



F A L L N E W S L E T T E R

Highway Commissioner Jerry Meyer To Retire

Road Commissioner Jerry Meyer is retiring after serving as Washington Township Highway Commissioner for nearly 29 years. Jerry started working for the Road District in 1989, working under former Highway Commissioner Clarence Bunte. Meyer was appointed as Highway Commissioner on December 2, 1991.

During Meyer’s time as Highway Commissioner, he was the General Contractor for the Washington Township Center, converted over 20 miles of dirt or gravel roads to tar and chip, and upgraded over 20 miles to asphalt. He helped create the Joint Fuel System with the Beecher Police and Fire Departments along with the Beecher School District. Over the last twenty years, he has worked closely with neighboring townships, sharing equipment and labor to help get road projects done correctly and economically.



Highway Commissioner
Jerry Meyer

He and his wife, Patty, have been married for 37 years, having two married daughters, Kristin (Jim) LoSchiavo and Ally (Adam) Detig. They have three grandchildren, Collin, Julia and Jenna, and one grand dog, Domino.

During his retirement, Jerry plans to spend more time fishing, enjoying his grandchildren, and helping on the family farm.

Thank you, Jerry, for over 31 years of serving Washington Township. We wish you many happy and healthy years of retirement!

Township Offers Early Voting for Upcoming Elections

The 2020 General Election will be held on November 3. The Clerk’s office will once again be holding early voting and is urging people to utilize early voting if they can’t get to the polls on Election Day or just prefer to not deal with lines and crowds.

Early Voting will be held at the Washington Township Center located at 30200 Town Center Road in Beecher, on Monday through Friday from October 19 through October 30 from 9 am to 3 pm. All residents of Washington Township (Beecher) are eligible to vote at our site. The process is quick and 100% secure.

Washington Township will follow CDC Covid guidelines and is taking every precaution during Early Voting including offering hand sanitizer, face masks and having a staff member present to clean and sanitize before, during and after voting each day.



From Supervisor Mike Stanula...

Hello Friends and Neighbors,

I will start off by saying that this article is not going to be about or mention that “Something 19” that has messed everything that we know up, but rather I will say, I wish you nothing but health and happiness as we approach the change of seasons and the end of another year. I am pleased to report that your Township is also healthy and happy as well.

I recently read some articles about township government and I would like to share some of those thoughts with you. Township government is the closest form of government to the people. It is personal and accessible. In addition to townships being the closest form of government to the people, it is also the oldest form of government. Dating back to the seventeenth century, townships have been established in order to reflect the idea that, "Government should derive its powers from the consent of the governed". Today's township government in the State of Illinois provides a grassroots culture and allows locals decisions to be made more quickly. By law, Illinois townships are charged with three basic functions: 1) general assistance for the indigent; 2) the assessment of real property in the township for taxation; and 3) maintenance of all roads and bridges outside federal, state and other local jurisdictions. Of course, townships provide other vital services including; Senior citizen programs, youth programs, assistance to the disabled, health services, transportation and so much more.

Lastly the upcoming election, which is a hot topic right about now (thankfully, township elections are not until April). Did you know that four Amendments to the Constitution, the 15th, 19th, 24th and 28th dating all the way back to 1870, all pertain to your right to “vote”. It's a BIG deal. Your vote today will create changes tomorrow. So, do something historic this November (and April). There are many options to voting, by mail, early voting or in person voting. So please exercise your right to vote. Because it's one of the things that make Beecher a Great Place to Be.

Washington Township Partners with Toys For Tots

Washington Township is once again collecting toys for “Toys For Tots”. Working to make this a true township effort, “Toys for Tots” collection boxes will be located at the Washington Township Center, Beecher Village Hall, and First Community Bank and Trust. New, unwrapped and unopened toys can be dropped off at these collection sites during their regular business hours. The township is very thankful for the support the community offered last year and invite our residents to come out and support this worthy cause.

The collection boxes will be available now through December 5. To learn more about Toys For Tots visit them at toysfortots.org.



Washington Township Food Pantry

The Washington Township Food Pantry is open to any Washington Township individual or family that is in need of help. Offering canned foods, paper goods, cleaning items, frozen food and at times, fresh products, the pantry strives to provide quality items for those in need.

