

## Village of Phoenix Board & Administration

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Caleb Sweet

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# Village of Phoenix Newsletter

September 2019



## Message from the Mayor

With summer coming to a close we look ahead to fall and all the things that come with it. Our children will be starting back to school and with that comes added bus traffic and the school zone speed limit is back in effect. Leaves will be falling and piling up to be bagged and set to the curbside for our DPW team to pick them up for you.

The long awaited completion of the Lock Street water and sewer replacement project is near. Again, "Thank You" for your continued patience with the dust, noise and traffic patterns. It is a necessity that benefits all but has been a constant hindrance for those who live on or around the project streets.

Other projects have begun to take shape around the Village and we all look forward to their continued progress. The transformation of the development projects will be exciting to watch take place.

With the coming of Fall comes our great Locktoberfest celebration. Come spend a day downtown with friends and neighbors and enjoy a little fun, food and lots of entertainment!

As always, my proverbial door is always open for questions, comments or if you just want to chat.

*Mayor Caleb Sweet*



## Police Department News

As we approach a new school year I want to point out to motorists of new legislation cited below regarding in bus cameras and



finer associated with passing a school bus. The districts which employ these cameras will contact law enforcement for follow up and

ticketing with stiff fines. Our children and their safety are one of our top priorities in this Village and we would appreciate our motorists taking extra caution to be aware and to slow down in school zones.

ALBANY, N.Y. — A new state law will allow school districts to install stop-arm cameras on school buses to catch motorists who illegally pass stopped buses and help law enforcement issue tickets to those offenders.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo signed the bills, S4524B/A4950B, into law on Tuesday, according to a news release from Cuomo's office. As SBF previously reported, the law also allows school districts and local municipalities to submit an annual report to law enforcement to help track locations where these incidents occur most frequently. The ticket fines, which are \$250 for a first offense, and which the bill raises from \$250 to \$275 for a second offense and \$300 for a third offense, would be applied to the purchase of stop-arm cameras and GPS units placed on the buses, so school districts wouldn't have to pay for them. A motorist found to have violated the law will not receive points on their driver's license, and the violation can't be considered by insurance companies to issue penalties. Every year we get excited about our Halloween festivities that we do with our children, like trick or treating with the Chief and his officers, this year will be no

## Village Contact Information

[www.Villageofphoenix-ny.gov](http://www.Villageofphoenix-ny.gov)

### Mayor

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[csweet@Villageofphoenix-ny.gov](mailto:csweet@Villageofphoenix-ny.gov)

### Village Administrator

Jim Lynch (315) 695-1307

### Clerk's Office/D.P.W.

Roxanne Demo (315) 695-2484

Laura Gonzalez (315) 695-4084

Code Depart. (315) 695-1307

Village Fax (315) 695-3311

### Police Department

Non-Emergency (315) 695-2001  
For Emergency Please dial 911

different. However some added excitement will be the addition of “Grimsley’s Gorge” which will transform our Sweet Memorial building into a haunted house open for activities on October 25,26,27,31st- check them out on Facebook! As always we will be asking for donations of glow sticks for our little trick or treaters, they can be dropped right off at the Police Department/Village Clerk’s Office.

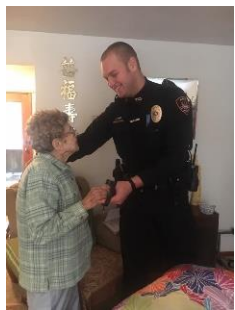
I now have to have a frank conversation with you, those of you that know me personally



know that I get called on a daily basis for a variety of police matters that should get called into 911 immediately. There are all types of police

emergencies and/or service calls, however if I get called I can’t get you police service faster than 911 can and in an emergency sometimes seconds can make a difference. I also personally answer all inbox messages on our Facebook page but again I will remind you that it is not monitored 24/7 and is not intended to report crimes or emergencies. It is perfectly fine to dial 911 when you need an officer, we do not man our station at all times, we are out patrolling the streets to keep you all safe. I am discussing this with you all because I have woken in the morning to find people leaving messages with reports of crimes in progress or “hey there is a girl staggering down the street”, I only want our citizens to get the quickest response to ensure their complete safety.

I also want to thank those of you who joined us on July 31st for our first annual community cookout, in my wildest dreams I could not have predicted what a great turn out that we had! I am completely impressed with the amount of citizens who made donations of food for this event and to our village officials who also came out to help, it



was a truly amazing night and I can’t wait to do it again. Thanks for showing your community pride and support making this a successful event.

