

VILLAGE OF PARK RIDGE

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

Greetings fellow “Park-Ridgians”,

Those that have lived in the Village long enough know exactly what I mean by that fun definition of Park Ridge residents. We are a unique breed... Always have been, always will be.

I will start by introducing myself. I am the new Village President, Dan Holloway. I am humbled and honored to be handed the responsibility of leading the Village as we move forward into the next chapter of our Village. Prior to my appointment to President, I served two terms (4 years) as a Village Trustee. I am excited for the opportunity help the Village maintain, improve and sustain.

I am coming up on my 15th anniversary of living in the Village. When I moved here in 2011 it didn’t take long to recognize that Park Ridge is a special place to live. Our little “City within a city” really is a unique little community, with a charm and character all its own.

What makes it that?... it’s the residents. “Neighbors helping neighbors” became the motto of the little subdivision on the outskirts of Stevens Point. We are no longer on the outskirts, but that motto still rings true for our Village. From the clerk and volunteers who help to make voting day so simple and quick, to the committee members, to the board members, and especially to the resident volunteers who helped with the significant planning effort that went into developing our Comprehensive, Strategic and Capital Improvement plans that are continuing to define how we move forward as a Village.

The meaning of “volunteering” in the Village has evolved through the years. Back in the day, volunteering may have meant signing on as a new volunteer fire fighter. When the Village was new the fire chief and crew were mostly, if not all, residents.

That number dwindled to just one resident in 2020. Park Ridge residents have never lost that volunteering spirit, they just didn’t want to fight fires.

Today, you can see that spirit in the many residents that helped plant trees along the Hillcrest/Greenbriar road project, to help that area “grow back the green” after a summer of construction. You can also see it in the six residents that recently stepped up and threw their names in the hat to be a Village Trustee at our recent caucus in January. Thank you all! You help make our “Village”.

Although it is apparent that our Village volunteer pool is strong, there are things that need to be outsourced to others in order to get things handled in a professional and efficient manner. As we followed our planning guidance, it became apparent that it made sense to contract our fire protection services to the professional full time fire crews at the city of Stevens Point Fire Department, and to contract our engineering services to a professional consultant engineering firm, currently MSA Professional Services. Yes, there are costs to these services, but given our extremely small Village government team, and the significant needs of the Village, it truly was, and is, the only way for our Village to sustain, and continue being a beautiful and safe place to live.

I am hopeful that in my term as Village President I will be able to help Park Ridge continue to be the unique and friendly community that it is. Our planning has clearly indicated that our residents want a community with great fire protection, clean water, safe and maintained street systems, and a beautiful “park-like” feel. I will do what I can to ensure the Village retains those values and desires.

Dan Holloway, President
Village of Park Ridge



Street reconstruction

Village planning efforts have defined a need (and desire of residents) for better fire protection (fire hydrants) and better streets and drainage. Fire safety (response times) were significantly improved when the Village contracted with the city, and the former Village Fire Chief, as well as Chief Moody with the city of Stevens Point both agree that more hydrants enhance fire protection.



Our first street reconstruction project has significantly improved fire safety for the Village along Hillcrest Drive and to the north, and the new water main and hydrants planned for the next project will

similarly improve safety in the south half of the Village.

Regarding street drainage, many of us have witnessed firsthand the significant flooding that can occur during the spring thaw, and also during major rainfall events. Streets became flooded completely, and even basements and homes are sometimes threatened. Water on streets deteriorates pavement and can become a serious safety concern if that water freezes on the streets. The recent reconstruction of Hillcrest and Greenbriar, the work on north Linwood a few years ago, as well as the smaller swale grading projects that the Village has done in the recent past have all helped to increase pavement life and get water off the pavement and into swales (or rain gardens) where it can soak in and recharge our precious groundwater.

In 2024, the Village received \$828,080 in a federal “STP-Urban” grant to be used toward the upcoming reconstruction of Ridgewood Drive and Greenbriar Ave south of Hillcrest Drive. That number is 80 percent of the roadway cost. Water mains and street lights are also planned, and the cost of those items will be 100 percent borne by the Village.

The project is planned for construction in 2028. The design effort has already begun, as the Village again hired MSA Professional Services to perform the design work. The initial work involves developing an environmental document, which should be completed by December. Part of the environmental process is a communication effort which will include

a public meeting. Invites will be sent to all Village residents, so be sure to watch for that this fall.

