like to include. Smart911 is currently available in 40 states and more than 1,500 municipalities across the country. This includes numerous public safety agencies in the Chicagoland area. Individuals are encouraged to create their Safety Profile with Smart911 today to have their information immediately available to 9-1-1 and to receive emergency notifications. Smart911 is private and secure, is only used for emergency responses, and only made available to the 9-1-1 system in the event of an emergency call. Register today online at <https://smart911.com>.

Countryside's Newest Patrol Officer!

Maciej Kuklinski was sworn in by Mayor McDermott at the City Council meeting on November 4, 2020. Officer Kuklinski joins our department as a lateral transfer with prior police experience. He is currently completing training with our Field Training Officers while learning the streets of Countryside.

Welcome TO COUNTRYSIDE!



Countryside Police Department Achieves Use of Force Certification

Pursuant to the *Presidential Executive Order on Safe Policing for Safe Communities (EO 13929)* issued on June 16, 2020, the U.S. Department of Justice set Standards of Certification that include two safe policing principles regarding the use of force policies of law enforcement agencies. In order for a law enforcement agency to be eligible for DOJ discretionary grant funding, the agency must achieve certification of adherence to these two principles. The first principle, **Adherence to Applicable Laws**, requires that an agency "maintains use of force policies that adhere to all federal, state, and local laws". The second principle, **Prohibition of Choke Holds**, requires that an agency "maintains use of force policies that prohibit the use of choke holds, except in situations where the use of deadly force is allowed by law". The Countryside Police Department applied for the Use of Force certification by submitting required documentation to the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (ILACP), which is a credentialing body for the certification. Following ILACP's review of Countryside Police Department's Use of Force Policy, it was determined that the Countryside Police Department meets the federal requirements for certification and has received a Use of Force Certification that will remain active for three years.

Water Department



Water Main Break Notification Procedures

If a break occurs during normal waking hours, City staff will generally attempt to notify the affected homes and businesses in person. If the break affects a large number of properties, a "Reverse 911" call will be initiated. If the break occurs after 10 p.m., the Water Department will make repairs and generally request a "Reverse 911" call in the morning (5 a.m.) if repairs are not complete.

The Reverse 911 system is an important tool for notifying residents of problems or conditions. ***It is important to remember that Reverse 911 calls go only to listed phone numbers.*** If you have an unlisted phone number and want to be added to the call list, contact the police non-emergency number at (708) 352-2171.

Help Keep Fire Hydrants Clear of Snow

The City asks that you help to keep fire hydrants accessible for firefighting operations by keeping space clear around sides of the hydrant as you do your shoveling or snow blowing. With 446 fire hydrants in Countryside, it is not possible for the City's employees to clear them all after a major snow storm when the priority is snowplowing the roads.

If you notice a damaged or leaking fire hydrant, please call the Public Works Department at (708) 354-3390.



Sump Pump Discharge

Winter is here and with that comes ice. City code prohibits sump pumps and downspouts from discharging into the street since the water freezes and creates hazardous situations. The ice can also create a dam that prevents melting snow from reaching the storm sewers. Please take a moment to ensure that your sump pump and downspouts are in compliance. City Code section 7-7-5 states that sump pumps and downspouts shall discharge the water at least 25 feet from the front or rear property line and at least 15 feet from the side property line.

If you are unsure about your property, please feel free to contact the Community Development Department at (708) 354-1860 and we will assist you.

Tips on Protecting our Waterways

It is estimated each person in the U.S. uses about 80-100 gallons of water per day. We sometimes take for granted this valuable resource. The good news is we can protect our water resource and prevent contaminants from impacting the waterways by modifying our lifestyle by taking these three steps:

THINK - about how you will use or discard a product before you purchase it.

CONSIDER - how the things you use every day affect the waterways and the environment.

CHOOSE - to use environmentally friendly products and teach your children to do the same.

Don't forget to disconnect any hoses that may have been connected to outside spigots to prevent frozen pipes.

Owners of vacant properties are reminded to have enough heat in their buildings to keep pipes from freezing.

Sign Up Today

Countryside residents can receive City News updates via email. To join the list, click on "Sign Up for E-News" on the home page of the City's website, www.countryside-il.org, and follow the easy onscreen directions.

Holiday Decorations Reminder

Please be cognizant of how long your holiday decorations stay up.

We ask that all holiday decorations be removed no later than January 31, 2021.

Coming Soon ...

The City has been working hard to provide services to residents and businesses online. The first service offered was the ability to view and pay water bills on-line, either with a credit card or through a direct debit to a bank account. Public response has been favorable and today about 45% of water accounts are paid electronically. The next service to be made available was the online permit application process. Applicants are notified of application status by email and can pay permit fees online after approval is granted. Again, public response has been favorable. Today about 40% of permit applications are submitted online. For more information, see Pay Your Bills Online,

The City's goal is to make all of the various application and request forms available online. Coming in 2021 residents, business owners and interested parties will be able to file these forms online:

➔**Real Estate Property Transfer** – All sales and transfers of real property in the City must have a transfer stamp. Transferors can complete this form online to apply for a stamp. The calculation of the transfer fee, if any, is part of the approval process. (Residents planning to sell their homes can learn about the process, including the application for a transfer stamp, in the Pre-Sale Handout and Permit Guide under Forms & Permits – Community Development on the City's home page.)

