



Village Manager's Report
Week ending January 24, 2020

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, Jan. 27:
 - Village Board Executive session, 7 p.m., room 130
 - Village Board Special Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Council Chamber
 - Transportation Commission, 7 p.m., room 101

- Tuesday, Jan. 28:
 - Board of Health, 7 p.m., room 102

- Wednesday, Jan. 29:
 - No meetings scheduled

- Thursday, Jan. 30:
 - No meetings scheduled

- Friday, Jan. 31:
 - No meetings scheduled

Financial report honored – For the 24th consecutive year, the [Government Finance Officers Association](#) has given the Village's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) a *Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting*. The Village's FY18 CAFR, which is for the audit year ending Dec. 31, received the best possible result with a *proficient* grade in every grading category. The GFOA calls the certificate the "highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting." GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving more than 20,000 government finance professionals. Village CAFRs and other financial reports are [posted online](#).

Debt recovery effort – The Village is now taking advantage of the state's *Local Debt Recovery Program* that authorizes the Illinois Comptroller to deduct money owed to local governments from state tax refunds, lottery payouts and payroll checks. Village staff recently submitted approximately 34,000 unpaid citations to the state for recovery. The citations were issued from July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2017 and total \$2.9 million. The Comptroller does not charge governments for the service. State tax refunds are the largest source of collections under the program.

Plan Commission actions – The Plan Commission voted to 6-2 last night (Thurs., Jan. 23) to approve the planned development application for the Senior Living Community development at 711-725 Madison St. Among the numerous conditions recommended by the commission were LEED certification, streetscape improvements and Village approval of final exterior materials. The commission also voted 8-0 to support vacating Euclid Avenue. In addition, the Commission voted

unanimously to approve the findings of fact report for proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance relative to retail cannabis establishments and craft growers.

Consolidated Plan poll – In compliance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development rules governing Community Development Block Grant funding, the Village has posted a poll to gather feedback to help set local spending priorities for the next five years. The poll is posted at www.oak-park.us/prioritiessurvey through January 29. The decision to post an online poll came after a public meeting had failed to attract sufficient attendance for meaningful discussion. Anyone with questions may call 708.358.5416 or email grants@oak-park.us. More information about the Village's role in distributing federal grants, as well as a link to the most recent five-year [Consolidated Plan](#), is posted on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/cdbg.

Call for referenda – Oak Park Township has officially begun the process for placing advisory referenda on the next election ballot. Under state law, if a citizen creates a petition supporting an advisory referendum question, gathers 15 signatures of registered voters and submits the petition to the local township clerk, it is placed on the township's annual meeting agenda, which is April 14 in Oak Park. The petition must be submitted to the township clerk by March 1. The registered voters of the township who attend the annual meeting vote on whether the referendum should be placed on the ballot of the next election. If it passes, the clerk must submit it to the county clerk for placement on the ballot. The local township board has no role in the process beyond the administrative logistics of the initial process. More information is [posted online](#).

Permit processing goes paperless – The Permit Processing Division of the Development Customer Services Department is reporting that the goal of paperless records is about to become a reality. The last of the paper permit files from the 1970s through the 1990s was digitized in late 2019. Staff now is wrapping up digitization of aging microfiche from the early 1900s to the 1970s. Once this final phase is complete, all Village building-related permitting documents will be available for easy access electronically. Achievement of this goal was accelerated with the investment in CityView software in 2015, which allows for electronic submittals of permit requests, documentation and inspection requests.

Taco Bell Update – The Zoning Board of appeals has been asked to continue until March 4 a request to allow a new Taco Bell restaurant at 6000 – 6020 Roosevelt Road. The applicant, Amber Development, is seeking two variances and a special use for a drive-thru. The developer has requested the continuance to allow time to complete a traffic study. A compromise on a midnight closing time was reached.

Snow response – Brief, but frequent snow has kept Public Works Department crews busy plowing and salting to ensure safe travel on Village streets and important pedestrian crossings. Crews battled freezing rain and snow beginning Friday (Jan. 17) and continuing into Sunday (Jan. 19). Dropping temperatures Saturday (Jan. 18) added black ice to the mix as the portions of the cleared, but still wet surfaces froze. A few alleys were plowed, but as large mounds of snow were freezing into boulder-like mounds, the decision was made to not continue. Crews have been salting alleys by request. The waves of snow that begin early Thursday (Jan. 23) could continue into Sunday (Jan. 26). Forecasts are mixed, but as much as five inches of snow could

accumulate over the weekend. Fortunately, temperatures are not expected to fall below freezing, which should allow crews to keep up, but could also mean a mixed bag of precipitation including ice. Public Works Director John Wielebnicki says sufficient quantities of salt are on hand, crews are on alert and all equipment is in working order.

Tree pruning update – Crews under contract to the Village for the [winter tree pruning cycle](#) are working on East and Wesley avenues between Madison Street and South Boulevard, moving west. The Village Forestry superintendent and his staff are keeping a close eye on the work to ensure the contractors address tree health, resident safety and protect property from damage. The cycle likely will wrap up in April. Residents can call 708.358.5700 or email publicworks@oak-park.us with questions or concerns about the type or quality of work being performed by contractors.

Employee News – Public Works Department Engineer James Olson recently became a Certified Public Infrastructure Inspector (CPII) through the American Public Works Association (APWA). Certification required James to have a minimum of five years of public infrastructure inspection field experience and pass an extensive exam. An important member of the Engineering Division, James joined the Village in June of 2018. He studied engineering at the University of Minnesota in Duluth.

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