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VOLUME 31, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2016

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Concerned About The Changes In 911 Dispatching? Here's Who To Contact

If after reading the adjoining article residents who want to voice concerns about the State's change in policy might want to contact:

Alec Messina
Governor Rauner's Office
Policy Advisor, Environment & Energy
Alec.Messina@illinois.gov

Cindy Barbera-Brelle
State-wide 911 Administrator
911_Administrator@isp.state.il.us

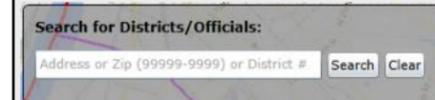
Herbert Simmons
St. Clair County Emergency Telephone Services Board
Herbert.simmons@co.st-clair.il.us
618-825-2160

State Rep. - 113th District Jay Hoffman
repjayhoffman@gmail.com
Phone: (217) 782-0104

State Rep. - 112th District Dwight Kay
dwightkay112@gmail.com
Phone: (217) 782-8018

State Senator - 57th District James F. Clayborne, Jr.
clayborne@senatedem.state.il.us
Phone: (217) 782-5399

If uncertain about your specific state representative go to the webpage http://gis.elections.il.gov/map_viewer_update/default.aspx and type your address in the upper left search box. It looks like this one.



Swansea Residents Need To Be Aware Of Potential Impact From 911 Changes

While the Village of Swansea just passed its budget for the fiscal year that began May 1, Illinois has now gone 11 months without a state budget. Yet political leaders who seem unable to manage the state's finances, apparently believe that they know best how to dispatch police and fire services in Swansea and other communities.

Back in 1991 taxpayers in St. Clair and Madison County decided to help fund 911 services locally by paying a fee on cell phone bills. This allowed the County to procure 911 equipment and technology more advanced than 95% of the entire state, and to do so without external funding.

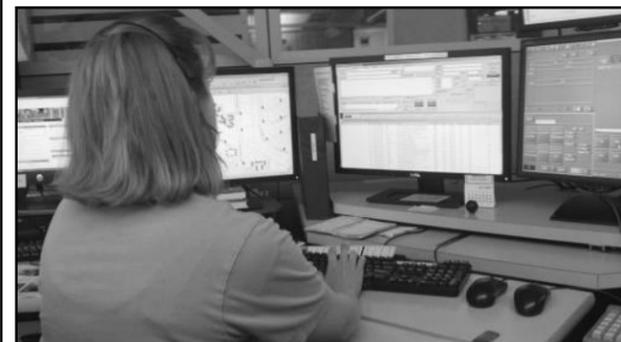
However in June of 2015, Illinois enacted Public Act 99-0006 into law. Among other new standards and requirements, that Act mandates the consolidation of 911 services across the State. The intent was to save money through that consolidation in order to fund upgrades and enhancements to 911 services state-wide. But as is sometimes the case with new laws, how they will be administered and the requirements they establish can strain common

sense, and create a structure that seems flawed, unfair, and even overreaching.

Through this Act the State of Illinois took away the authority of local government to levy and collect a 911 fee, made it a state fee instead, then increased the fee, while at the same time directing that the 911 dispatch centers in each County be reduced by half - an arbitrary number. In essence the State is requiring Swansea residents to pay a higher fee to the State but taking away the local services that have been funded through that fee in the past.

Mayor Ken Mueller summed up his feelings with a familiar phrase, "If it ain't broke, don't try to fix it." The system has worked well for about 25 years, and Swansea officials are concerned that it will not in the future.

Swansea police point to a recent example to illustrate their concerns. In 2015 a Swansea Dispatcher answered a 911 call reporting a "disturbance" on Marcella Drive. The dispatcher immediately put the call out to officers on the street who were on scene in less than two minutes.



On arrival a 9-year old child ran towards them with a man in pursuit. Seeing the officers, the man turned and ran back into an apartment. The child had been stabbed in the neck and his mother lie murdered in the parking lot. Quick

See 911..., page 6

News Briefs

Budget Passed and Posted On-Line

The Village Board of Trustees adopted a new budget for the fiscal year that began May 1, 2016. That budget can be found on the Village's website at <http://www.swanseail.org/>. Click on the Transparency tab on the top line menu of the Home page, and then click on Financial Information and then Budgets. Choose the top listing for the FY 2017 Annual Budget.

