



Village Manager's Report
Week ending April 15, 2022

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, April 18:
 - No meetings scheduled
- Tuesday, April 19:
 - No meetings scheduled
- Wednesday, April 20:
 - Housing Programs Advisory Committee, 7 p.m., via Zoom
- Thursday, April 21:
 - Building Codes Advisory Commission, 5:30 p.m., via Zoom
- Friday, April 22:
 - No meetings scheduled

**COVID-19 Weekly Activity Reports are posted at www.oak-park.us/covid19
just click on the *Village Manager Reports* heading**

Police Chief update – Deputy Chief Shatonya Johnson has been selected to serve as Interim Police Chief as we plan for a nationwide search to permanently fill the role as current Police Chief LaDon Reynolds retires today (April 15). A 22-year veteran of the Oak Park Police Department, Johnson became the highest-ranking woman in department history when she was named Deputy Chief in 2020 – [click here to read more](#). As the Village prepares to begin the process of selecting the next permanent chief, residents, business operators and individuals who work here are encouraged to [take an online survey](#) about the qualities they believe are most important in the community's next top law enforcement official.

Business grant update – This Village has approved nearly 250 applications from local businesses that applied for COVID-19 relief supported with funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. More than \$860,000 in federal grant money managed by the Village has been distributed through mid-April. About \$492,000 went to keep low- and moderate-income staff employed, \$91,000 to help pay for PPE-related expenses, \$193,000 for past-due rent assistance, \$66,000 to administer vaccine card check requirements and \$17,100 to the Oak Park and River Forest Chamber of Commerce to support business recovery. More information about the locally administered grant program is [posted on the Village website](#).

Homeowner assistance – Income-eligible residents can apply for assistance to pay past due property-related expenses through the Illinois Homeowner Assistance Fund (ILHAF) program. Eligible households may apply for up to \$30,000 for help pay delinquent mortgage payments, property taxes, property insurance and condo association fees. Applicants must have experienced financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as lost income or increased expenses since Jan. 21, 2020. They also must own and occupy their home as their primary residence, be at least 30 days late on homeowner expenses and have a household income at or below 150 percent the area median income. The deadline to apply is May 31. More information is posted at www.IllinoisHousingHelp.org.

Parade planning – With activities related to the return of [A Day in Our Village](#) well underway, Community Relations Department staff have also begun to plan for the return of the July 4th parade. Registration and sponsorship forms, which have not yet been released, will be available at Village Hall, via email to community@oak-park.us and on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/parade. The deadline to register has been set tentatively for June 10. Prior to the pandemic pause, more than 75 groups typically participated in the parade, including social and special interest groups, community groups, athletic teams, politicians, businesses, service organizations, children’s groups, animal lovers with their pets and musical groups. More information will be shared as plans are finalized.

Latest water quality report – The latest annual water quality report for the Village is now posted online at www.oak-park.us/waterqualityreport. Each year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requires communities to provide details on the quality of the local drinking water. In addition to analyses of substances in the water, the report also includes facts about the community’s drinking water delivery system and source. The latest report, which is based on samples from 2021, indicates that Oak Park’s water quality remains well within EPA standards. An archive of past water quality reports is posted at www.oak-park.us/waterquality. For more information on Oak Park’s drinking water also is available by calling 708.358.5700 or emailing publicworks@oak-park.us.

Alley construction – Utility work was completed in the alley between Elmwood and Ridgeland avenues by Randolph and Pleasant streets. Work began this week in the alley between Austin Boulevard and Humphrey Avenue by Chicago Avenue and Iowa Street. Crews were delayed by the weather, but were expected to start work yesterday (April 14) in the north-south alley east of Fair Oaks Avenue and south of Chicago Avenue.

Harlem Avenue resurfacing – Illinois Department of Transportation crews working on the Harlem Avenue resurfacing project completed curb and gutter removal from North Avenue to 26th Street. Concrete pouring is expected to take another week, with about three weeks of pavement patching expected to begin today (April 15) at North Avenue and move south.

Pleasant & Marion development – Utility lines are still being relocated in the alley adjacent to Marion and Pleasant streets in preparation for the new development planned for the corner. Excavations for the building foundation will be underway for about the next two weeks. The decorative street lighting is being removed to make way for temporary lighting during the construction.

LeMoyne Parkway sewer – The intersection of East Avenue and LeMoyne Parkway is closed to thru traffic during construction hours each day, but one east/west lane is reopened after work hours as the sewer improvement project on LeMoyne continues. Traffic control and tree protection barriers are in place.

Madison Street construction – The fencing has been removed and site grading begun for the new senior living facility under construction at 703 Madison St. To the east, construction of the new Pete’s Fresh Market remains delayed awaiting clearance from ownership to extend the construction fence across Euclid Avenue. However, utility work is continuing in the alley between Oak Park and Euclid avenues.

Employee news – Rida Naqvi is the Health Department’s new Environmental Health Supervisor, Taras Horalewskyj has joined the Water & Sewer Division of the Public Works Department and Sustainability Graduate Fellow Erica Helms has added Farmers’ Market Manager to her duties. Rida, who has public health degree from Northern Illinois University, was an Environmental Health Specialist with the DuPage County Health Department and was a safety intern with School District U-46 in Elgin. Taras, who grew up in River Forest, attended Oak Park and River Forest High School and earned both bachelor and master’s degrees from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. Erica, who joined the Village last year as part of the sustainability team, has a bachelor’s degree in environmental science from the University of North Carolina and recently earned a master’s degree in urban planning with a n environmental focus from the University of Illinois Chicago. In other employee news, Jewel Dillard and Keisha Wheaten of the Development Customer Services Department were recently sworn in as Property Maintenance Inspector Technicians after earning their certifications from the International Code Council.

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