

Shabbona Express

August, 2024

Village Government News

By Joshua Snyder

July's regular board meeting was very brief, lasting around 11 minutes. Not much was discussed beyond the typical affairs such as approving the monthly bills and payroll.

The closed executive session that was scheduled to be at the tail of the regular meeting was cancelled. While the Shabbona Express is not privy to the details of the closed sessions, we are aware that they have purchased the Small Engine Repair Shop that Tom Greenwell ran and was passed to his children on his passing.

Events

- August 3** – Farmer's Market @ 8 AM – 12 PM @ Purdy Park
- August 10** – Farmer's Market @ 8 AM – 12 PM @ Purdy Park
- August 17** – Farmer's Market @ 8 AM – 12 PM @ Purdy Park
- August 17** – Community Game Night @ 6 PM - 9 PM @ 104 W Comanche Ave (Up Realty)
- August 24** – Farmer's Market @ 8 AM – 12 PM @ Purdy Park
- August 26** – Village Board Meeting @ 7 PM @ Village Hall (206 S Blackhawk St)
- August 30** – Game Night & Light Meal @ 5:30 PM @ Shabbona Community Church
- August 31** – Farmer's Market @ 8 AM – 12 PM @ Purdy Park

Local Business Purchased by Village

By Joshua Snyder

The Village has purchased the Greenwell Small Engine Repair Shop. The Village has not yet stated their intentions with the property nor the cost of planned changes to the property.

According to DeKalb County records, the property was purchased on 7/26/2024 for \$30,000. The Village has been eyeing this property and others for a while now and appropriated \$69,000 for property purchases in this fiscal year. That leaves \$39,000 appropriated to purchase other properties.

Just like Native American Reserves, Village property is tax exempt which reduces the tax base of all taxing districts the property is in.

Inside we have a brief history of the repair shop and why they decided to sell to the Village.

Shabbona Express



Tom's Small Engine Repair Shop Shutdown by Village

The following is a brief history of the repair shop and why they decided to close down their business and sell the shop to the Village. It is written by Barrie Greenwell and unedited.

I was asked to comment on the events and actions of the Shabbona Village Board of late.

While my first impulse was to lash out at what I feel to be completely illegal procedures taken by the board, I felt it might be best to reflect on the evolution that has evolved to:

TOM'S SMALL ENGINE REPAIR SERVICE

My dad purchased the shop when I was a teenager. At that time, it was a wood shop where we built furniture for friends and family. We refurbished horse drawn wagons, stage coaches, hurst, and buggies. We used these in the Shabbona Centennial Parade where we had a stage coach robbery, gunfight, and victims of the gun fight loaded in the hurst. A lot of great memories.

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My father was gifted in the way of tinkering. He could figure out ways to use parts (Not designed or intended for different machines) but could be modified to repair what ever he might be working on. I have always joked about his salesmanship abilities made it possible for him to sell a horse fly to a horse. These skills lead to people stopping in the shop and asking him if he could fix whatever they might have needed repaired. Thus, the tinkering garage evolved into a small engine repair shop. The Property Deed reads (2) Sheds Zoned Commercial Small Engine Repair

In the early 2000s the Briggs and Stratton Company approached my father with an offer to build a two-story building on his location and make him a Briggs and Stratton Sales and Service Center for the Midwest Region. (This would have generated a lot of sales tax)

The Shabbona Village Board turned him down. This led to a heated debate where as a board member accused my father of owing tax dollars for parts sold. My father pulled receipts from his pocket showing taxes were paid. My father stated that as long as he doesn't mark up the parts for a profit then there is no more tax money due.

My understanding is that in 2010, the village took him to court over this issue and my father won. Thus, the war continued and business continued in the same manner.

Fast forward to 2020. My father went down with a stroke. I stopped at the shop to check on things. The two men at the shop asked about my father's health and stated that he was in their prayers. They said they would gladly take care of things until he was back on his feet. They told me how they really enjoyed coming to the shop, fixing things for people, and providing a service to the community. I asked if they had keys to the shop? They replied yes, do you want them? My reply was that if my father trusted them with keys, so do I. Keep doing what you are doing and thank you for your support.

This has proven to be one of the smartest decisions I have made in life. These gentlemen have been incredible. They have helped me clean the place up, complete some of the maintenance, and continue to provide a valuable service to the community. They told me that when they first approached my father to work with him his response was quote:

(IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO MAKE MONEY GO HOME. WE DON'T MAKE MONEY HERE WE SIMPLY PROVIDE A SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY!!)