What you will find is a Summary page for each Fund or function followed by detailed pages for projected revenues and expenditures, both operational and capital. Line items are listed by name and number along the left edge followed by total columns for fiscal years 2015, 2016 and the current budget of 2017 (the fiscal year is designated by the year the budget ends, in this case April 2017).

The right side of the budget highlights monthly projections and "cash flow". Under many of the line items there is significant detail as to costs which should help to facilitate anyone's understanding.

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Board Adopts Formal Credit Card Policy

While the Village of Swansea has never had an issue with the misuse of Village issued credit cards, in light of some issues in other communities the Board of Trustees formalized the policies and procedures governing the use of such cards and adopted those as a formal addition to the Employee Handbook.

Most of the requirements are simple common sense and each Village employee issued a credit card understood what usage would be inappropriate. The new rules simply reinforce that understanding and ensure that the rules are clear to others in the future as well.

Contract Awarded For HVAC Replacement In New Government Center

As part of the renovation of the building at 1444 Boul Avenue, which will become the new Swansea Government Center, the Board awarded a contract to All Seasons Heating and Cooling for the replacement of the three furnaces and air conditioners. When buying the building, the Village knew that one of the furnaces and one of the air conditioners had been cannibalized for parts to keep others functional.

But the remaining units are also at least 27 years old. The Village considered multiple options from three different companies but in the

end elected to replace all three units, choosing high efficiency models which should help reduce long-term operating costs and help maintain even temperatures throughout the building. All Purpose was the low bidder among the three.

Bids For New Roof Also Sought

At the same time the Board issued a Request for Bids to replace the roof on the building. This too was work that was anticipated when the building was purchased. The Village initially considered delaying the work for a year or two, but upon further examination decided to proceed at this time to replace the shingled roof. Bids were due May 19th and the Board is expected to award the contract at the June 6th meeting.

Government Center Projected To Relocate Sometime In July

While the Village is diligently working towards the eventual relocation of the Government Center staff and offices to the 1444 Boul Avenue building, it is still too early to project the exact move-in date. A lot of work still needs to be completed to get the building ready for staff. The Village will probably close the Administrative offices on a Friday in July and use that day to move and get staff settled in place. Business would then resume on the following Monday morning. Definite dates will hopefully be announced in the next issue.

Swansea Community Calendar - June 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
			Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Luncheon Stonewolf Golf Club 11:30-1:00pm	Swansea Farmer's Market - Opening Day 11:00am - 3:00pm Rural King Parking Lot		Rotary Club 5k Run Walk 7:00am Wolf Branch School
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Committee Meetings 6:00pm Govt. Center Village Board Meeting 7:00pm Govt. Center		Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting & Dinner Holiday Inn Fairview Heights 5:30pm	Swansea Farmer's Market 11:00am - 3:00pm Rural King Parking Lot	Chamber of Commerce Morning Mingle 7:45am - 9:00am Recreation Center Fairview Heights City Hall, 10025 Bunkum Rd	Swansea Park Board Meeting 7:00am Norman Lehr Center Swansea Patriots Meeting 8:00am Norman Lehr Center
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Flag Day	Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours FCB Bank - Swansea 5:00-7:00pm	Swansea Farmer's Market 11:00am - 3:00pm Rural King Parking Lot		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Police & Fire Youth Academy					
	Committee Meetings 6:00pm Govt. Center Village Board Meeting 7:00pm Govt. Center			Swansea Farmer's Market 11:00am - 3:00pm Rural King Parking Lot		
Father's Day						
26	27	28	29	30		
				Swansea Farmer's Market 11:00am - 3:00pm Rural King Parking Lot		

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Swansea Farmer's Market

The crops for May were fantastic and June has the promise of being a good month. The Swansea Farmer's Market will continue to have a different local restaurant or charitable organization cook up good eats every week, sometimes for FREE.

You will find the market in the parking lot of Rural King at 2801 N. Illinois Street, in Swansea. It operates every Thursday, rain or shine, 11:00am until 3:00pm. Come out and see what they have to offer and perhaps grab a bite to eat.

For additional information, you may contact Norm Geolat 978-8753, swanseafarmersmarket@yahoo.com or visit their Facebook page as Swansea Farmers.