The scope of this project is similar to the recent reconstruction of Hillcrest Drive and Greenbriar north, with the existing roadway being removed, utilities adjusted, water main installed, roadway and swales shaped, and finally new gravel, pavement, streetlights and topsoil placed. The good news is that initial reviews have indicated that this project will have fewer conflicts between the water main and existing trees, so fewer trees will need to be removed.

The preliminary plan for the roadway follows the Village’s Capital Improvement Plan and includes 20 feet wide pavement (10-foot lanes) with 2-foot gravel shoulders on each side. Swales will be constructed as with last summer’s project. The plan is to build full swales where possible and adjust to smaller swales where needed to minimize impacts to trees. All trees will be reviewed individually and will only be removed if necessary and appropriate. Tree species, age, size, health, safety, and impacts to roots (from excavations) will all be considered before the decision is made to remove a tree.

Sign post auction

The Village has a number of used/broken treated wood sign posts that have accumulated through the years. These posts are 4 by 6 and vary in length (they have broken off and were replaced) and are currently stored in the fenced in area immediately west of the Village Hall. The Village needs to dispose of these posts, and the board has voted to hold an auction to sell the posts. Village residents can submit a bid if they are interested. Please submit a sealed envelope with your name, address, and the amount of your bid prior to June 30, 2026. Bids will be opened by the Clerk on July 1, 2026, and you will be informed if you are the winning bidder.

Mailboxes

Mailbox locations have notoriously been an issue for the Village in regard to street maintenance. Many mailboxes in the Village are too far from the street, and as such are causing maintenance issues with the street shoulder and pavement edge. If your mailbox is more than 3 feet from the edge of the street pavement you are in violation of the ordinance. Ideally your mailbox should be 18 to 24 inches from the edge of the



pavement, as that gives sufficient room for snow plows and minimizes the distance the mail delivery vehicle needs to pull off to reach your mailbox. Please consider moving the mailbox if it is too far from the pavement edge. Additional details on mailbox location and type can be viewed on the Village website (17.17 Zoning Ordinances, pages 3 and 4).

Building permits

Building permits are required for certain types of changes or improvements to your residence. Qualifying changes could include home remodels, roof replacement, driveway replacement or expansion (including parking pads) and grading, especially if the grading involves your front yard near the street (swale area). Please contact the Village clerk if you have plans to make any changes to your home or yard to ensure that you get a permit as needed.

Right-Of-Way Use

Please remember that everyone's front yard is theirs to maintain, but that there is a good portion that actually belongs to the Village. That Village owned portion is called street right of way. It is typically about 30 feet from the centerline of the street, so approximately 18 to 20 feet from the edge of the roadway pavement. There is a Village ordinance that clarifies and restricts how that right of way is maintained and used. Details of the ordinance can be viewed on the Village website (17.17 Zoning Ordinances).

Note that there are specific rules regarding mailbox locations, driveway widths, landscaping, trees, roadside parking pads (prohibited), as well as other items. Please be mindful that the right of way area can be used as your "front yard," but must be maintained in accordance with the ordinance. If changes are planned, please contact the Village clerk for guidance, and to obtain a building permit if required.

Although there are rules for how Village right of way is used, plantings within the right of way are encouraged. Trees (10 feet or more from the pavement edge), bushes and gardens (especially rain gardens, which help our swales drain more efficiently) are all welcome. Gardens can be as close as 24 inches from the edge of the street pavement, as long as plants are small. Bushes are also encouraged

and can be planted within the right of way and swale area providing they do not encroach onto streets or hinder intersection vision. Reminder: hard structure landscaping such as stone barrier walls are prohibited in the right of way.

Reminders to pet owners

- Please clean up after your pets. Do not leave animal droppings in another resident's yard. (Ord. 10.03, sect. 13)
- Please do not allow your cats (or other pets) to roam off your premises. The leash law applies to cats, too! (Ord. 10.03, sect. 7)
- Noisy animals or fowl are prohibited in the Village. (Ord. 10.05, sect. 10)



Yard Waste

The Village has an agreement with the City of Stevens Point to allow Village residents to drop off yard waste – leaves, grass clippings, plant stalks, flowers, twigs/sticks, and brush up to 6" diameter – at the City's drop-off site at the City Garage near Bukolt Park, 100 Sixth Avenue. Please visit the website for a list of hours. <https://stevenspoint.com/368/Drop-Off>.