Both gentlemen laughed and said yes, we don't make money here. These gentlemen have been known to provide a pickup and delivery service for the equipment they were asked to work on. In some cases, if they knew the person was on hard times, they didn't even charge them for that part of the service.

I am a firm believer in GOD and Karma. A building with life in it will not rot. A service to the community is good Karma. These gentlemen have provided both and I can't thank them enough for their efforts. Efforts for which they have never requested a dime from me. They enjoy having a place to tinker and get great pride in helping the members of their community.

On too 2023. My father died in 2020 and my step mother refused to let us do anything with anything. This is typical to want to hang on to anything related to someone you lose. Out of respect for her we did exactly that, nothing.

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When she passed on Mother's Day of 2023, we started in cleaning out the house and garage they had lived in for over 30 years.

During the garage sale a great number of people approached my sister and I requesting that we not let the shop close down as it was sorely needed in this community.

HISTORY OF INVOLVMENT WITH THE MAYOR

Shortly after my father died, the mayor called my sister in Tennessee and proceeded to abrade her with issues about the shop. He intimidated her to the point that she called me in tears about what to do with him and his accusations about our property. I promptly got his number from her, called him, and set up an appointment with him and my step mother. (Trish Greenwell)

During this meeting I asked how and why he would contact my sister in Tennessee rather than the woman whom was just down the street, had lived in the town her entire life, and was the obvious owner of the property. He refused to say how he got my sister's number and claimed he didn't want to bother a grieving widow. I replied with and yet you are OK with trying to steal her property.

He claimed the village was interested in the property and that he was willing to offer \$2,500.00 for the property. I asked if he was done insulting us or if he would like to continue? He continued. They estimated it would cost \$30,000.00 to clear the lot for their planned beautification project. He claimed he had already approached the owner of the blue apartment building about purchasing the property but he was not interested. (My silent question here was who are you to shop a property you don't own?)

He then proceeded to tell me that the Village Ordinance violations could reach an unsustainable financial burden level. I told him that my younger brother owned a professional painting company, my youngest brother owned a construction company, and that I owned my own company dealing with electrical. Hammer away. He then told me my electric service was unsafe and that he had called COM ED. I thanked him. COM ED eventually showed up to fix the issue. He claimed the building was not compliant because there was no water. I laughed and said it is a garage, there has never been water. He then said that with no utilities they can condemn it and tear it down. I informed him that the tax deed says shed and sheds are not required to have utilities.

The meeting was on a Wednesday. He told me the concerns he had with the property and I called him on Friday to inform him all issues had been taken care of.

The mayor claimed he wanted the property for a park bench seating area to beautify the down town area. I laugh because the only way to see the property is if you are standing in front of it, standing on Illini at Navajo, and or driving west bound on 30 and happen to look at the right angle at the right time. Your scenic view to the west is the brick wall of the library, to the east is the parking lot and 2 story brick walls of the new bed and breakfast, to the south is the 2-1/2 story blue wall of the apartment building, and to the north is the railroad tracks with the back yards of private properties.

The mayor then claimed he wanted the property for a village parking lot with a pass through at the rear of the property. This is laughable because he doesn't do his homework. If he did any homework, he would discover that the distance between the Library and the Blue Apartment Building with their gas lines would not grant room for a vehicular drive through.

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Not to mention the fact that trying to get another access to a State Highway from I.D.O.T would be almost impossible because that would create 3 access points to a major highway within a total of 400 feet or less.

Now we move to I.D.O.T. minimum space requirements for parking spaces. At just under 20' wide by 20' long with a minimum vehicle travel access of 20' behind parking spaces, you will be lucky to get 4 to 6 parking spaces out of my entire property barring there are no handicap spaces which are double the size. This layout will also require patrons to back the distance of my lot, make a reverse corner maneuver, and back onto the highway. (can you see any fender benders here?)

VILLAGE BOARD ENCOUNTERS

Almost immediately after we completed cleaning out my father's house and garage, we got an abandoned building notice from the village with a list of code violations. My youngest brother and I went to the village meeting where they told us we had 60 days to address all of the issues. This would take us to the end of the year. The Village Board chose to disregard what they told us and proceed immediately with the abandoned building codes. I am now 3 months in late fees for an abandoned building that has never been abandoned. I have completed all repairs with the exception of a little more tuck pointing and painting. This could not be completed at this time due to weather. A village board member told me the place has never looked better.

