

From the desk of Mayor Gary W. Manier



I am pleased to announce that our new City Administrator, Jim Culotta, started working for the city on December 28, 2015. Please welcome Jim and his family to Washington – we are looking forward to working with him!

I want to thank all of our city employees for helping our residents during the December 28th ice storm and especially thank all the workers that had to endure the cold, wet conditions. Our public works crew has spent weeks picking up branches from this storm along with occasional snow plowing. We enacted COAD (Community Organizations Active in a Disaster) when the storm began that day and were able to secure two warming places for our citizens. COAD was established in 2015 and is a group of local organizations ready to mobilize to any disaster area in Tazewell, Woodford, and Peoria counties should the need arise and help is requested. I also want to give a special shout out to Ameren and their crews for restoring power. Considering how widespread this storm was, Ameren was amazing. I think it makes us realize how we take for granted the luxury of electricity.

I would like us to remember the life of former Mayor Don Gronewold who passed away on August 25, 2015. Don served as Mayor from 1989 until 2001 and loved his community. I would also like us to remember the life of our part-time Police Commander, Tony Maggio, who passed away January 7, 2016. I cannot imagine attending a special event and not seeing Tony there, he will be missed. I would also like us to remember the lives of Harold West, II (West's Meats, Lockers & Catering) who passed away on November 1, 2015 and Spc. Trenton Harry Weston (son of Doug & Julie Weston) who passed away on December 10, 2015 while serving in our armed forces. Please continue to keep these families in your thoughts and prayers. We must always remember those who are no longer with us.

On December 22, 2015, I retired from Caterpillar after 41 years and 9 months. I was 19 years old when I was hired by Caterpillar and started as a chip wheeler in Building N in East Peoria. I had many jobs within Caterpillar – ending my career as a Dealer Solution Network Engineer 3. You will all see me a little more often around Washington and City Hall!

What an honor our city received the beginning of this year—Washington was named 3rd Best City for Illinois Families by WalletHub.com, an online financial website. As I stated in the press release, “We have so much to be proud of and we know most of that is because of our churches, parks and recreation trails, schools, beautiful and safe subdivisions, and most of all our residents.”

Congratulations go out to former Washington Township Road Commissioner Dave Weaver on his retirement this past year. We appreciate all the years of public service he provided to our community—job well done, enjoy your retirement!

We are off to a great 2016 and I am looking forward to helping us keep Washington a truly great place to live!

Together we can...together we will!



GOD BLESS WASHINGTON,

Gary W. Manier
Gary W. Manier, Mayor

WASHINGTON EMBRACES NEW WATER UTILITY TECHNOLOGY

The City of Washington will be replacing approximately 6,000 of its 7,400 water meters throughout the city, beginning in late Spring. Existing water meters utilize moving internal components to measure the consumption of water which wear out over time, resulting in reduced accuracy. The new meters feature no moving parts and facilitate an automated meter reading process through the use of radio technology that will provide greater efficiency in meter reading, more timely leak detection, and the ability to bill monthly rather than quarterly as requested by many residents. Over 1,000 meters have already been replaced during the rebuild the last two years and approximately 500 will not be replaced in this phase because of the age of the meter; however in all cases radio technology will be installed.

What is the process for the replacement? Do I have to be home?

The City has contracted with HD Supply for the project and the actual installations will be done by their subcontractor – United Meters, Inc. (UMI). All residents who are scheduled to receive the new meters will be sent a letter from the City requesting that they call United Meters toll free to set up an appointment within a 2 hour window. Under normal conditions, the meter replacement will take approximately 30 minutes. We encourage everyone receiving a letter to respond promptly so the project may proceed in a timely, orderly and efficient manner. Please note that “radio only” installations will not require an appointment or inside access.

Will UMI employees be going door-to-door unsolicited?

If UMI is in your neighborhood and hasn't received a call for an appointment, they may request an opportunity to replace your meter while in the area. All installers have been thoroughly background checked by our Police Department, will have appropriate photo identification on them at all times, and will be driving company marked vehicles.

How is this project being funded?