Street Overlays To Begin Mid-June: Some Streets Added

Residents living in the area north of Morgan and east of 17th Street will soon be driving on new asphalt pavement. Illinois American Water Co. and the Village reached an agreement to share costs and the contractor is now under contract. The asphalt overlay is a bonus resulting from the water company's earlier replacement of mains in the area.

The Village will also add several streets to the project so that all oil and chip streets in that area are resurfaced. This includes:

- Roger Avenue from N. 17th to N. 16th
- West Belle Street from N. 17th to N. 16th
- Jay Avenue from N. 17th to N. 16th
- Caseyville Avenue south of Morgan to the "Y" with Kinsella.

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News Briefs

Village Board Terminates Contract On Sewer Main Project

Frustrated with workmanship and lack of progress, the Village Board has declared the contractor who is replacing a portion of the sanitary sewer main leading to the Western Avenue Lift Station to be in default of their contract. The project runs north from the end of Kingsbury Drive behind properties at the end of Meta, Lindenwood, and Shawn Drives.

Noting that the contractor's work was defective and not completed within the time limits of the contract, the Village gave notice on May 5th that their contract is terminated. The Village also gave notice to the contractor's surety company. A surety provides a Performance Bond which insures a contractor and guarantees completion of a project if the contractor fails to do so.

There have been numerous issues with the contractor and project. The Village recently televised the installed

sewer mains and that inspection documented multiple locations where the line was not installed at the correct and consistent 'downhill' grade. The line instead has 'peaks and valleys' which prevent gravity flow of wastewater towards the lift station. In another area, a section of main through a creek bed appears to have separated, allowing creek water into the sanitary sewer. Therefore, it may be necessary for entire sections of the newly installed pipe to be excavated and replaced.

Residents in the area of the project have had to deal with ruts in yards, damage to trees, and construction debris that the contractor failed to correct. While the Village would prefer to step in and address those issues, it is bound to follow contractual procedures to ensure the best possible result for Village residents.

It will therefore take some time to work through the logistics, but the Village is moving as quickly as possible to remedy the situation.

Additional Sewer Projects Included In FY 2017 Budget

A number of additional sewer projects are planned for the current fiscal year, and others are already underway or getting ready to start. For example, replacement of the sewer main in the area of Marcella and Castellano Drives is currently under construction. The project should be completed quickly.

A bid opening scheduled for May 25th will select a contractor to replace the sewer main along Shae-Fries drive and within that vicinity. Work will probably begin in June and take two months or so.

Once the issues have been resolved with the Phase II section of the main leading to the Western Avenue Lift Station, the contractor already selected for Phase III will begin replacement of the main northward behind Erwin, and along part of Englewood and Lakefront Drives - also about a two month project.

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News Briefs

Leaf Burning Ends 6/15

June 15th is the last day of the season to burn yard waste for this Spring. The fall burn season will begin October 1st through November 30th. Burning of yard waste is only allowed in Swansea on Wednesday's and Saturday's from 11:00am until 4:00pm, and between specific dates.

In between residents may compost, use Republic Services yard waste collection (call 618 656-6883), or take their yard waste to St. Louis Compost, located at 3521 Centerville Ave. in Belleville (call 618 233-2007).

Regulating the burning of yard waste is an attempt to balance the rights of property owners with the rights of those with respiratory conditions.

Swansea Gives "Lamp of Learning" Awards

"Lamp of Learning" awards are given each year by the Village of Swansea to eighth graders graduating from High Mount and Wolf Branch schools to students who have demonstrated exemplary achievement in and out of

the classroom. This year's recipients are Alexis Mitchell and Abbey Meirink from High Mount School, and Chris Bishop and Genna Haas from Wolf Branch School.

Peddlers and Solicitors Must Have A Permit

Salespeople who go door-to-door are referred to as peddlers, hawkers or solicitors in Village ordinances. A peddler or hawker is someone who is selling a tangible product, merchandise or ware on the spot. A solicitor is any person trying to obtain orders for the purchase of goods or services, such as magazine subscriptions, or who is seeking to obtain donations.