During these very difficult times, many families have suddenly found themselves in need of assistance. As the holiday season approaches, we ask that you consider a donation to the pantry to help those, who are less fortunate, get through the holiday season. If you would like to help, items can be dropped off at the Washington Township Center on Monday through Friday from 9am - 3pm. The pantry also accepts cash donations that is used only to purchase items from the Chicago Food Depository.

The pantry is open on the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month from 9am - 10am AND from 6pm - 7pm. Please call Trustee Paul Goldrick at (708) 516-2594 for additional details or if you need assistance.

A Few Interesting Points Regarding Township Roads

Beecher is within Washington Township. The village is responsible for the roads within the village limits and the township is responsible for the roads in the unincorporated area.

There are 72 miles of roads in unincorporated Washington Township, which is the third most of any township in Will County.

The Road District recently resurfaced two miles of Ashland Avenue with asphalt at a cost of \$264,000. At \$132,000 per mile, it would cost \$9.5 million to resurface all the roads in the township. The Road District only receives approximately \$580,000 a year in tax dollars, using that total, it would take 16 years to resurface every road and that's if you spent the entire levy on roads, which isn't feasible, because the district also must pay for labor, insurance, equipment, materials, repairs, fuel, supplies, building utilities and the list goes on.

Making things more challenging, is most of the original roads built in Washington Township were not built with an adequate road base. Several roads actually started out as "mud roads" and were never intended to be used as through roads to get from point A to point B, they were built for farmers to get to their fields. Over the last several years, the Road District has had to completely "dig up" sections of roads and install a new 12" stone base before any type of hard surface can be applied. At the same time, drainage and ditches must be updated as well. Depending on how many miles of road are being improved, this process can take up to two years and requires hundreds of hours or labor and thousands of tons of stone. Unfortunately, current funding only allows for so much to be done at any given time.

The Road District is working within their means to keep our roads in good condition.

What About the Airport?

There has been discussion about a 3rd airport since the mid 1980's and to date the project has gone through a series of taking steps forward and then falling back. According to an article in the Chicago Tribune, dated 8/12/19, the state owns 5,000 acres of the 6,000 acres they need for the "inaugural footprint". According to the Assessor's office, only 102 acres of this property is within Washington Township. A law passed in 2019 also requires the state to pay Will County, and in turn the affected townships, real estate taxes on this property, this provision will expire in 2030.

Your Township Officials:

Supervisor

Mike Stanula

supervisor@washingtontownshipil.com

Clerk

Joe Burgess

clerk@washingtontownshipil.com

Assessor

Mary Margaret Tamez

assessor@washingtontownshipil.com

Highway Commissioner

Jerry Meyer

commissioner@

washingtontownshipil.com

Trustees

Paul Goldrick

Tracy Heldt

Mark Herlitz

George Obradovich

Office Coordinator / General Assistance

Tammy Hitzelburger

transportation@washingtontownshipil.com **OR**

ga@washingtontownshipil.com

Community Building Board of Managers

Ronald Mazurek

Teresa Peterson

Dan Waterman

Newsletter Editor:

Clerk Joe Burgess

From Assessor Mary Tamez...

“In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity...” Sun Tsu

Life has been different everywhere throughout these last few months. I have been handling business with our township residents through social distancing with a few months of it working from my home. With the extra time on our hands, many have taken the time to investigate things that we have left on the back burner. One of them being their property tax bill.

I have had the privilege of speaking with and getting to know so many of you throughout the last few years. We have worked through so many things together but one of the most common questions being: “How can I lower my tax bill?”

Your taxes are based on a Tax Rate that is applied to the Equalized Assessed Value of your home. My office is responsible for that value. Take the steps below to ensure that you are paying your fair share of property tax.

First, how is the market value determined?

Market data - Similar, neighboring properties that have sold in the last three years are compared to the property being assessed.

Cost – The cost to reproduce (or rebuild) the property minus the amount for depreciation (e.g., wear and tear, age) plus the land value.

Using this information, I can place a market value on your property. The assessor values your residential land, your home, and farm buildings. The farmland is determined at the County level based on soil types. Your assessment is 33.33% of the market.