Village-Wide Large Item Pickup

A Village wide large item pickup is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2026. Please set items out the night prior for pickup. Place items on the opposite side of your driveway from your garbage and recycling. Please check the Village website in the future for more information on this event.



Recycle / Reuse

For all your recycling and solid waste disposal questions, contact the Portage County Solid Waste Department at 715-343-6297 or visit their website at:

<https://www.co.portage.wi.gov/396/Solid-Waste>.

The Portage County Transfer Facility & Recycling site is located at 600 Moore Road, east of I-39 off of County Hwy B in Plover. Turn north onto Apache Drive. Stop at the scale speaker and the attendant will direct you from there. When done, weigh out and go to the scale office in the MRF (Material Recovery Facility) to make payment. The facility is open Mon-

Fri 7:30 am – 3:00 pm and Sat 7:30 am – 11:00 am (May-August). Arrive at least 30 minutes before closing. Fees vary and some restrictions apply, so call 715-343-6297 for more information. Rates for Residential, Commercial and Construction/ Demolition: \$20 minimum charge for any load of 500 lbs. or less.

Alleys and areas near stop signs: keep clear

- Please keep the alleys mowed and open to emergency vehicles.
- The alleys may also be used by all residences that are located on an alley. However, please do not block any alley entrances or exits.
- Clear vision triangle: *“On corner lots, vegetation shall be maintained by lot owners to allow vision triangles that provide clear vision in both directions when a vehicle is stopped near the edge of the crossing street. Trees and bushes and other vegetation shall not exceed a height of thirty-six (36) inches above centerline street grade in such vision triangles areas.”* (Ordinance 17.17, Sect. IV)

Public Nuisances

The Village of Park Ridge has always tried to maintain as a fairly neat and tidy place to live and visit. Ordinance Chapter 10 – Public Nuisances, is extensive, and is written specifically to keep the Village looking good, and to help define appropriate ways that residents can affect their neighbors. All residents should familiarize themselves with this chapter and do their best to abide by the rules. Please make special note of section 10.06, which pertains to Junk, Certain vehicles, and firewood. There are currently residents that are in violation of that specific ordinance, and those residents will be notified as such.

Burning and Campfires

The Village has received some questions regarding burning. The Village has a burning ordinance, 5.14, Section II, paragraph 4. This ordinance will be revised and expanded to more closely match the City of Stevens Point’s burning ordinance. The Village’s new burning ordinance is expected to be finalized and adopted in the near future.

In the meantime, be aware there are generally two types of burning: open burning and recreational burning. Open burning is the burning of yard waste, requires a permit, and is required to end at 9 pm.

Recreational burning (campfire) does not require a permit, and is not time restricted; however, there are restrictions on the fire pit or fire ring and what surrounds it.

Please be mindful of the burning ordinance and acquire a permit if you intend to do anything other than a recreational campfire. Recreational campfires must be within a commercially manufactured fireplace or a fire pit three feet or less in diameter. For further details please see the City of Stevens Point Burning Ordinance 6.11.

Speed Limit Reduction

The Village is considering reducing the speed limit in residential areas. The idea was spawned by Portage County Safe Streets For All (SS4A) Task Force recommendations. If we choose to adopt this change, Park Ridge will be among the first communities in Portage County to implement this new idea, which has been dubbed “20 Is Plenty”. To investigate the feasibility of this idea the Village requested that Tom Turchi, Project Manager with MSA Professional Services, conduct a traffic study. As part of this review, Mr. Turchi evaluated the feasibility of lowering speed limits, including consideration of a 20 mph target speed, which is being implemented in select communities and locations throughout Wisconsin. The study included an evaluation of roadway environments and characteristics, assessment of geographic context, review of crash history, and measurement of prevailing traffic speeds. Based on this analysis, Mr. Turchi determined that the Village of Park Ridge may legally establish 20 mph speed limits on all Village streets, apart from Sunset Avenue and Green Avenue north of STH 66, as well as STH 66 (Main Street), which is under the jurisdiction of the State of WI.

If the Village chooses to go forward with this speed limit change it will require that all existing 25 mph signs be replaced with new 20 mph signs. The cost of this change will be minimal, as existing signposts can be utilized, so it’s just a matter of changing out the sign plate on the existing post. The cost of each sign plate is estimated to be less than \$50 per sign.