I would also like to announce that

Officer Justus Stahr has returned to work in Phoenix and carry on his tradition of community policing, I’m sure many of you will agree that he is an asset to our mission. Officer Stahr had to complete his probation with the Sheriff’s Office in Onondaga County before he could return, join me in welcoming him back!

Every year we come together on 9/11 to remember those we lost on that day that



many of us will never forget. Please join us at 6:30pm in Henley Park as we pay tribute to a hero we lost this past month, NYSP Sgt. Jeffrey Cicora.

I hope to see all of you at our future events

such as Locktoberfest. I would love it if you stopped me and introduced yourself, as always please feel free to stop by or inbox me with any questions, comments, or concerns that I can help you with.

*Martin Nerber* – Police Chief



For more information call  
(315) 695-1307 or visit  
[www.Villageofphoenix-ny.gov](http://www.Villageofphoenix-ny.gov)

**September 11, 2019**  
**6:30 pm, Henley Park**  
**Community Vigil in Memory of those who lost their lives.**

*(Bring a candle and chair)*

**October 5, 2019**  
**11:00 am-8:00 pm – Locktoberfest**  
**State Street Business District**  
*Sponsored by Phoenix Rising*

## Village Administrator News

### How to Be Inspired and Ready for the Seemingly Impossible!

There are those days when you wake up feeling just right, ready to take on the day. But then there is a little voice inside your head that’s holding you back and it doesn’t quiet down. That idea that you were so passionate about once isn’t there anymore. You face the truth, sit back and finally accept that you don’t feel motivated enough to do anything.

It is natural for all of us to, at times, be stuck in a rut or overwhelmed. If you are not entirely motivated about your work, it might even be difficult to wake up and look forward to it every day. However, when you are drifting away, you should know that it doesn’t always have to be like this... Here are a few ways to regain inspiration and pick yourself back up:

#### **Connect the Dots**

At times, when you are trying to reach a goal, it might be impossible to connect the dots from where you currently are. You will

need to trust yourself. It might sound difficult right now. Trusting that you will reach your end goal—even when you don’t have the slightest clue of how—will help you.

Sometimes, you can’t connect dots when looking ahead; you have to take a step back and analyze. Then move ahead.

#### **Consider Your Work Environment**

Take a good look around your room, your office and maybe even your car... do these areas inspire you? It is quiet? Does it motivate you to do something? At times, one of the common reasons behind lack of inspiration is pushing ourselves to work in an environment we feel uncomfortable in. When you constantly try to discipline yourself in an environment you don’t want to, you feel less productive. Why not add some art to the walls? Maybe frame your favorite quote, change up your agenda or planner... maybe if you have the opportunity and you feel you are more energetic at night, why not work at night?

#### **Are You Forcing Yourself to Work?**

Do you often feel that you are trying to force your way into working or taking action? You could actually be working too hard.

The first thing many people think immediately after waking up is, “What do I need to do today?” When they do get the answer, it is often a downward spiral from there, as if your work and responsibilities have suddenly started to weigh you down.

Forcing yourself to work is like paddling upstream when what you need to do is paddle down it. When you wake up and spend time to picture the bigger things instead of the tiny details, visualize your bigger goals, you will soon see yourself working with all the inspiration and not forcing your way through things.

As your Village Administrator, I too have these same issues at times. I constantly change up my agenda and planner to better suit my daily tasks. As most people, throughout the course of my day, changes happen frequently and I have to adapt and juggle things around...family responsibilities and work related responsibilities often overlap and something needs to give.

I am very blessed with the opportunity to meet and greet residents on a daily basis. I have a nice quiet office on the 3rd floor but I am rarely in there! For me, I feel the most comfortable and productive around my coworkers, at the window talking to village residents, discussing ideas and concerns with business owners, visiting our waterfront and talking and learning from first time and



frequent boaters that visit our village. Remember, change is good, figure out what makes you perform at the best of your ability while minimizing stress in your daily life. Take time out to relax and enjoy your family and friends as well as the resources you have around you. Consider starting a hobby by yourself or with someone important to you... when you are happy and productive with yourself, all the other things in your busy lifestyle should hopefully fall into place.

Optimistically Yours,

*Jim Lynch* — Village Administrator

## D.P.W. News

The DPW crew has been doing various tasks all summer in all areas of the village. Lots of jobs including water, sewer, buildings and grounds, general roadwork, and some sidewalk replacements are a few that we have been working at. As the summer starts to come to an end the crew will be getting the village and equipment ready for the upcoming winter season.