Second, a multiplier is added to the assessment every year based on the market. What will happen to my assessment based on the 2020 market? How is this determined?

Will County is required by the Illinois Department of Revenue to use a three-year Sales Study for assessments, which is a retrospective value. That means township assessors look at 2017, 2018, and 2019 sales when determining 2020 assessments. What you can do is make sure your property characteristics are accurate. For example: square footage, number of bathrooms, full basements, etc. If you find an inaccuracy, contact my office immediately.

Pay attention to what homes sell for in your area. Look into the market value of your home to make sure you feel the home is not over assessed!

Third, make sure you are getting the exemptions you are entitled to.

Review the right column of your current tax bill to confirm your exemptions. Exemptions that are available:

- ◆ General Homestead
- ◆ Senior Homestead
- ◆ Senior Homestead Assessment Freeze
- ◆ Disabled Person
- ◆ Disabled Veteran

It is the homeowner’s responsibility to apply for all exemptions. I suggest you check this annually to ensure the savings are applied that you deserve!

I have appreciated getting to know and work with so many of you. I have also taken this time to look inward, reflect on what truly matters, and connect with myself and my loved ones on a deeper level and I encourage you to do the same. Learning to appreciate time and dealing with the unknown is something that I hope we all have been able grow with as humans. Stay healthy. Take heart. Take care of each other. Fear and pain have been in so much of our life lately. Let’s let love help us find our way out.

Enjoy each day.
Mary

Learn more about Washington Township and the services we offer our residents by visiting us online at: www.washingtontownshipil.com

UPCOMING TOWNSHIP BOARD MEETING DATES

The Washington Township Board meets on the FIRST Monday of every month (except on holidays or as noted) at the Washington Township Center located at 30200 Town Center Road. All meetings start at 7 pm and are open to the public and public commentary is welcome. Please call Supervisor Mike Stanula at 946-2026 if you need assistance.

- November 2, 2020
- December 7, 2020
- January 4, 2021
- February 1, 2021
- March 1, 2021
- March 22, 2021



**November 3 is Election Day
Please Vote - Be Counted!**



RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONICS & HAZARDOUS WASTE DROP-OFF EVENT

By Appointment Only Saturday, Nov. 14th, 2020 – 8am to 3pm
BEECHER, IL

For location information: Make Appointment at
www.willcountygreen.com

VEHICLE UNLOADING ORDER

1st - Electronic Items
 2nd - Hazardous Waste

Event Sponsored By:
Resource Recovery & Energy Division,
Will County Land Use Department



815-727-8834
www.willcountygreen.com
The will power to rethink, reuse, reduce and recycle.

ACCEPTED ITEMS		
Electronic Items (broken or obsolete)	Household Hazardous Items	
Televisions (LIMIT 2 per vehicle)	Telephones / Cell Phones	Used Oil / Used Oil Filters
Computers (laptops, PCs, tablets)	Answering Machines	Antifreeze / Old Gasoline / Auto Fluids
Monitors	Pagers	Household Chemicals & Cleaners
Keyboards	CB's / Two-way Radios	Solvents / Pool Chemicals
Electronic Mice	Microwaves	Cooking Oil
Modems / Hard Drives	String Lights	Poisons / Pesticides 15 Gallon Limit Per Vehicle on All
Typewriters/Word Processors	Adding Machines	Paint thinners Paint & Stains
Copy/Fax/Scanner Machines	Postage Machines	Aerosol paints
Floppies, CDs, DVDs	Calculators	Latex & Oil Based Paints & Stains
Cords & Cables (power, USB, etc)	Paper Shredders	Unwanted Medication (Pills & Liquids)
UPS (Battery Backups)	Hair Dryers	Lawn & Garden Chemicals
Printers (laser, ink jet, dot matrix)	Straighteners	Liquid & Solid Fertilizers
VCR, DVD, Laser Disc Players	Vacuums	Rechargeable & Lithium Batteries
Video Game Players	Fans	Automotive & Boat Batteries
Digital Clocks	Heaters	Fluorescent Light bulbs (Limit 15/ Car)
Cameras (all types)	Toasters	Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs)
Palm Organizers	Power Tools	Mercury & Mercury Containing Items
Hand Held Game Devices	Electric Razors	Handheld Sized Only:
Joysticks/Game controls		Small Propane Tanks
		Refrigerants



Please remember that area residents may recycle electronic devices in on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month from 5pm-7pm at Peotone Police Department located at 208 E. Main St. Peotone.

