



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending January 20, 2023**

Meetings scheduled for the next two weeks:

- Monday, January 23:
 - Village Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Council Chambers
- Tuesday, January 24:
 - Board of Health, 7 p.m., Room 102
- Wednesday, January 25:
 - Disability Access Commission, 6 p.m., Main Oak Park Library
 - Historic Preservation Commission, 7 p.m., Council Chambers
- Thursday, January 26:
 - No meetings scheduled
- Friday, January 27:
 - No meetings scheduled

**COVID-19 Weekly Reports are posted at www.oak-park.us/covid19
just click on the *Status report bulletin* heading**

Employee news – The Village welcomed several new employees and celebrated several promotions this past week. Erica Helms is the new Environmental Services Manager within the Public Works Department. Erica first came on board at the Village in 2021 as a Sustainability Fellow and last year moved into the role of Farmers' Market Manager in addition to her duties with the sustainability team. As part of her new position she will oversee the Village's solid waste disposal program. Erica has a bachelor's degree in environmental science from the University of North Carolina and a master's degree in urban planning with an environmental focus from the University of Illinois Chicago. The Fire Department hosted a swearing-in ceremony Wednesday for Christopher Eurkaitis, who was promoted to Lieutenant. He has been a member of the Fire Department since 2000. Terrence Vavra is the Village's new Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator. He is a 47-year veteran of the fire service who served in an emergency preparedness role in two other communities during that time. Most recently Terry worked as Fire Chief and Emergency Manager in LaGrange, where he developed the incident action plans for the community's COVID-19 response. He has a master's degree in management and organizational behavior from Benedictine University. Tony Bulthuis also joined the Village staff this week as an Equipment Operator with the Public Works Department. Tony worked as a farmhand as a teen and was a regular employee at the Oak Park Farmers' Market for 10 years. He also worked in distribution for the past 17 years.

Grossman participates in forum – Development Customer Services Director Tammie Grossman participated as a panel member this week at the Illinois Financial Forecast Forum sponsored by the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies. Tammie was part of a discussion that addressed major development forces, trends and initiatives impacting Illinois communities. She was joined on the panel by representatives from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, SB Friedman and Heitman Real Estate Investment Management.

Parking garage revenue for 2022 – The Village-operated Holley Court, Avenue and Lake & Forest garages combined to generate \$406,058 in revenue during 2022. This total is up \$162,563 compared to 2021 revenue but down \$474,454 from pre-pandemic revenue totals in 2019. [Click here](#) to see a detailed monthly revenue comparison from 2019 through 2022 for the three garages.

Hotel/motel occupancy continues to recover – The first 11 months of 2022 marked the highest occupancy rates among local hotel/motel operators in the past five years. The Village collected \$210,545 in hotel/motel taxes through November, a slight increase over the same period in 2019. Payments from short-term rentals such as Airbnb continue to drive the increase. [Click here](#) for a detailed, multi-year summary of the Village's hotel/motel tax collections. The increase mirrors the trend in Chicago, where hotel occupancy rates have rebounded to only about 8.6 percent below pre-pandemic rates in 2019 per a report published in the Chicago Tribune.

Zoning Board of Appeals update - The special use petitions filed by Prosperous Platforms Group, LLC., to operate day care facilities at 404 Lake Street and 326 Lake Street both received positive recommendations via 5-0 votes at the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held Wednesday.

Building benchmarking engagement – More than a dozen owners and managers of large buildings in Oak Park participated in an engagement session hosted by the Village on Thursday to share information and gather feedback related to the benchmarking policy and program being considered as a way to help the community reach its climate goals. The benchmarking program is intended to help owners and managers of large commercial buildings better understand their building's energy use. More information about the initiative, including a recording of the engagement session and space to offer feedback, is posted at www.oak-park.us/benchmarking.

CDBG workshops planned – Non-profit organizations that serve Oak Park and are interested in applying for federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding are required to attend a virtual workshop hosted by the Village. The workshop is scheduled for 10 to 11 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 3. Attendance at the workshop is required to apply for funds during Program Year 2023, which runs from October 2023 through September 2024. The workshops will provide details about the Village's upcoming application process, including an overview of required documents, timelines and reporting requirements. Email grants@oak-park.us to receive the registration link or for more information. Visit www.oak-park.us/cdbg to learn more about the CDBG program in Oak Park.

Village participates in Betty White celebration – The Village is joining about a dozen Oak Park businesses and organizations to celebrate what would have been Betty White’s 101st birthday. Through this Sunday a Betty White cutout is on display at Village Hall and other participating locations. With each cutout is a Betty fact card, and the community is invited to collect seven different facts and mail/deliver them to the Wednesday Journal, which organized the celebration, by January 27 to be entered to win local gift certificates. [Click here](#) for more information and to browse a special insert in the Wednesday Journal with complete details about the celebration.

Local flu information - With influenza spreading in the community, the Oak Park Health Department is sharing information about the flu virus at www.oak-park.us/communicable-diseases. The page includes details about how to prevent the spread of the virus and data related to local cases.

Reporting positive COVID-19 at-home test results – Oak Park residents who test positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to alert the Oak Park Health Department by filling out an [online form](#) if they choose not to undergo a confirmatory test at an official testing facility. Residents who report at-home test results can request a replacement at-home test kit from the Health Department while supplies last. While at-home test results won't be included in the official tally reported to the community each week in bulletins posted at www.oak-park.us/covid19, it will help give the Health Department a sense of the number of new cases beyond the official count it receives from the state. Information provided will be kept confidential and is strictly for disease surveillance purposes. For more information about COVID-19 testing, including details about upcoming testing clinics, visit www.oak-park.us/testing.

Planned development updates – The combined sewer work for the new Pete’s Fresh Market on Madison Street is almost complete and crews will soon begin excavating and installing the last manhole at the site. The contractor for the development at Pleasant and Marion streets continues to oversee the installation of wall panels using a tower crane and ongoing mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection work in the common areas and lobby.

Sewer televising update – The contractor for the sewer televising project is working on locations in the northwest part of Oak Park. Partial lane closures are anticipated when work is in progress.