



VILLAGE OF ELLSWORTH

# Newsletter

FALL 2022

## HOURS

Monday through Friday  
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## CONTACT INFO

130 N Chestnut Street

Village Hall  
(715) 273-4742

Police Department  
(715) 273-3275

## DROP BOX

Payments and/or paperwork can be submitted using the 24-hour drop box on the front of the Village Hall.

## PAYMENTS

The Village accepts cash, check and/or Point and Pay (online) payments.

## If We Don't Love Our Community, Who Will?

*Message from Becky Beissel, President, Village of Ellsworth*

Dear fellow community members,

I've been thinking and talking a lot about the topic of apathy lately—so much so that I was asked to facilitate a panel of municipal leaders on the topic at the League of Wisconsin Municipalities CEO Conference in Brookfield last month.

Apathy, the lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern, was mentioned a few times here in Ellsworth while going through our Comp Plan update. While we were pleased with the engagement we were seeing from the community in completing surveys and attending meetings, the numbers were a little low. Which, we were told, was probably a reflection that people thought things were "OK" here.

Now, in switching to my marketing hat for a minute, I know that things being "OK" (i.e. your experience at a business) is actually one of the worst things people can feel. "OK" doesn't leave a lasting impression and if your customers don't "love" a business, you'll need to work that much harder to get them to come back. Now, obviously, you don't want people to "hate" the experience either but even that can be a benefit—you'd know what



needs to be changed/fixed.

Now, picture this in terms of a community. If everyone thinks we're just "OK" they sure aren't expressing much love for our community's members, businesses, etc. (And I know this to be true from some of the words being spewed on Facebook).

So, how do we combat apathy here in Ellsworth? How do we, as community members, go from being indifferent about things to loving Ellsworth more?

Well, there's probably not one simple answer, but rather the need to attack this from all sides. The Village Board and I will continue to work towards creating a community that we can be proud of. The Chamber will continue to work on creating a dynamic business district. The School District will continue to work on providing a first-class education.

Now, as for you. I would encourage you to ask yourself, "what would make me love this community more?" And if your answer starts with "Somebody should..." consider that "somebody" to be you. Many hands make light work.

Let's do this!

## Welcome, Brad Roy!

*Our new Administrator Clerk-Treasurer Started September 26.*



We're happy to announce that Brad Roy joined the Village of Ellsworth as our new administrator clerk-treasurer.

Brad comes to us with more than 17

years of experience in county government, having served as a zoning specialist and zoning administrator for Pierce County. He

has an MBA in public administration and knowledge in project management, policy development and implementation, budgeting, change management, grant writing, and economic development.

When asked why he chose a career in public administration he said, "I did not start out with the intention of working in the public sector, but after working in it I found that I enjoyed working to improve a community for its citizens." He is excited to learn more about the community and is most looking

forward to assisting the Board with their goals and visions for Ellsworth and helping carry out the community's initiatives in the newly updated Comprehensive Plan.

The Village Board worked hard to not only find someone with the right skill set to align with our vision for the Ellsworth community, but also the right fit within our Village's culture. We are confident that Brad will be a great addition to the team here!

# What's a Mill Rate?

*No, Your Increased Assessed Values Doesn't Mean Higher Taxes*

Nobody panic!

By now, you all should have received your new assessments in the mail. We've heard a lot of misconceptions that this will automatically increase your property taxes. That is not the case.

The Village needed to undergo a reassessment to be in compliance with Wisconsin State Statute 70.05, which requires assessments to be within 10% of market value every five years.

The 2022 assessed value represents the approximate full market value of your property as of January 1, 2022. The last time all properties in the Village had been updated was in 2010. The real estate market has changed substantially in the last twelve years.

The purpose of a revaluation is not to increase or decrease the total amount of taxes collected. The purpose is to ensure equity among property valuations so that the tax burden is distributed fairly. Just because the assessed value changes, it does not mean your taxes will change proportionately. The total assessed value of the Village increased by about 50%. If budgets and levies were to remain the same as last year, the mill rate would be reduced in proportion to the increase in the Village's value. Tax rates are largely controlled by the needs of the school district, technical college, county, state, and village budgets. This budgeting process is not usually finalized until after November.

Please note: The numbers used on this image are for illustration purposes only.

## WHAT IS A MILL RATE?

The mill rate is calculated by dividing the total taxes needed by the total assessed value of the community. An increase in assessed value does not equate to an increase in your taxes.

$$\text{MILL RATE} = \frac{\text{TOTAL TAXES NEEDED}}{\text{TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE}}$$

It is a simple mathematical fact, as assessed values increase the mill rate will fall and your taxes will stay about the same if you increase with the average.

Year	Assessed Value	Mill Rate	Taxes
2021	\$285,000	.0231	\$6,583
2022	\$425,000	.0154	\$6,545

**50% average community-wide increase**

Taxes are set annually by these four entities:  
Municipality • School District • County • Technical College  
Mill rates may adjust based on their tax needs.

## Update: The Old Junior High

*Turning Our Largest Blighted Property Into a Productive Asset*

The property at 254 S. Chestnut Street is now owned by the Village of Ellsworth. Prior to closing, Trustee Andrew Borner completed a walk-thru of the property. The photos tell the story of years of neglect, and what a hazard this property truly is to the community, especially the surrounding neighborhood.

The Village Board, Plan Commission, and Joint TID Review Board approved the creation of TID No. 12, which will help the Village recoup any costs associated with demolition and development.

The cost of demolition is estimated to be \$943,000. The Village Board presented a request to Pierce County in June for a portion of their 8.3 million dollars in American Rescue Plan Act funds to assist in demolition. We have not gotten an update from them at this time. The Village is also working with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation regarding a Site Assess-

ment Grant for up to \$150,000 that could be used towards environmental site assessments, asbestos abatement, etc.

The Community Development Authority is still in the early exploratory stages of determining what kind of development will take place on the property. They have determined the goals to be: to increase housing, to fit within the neighborhood/community, and to produce enough tax base to pay back the TID.

Discussions seem to be pointing towards a mixed development consisting of townhomes and a small 2-story apartment building. The development would be geared towards middle-income (for our area, annual household incomes from about \$45,000-\$115,000).

Simultaneously, we're looking into the infrastructure surrounding this property. Knowing that the wastewater pipes are about 100 years old, we knew they'd need

to be updated regardless of this project.

Further updates on this project can be found on the Village website, at upcoming Village Board and CDA meetings, on our Village Facebook page, and here in our quarterly Village newsletter.