Various funding methods have been investigated and presented to the City Council and a technology fee that will be included on the monthly bill is currently being proposed. This fee is estimated to be between \$3.85 and \$5.50 per month depending on the number of meters installed. The City Council will set the fee this spring.

How will the City transition from quarterly to monthly billing?

All residents will receive a quarterly bill in **May for January through March 2016 usage** and in **July for April through June usage**. In **September, July and August** usage will be billed and **October will be the first monthly bill** that is reflective of one month's usage from **September**. The technology fee will not be applied until monthly billing is fully implemented in October 2016 as currently projected.

Won't this make our water rates higher than surrounding communities?

No. Actually a typical City of Washington water bill at 4,500 gallons per month is only \$18.54, or 50% of the local regional average of \$37.31 per month. Furthermore, even though sewer rates may be higher than surrounding communities, the combined water and sewer average bill of \$57.15 compares favorably to the regional average of \$66.88. The proposed technology fee will still keep Washington comparable to this combined water and sewer regional average.

Community	Typical Bill (4500 gal)		
	Water	Sewer	Combined
Morton	\$ 30.43	\$ 27.25	\$ 57.68
Pekin	\$ 35.79	\$ 26.58	\$ 62.37
Peoria	\$ 43.88	\$ 16.72	\$ 60.60
Metamora	\$ 45.42	\$ 16.71	\$ 62.12
Eureka	\$ 27.54	\$ 18.54	\$ 46.08
Germantown Hills	\$ 49.34	\$ 63.10	\$112.44
Northern Tazewell Water	\$ 28.76	\$ 38.61	\$ 67.37
Regional Average	\$ 37.31	\$ 28.15	\$ 66.88
City of Washington	\$ 18.54	\$ 38.61	\$ 57.15

For more information on the meter replacement program, please visit our website at www.ci.washington.il.us.

DEVELOPMENT HAPPENINGS...

The building staff issued 90 new residential building permits in 2015 with an estimated construction value of nearly \$17.2 million. Of the residential permits issued, 38 were for single-family dwellings and 52 were for multi-family dwellings. Staff issued ten commercial/industrial permits for a construction value of \$7.16 million. Both the residential and commercial/industrial permits have increased over the past year.



The rebuilding of the city from the November 17, 2013, tornado has continued to progress at a quick rate. A total of 481 residential rebuild permits have been issued since the tornado. Additionally, another 92 tornado-related permits were issued in 2015 comprising of new roofs, new garages, and major house repairs with a total of 894 over the last two-plus years. There are only 24 single-family and duplex lots and two multi-family lots that have not commenced rebuilding.

Additionally, the City was recently approved for two economic development tools. A new Enterprise Zone became effective on January 1, replacing the previous zone that had been active since 1986. The Enterprise Zone provides benefits for commercial and industrial properties that undertake a building improvement or new construction project that requires a building permit. Benefits include a five-year property tax abatement upon completion of the project, a sales tax waiver on all materials permanently incorporated into the real estate, a 50% utility connection fee waiver, and a 50% building permit fee waiver.



Finally, the City received funding from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and leverage assistance from some city banks to help establish a Revolving Loan Fund that can be used by any businesses east of Ernest Street per the USDA regulations. The program is intended to provide gap funding for those businesses looking to retain or create jobs. Eligible activities include inventory and working capital, machinery and equipment purchases, and small business development. This funding offers competitive interest rates to supplement traditional bank financing. Please check out either of these programs on the City's website: www.ci.washington.il.us.

We encourage you to check out all of the great Washington businesses and to shop local!

WASHINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS...