The water and sewer project on Lock Street is moving along well with the water portion in its final stages and the sewer portion getting under way. All main line work and pavement repairs should be completed by winters start.

Yard waste and brush is still being collected each week through the village. Brush pick up will be coming to an end at the end of October. At this time most of our equipment will need to be set up for snow removal. We will only be collecting bagged yard waste until the snow starts to fall. Please don't put out any yard waste if there's a chance it could get mixed with snow because it just leaves greater mess for everyone once the snow melts. If anytime during the winter season residents need a place to take some yard waste because of wind or storm related issues please stop by the DPW and someone can assist you in a place to get rid of the debris.

I hope everyone had a great summer and please be mindful of our kids walking to and from school.

If anyone has any questions or concerns related to water, sewer or road issues please call the clerk's office and they will be sure to get in touch with someone from the DPW to help with any matter we can. Sincerely,

*John Kerfien* — D.P.W. Senior Crew Leader

## Codes News

### Must-Ask Questions about Housing Code Violations

Codes are about minimizing risk, so if your home is not in compliance, you could be in danger.

Whether or not anything in your home is in fact "to code" is a mystery to most homeowners. Depending on the work that's been done over the years – whether it's an air conditioning unit replacement, a bathroom vanity installation or electrical maintenance – there's a good chance it's not.

Most municipalities in the U.S. have adopted a set of building codes that establish standards for properties, aimed at ensuring the health, safety and general well-being of their occupants. The specificity of building codes range from requirements for ensuring a floor can bear an adequate load to the distance a toilet must be away from the wall.

The strictest attention is paid to new construction homes, where code inspectors will visit the property multiple times before it is completed. Inspectors will check the site repeatedly to ensure the foundation is poured correctly, walls are secured properly and even radon mitigation hardware is installed sufficiently.

Building codes can vary depending on differences in geography and climate, but they often follow similar standards and are accessible through your local government. However, despite being a part of every building process in incorporated municipalities throughout the country, they're often not well understood by property owners. Here are answers to common questions about residential building codes.

### Is Your House to Code? *Probably Not.*

A newly built home will be built to code, beginning with the plans and permits, and it will be checked each step of the way until a final inspection is performed and a certificate of occupancy is issued.

But once a resident moves into the home, that's often where code compliance goes off track.

Having someone perform a code inspection on an old house just gets you a laundry list of codes it doesn't meet. General inspectors do not check for code compliance, but rather they look for general issues with the home, such as poor workmanship in a finished basement or leaky plumbing that could be causing water damage.

When general inspectors do come upon some work that's been done, like a newly installed water heater that fails to follow

local standards, the rule is to note that it "doesn't meet current standards."

But a building code violation doesn't necessarily mean it has to be fixed, as long as you're maintaining your home properly. And if a code violation isn't posing a health threat or creating a nuisance to others, you're often in the clear. It's when the magnitude of the project reaches a certain point, like a complete overhaul of a room, than you need to follow the code's guidelines more closely.

If somebody's replacing a toilet in a 1910 house, I am not going to make them move walls around. If they're going to remodel the bathroom, and they're doing a substantial amount of work to it, or a total gut of a single-family home, we are going to make them make those type of corrections."

### Will It Kill Your Ability to Sell a House? *No.*

Existing homes often have a number of things that technically violate local code, though they don't necessarily pose an immediate danger. You wouldn't force somebody to bring a house up to code because if you did, none would ever sell.

A real estate transaction typically includes a general inspector who checks for deficiencies in the home or perhaps poor workmanship that could affect a person's desire to purchase it or a lender's willingness to issue a loan. Code officials, who check for code compliance, are rarely – if ever – involved in a real estate transaction.

### Does It Mean You're in Danger? *Maybe.*

While there are any number of things in your home that can stray from the adopted building code without posing an immediate threat to anyone, the codes are an effective way for the local government to require compliance to avoid harm to individuals.

The codes are all about minimizing risk, the International Code Council has established building codes for various property types that have been adopted throughout the U.S. and other countries.

Under the ICC's "International Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings, any lighting or electrical outlet near a swimming pool, for example, must adhere to strict distances from the pool and not be positioned directly above the water, reducing the possibility for accidental electrocution.