Items NOT Accepted for Drop Off		
Scrap Metal, Scrap Wood, Foam Plastics	Ammunition	Gas Cylinders (except small handheld propane)
Home Goods, Textiles,	Fireworks/ Explosives	Refrigerants (except small handheld size)
Books or Flags	Fire Extinguishers	Household Garbage
VHS / Cassette Tapes	Sharps/Syringes	Business or Institutional Waste
Carbon Monoxide & Smoke Detectors	Medical Waste	Empty Containers
Dehumidifiers	Controlled Medication	Traditional Recyclables
Air Conditioners or Appliances	Controlled Substances	Tires
Alkaline Batteries	Radioactive Material	

Will County Appointment system has been implemented in an effort to improve resident wait times and service at events.

The Washington Township Clerk’s office provides the following services to all Washington Township residents!

- Voter registration
- Early Voting services during elections
- RTA Reduced Fare Permits. If you are a Senior Citizen or a Person with a Disability you can apply for a free or reduced fare permit, which can be used on all RTA services.
- Free Notary Public Service
- Temporary or Permanent Parking Placards
- Public Information - township records are available on our website or through the use of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
- The Clerk’s office also maintains the township’s website and mails the biannual newsletter

Your Right To Know

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides that all government bodies make public records readily available for inspection. You can access our agendas, minutes, recent budgets and many other items by visiting our website and clicking on the “Public Information” button on our homepage. Don’t see what you’re looking for? Contact Clerk Joe Burgess at (708) 946-2026 Ext 1176

News From the Community Building Board of Managers

During the past 3 ½ years, the Washington Township Community Hall Board of Managers has been working hard to accomplish many projects to improve and restore the Community Hall: installing a new roof to prevent further water damage, working with ComEd to retrofit all the fluorescent lighting to LED, painting of the entire interior of the building, replacing the broken block windows upstairs, rebuilding the crumbling brick façade on the front of the building, replacing the worn and rusted exterior doors, refinishing the wooden floors upstairs and installing a new water fountain with bottle filler. But perhaps one of our biggest accomplishments was to have an ADA compliant incline platform lift installed to allow full access to all levels for anyone that is physically challenged. Once we receive final approval from the State Fire Marshall, the lift will be fully operational. And it is important to note that all of these projects were completed well within budget so no additional funds were required.

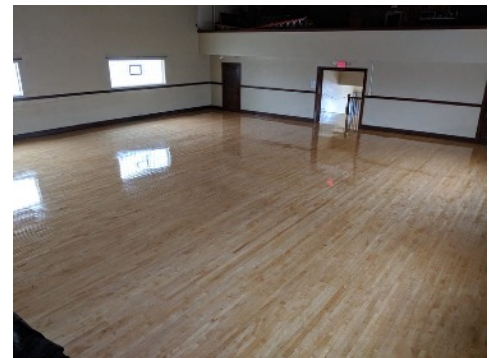


(Above) The new incline platform lift at the Washington Township Community Hall. The seat flips up to allow room for wheelchair access to all levels of the building.

But we haven't finished yet! Since the Community Hall, and the many programs and activities it hosts, benefits directly from use of the parking lot, we will be entering into an inter-governmental agreement with the Village of Beecher and the Beecher Fire Protection District to repair and upgrade the parking lot to the west of the building once renovations to the fire station are completed. We have also begun the process of getting bids and estimates for replacing all the sidewalks around the building and restructuring the main entrance to provide a larger platform and install ramp access. We will also be updating the landscaping around the building.

(Below) The 2nd story floor has been refinished.

During these uncertain times, the Community Hall will also be offering a discounted rental rate for any residents of Washington Township for the months of October, November and December. Instead of the usual \$125 rate per day per level, it will be reduced to \$75 per day per level. We encourage anyone interested in seeing the building or reserving a date to contact Kellie Karstensen, Community Hall Manager at 708-417-6403 to check availability and details.