At the most recent board meeting I was allowed to speak to a silent band of sheep whom refused to answer any of my questions. They just sat there staring at me. I finally laughed, gave up, and sat down. When the gentlemen after addressed the same issue of abandoned building, I couldn't help but comment. This comment was responded to by the mayor screaming: YOU SHUT UP YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO TALK! I was so impressed with this professionalism that I had to comment again. As I expected I got the same exceptional response: YOU SHUT UP YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO TALK.

The American Concept of Innocent until proven guilty has completely illuded this village board and the dictator controlling them. They have appointed themselves Judge, Jury, and Executioners.

They have no intention of utilizing the justice system. Their new plan is to claim you guilty, fine you, put leans against your property, and or turn you over to collections to damage your credit rating.

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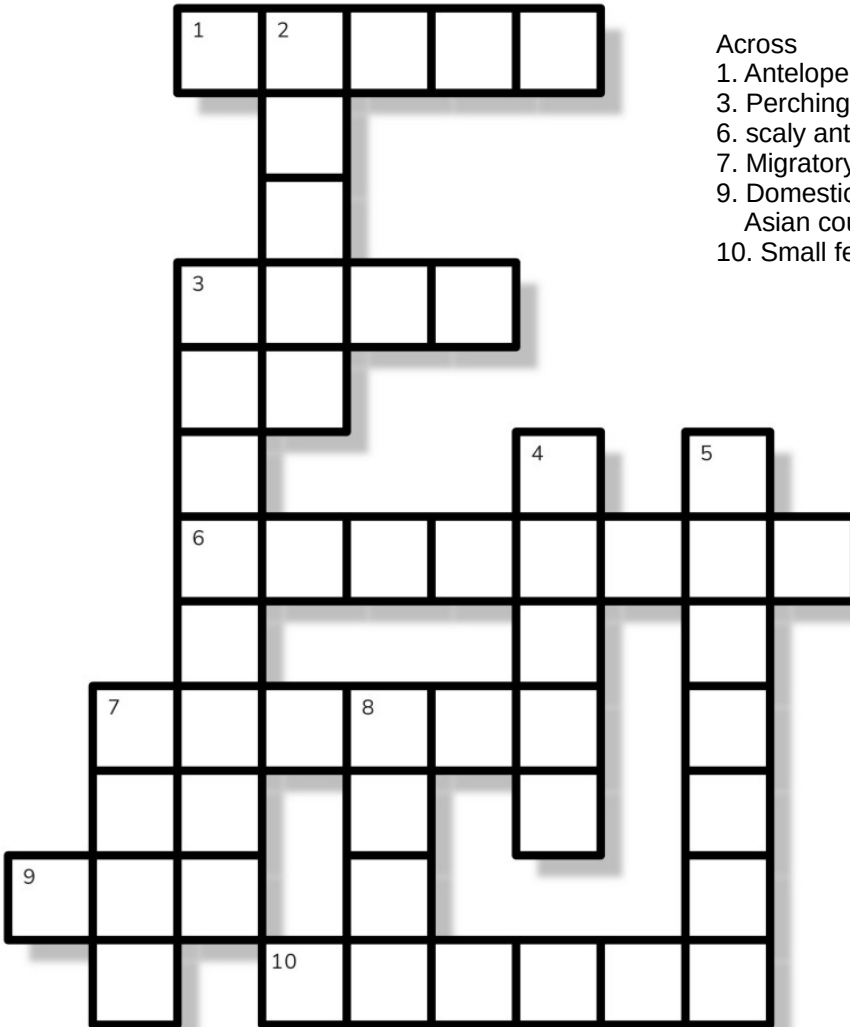
I would like to add a saw blade and knife sharpening shop to the small engine repair shop but I am quite sure this village board will never allow it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Thanks:

Barrie Greenwell
Alias: Bear

Shabbona Express



Across

1. Antelope with a strange nose
3. Perching bird of prey
6. scaly anteater
7. Migratory fish of the Pacific
9. Domesticated ox that is found in Central Asian countries
10. Small ferocious predator

Down

2. Flying creature
3. This animal is known for its long migrations in the ocean
4. Loyal canine breed often used for hunting
5. Tallest living land animal
7. Flippers in the sea
8. Small, secretive animal that lives underground

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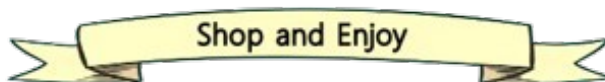
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Shabbona Farmers Market



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