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City of Fulton
415 11th Avenue
Fulton, IL 61252

Quarterly Newsletter

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www.cityoffulton.us

815-589-2616 phone

815-589-4421 fax

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415 11th Avenue
Fulton, IL 61252

Mayor's Report

SYSTEM UPGRADES AND REPLACEMENTS

A long term capital improvement plan for the City is being developed. Your reactions and inputs are welcomed and needed. A series of workshops, hearings and regular City Council meetings will set the course over the next several weeks. Please give us your opinions and, in the end, your support as we move ahead.

The Situation:

Our City just celebrated 175 years. Over that time, we have developed over \$25 million in systems and facilities to serve some 2000 homes and businesses. Current income is paying off remaining balances of loans for the new water tower, the infrastructure to serve the new hotel and our new automated metering program. Two smaller loans for the Windmill Cultural Center and Heritage Canyon improvements are being paid with Hotel Room Tax income. We now need to address serious water, sewer and street upgrades that have been put off for too long.

A Plan:

It appears that we can address the needed upgrades with no increase in property taxes. One reason is that refinancing existing loans can significantly lower current loan payments. Also, our automated meter reading program will be completely paid for this year, thus freeing up \$ 80,000 per year. Your recent support for a 3/4% increase in sales tax will generate an added \$200,000 per year. This income will help us address \$4 million in immediate needs according to latest engineering estimates.

A plan that is taking shape includes:

- Existing Water Meter Loan - retire this debt this fiscal year with current revenue;
- Existing Water Tower Bond - refinance this loan with a lower interest rate to realize a \$ 40,000 savings;
- Existing Hotel TIF Bond - refinance this loan with a lower interest rate to realize a \$ 100,000 savings;
- New Environmental Protection Agency Loan - finance an estimated \$2.5 million to replace Well #4 and upgrade treatment using below-market interest rates from the State Loan Program;
- New Bond Money - secure \$385,000 to kick-start the promised infrastructure program to rebuild our aging streets, waste water treatment plant, and underground systems and to support housing growth needed to offset our school enrollment declines.

The seriousness of our water supply situation cannot be over emphasized. A City of our size and one that is home to major employers needs a second reliable well. We also need to improve water quality and prepare for stricter standards. Current debate focuses on a \$1.8 million filter plant and pumping station. We know that water fees will need to increase to get our water supply up to par. Amounts and allocations will have to be determined.

Help your City Council finalize these plans and keep our community operating at standards that we've come to expect and that new residents and businesses expect.

Mayor Larry Russell



Downtown Streetscape Plan

A public open house to review a downtown streetscape proposal is set for Thursday, August 4, 2011, from 5pm to 7pm at the River Bend Senior Center. A committee consisting of local business leaders and city personnel have met with architects to develop a proposal for downtown infrastructure improvements. The public is encouraged to attend and offer either verbal or written comments about the proposed improvements. Attendees can stop by at anytime between 5pm and 7pm, but a formal presentation will be provided at 5:30pm.

Last year, the City of Fulton received a \$60,000 state grant (\$10,000 city match) to do the following work:

- Apply for a National Register Historic District designation.
- Conduct a workshop on the possible financial incentives for such a district
- Recommend an overall streetscape plan, which will include green space design.
- Recommend alley improvements between 4th Street and 3rd Street.
- Work on a schematic design for the Blecha building (former Bud's IGA lost to fire)

Automatic Payment - sign-up for automatic utility payments deducted from your checking account. Stop by or call City Hall for details. 815-589-2616.

Cattail Building Rental - \$40 residents & \$75 non-residents (plus \$40 refundable deposit). Seats 50. Stop by City Hall to reserve.

City Council Meetings - 1st & 3rd Monday of each month at 5:30pm. Meetings are open to the public. Minutes can be found on the city website. www.cityoffulton.us

Windmill Accident

A very tragic accident occurred at the windmill on Friday, July 1, 2011. Chief Volunteer Miller, Ron Venema, fell while performing closing procedures. Ron died on Sunday, July 3, 2011, as a result of his injuries.

