



**Village Manager's Report  
The Week Ending November 11, 2016**

**Meetings scheduled for next week:**

- Monday, November 14:
  - Village Board Special Meeting, 6:30 p.m., room 101
- Tuesday, November 15:
  - Citizen Police Oversight Committee, 7:30 p.m., room 102
- Wednesday, November 16:
  - Plan Commission, 7 p.m., room 201
  - Disability Access Commission, 7 p.m., 834 Lake St.
  - Community Relations Commission, 7 p.m., room 101
  - Housing Programs Advisory Commission, 7 p.m., room 215
- Thursday, November 17:
  - No scheduled meetings
- Friday, November 18:
  - No scheduled meetings

**Zoning public hearing** – The Plan Commission will review the draft zoning ordinance and map at 7 p.m., Wed., Nov. 16, in the Council Chamber. Residents, business operators and property owners are invited to make comments to the Plan Commission by either attending the meeting or sending an email to [planning@oak-park.us](mailto:planning@oak-park.us). Anyone interested in learning more before the public hearing or unable to attend is urged to visit [www.oakparkzoning.com](http://www.oakparkzoning.com), where the proposed draft is posted. Public comments also may be posted on this project website.

**Breaking bread to open minds** – The Community Relations Department's popular [Dinner & Dialogue initiative](#) will host its next session at 4 p.m., Sunday (Nov. 13) at Pleasant Home. The dinner discussion topic will focus on how to build teen and youth alliances in challenging times. This will be the seventh time this year Director Cedric Melton has worked with the Community Relations Commission to bring together residents of diverse backgrounds for candid discussions of difficult topics. Among the topics discussed so far this year are economic disparity among races, white privilege, ageism and the education gap. The year's eighth and final dinner will be scheduled later this year.

**Farmers' Market roundup** – With the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Oak Park Farmers' Market now in the books, the commission is assessing general attendance based on data gathered at four markets to be representative snapshots of the season. According to their headcount report, about 4,700 patrons visited each market this season or about 102,900 total patrons. While

overall attendance appeared down slightly in 2016 as compared to 2015, the difference was not deemed significant. Attendance appears to peak between 9 and 10 a.m. and commissioners surmise that the weather can have a big impact on any given Saturday. [Click here to read the full report.](#)

**Mental Health Board request** – The Township has asked the Village to help spread the word that applications are being sought for future positions on the Community Mental Health Board. Applicants with professional backgrounds or interests in the quality, availability and funding of mental health services are encouraged to apply. Volunteers serve four-year terms and help make decisions on how Township funds are allocated among local agencies to address mental illness, developmental disabilities and abuse of alcohol and substances. For more information, visit [www.oakparktownship.org](http://www.oakparktownship.org), email [ahill@oakparktownship.org](mailto:ahill@oakparktownship.org) or call 708.383.8005. The deadline to apply is November 21.

**Incarceration discussion** – The Community Relations Commission, in partnership with the Oak Park Public Library, will host a discussion on the lasting effects of incarceration. The event is scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m., Thurs., Nov. 17 in the Veterans Room of the main library. The discussion will include post-prison traumatic stress disorder, a timely topic given that nearly 150 individuals are paroled back into various west-side neighborhoods every month, according to corrections officials. Ben Levenson of the North Lawndale Employment Network, which works with ex-offenders, will lead the discussion with participants sharing personal anecdotes from their years of experience working with individuals returning to the community from the penal system.

**Chief meets the public** – About 40 citizens gathered in the Council Chamber Wednesday evening to meet new Police Chief Anthony Ambrose and learn about his approach to community policing. Several notables were in attendance including Virginia Cassin, Sherlynn Reid and Sandra Sokol, three of Oak Park's many prominent social activists who had known the chief since he joined the force in 1984. In addition to providing interesting insights into why Oak Park officers are so good at what they do, Chief Ambrose noted several new state and federal training initiatives just now coming online that have been part of the Oak Park standard training guide for many years, including tactics for de-escalating situations and properly responding to incidents involving individuals with mental, emotional and physical challenges. The event was hosted by the Community Relations Commission, which hopes to host additional gatherings to discuss the role of citizen and police collaboration in keeping crime low and residents safe.

**Downtown construction updates** – The alley north of Westgate Street and west of Marion Street affected by the Elevate Oak Park redevelopment project is now open to traffic. In addition, Westgate Street was paved between Maple and Marion streets with a temporary surface to provide a serviceable road that can be plowed during the coming winter. Nicor is expected to begin work in the area next week to install a new gas main to the Elevate project. Marion Street traffic will be affected, but plans are to ensure southbound Marion and eastbound North Boulevard lanes remain open. Complicating travel in the area will be the crosswalk repairs under on Marion Street between South Boulevard and Pleasant Street. The west half of the crosswalks were expected to be completed this week, with work shifting to the east bound lanes next week. A flagger will remain to help maintain safe traffic flow around the work sites. Meanwhile, new tree grates and light poles were installed on the outdoor dining area on South Boulevard just west of Marion Street, with work expected to continue through next week.

**Chicago Avenue resurfacing** – Installation of the final surface is expected to begin next week on Chicago Avenue. Structural adjustments were made to the roadway this week and the vehicle detection loops for the traffic signs were installed. Joint sealant will be applied tomorrow (Sat., Nov. 12) to the centerline along the entire corridor, but traffic should not be affected.

**Miscellaneous construction projects** – Catch basins were installed and service connections made to the new water main on the 500 and 600 blocks of Highland Avenue this week. Final parkway restoration continued on Harrison Street where new lights were installed and where various streets had been repaved during the final phase of the season. Surveyors continued collecting data points throughout the Village in preparation for next year’s roadway and utility projects. Nicor also continued replacing parkway sod damaged when new gas mains and servicers were installed in northwest Oak Park.

**Public Works activities** – Street Division crews helped a private contractor repair brick trip hazards and tree pits in the downtown business districts, in addition to pushing leaves and monitoring problem areas where collection is a challenge for the equipment operators. Water & Sewer Division crews repaired a broken valve at Chicago and Harvey avenues and upgraded water services at 209 Division St., 1037 S. Kenilworth Ave. and 1155 S. Cuyler Ave. as part of the lead abatement program, likely the last before non-emergency excavation operations are suspended for the winter. Forestry Division crews began planting the 194 trees scheduled to go in as part of the annual fall program.

**Employee news** – Rogelio Pena Jr. and Elida M. Uriostegui have joined the Police Department as Community Services Officers to perform a variety of customer service and administrative duties that do not require the powers of a sworn police officer. Rogelio, who starts next week, most recently was a TSA security officer at O’Hare and Elida, who starts later in the month, was a corrections officer with the Waukesha County Sheriff’s Department in Wisconsin. Typical CSOs duties include staffing the front desk, searching and monitoring prisoners, answering non-emergency calls, generating reports, assisting with traffic control and special events, responding to animal control calls and issuing parking and local ordinance citations. In other employee news, Police Chief Anthony Ambrose has been asked to serve on the [Metro Suburban Board of the National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#). The grassroots family and consumer self-help support, education and advocacy organization works to improve the lives of people with mental illness, their families and friends within west suburban Cook County.

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