Nominating Petitions for All Washington Township Elected Officials are Now Available

The four-year terms for the Washington Township Supervisor, Clerk, Assessor, Trustees (4), Community Building Board of Managers (3) and Highway Commissioner will be voted upon during the Consolidated Election of 2021 to be held on Tuesday, April 6, 2021. Anyone wishing to receive and / or file a nominating petition may contact Joseph Burgess, Washington Township Clerk at (708) 946-2026 or visit the Washington Township Center from Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The filing period for nominating petitions is from December 14 to December 21, 2020. Petitions may be filed by mail or in person. The LAST day to file a petition in person is December 21, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Will County Clerk's Office OR the State Board of Elections or by visiting their website at www.elections.il.gov.

Washington Township Senior News

All Events Cancelled for 2020

Due to the current pandemic and especially for the safety of our residents, ALL remaining Senior Events for 2020 have been cancelled. The Washington Township Dial-a-Ride service is also suspended until further notice.

We eagerly look forward to scheduling as many events as possible, once it is safe to do so.

Winter Tips for Seniors

A single fall can cause debilitating and costly injuries, but a few simple tips can help older adults stay safe and healthy through the winter months.

1. Tread carefully

To help avoid falls, wear appropriate shoes outdoors and put road salt, sand or kitty litter on sidewalks and driveways.

2. Avoid overwork

Find someone to handle snow shoveling and other strenuous outdoor tasks.

3. Exercise indoors

Staying indoors does not mean being inactive. Keep in shape by walking in place, using a stationary bike or working out with a fitness video, available at the local library.

4. Bundle up

Cold temperatures are a serious threat to seniors. Wear layers!

5. Keep the heat on

Inadequate indoor heat also can cause hypothermia. Keep home temperatures above 65 degrees and dress in layers to maintain body temperature.

6. Clear the air

If you heat your home with a fireplace, gas furnace or gas-powered space heater, invest in carbon monoxide detectors, which can be purchased at a home improvement store for as little as \$30.

7. Socialize

Depression is more common in the winter months, make efforts to spend time with family, friends and neighbors, and when weather makes visiting difficult, pick up the phone for a chat.



For information about Will-Ride or our own Dial-a-Ride transportation program, call the township offices at (708) 946-2026.



Beecher Fire Protection District - Fire Prevention Bureau

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a fire inspection?

A fire inspection is a comprehensive look inside and outside of an occupancy for potential items that could cause a fire or a potential life safety hazard.

How often do fire inspections occur?

Fire inspections occur a minimum of once per year, unless there is a need to inspect a premise more often. A public concern would be one of those times. A person calls in a concern about a premise, the fire inspector may visit the premise to investigate and determine if further action by the bureau may be warranted.



Does the fire inspector just show up?

The fire inspector may or may not make an appointment with the premise. For larger premises, premises that have fluctuating hours, and premises that may have a high customer load, the fire inspector will call for an appointment. Smaller premises the fire inspector may not make an appointment due to time constraints. The fire inspector will do their best to minimize the effect on day to day operations.

Can I refuse to have an inspection?

If business at the time prevents you from meeting with the fire inspector, then you can refuse the inspection at that time and request the fire inspector make an appointment for a later time. That does not mean you can refuse an inspection all together. All commercial, industrial, or multi-family occupancies within the Village of Beecher and unincorporated areas protected by the Beecher Fire Protection District must have an annual fire inspection.

How long does a fire inspection take?

Depending on the size of the occupancy the inspection can take as little as 15 minutes or up to an hour.

What does the fire inspector look for during an inspection?

The fire inspector is looking for items that may be considered a life safety issue or a fire risk.

Some examples include:

- ◆ Blocked exits. Exits must have a clear path of travel to the exit door
- ◆ Locked exits. Exits may be locked during normal business hours; however, the lock must be able to be opened without a key. In other words, a thumb latch or panic hardware must be installed on the inside of the occupancy.
- ◆ Extension cords. Extension cords generally are not permitted; the inspector will let you know if the extension is acceptable.
- ◆ Exit lights and emergency lights. The fire inspector will test all the exit and emergency lights to make sure they are working properly.
- ◆ Fire extinguishers. All occupancies must have at least one extinguisher. That extinguisher needs to be hung and serviced by a fire extinguisher company at least once per year and have a tag certifying when it was done affixed to the extinguisher.
- ◆ Fire alarm and hood and duct systems. Any occupancy that has a fire alarm system, if it's a combination system with a burglar or a stand-alone system; must have the system serviced by a licensed fire alarm company once per year and the system must be tagged like a fire extinguisher. If the occupancy has a hood and duct system, that system must be serviced and cleaned every six months by a licensed company. The results of the service must be uploaded by the company to www.thecomplianceengine.com. The Compliance Engine is a third-party tracking company that monitors the servicing of all fire protection systems for the district.
- ◆ Sprinkler systems and fire pumps. The inspector will check to see if the sprinkler system and fire pumps have been serviced on an annual basis by a licensed company. The findings of the service must be uploaded to the www.thecomplianceengine.com

Beecher Fire Protection District - Fire Prevention Bureau Frequently Asked Questions - cont.

What code does the Fire District use?

The Village of Beecher has adopted the International Fire Code (IFC) 2015 edition, NFPA 101 and the International Building Code (IBC) 2015. The Fire District will use those codes within the village boundaries. The Fire District has adopted the same codes for use in the unincorporated areas of the county within the boundaries of the Fire District.

I'm opening a new business in town; do I need an inspection?

Yes, when a new business opens, a final occupancy inspection by the Fire District must be completed. This is to ensure the business has all of the required fire and life safety protections in place.

I want to put a fire protection system in my business what do I need to do?

Plans of the system must be submitted to the Fire District for review and approval. The plans must be done by a licensed engineer. Plans can be submitted electronically or by paper.

Is there a charge for the plan review?

Currently, there is no charge for a plan review from the Fire District within the Village limits.

Is there a permit fee for installing an alarm or sprinkler system?

Currently, the Fire District does not charge a permit fee for installing a sprinkler system.

For questions regarding the fire inspection program or a recent fire inspection, you may contact Fire Inspector Eric Davidson at (708) 946-6585 or edavidson@beecherfire.org



Coming Soon!

Its Harvest Season - Safety Tips for Sharing the Road with Our Farming Community

Washington Township is an agricultural township with hundreds of farms within our boundaries. We thank our farmers for all they do to feed our nation and ask everyone to use caution during the harvest season. Farming equipment has become much larger over the years and according to the National Safety Council, approximately **33%** of fatal tractor accidents occur on public roads. In order to decrease the chance of a collision, motorists should follow these six rules of the road:

1. **Slow down when you see a piece of agricultural equipment.**
2. **Watch for Slow-Moving-Vehicle (SMV) signs.**
3. **Watch for hand signals.**
4. **Pass farm equipment cautiously.**
5. **Watch for flashing amber lights.**
6. **Remember that agricultural operators have a right to drive their equipment on the road and during harvest season, are sometimes out late at NIGHT!**

Please be alert and exercise patience when driving near or passing farm equipment on the roadway. Help us to make this year's harvest season a safe one!



**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
30200 TOWN CENTER ROAD
BEECHER, IL 60401**

**U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BEECHER, IL
PERMIT NO 110
ZIP CODE 60401**

RESIDENT

**Washington Township
60401**

2020 FALL - WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER



Need A Ride? Call WILL-RIDE (800) 244-4410

Schedule appointments between the hours of 6 am to 5 pm, Monday-Friday (A 24-hour notice up to 7 days advance notice is required)

Buses Operate - Monday - Friday 8 am to 5 pm - Weekend & holiday hours are NOT available

The Will-Ride "suggested" donations for rides outside Washington Township are \$4 one way or \$8 round trip

You MUST register with Washington Township to be eligible for Will-Ride

Restrictions Apply

EARLY VOTING HOURS

**October 19 - October 30
MONDAY - FRIDAY
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

Due to the burden the Covid pandemic has put on our area businesses, NO ads were solicited for the Fall Newsletter.

Washington Township encourages all of our residents to support our local businesses, who employ so many of our residents, during these trying times.

**We are a
TOYS FOR TOTS
collection site!**

The logo for Toys for Tots, featuring the words "TOYS FOR TOTS" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are outlined in white and have a slight shadow effect. Below the text is a stylized red train engine with yellow wheels and a white smokestack.