On the other side of the danger spectrum, the ICC's residential code also requires any hinged shower doors to swing outward, away from the shower. While a mandate that a shower door swing a certain direction intends to keep all who use it safe, a person

comfortable with the space would likely not be in immediate danger by pulling it inward.

**How Do You Know if It's to Code? Ask for Permits.**

Particularly if you're planning to purchase a home, there's good reason to want to ensure any major work was done to the local code requirements. You can always contact the Village for permits obtained for the home you're interested in – and also having a general inspector check the quality of work completed is an excellent idea.

It's when major work hasn't been permitted that a problem could arise, as most state or local laws dictate that the current homeowner is responsible for resolving any code violations. So if you buy a home and neglect to check for the permit on the kitchen addition the seller did a few years ago, you'll likely find yourself shouldering the cost of redoing it properly.

**Can You Fix a Code Violation? Yes.**

When the Village receives a code violation complaint, I typically will visit the property to verify if the complaint is valid. If it is, we will notify the property owner, explaining what corrections need to be made and how long they have to make them. In the event of a code violation on a construction site, I will put a hold on all work until the correction is made.

In either case – with a new or existing building – if the property owner doesn't take the proper steps to reach code compliance, I will typically allow some extra time, unless

it becomes clear the owner doesn't intend to correct the violation. The next step is prosecution by the Village attorney. Thankfully that's a really rare occurrence.

Once a code violation is identified, it will typically be corrected as quickly as possible because there aren't exceptions to the code adopted by the municipality: When I find a violation, there are no personal agendas ... It's what the code says, and it's what the code requires.

**The Best Time of Year for Every Home Improvement Project? I will try to give you a few items when I can related to the timing of our Village newsletter.**

Homeownership comes with a never-ending list of home improvement projects, and being able to time them right can be tricky. Ultimately, the best time for a home improvement project is when you have the time. But if you're eager to plan projects to set yourself up for success, consider which season has the right weather patterns, minimizes future maintenance issues and makes it easiest to hire professionals.

**Roof repair and replacement**

**Best time of year: Summer, early fall**  
It's a given that you don't want people working on your roof in icy or wet conditions. As a result, the best time of year for roof repair or replacement is also when the professionals are busiest. Be sure to plan roof replacement a month or two in advance to avoid having to wait with possible leaks causing damage to the inside of your home.

**HVAC care**  
**Best time of year: Early fall**  
Any repairs to your heating, ventilation and air conditioning system should be done as soon as you notice an issue, but if you're planning to do routine maintenance, schedule a professional long before you'll need to turn on the heat. That way, any potential problems that could leave you without heat are found and fixed before the first cold nights of the season. The same goes for air conditioning in the late spring and summer.

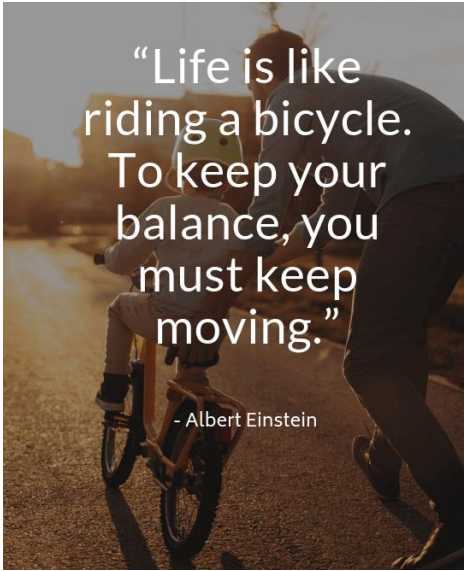
**New appliances**  
**Best time of year: Fall**  
Consumers can expect everything from washing machines and oven ranges to refrigerators to offer discounts leading up to the holidays. Even if you're not updating your kitchen until May (and your home can accommodate an extra oven or fridge for five months), keep an eye out for deals. Stores that sell appliances like Sears, Lowe's and Home Depot are known to regularly offer holiday weekend deals. As always, please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk's office or me directly if you have any code questions about a project you have in mind or any potential code violations or concerns you may notice throughout our village. An extra set of eyes out in our Village is always greatly appreciated!

*Jim Lynch* — Code Enforcement



**LOCKTOBERFEST 2019**  
**SATURDAY, OCT. 5TH**  
**11AM TO 11PM**  
**LIVE MUSIC • VENDORS**  
**FOOD • WINE • CRAFTERS**  
**HELICOPTER RIDES • FIREWORKS**

Join us for a fun filled day of activities for the entire family!



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