The Village requires all such persons to first apply for a license. The license application requires pertinent information about the specific person wishing to peddle or solicit, and the company they work for. If the applicant passes a local background check, an original license is issued, and the applicant is required to produce that license on request to verify they have complied with Village

ordinances. The license is distinguishable from other communities with the Village of Swansea's name, address and logo.

Residents may ask any solicitor or vendor who comes upon their property to produce this license. If they cannot, or produce one from another community, or produce one that appears to be a copy or fake, ask them to leave and then call the Police Department. Criminals sometimes pose as solicitors to try to gain access to your home.

Soliciting is only allowed between the hours of 9:00a.m. and 6:00p.m., Monday through Saturday. It is prohibited on Sundays and national or state holidays.

Residents may prevent all solicitors and peddlers from knocking on their door, even if they have a valid permit, by placing a "NO PEDDLERS. NO SOLICITORS" sign in their window or storm door. Residents can simply print one on a computer printer and post that. Upon seeing it, peddlers and solicitors must walk away and not disturb the resident.

Residents Are The First Line Of Defense Against Mosquitoes

In light of the news stories about the Zika virus, and on top of past concerns about West Nile virus, some residents might be asking if the Village is going to do anything this summer to address mosquitoes.

But to be effective, fogging for mosquitoes must be conducted in the evening or early morning hours, with temperatures between 60 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and with low wind speeds. In addition, the aerosol fog kills only adult mosquitoes that come into direct contact with the insecticide droplets. Once the fog dissipates, it is no longer effective.

So while the mosquito population in the immediate area of a street may be reduced by fogging, it does not prevent mosquitoes from re-entering that area, and does nothing about mosquitoes in residential yards.

To effectively control the "house" mosquito, which is responsible for 70% of West Nile Virus, you need to kill its larvae. That mosquito breeds most prolifically in stagnant water. And since House mosquitoes don't fly too far from where they hatch, your

best defense is to eliminate breeding areas within your own back yard or neighborhood.

Ways you can eliminate standing water include:

- Get rid of old tires, cans, or similar containers that tend to hold water.
- Fill in depressions in your yard that tend to retain water, or create ways for them to drain.
- Keep drainage ways, ditches and culverts free of weeds, high grass and trash so water will drain and the ditch dry out between storms.
- Clean out roof gutters where leaves can cause water to stand.
- Cover trash containers to keep out rain, or drill a hole in the bottom.
- Empty wading pools at least once a week and store indoors. Use other pools regularly.
- Fill in any tree rot holes or hollow stumps that might hold water.
- Change birdbath water weekly.
- Store boats upside down, cover them, or remove rainwater weekly.
- If you have an ornamental pond add fish that eat mosquito larvae.

The Village will also work towards eliminating standing water on its properties, including in its parks.

The mosquito that primarily spreads Zika, dengue, chikungunya, and other viruses - the aedes aegypti - lives in tropical, subtropical, and some temperate climates. While the CDC map suggests those mosquitos are not expected to reach Illinois in 2016, the same techniques for eliminating standing water will work to prevent their larvae from hatching.

People should also regularly protect exposed skin with EPA-registered insect repellents containing DEET, which when used as directed should be safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.



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Village Aggressively Enforcing Typical Ordinance Violations

As is typical at this time of year, the Village of Swansea steps up enforcement of some common and recurring ordinance violations. What the Village would really prefer is that every resident understand and do their part to maintain their own property and not allow it to negatively impact the community at large.

The following are recurring violations that the Village sees on a regular basis. To avoid being cited for any of these, residents should bring their property into compliance and maintain it that way.

Tall Grass and Weeds

Grass and weeds that exceed 8 inches in height are declared a nuisance in Swansea. So not keeping your lawn cut can result in the issuance of an ordinance violation and fine. If residents fail to comply in a timely manner, a Public Works crew may step in and cut the grass. However, when the Village does so, it charges standard time and material hourly rates for each worker and the equipment used. The total cost could be hundreds of dollars per cutting - significantly higher than a resident

would pay a commercial lawn care company. The Village then files a lien against the property to ensure it will collect payment for having to cut the grass. This results in an added cost to the property owner. The Village does not want to be in the business of cutting grass on private property and the charges and lien are meant to encourage every property owner to address this issue themselves.

