



# The Village Voice

Bremen Ohio's Monthly Newsletter

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## January 2015

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### Looking Back and Moving Forward

2014 is in the rearview mirror, and 2015 holds new opportunities.

In early 2014, we endured a harsh winter with extended periods of frigid temperatures and above-average snowfall. The snow and ice certainly kept our street crew busy! Eventually the sun finally prevailed, advancing us into the warmer seasons. During the year we saw improvements to the swimming pool, streets, and Howell Park. A growing number of people are making Howell Park a recreational destination.

During 2015, we are looking forward to more street and sidewalk improvements, enhancements to Howell Park, replacements of old sewer lines, and hopefully a strengthening state and national economy which would help our local businesses.

Watch for updates about the various projects in future editions of this newsletter.



### Welcome our New Village Administrator

As we enter the New Year, we also have a new administrator to oversee the village's daily operations. At their December meeting, the Mayor and Council confirmed the appointment of Jeffrey White as Village Administrator.

There are many aspects to his job including such diverse tasks as supervising employees, overseeing maintenance of streets, lands and buildings, water and wastewater operations, customer service, utility billing, managing contracts, coordinating with other government entities and agencies, swimming pool operations, among many other things.



So while he's settling into his new role, let's start by meeting Jeff...

#### Where are you from?

I grew up in the Village of Minerva Park which is a few miles south of Westerville. In terms of population, Minerva Park is somewhat smaller than Bremen. I went to high school in Westerville, which is also where I currently reside with my family.

I graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in Natural Resources, Policy and Planning. That was essentially land use planning and development with awareness of governmental regulations and processes.

My career has spanned both the public and private sectors. My private-sector experience includes starting and operating two different businesses. The first one was a commercial photography studio in Worthington. The second one was a financial services consultancy over the past several years. My public-sector experience was through my years of service with ODOT, helping to provide projects in support of traffic, population and economic growth in the Central Ohio area. I administered the environmental regulatory compliance program and managed projects through all phases of development from conceptual planning and alternatives analysis, through environmental impact studies, engineering design, real estate acquisition and construction.

### **What interested you about the position in Bremen?**

Working as a solo-entrepreneur for the past several years, I realized that I missed working in a team setting, serving the public. I wanted to find a public administration position at the local government level, and the Bremen opportunity came along at the right time. Bremen has attractive attributes as well as interesting opportunities and challenges. It's a good fit for me.

### **How did you come to pursue a career in public service?**

When I was growing up, my dad was the civil engineer for three communities in the Columbus area, plus a Colonel in the US Army Reserve. So starting from an early age, I was exposed to the concepts of public affairs, public works and public service. That carried over into my years as a Boy Scout during which I developed my leadership and citizenship skills and fueled my interests in outdoor pursuits and natural sciences. As a teenager growing up in Minerva Park, I worked on the leaf collection crew each autumn and helped research and write the community's first history publication. Then after college, I landed at ODOT where I was able to apply my natural resources degree, plus interests in archaeology and history,

blended with my familiarity with public works and engineering, while serving the public.

### **Tell us about your family.**

My wife Victoria and I celebrated our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014, and we have two children who are aging faster than we'd like. Andrew attends Columbus State and Elizabeth is a senior at Westerville North.

### **What do you like to do in your spare time?**

My time away from work is typically with family and friends, and doing home improvement projects. I also enjoy bird watching, local history, genealogy, fly fishing, hunting, bicycling, and canoeing. This time of year, I can also be found participating on Audubon Christmas Bird Counts. I've been the organizer of the Buckeye Lake Count ([www.BuckeyeLakeBirds.info](http://www.BuckeyeLakeBirds.info)) since 1987, and also enjoy participating on the Lancaster and Hocking Hills bird counts.

### **Ice skating? .... Maybe.**

As this newsletter is going to press, the ice skating rink is in the process of being set up inside the tennis court enclosure at Howell Park. The big question is whether we'll have low enough temperatures to freeze the water and keep it frozen. Access to the rink will be controlled by a locked gate, as both a public safety measure and to help prevent damage. Before going, please call Debbie Wolfe at (740) 475-7739, who will monitor the facility. She also will have access to loaner pairs of skates for those who need them.



### **Two more community members helping to make a difference...**



We owe a big Thank You to Bill Montgomery and Tony Michaels for stepping forward and volunteering to serve on the Zoning Committee. It's citizen participation like this that enables local government to function well.