Hopefully we will not have to use this again this winter, but there seems to be some confusion with regards to our policy on parking bans during snowfalls. First, the ordinance allows for us to issue a parking ban when the conditions are right for the possible accumulation of snow or ice over 2-inches. The ban automatically goes into effect once the 2-inch level is reached. So we generally attempt to put the ban into effect when a prediction is made where we expect to reach that level. The part that seems to confuse some people is that there is a built-in timetable for individuals to remove their vehicles from the street, after the ban goes into effect. This is done so that people who may be at work have an opportunity to remove their vehicle before we start enforcement. This "lapse" in time is incorrectly viewed by some as "the police don't enforce this," which is not correct. Our primary concern is to gain compliance of the general public to move their vehicles off the street so that the City plows can clear the roadways. Often times, the plows make their first pass down the middle of the street, to provide a drivable lane, but then make a return pass, in an attempt to clear the roadway from "curb to curb." Lastly, once the snow parking ban is placed into effect, it will automatically last 48-hours, unless it is cancelled sooner. With winter nearly two-thirds over, I hope that we don't have to worry about this again, but we do live in central Illinois and one never knows what the weather will do!



Also, follow us on  Facebook—www.facebook.com/WashingtonPoliceDepartment and  Twitter—https://twitter.com/Wash_IL_Police. They are another way of keeping up to date with important information!

Have a safe and wonderful spring!

LAWN MOWING SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

Be reminded that grass clippings cannot be deposited into the street along your property. Disposal of grass clippings result in obstructed storm sewers, which can create a serious problem when it rains. If grass clippings are deposited into the street, we ask that you sweep them and either use as mulch or dispose of as you would your landscape waste. Your cooperation will help ensure that storm sewers in your area are working as they were designed to do. Thank you!



CITY ADMINISTRATOR JIM CULOTTA – WELCOME!



It is an honor to join the City of Washington as the new City Administrator. Prior to accepting this position, I served nine years as the Town Administrator in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, which is a small community just outside Milwaukee. While we enjoyed our time in Wisconsin, my wife and I are very excited to bring our family back to Illinois as we both grew up in the suburbs of Chicago. We are very grateful for the warm reception we have received since our arrival in Washington.

As City Administrator, I'm responsible to Mayor Manier and the City Council for the day-to-day operations of the City. After slightly more than a month on the job, I am impressed with the professionalism of our city employees and officials. I'm eager to work alongside these dedicated public servants to provide you high-quality services in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Communication is an important responsibility of any local government. We recently launched new Facebook and Twitter accounts for the City – www.facebook.com/CityofWashingtonIL and www.twitter.com/WashingtonILGov. These social media accounts, as well as those already established by our Police Department, will enable us to quickly provide you with important news and information. Our efforts to keep you informed won't stop there as we continue to investigate other opportunities that will help us to be responsive to your needs.

CITY MEETING SCHEDULES 2016

All meetings are held in the Library meeting room at Five Points Washington, unless otherwise noted.

- ◆ City Council—first and third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
- ◆ Standing Committees—Committee of the Whole, second Monday of each month, 6:30 p.m.; Public Safety, second Monday of each month, 5:30 p.m. at Police Department; Finance & Personnel, first Monday of each month, 5:30 p.m. at City Hall; Public Works, third Monday of each month, 5:00 p.m. at City Hall.
- ◆ Planning & Zoning Commission—first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Annual Residential Curbside Pickup of Unwanted Items begins Monday, April 18th

Annual Spring Brush Pickup Service begins Monday, April 25th

Annual Spring Fire Hydrant Flushing begins Monday, April 11th

Annual Take Pride in Washington Cleanup Day is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 23rd

Washington Good Neighbor Days Festival begins Wednesday, June 1st and ends Sunday, June 5th



Reach us by phone at 444-3196 - Website at www.ci.washington.il.us



Facebook at www.facebook.com/CityofWashingtonIL



Twitter at <https://twitter.com/WashingtonILGov>

Mayor
Gary Manier

Aldermen

Robert Brucks, *Ward I* Dave Dingledine, *Ward III*
Mike Brownfield, *Ward I* Brian Butler, *Ward III*
Carol Moss, *Ward II* James Gee, Jr., *Ward IV*
Tyler Gee, *Ward II* Travis Maxwell, *Ward IV*

City Officials

Jim Culotta, *City Administrator*
Pat Brown, *City Clerk*
Ellen Dingledine, *City Treasurer*

City of Washington
301 Walnut Street
Washington, IL 61571

Postal Customer
Washington, IL 61571

Presorted STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 23