Grass or Weeds Deposited

A related and common violation is the depositing or blowing of grass clippings and leaves onto the public right-of-way and into public drainage ditches and storm sewers. Drainage ways need to be kept clear of leaves and other materials, if not being mulched, grass discharged from your mower should be directed back into your yard, not onto the street.

Any such material blown into the street can end up clogging storm sewers and drainage ways, and thus cause rain water to backup onto your property, your neighbors property, or into the street where it could cause an accident to occur.

Abandoned Vehicles

Another prevalent nuisance is an "abandoned vehicle" - defined as any motor vehicle in a state of disrepair, rendering it incapable of being driven in that condition, or any motor vehicle or other vehicle that has not been moved for seven (7) or more consecutive days and is apparently deserted. This provision targets the stereo-typical car on blocks in a yard full of weeds. The police department actively assists Code Enforcement staff in prompting compliance.

General Debris

Then there is a category called "general debris". Residents can be cited for the accumulation of brush piles, old tires, appliances or furniture, and piles of trash or other debris in their yard. All are violations under the Village's property maintenance code.



Clarifying Yard Sale Rules and Regulations

There is apparently some confusion among a few residents as to Swansea's requirements relative to yard sales. The following might help to clarify.

"Yard Sale" is technically defined as any display of merchandise for the purpose of exchanging it for legal tender or barter at a location not otherwise regularly used or specifically designated for the sale or exchange of merchandise. Events commonly known as "garage sales", "tailgate sales", "flea markets", "house sales", and "moving sales", all fall under that definition.

A license is required for each yard sale and may be obtained at the Swansea Government Center. One day advance notice is required to process a license for a single family sale and five days advance notice is required to process and issue a license involving multiple (3 or more) locations, such as a neighborhood yard sale. It is a violation of the Swansea code to hold yard sale within the Village of Swansea without first obtaining a license.

Even when licensed, there are limitations.

- Yard sales can not be conducted for a period greater than three successive calendar days.
- Yard sales are allowed only between 7:00am and 5:00pm on the day(s) of the sale.
- Yard sales can not be held more than three times within the same calendar year at the same location.
- Yard sales can not be held less than thirty (30) days after the last day of a previous yard sale at the same location.
- It is unlawful for anyone to conduct a retail selling business using a yard sale license, or to engage in any sales other than those of junk, second hand, antique or other used or discarded items of property.
- Any booth or concession stand can not be placed in the roadway.
- Signs for yard sales cannot exceed four (4) square feet, cannot be erected

more than five (5) days prior to the scheduled sale and must be removed immediately following the event.

- No such signs are to be attached to utility poles or Village owned sign posts, or placed within the public right-of-way along streets.
- Any sign must have the name and address of the license holder along with the license holder's signature printed on the back side.
- Anyone found guilty of violating any provision of the Village's Yard Sale Ordinance can be fined from \$50.00 to \$500.00.



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Continued from Page 1 – Swansea Residents Need To Be Aware Of Potential Impact From 911 Changes

action by the police officers saved that young boy's life. The actions of the dispatcher put them on scene in time to do so.

Would the result be the same if Swansea Police were dispatched by someone else? Perhaps. But suppose that same "disturbance" call came into a consolidated dispatch center handling police and fire calls for over 50 different entities. And suppose at the same time a call came in for a major traffic accident on I-64. Everyone who has a cell phone calls in at the same time to report the traffic accident. At that moment, where in the hierarchy would you expect to find a single call reported only as a "disturbance"? This may be a likely scenario in consolidated dispatch centers like the state is mandating. But any tendency to minimize the "disturbance" call like this case might have cost a young boy his life as well as his mother's.

As another example, two Swansea Police Officers were in the Swansea 911 Dispatch Center finishing some reports when a 911 call came in for

an armed robbery in progress at Jack in the Box. Having overheard, the Officers immediately proceeded to the restaurant even before the telecommunicator finished taking the call. They arrived to capture the robber as he was exiting the restaurant with gun in hand. Separate Swansea's dispatching from its police officers and in this case the minute or two it would have taken to dispatch them via radio probably would have resulted in the robber escaping.