➔**2021 Business License Registration/Application** – Owners and agents of new businesses can complete and submit this form online to apply for a business license. Current businesses can also submit this form annually to renew a business license.

➔**Freedom of Information Memorandum Regarding Request for Records** – The Illinois Freedom of Information Act provides a mechanism for interested parties to request information about the City and its operations. This process begins with completion online of a Freedom of Information Memorandum.

In each case, after submission the completed form is directed via an electronic workflow to the appropriate City department for action. Submitters may receive status notifications by email as their application is acted upon by the City.

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

- ➊ Go to www.countryside-il.org and click on the Pay Online button to access the payment portal.
- ➋ Click on Register Now to create an account or click on Pay Now to make a one-time payment.
- ➌ Enter your information and select the invoice that you would like to pay. Add it to your cart or click the option to register.
- ➍ 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

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

Angel Tree Program Update

With the COVID pandemic this past year, the 2020 Angel Tree Program was handled a little differently. Instead of "Angels" buying gifts for our residents, we had them purchase gift cards for local Countryside businesses of the resident's choice. Thank you to all of our generous angels who participated in our annual Angel Tree Program. This holiday program is designed to assist our residents who are experiencing a hardship during the holiday season. The generosity and goodwill of the community is what makes this program a success! This year, we were able to assist 34 individuals from 10 families. The Clerk's Office staff members coordinate this program each year, and they work diligently to identify families and individuals who qualify for the program. We hope that all of our participants had a very happy holiday!

Want To Get Involved?

Have you ever thought about serving on a board or commission? Now is the time. Residents are appointed to the Board of Fire and Police, Flagg Creek Golf Course Advisory Board, Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals and the Police Pension Board with a recommendation by the Mayor with concurrence by the City Council.

Any interested resident 18 years or older may complete the Committee/Board Member Interest Form on the City's website at www.countryside-il.org/forms-permits/ or you may obtain a copy from the Clerk's Office. Applications are kept on file for a minimum of 2 years.

Boards

Board of Fire & Police

Board members independently fulfill all duties and responsibilities associated with the hiring, firing, promotion and discipline of Countryside's police officers.

Flagg Creek Advisory Board

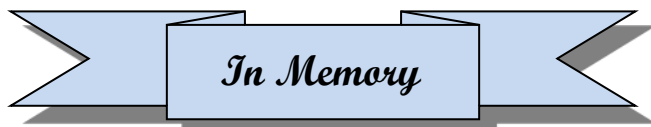
Members advise on the operation and maintenance of the golf course.

Plan Commission/Zoning Board

Commissioners are responsible for land use planning and zoning including review of variance and special use requests.

Police Pension Board

Board members fulfill all duties and responsibilities associated with the Pension Fund including investment oversight and approval of applications for participation, retirement benefits, and disability.



Jerry J. Welch (1941 - 2020)

Jerry Welch, who loyally served the City of Countryside, passed away on October 22, 2020. Jerry served on many boards during his time with the City. He began his service on the Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals in August of 1978. He was appointed to the Board of Fire and Police Commission in April of 2002, becoming the Chairman in April of 2003. He was appointed to the Flagg Creek Advisory Board in January of 2017. Jerry freely gave his time to other community organizations including the St. Cletus Holy Name Society and the Flagg Creek Historical Society. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.



ComEd is accepting applications for their Small Business Customer Assistance Program as of December 16, 2020. The Small Business Assistance Program provides eligible small business customers, with a one-time grant up to \$2,000 towards a past due balance.

To apply, please call (877) 426-6331.

ComEd
An Exelon Company

Brainard Avenue Multi-Use Path Ribbon Cutting

The Brainard Avenue Shared-Use Path was completed this past September. This project was a vision of the City Elected Officials for many years and became a reality in 2011 when the City of Countryside was awarded a \$25,000.00 Model Communities Grant through the Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago in collaboration with the Cook County Department of Public Health.

The City was able to use this funding to work with the Active Transportation Alliance in drafting an Active Transportation Plan for the City. This entire process took approximately a year, with online surveys and open houses gathering data on residents thoughts on biking and walking in Countryside. The City Council adopted the Active Transportation Plan in February, 2012. An ad hoc committee was formed in May 2012. The goal of this committee was to prioritize areas of Countryside that were identified in the Plan that staff should focus on when applying for grant funding opportunities for bike paths. In August, 2013, the City applied for an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) Grant for the Brainard Avenue Shared-Use Path.

