

FIRE-EMS

Continued from p. 1

Edgerton-Milton Fire-EMS Department. The new entity carries forward the individual 140- and 114-year heritages of the Edgerton and Milton Fire Departments providing service to our residents, businesses and visitors.”

The chief focused on what the consolidated agency offers. “The new entity provides all-hazard emergency services to over 25,000 permanent residents and businesses across 220-square miles of Rock, Dane and Jefferson counties in the cities of Edgerton and Milton, and the Towns of Albion, Fulton, Harmony, Johnstown, Koshkonong, Lima, Milton, Porter and Sumner.”

Koshkonong is not an IGA signatory, but contract client of the new district.

Pickering assured stakeholders, “Fire and paramedic-level emergency medical services will continue to be provided from the two existing stations in Edgerton and Milton. Planning is now underway to add strategically located stations in order to meet the needs of our rapidly growing region, which includes the fourth largest inland lake in Wisconsin, four heavily used navigable recreational rivers and creeks, 19.7 miles of Interstate highway, and significant residential and industrial expansion valued at over \$2.5 billion.”

Part of the reason for the consolidation of departments was to ensure adequate staffing

24/7/365, lower operating costs and anticipate future growth, with the basic measure of “response time” to a 9-1-1 call.

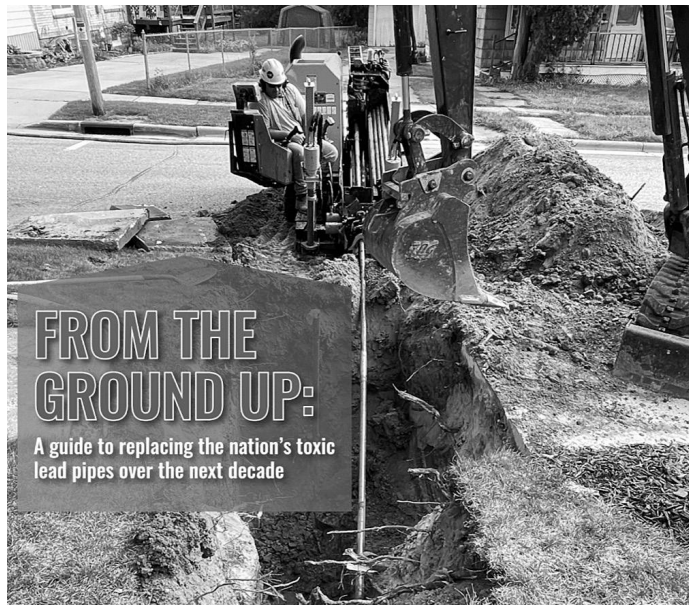
Pickering said, “Locations of the new fire-EMS stations are designed to significantly improve overall response times, with 99.5% of urban areas within an average five-minute response, and a 228% improvement in response times in the rural portions of the department coverage area.”

The chief along with all the officials representing the 10 signatories to the fire protection IGA hold high hopes for the future sustainability of the district model they’ve devised to meet anticipated service demand in light of population growth.

Pickering asserted, “While fire and emergency medical services across the state are struggling to maintain operations, I give our 11 municipalities a tremendous amount of credit for rolling up their sleeves and working cooperatively together to invest in a more sustainable service delivery model.

“In a political era characterized by polarization, the elected officials in our 11 municipalities showed a different way forward. There was exemplary give-and-take with everyone looking at the better collective good, versus looking at just their colloquial self-interest.”

The new entity is in the process of polling their employees for ideas for a new name for the integrated department, which is expected to be announced later in February.



A backhoe photo breaking ground on Park Lane in Edgerton for lead lateral replacement has been used in a campaign to promote removal of lead pipes nationwide. The photo was taken by Alderperson Casey Langan for the Environmental Policy Innovation Center. Edgerton has a vigorous campaign to remove lead water pipes. Edgerton was the smallest city to be recognized for its lead abatement program at a White House summit on the subject last week attended by City Administrator Ramona Flanigan.

Photo by Casey Langan

EDGERTON

Continued from p. 1

ation or less,” said Timothy Male, Executive Director of the Environmental Policy Innovation Center. “No one should have to live with the threat of lead in their drinking water.”

The Environmental Policy Innovation Center, the State of Wisconsin, and cities of

Kenosha, Madison, Milwaukee, Sheboygan, and Wausau are among the 123 inaugural members of the Partnership.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that six to 10 million lead pipes currently deliver drinking water into U.S. homes and businesses, putting millions at risk for harms, including permanent neurological damage and coronary heart disease.

NEWS

Central, Racetrack Parks come under criticism

By Sam Martino
Special to the Reporter

Central Park and Racetrack Park came under the most criticism from park users who commented on a proposed Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan in a survey submitted to the Parks and Recreation Committee Jan. 30.

“Central Park playground area remains sketchy with numerous older kids loitering in the park. The swearing, yelling and intimidating behavior of older kids make many families uncomfortable to let their small children visit or play at the park,” said one respondent.

“Even with parents present, there’s an uneasiness at times when large groups of teens are at the park. Perhaps re-locating the basketball court or the play area so the two are further apart would allow for a more peaceful and pleasant park experience for families,” the respondent added.

