

## Conversation with the Mayor December 1, 2008

Vicky Daly

### Let's Talk About Water Meters

Talking about water meters is in the same category, for me anyway, as talking about the merits of one roofing material over another - unless you need a new roof or, in this case, you have been discussing water meters with the village staff. Some of you have because of an eye opening water bill. Some of you may have been asked to read your inside water meter and to call in the reading.

Here is why. There are over 1200 water meters in operation in the village. The inside meter is connected to the outside remote by a wire. When the meter gets older, it does not always send a signal to the remote. Both the meter itself and the outdoor remote should provide the same reading. If there is a discrepancy, a lack of agreement between the two, and if it is not detected early, the property owner can be faced with a startlingly large water bill. We are trying to avoid this shock to the system in two ways - replacing the water meters on a multiyear cycle and asking property owners or tenants to read their inside meter and to report that number to the Village Clerk's office. The Water and Sewer staff does not always have access to the inside meter and this few minutes of your time could save grief later.

About the startling bills, the Village cannot legally waive the cost. The water, which we pay for, was used and it simply is not equitable or legal to just give it away. That would just shift the cost from that water user to the community as a whole and that cannot be done. What we can do, however, is make arrangements to spread the repayment over time, and, if this is a multiyear situation, determined by the age of a meter which has been replaced, we can recalculate the cost depending on the water rate during that period. Also, we are now keeping the old meters for 15 days so that if the property owner believes that the meter had malfunctioned, it can be tested. If that is the case and the mistake is ours, an adjustment will be made and the cost of testing the meter will be the village's. If testing shows that the meter is accurate, the water user will pay for the testing, estimated to be \$100.00. So, please read your inside meter when asked so that everything that

could come later can be eliminated. New water meters and surprisingly large water bills are not high on my holiday wish list and I'll bet not on yours.

On another matter: The December 1st Board meeting was the first of the new village year. It is at this meeting that appointments are made. The list of Board assignments, which follows, has changed very little. These are the people to contact in each instance: Buildings & Grounds, David Husk; Celebrations, Special Events & Seniors, Ken Bradstreet; Fire Department, David Husk; Personnel, Pat Nolan or Vicky Daly; Planning & Zoning, Ken Bradstreet; Preservation, Vicky Daly; Revitalization & Economic Development, Ken Bradstreet & Vicky Daly; Streets & Highways, Chris Piccola; Water & Sewer, Pat Nolan; Veterans, David Husk; Youth & Community Center, Pat Nolan. The best way to do that is with a call to the Village Office, 597-4849, Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Finally, the Village Board is focused on an even better Palmyra and to do that we need your help in another way. Both the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals need the service of thoughtful people dedicated to Palmyra's future. Consider being one of those people. Call 597-4849 for more information about these opportunities. Thank you.

Merry Christmas!