The City was notified that it was awarded the ITEP Grant in April, 2014. In April 2018, the City applied for an Invest in Cook County Grant to help offset the costs of the Shared-Use Path; we were notified that we were awarded the grant in September, 2018. Work began on the project in May, 2019 with the utility relocations. Due to delays with the utility companies the work stopped in the fall and resumed again this past March. We are thrilled to be connecting Countryside! The Shared-Use Path starts at Joliet Road and Brainard Avenue and ends at 55th Street and Brainard Avenue.



Pictured L to R: P.W. Superintendent Jesse Serna, Novotny Engineering Tom Brandstedt, Alderman Von Drasek, Mayor Sean McDermott, Assistant City Administrator Sharon Peterson, Alderman Finn, City Administrator Gail Paul, Alderman Musillami, City Clerk Liz Kmet.

Mayor Swears in Board Members and Commissioners



Mayor Sean McDermott recently swore in one member to the Police Pension Board, two members to the Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals and two members to the Board of Fire and Police Commission.

Appointment Terms:

Police Pension Board - 2 years
Board of Fire & Police - 3 years
Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals - 5 years



Pictured (top) to L to R: Police Pension Board member Brandon Edenfield; Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals member Stephen Kehr; Plan Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals member Ronald Ward; Board of Fire and Police Commission Mary Louise Pisone and Caroline Golden.

Community Development Survey



City of Countryside Community Development Department.



How Are We Doing? We are committed to providing you with the best online permit submittal and payment process possible, so we welcome your comments. Please fill out this questionnaire and place it in the night repository in our lobby or mail back to Community Development Survey, 803 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525. Thank you.

Please rate the ease of use of the fill in permit application form(s).

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
(1 = Not Good and 5 = Excellent)

Please rate the ease of use of the online permit submittal portal (<https://bsaonline.com/?uid=2690>)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
(1 = Not Good and 5 = Excellent)

Please rate the process for uploading required documents.

Easy? ☐ Yes | ☐ No

Somewhat Easy? ☐ Yes | ☐ No

Difficult/Complex? ☐ Yes | ☐ No

Contractors please rate the web permit registrations process.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
(1 = Not Good and 5 = Excellent)

Contractors please rate the online inspections scheduling.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
(1 = Not Good and 5 = Excellent)

Please rate the online permit notification and payment process.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
(1 = Not Good and 5 = Excellent)

Please rate your overall online experience.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
(1 = Not Good and 5 = Excellent)

How frequently do you visit our web-site?

(<https://www.countryside-il.org/departments/community-development/>)

☐ 3-5 times per month ☐ 1-2 times per month ☐ Once every 2 months ☐ Other

If Other selected please specify or please provide any additional comments or suggestions:

803 Joliet Road * Countryside, IL 60525 * Tx: 708-354-1860 * Fax: 708-354-9445
E-Mail: building@countryside-il.org / Web Site: www.countryside-il.org

City Employees Service Recognition in 2020

Congratulations!

Doug Davis	20 years	Mark Battaglia	5 years
Billy Rosinia	20 years	Mike Maher	5 years
Shawn Ligeikis	15 years	Maricruz Reyes	5 years
Tom Nicholson	15 years	Dave Schutter	5 years
Steve Ourada	15 years	Michele Sullivan	5 years
Holly Williams	15 years	Ryan Venem	5 years
Sue Dignin	10 years		

We would like to recognize all employees who reached service year milestones this year. These employees help provide the many services enjoyed by our residents and businesses.

SAVE THE DATE

2021 St. Patrick's Day Family Parade

(tentatively scheduled)

Saturday, March 6th at 1 p.m.

GET YOUR GREEN ON!

EASTER EGG HUNT

(tentatively scheduled)

Saturday, April 3rd
10 a.m. at Countryside Park

Over 1,000 hidden candy filled eggs.

For more info. call (708) 485-2595

Welcome to Countryside

Hair AF

23 Countryside Plaza, Suite 114
Hair Salon



Keturah's Vanity

23 Countryside Plaza, Suite 129
Hair Salon



Megwear

5230 East Avenue
Embroidery and shirt printing

Roka Bakehouse

6526 Joliet Road
Bakehouse and coffee shop

Reminder...Parking After 2" off Snowfall



Per the City Code, there is **NO** parking on any public street in the City at any time within twelve hours after a snowfall of two inches or more has occurred, unless the snow has been plowed off or otherwise removed from the street.

May all our residents
and businesses have a
healthy and safe New
Year!

City Staff & Elected
Officials



Upcoming City Meetings

January

5	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
13	City Council	7:30 p.m.
20	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
27	City Council	7:30 p.m.

February

2	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
10	City Council	7:30 p.m.
17	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
24	City Council	7:30 p.m.

March

2	Plan/ZBA Commission	7:15 p.m.
9	Fire & Police Commission	5:00 p.m.
10	City Council	7:30 p.m.
17	Flagg Creek Admin. Board	7:00 p.m.
24	City Council	7:30 p.m.



City of Countryside
803 Joliet
Countryside, IL 60525

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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.