

January 16, 2017

Mike and I met with Jeff Hepler, Village Manager and Police Chief of Augusta. He was very open with us about his community and mentioned he has been their village manager for the past 4 years. He also has been in law enforcement for the past 42 years. He has been the Police Chief since 1982.

He feels because of age, their infrastructure is their top priority in planning for the future of Augusta. He mentioned they have a water line that is 90 years old and that concerns him. They are currently in the planning stages.

He seems to be very comfortable with his job and the people he meets as the village manager. Does extra little things to help the elderly there, such as plowing driveways in the winter. He feels he has a good sense of his community, the people who live there, and their concerns.

He meets every Monday morning, for about an hour, with 2 of the council members, just to stay in touch.

He spent 2 hours with us and went into detail about the nuances of his village, letting us know he is deeply involved with the people there.

He answered all our questions and seemed eager to share with us. We enjoyed speaking with him.

Questions for Municipalities

1) What businesses are in your community?

Restaurants, convenience store, gas station, drugstore, and Knapan Industries.

a) Why do you think they were attracted to your community?

Good foot traffic given we are out the middle of farmland.

b) Do you offer any incentives to small businesses?

No.

2) Do you have other ways to communicate to your residents besides your website?

We do not have a website. We send out a newsletters tucked in with the water bills 4 times a year.

a) Costs involved?

Our newsletter is done by our clerk.

3) Police Service: Do you have your own police department?

Yes.

a) What is your yearly budget for this police coverage?

=\$80,000 a year.

b) How long has it been established?

Since 1953.

c) How many officers on duty, full-time and part-time?

We have one full-time and three part-time officers.

d) What kind of coverage do you provide? (access to detectives, ordinances, hours, etc.)

Our police officers do ordinances.

4) Parks and Recreation:

Who provides the flowers for your community?

Our village.

a) Who pays for the flowers?

Our village.

b) Who maintains them throughout the season?

The DPW.

c) Who plants them?

The DPW.

5) How many DPW workers do you have currently?

One full-time and village manager helps out as needed.

a) What city services do your DPW workers provide? (Snow removal, leaf pick-up, weed control, junk pick-up, etc.)

Snow removal is done on the main streets and any streets that go where children walk to school. Plant and care for flowers.

6) What types of recreation do you offer your community?

Currently working on a walking trail.

7) What are the biggest challenges that your community faces?

Infrastructure improvement. Our water line is 90 years old.

8) What challenges has your community faced in the past, and how did you remedy those?

Residents felt they needed a village manager. Four years ago. Working on the yearly budget is still a challenge.

9) What are some of the ways in which you have encouraged your residents to be actively involved in their community?

We have a car show every year that our fire dept. sponsors.

10) Do you have an attorney that is present at any, or all, council/commission meetings?

No. If a legal problem comes up, we contact our attorney then by phone or email.