The core goal of the new law is to convert all of Illinois to the Next Generation (NextGen) 911 system by 2020. That's important because some areas of the State have no 911 capabilities at all. And in other areas several competing taxing bodies within one county provide 911 services to smaller populations. But in St. Clair County and Madison County, neither of these situations is the case.

Each of the two counties have already invested over \$5 million to locally provide NextGen 911 service, so they are well ahead of the new

law's goal. Their forward thinking has in fact saved Illinois the substantial cost of doing so here. Some other locations are rumored to have purposely delayed converting to NextGen so the State would have to pick up the costs.

In St. Clair County there are eight Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs): Belleville, Swansea, Fairview Heights, O'Fallon, E. St. Louis, Cahokia, Centreville and CENCOM. CENCOM evolved from the previous dispatching center at the Sheriff's Department, and now handles 911 calls for the Sheriff and most of the smaller, rural communities as well as many volunteer fire departments.

Back in the 1980's, Swansea police and fire were dispatched by the Sheriff's office, but as 911 came into being, Swansea and others broke away to handle their own dispatching. Swansea's reason for doing so was to have better control over the quality and timeliness of that dispatching and to improve response times when an emergency occurs.

But the new law will now force St. Clair County to reduce its eight PSAPs to four. As an illustration of the arbitrariness of that number Madison County has sixteen PSAPs and must reduce to eight. It would seem that if eight is the "right" number for Madison County, St. Clair, with its larger population and higher 911 call volume, would be justified with eight PSAPs as well.

The St. Clair County Emergency Telephone System Board already submitted a plan to the State for consolidation and within that plan designates that Swansea will lose its PSAP and either be consolidated with CENCOM or Belleville. The State approved their plan on April 26th. So unless the State changes

the law's requirements, Swansea seems destined to lose the ability to dispatch its own police and fire.

While in theory consolidation is supposed to save money, for Swansea it becomes another unfunded State mandate. Swansea, telecommunicators perform a lot of tasks in addition to dispatching. They answer non-emergency calls, provide Police Department reception for 3,500 walk-ins per year, monitor security cameras at the PD, Government Center and other locations on Village property, and provide administrative support to the officers and administration.

Consolidating with CENCOM means all of those duties must be performed by other new employees. Yet the Village would still be charged by CENCOM for dispatching services. Consolidating with Belleville in a co-location approach, means that dispatchers might still be able to answer non emergency calls and monitor security cameras, but the equipment and communication lines to allow that would need to be moved from the Swansea Police Department to Belleville's - at substantial cost. At the same time, someone still needs to be employed to provide reception and administrative services at the Police Department.

Under either approach, the Village does not expect costs to go down, but instead increase. So not only will Swansea residents need to use more of their tax dollars to support police operations, they will be paying a higher fee on their cell phone bills to

fund the conversion to NextGen 911 in other communities in the State.

The law allows an affected area to request an exemption from consolidation because of public safety, financial, or feasibility issues. However, Swansea has been advised that any such exemption request will not be approved and the St. Clair County Emergency Telephone Safety Board has stated that they will not request such a waiver for our County.

And this may not be the end. Communities could spend significant dollars to meet current consolidation requirements only to have a second, third, or more rounds of consolidation that make the initial investments a waste of money. A long term goal could become consolidation into a handful of large centers covering huge regions of the state. In other words, calling 911 in Swansea might connect you to a dispatcher in Springfield, Peoria or even Chicago, where that person is probably not familiar with Swansea or our area.

While now a call to the Swansea Police Department is answered by a human being rather than a recording, and a visit to the department results in you seeing and speaking to a human being, under this law that could all change. You may instead find an intercom phone on the wall that you will pick up and be connected to a person somewhere else - and maybe placed on hold until they have time to speak to you.



VILLAGE OF SWANSEA CONTACT INFO

Swansea Government Center
1400 N. Illinois Street
Hours: 8:00am - 4:30pm, M-F
www.swanseail.org

Administration, Mayor's Office, Village Clerk, Utility Billing & Public Works
Phone: 618-234-0044
swanadm@swanseail.org

Building, Zoning, Permits
Phone: 618-355-0280
swanbnz@swanseail.org

Swansea Police Department Emergency: 911
Non-emergency: 618-233-8114
swanseap@swanseail.org

Swansea Fire Department Emergency: 911
Engine House: 618-234-3291

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