Another person said: “Find a way to have something for the teenagers to use to keep them away from the younger kid areas. All they do is swear and ruin the playground equipment and keep parents from bringing their littles to the park. Mostly Central Park.”

“Security needs to be heightened at Racetrack and

Central Park,” said another respondent.

Central Park is the most popular in the summer because of the Community Swimming pool that attracts thousands of users.

Recreation Park has a variety of festival and sports uses and has the highest number of users according to the park surveys.

Alderperson Casey Langan, a member of the Parks and Recreation Committee, agreed with a respondent about rowdies at Central Park during a Jan. 30 parks meeting.

Langan said the park was getting an unfavorable reputation because of the action of some youths.

One respondent said they avoided St. John’s Park also because of teens and pre-teen loitering.

Racetrack Park came under close scrutiny by residents ranging from comments about adding a performance venue to more softball, soccer and baseball fields and additional parking.

The grocery-like list of ideas for improvements in Edgerton’s parks was wide ranging from 196 written comments.

Among them were calls for more promotion of use of parks, expanded programs offering classes and leagues to support physical activity for people of all ages, bike paths

through the city and a stage in Racetrack Park to hold large events like Tobacco Days.

Other comments included opposition to a performance venue and moving all parades to Racetrack Park so traffic isn’t blocked during events.

Meanwhile, many respondents said there was a need for more parking at Racetrack Park.

“Racetrack Park parking and driving is an absolute disaster,” said one respondent. The parking needs to be expanded and you need to be able to drive all the way around for easier access and ability to enter and leave.”

One respondent suggested more paving and parking stall lines be added at the park.

Alderperson Candy Davis, chairperson of the parks committee, agreed parking was an issue at Racetrack Park. She said more park users need to use street parking along IKI Dr. than expect all parking to be close to various activity and sports venues.

One respondent offered a mixture of needs: “Dedicated soccer park for growing program and allowing space for baseball and football to expand as well. An ice rink at Central or eternal Park with warming house in the pool building. Community flower garden or food forest in current green spaces, Randolph St. ideally. New pool water

features and small splash pad at Dickinson. Arts and farmers market space at the pond and next to Outreach. Soccer goal at every neighborhood park. Trails that safely connect kids on bikes from expanding areas to schools/center.”

Another respondent urged “diagonal parking downtown so there [are] parking spaces and please fix the roads.”

“Interconnected bike/hiking trails possibly connecting to Newville,” was suggested by another person.

“Natural space with prairie emphasis especially in vacant city owned areas, establish bird houses and identification tags for trees possibly privately funded dedicated memoriams (benches, sculptures, etc.)”

Edgerton residential fire



The Edgerton Fire District, Janesville Fire Department, Evansville Fire Department and Stoughton Fire Department responded to a residential fire in Edgerton on the morning of Tuesday, Feb. 7. The Cambridge Fire Department was on standby at the Edgerton Fire Station; Edgerton Police Department were called to a fire at the Cheryl Schremps home in Edgerton. Per Chief Randy Pickering, the fire started in the attic. It destroyed the roof and the porch addition. The fire is still under investigation.

Photos by Toni Turnquist

Edgerton lead lateral replacement program facts

By Ramona Flanigan
City of Edgerton

While the City of Edgerton could complete the removal of the remaining public and private lead laterals in 2023, its Utility Commission recently voted to delay the completion of the project until 2024 due to unknown availability of grant funding. Without funding assistance, at least half of the cost of private side lateral replacement would either have to be borne by individual property owners, many of whom are low to moderate income, or by the City’s tax levy, which is severely restricted in Wisconsin. Both options are significant impediments to the removal of lead laterals.

2021 and 2022 statistics and policy decisions:

- 266 private lead laterals replaced. (Average price per lateral \$3,888; average If cost \$90.43)

- 71 public lead laterals replaced. (Average cost per lateral \$9,051; average cost per If \$335)

- Less than 10 houses left to inspect.

- More than 920 houses inspected.

- City has been awarded \$1,024,000 in Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grant funding.

- Local out of pocket costs for private side replacements (not covered by grants in 2021 and 2022) are approximately \$70,000.

- Local costs for public side replacements were \$642,649.

- Final Construction Year:

- Approximately 80 private side laterals to replace.

- Approximately 72 public side laterals to replace.

- If the funds were available, Edgerton could physically complete the remaining replacements in one construction season.

- Estimated total cost of remaining private side replacements is \$700,000. Future Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources programs are not likely to fund 100% of the costs to replace private laterals (as they did in the past).

- Estimated cost of remaining public side replacements \$650,000.

- The Utility Commission decided to use rate payer funds (water utility funds) to pay for up to 50% (which is the maximum allowed) of the cost to replace private side laterals if Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grant funding will not cover all the cost of private side lateral replacement. Approval from Wisconsin’s Public Service Commission is required for this.

- With more than \$1 million in principal forgiveness funding provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the City of Edgerton, Wisconsin (population 6,000) has replaced 75% of its private lead service laterals in the last two construction seasons. Policymakers in Edgerton have committed to replacing the remaining 80 private lead laterals in 2024 using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding and funds provided by water utility rate payers.