The City of Fulton and Volunteer Millers have met several times since the accident to review safety procedures and operations. The City of Fulton and Volunteer Millers have also met with the Illinois Department of Labor's Division of OSHA and the city's insurance agency to review the accident. Both the City and the Volunteer Millers continue to work together to ensure safety for the mill, volunteers, and visitors.

It is important to remind our residents and visitors that the Volunteer Millers exercise caution while working at the windmill and take their job seriously. The Volunteer Millers are each provided with a detailed training manual and participate in routine training.

Chief Miller Ron Venema was a dedicated volunteer who loved working at the windmill and enjoyed sharing his passion and enthusiasm of the windmill with both visitors and his fellow volunteers. Ron will be missed by many.

Building Permits

Building permits are required for all new construction and for remodeling work which changes the size, area, outline, location on lot, height of structure, yard requirements or use/occupancy of any building. No building permit is required for usual maintenance or repairs; including roofing and siding. There are several other instructions prior to construction to abide by such as locating underground utilities, locating property lines, providing a legal description of property, plus much more.

Building Permit Applications & Instructions are available at Fulton City Hall or online at www.cityoffulton.us.

Permit Fees (based on value of project):

| Fee | Project Cost |
|---------|-----------------------|
| \$25 | \$0 - \$1,000 |
| \$40 | \$1,000 - \$5,000 |
| \$55 | \$5,000 - \$25,000 |
| \$100 | \$25,000 - \$50,000 |
| \$250 | \$50,000 - \$100,000 |
| \$500 | \$100,000 - \$250,000 |
| \$750 | \$250,000 - \$500,000 |
| \$1,000 | Over \$500,000 |

Fulton Events (Aug. thru Oct.)

Aug. 4

Downtown Streetscape Plan Open House @ River Bend Senior Center, 5pm-7pm

Aug. 5 & 6

Community Wide Yard Sales

Aug. 13

Photoside Café Band @ Library, 7pm

Aug. 11

Fulton Summer Night Event @ Windmill Area, 6pm-8pm

Aug. 20

Back to School Car Show @ First Reformed Church, 9am-3:30pm

Aug. 26

Tailgate Party @ Central Bank, 3:30pm-6pm

Aug. 30

Farm Windmill Program @ Windmill Cultural Center, 6pm

September 26

Peter Rabbit & the Landscapes of Home Presentation @ Windmill Cultural Center, 6pm

October 1

Fall Festival @ Downtown, 10am-4pm

October 1 & 2

Fall Festival @ Heritage Canyon, 10am-4pm

October 10

7 Centuries of the English Mill Video @ Windmill Cultural Center, 6pm

October 15

Beggar's Night @ Heritage Canyon, 4pm - 7pm

October ?

Fulton Trick-or-Treat, TBA

For more details, visit www.cityoffulton.us

Fall Festival Seeking Arts, Crafts, and Food Vendors

The Fulton Fall Festival Planning Committee is seeking food vendors and arts & craft show vendors. The cost to participate is \$25/craft vendor and \$30/food vendor. If interested, please download a participation form at www.cityoffulton.us or call the Fulton Chamber of Commerce at 815-589-4545.

Electric Aggregation Has Started

The electric bill residents will receive in August will reflect the lower rate that the city has secured on behalf of the residents. Approximately 95% of the billing customers chose to realize savings.

ComEd will continue to read the meter, send the bill, and maintain the electrical infrastructure. ComEd's cost will still be shown on the bill. The power use portion of the bill will reflect the savings of 20% for homeowners and 21% for small businesses.

Well # 4 Water Treatment Plant - Project Plan

Well #4 is located south of 16th Avenue on 11th Street. This well has not been in full operation since the 1970's. If the well is rehabilitated it will have a new pressure filter which will remove high levels of iron, manganese and radium, if present. Once rehabilitated, the well will be 271 feet deep and have a capacity of 550 gallons per minute. In addition to rehabilitating well #4, the city would also like to build a new well, well #5, to replace well #2.

This project plan will improve the water capacity and the quality of water for decades to come. In 2000, the city increased its water storage from 100,000 gallons to 750,000 gallons. Now the project plan focuses on the next phase for a Class A water facility. If approved by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the city would have up to 5 years to complete the total project plan. The city will also apply for a low interest loan, potentially under 2% and an opportunity to realize a portion to be granted or forgiven.