If you’d like to learn more about why reducing the speed limit makes sense, please reference the following link:

https://www.20splenty.org/vision_zero

Pedestrian injury severity and deaths change significantly with increased speed. For more information related to this:

[www.https://aaafoundation.org/research/impact-speed-pedestrians-risk-severe-injury-death/](https://aaafoundation.org/research/impact-speed-pedestrians-risk-severe-injury-death/)

Test Your Drinking Water

submitted by **Dan McFarlane, Trustee**

For nearly seventeen years, I've served on the Portage County Groundwater Citizens Advisory Committee or GCAC, and one thing I've learned is that if you have a private well, regular water testing really matters.

In Park Ridge, our sandy soils allow water to move quickly into the groundwater. That's good for recharge, but it also means pollutants may not get filtered out very well. Nitrogen from lawn fertilizer and other sources can turn into nitrate and end up in groundwater. I've had my own well tested several times since living in the Village, and nitrate has been detected in my water. The presence of nitrate is a reminder that human activities on our yards and streets can affect what we drink.

Nitrate is a concern because you can't see it, smell it, or taste it. The only way to know if it's in your drinking water is to have your water tested. High nitrate levels can be especially risky for infants under six months old and people who are pregnant or may become pregnant. Nitrate has also been linked to other health concerns, including thyroid issues and increased risk of colon cancer.

Private well owners should test for bacteria and nitrate at least once a year. A local testing option is the local UW-Stevens Point Water and Environmental Analysis Lab. Their basic Homeowner Package is currently listed at \$78 and includes common private well tests like bacteria and nitrate.

While no one wants another expense, the cost of testing is minimal compared to many things we pay for every month, including cell phone plans. For a relatively low cost, a water test gives you important information about something your family drinks every day.

You can also contact Portage County Planning & Zoning / Water Resources or Portage County Health and Human Services for local well testing information and possible screening events. Testing is simple, results are confidential, and it's an inexpensive way to know what's in your water. Please help to keep your family safe.

In Memoriam

We are sorry to report the recent passing of long time Village resident, Joan Dorschner. She served as a Village Trustee in the early 2000's.

<https://www.shudafuneral.com/obituaries/Joan-Claire-Dorschner?obld=48266223>

Partisan Primary Election August 11

The Partisan Primary Election is August 11, 2026. Polls are open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Early in-person absentee voting is available July 28 through August 6 (no Friday, Saturday or Sunday) at the Village Hall during regular office hours of 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Registered voters may request an absentee ballot by mail at [www.https://myvote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov)

New Bike Racks at Village Hall

Last year, the Village Board approved the purchase of bike racks for visitors to use while visiting the Village Hall. Now that spring is here, two bike racks have been installed at the Village Hall.

The two bike racks have a powder-coat over the galvanized finish that will add an extra layer of protection to make the racks more durable and long-lasting. Both bike racks also have a lean bar. The lean bar offers Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) cane-detection compliance. The lean bar also makes the bike rack safer and provides the bike with more support when the rack is in use. Residents are strongly encouraged to lock their bikes when utilizing the bike racks.

Thank you to Village Trustee Kristin Paulson for ordering the bike racks. Thank you to Shawn and Kristin Paulson for installing the two bike racks.





Village of Park Ridge
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Village Board and Staff Contact Information

President	Daniel Holloway	dholloway@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-459-2882
Trustees	Gord Renfert	grenfert@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-252-9239
	Kristin Paulson	kpaulson@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-209-7417
	Joe Thompson	jthompson@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-839-6402
	Dan McFarlane	dmcfarlane@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-252-5406
	Clerk	Anne Arndt	clerk@vi.parkridge.wi.gov
Treasurer	Melissa Clark	treasurer@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-343-1590
Fire Chief (SPFD)	JB Moody	Non-Emergency	715-343-1833
Zoning Administrator	Lon Butcher	lbutcher@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	207-373-8421
Diggers Hotline	John Kraft	krfty605@charter.net	715-498-7700
Crossing Guard	Lois Miller	clerk@vi.parkridge.wi.gov	715-343-1590

Volunteers Wanted

- Zoning Committee and Zoning Board of Appeals - chair and alternate members needed
- Chief Election Inspector and Election Inspectors (paid position)
- Substitute crossing guard 8-8:30 and 3:30-4, school year only (paid position)

Please contact the Village Clerk to volunteer.