



**Village Manager's Report  
Week ending March 21, 2014**

**Meetings scheduled for the next week:**

- March 24:
  - HPC Education Committee, 7:30 p.m. room 215
  
- March 25:
  - First Time Homebuyer Seminar, 7 p.m., room 101
  - Board of Health, 7 p.m., room 102
  - Liquor Control Review Board, 7:30 p.m., room 215
  
- March 26:
  - Community Design Commission, 6:45 p.m., room 101
  - Disability Access Commission, 7 p.m., 834 Lake St.
  - Condo Training Series, 7 p.m., room 201
  - HPC Architectural Review Committee, 7:30 p.m., room 215

**CDBG funding to increase** – The Village 2014 Community Development Block Grant allocation will be \$1,542,732, an increase of nearly 1 percent (.008 percent) over 2013. This is especially good news since the Village has seen its CDBG award shrink significantly over the last decade due to the recession and continuous cuts to federal programs serving low-income persons. The CDBG allocation has declined 34.7 percent from its modern day peak in 2004, including a 21.3 percent decline from 2010 to 2013. However, not all news from HUD was good. For the first time since the late 1980s, the Village did not receive an Emergency Solution Grant ESG grant for 2014 due to demographic projections in the [U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey](#).

**Call made for housing task force volunteers** – The word has gone out seeking applications from community members to join the newly formed Fair Housing Task Force. The request for volunteers was published in this week's *Wednesday Journal* and [oakpark.com](#). We also made it the main news story on the Village website and promoted the message via our social media. The [online commission volunteer application](#) was updated to include the task force among the choices so that the current process could be used to gather information for review. This volunteer process is managed by the Village Clerk's Office, which will provide copies of the applications for Board review.

**Fair Housing Task Force meeting** – The first meeting of the new Fair Housing Task Force is scheduled for 5:30 p.m., Wed., April 16 at Village Hall.

**New overnight parking pass system update** – Implementation of the new overnight parking pass system is proceeding as planned. Vehicle owners still continue to use

the live call-in system as expected, given the many years the manual system has been in place. However, operators are informing callers about the new online system, which should mean a gradual shift to the automated system in the weeks and months ahead.

**Pothole patrol** – For the first time since late November, Public Works crews did not have to respond to a snow event. However, the Streets Division now is contending with the aftermath of a brutal season – potholes. Patching potholes throughout the Village is a high priority, as the freeze and thaw cycles increase in frequency. Since late February, we have used 65 tons of special cold mix asphalt material to fill potholes. At the same time, Water & Sewer Division crews focused on clearing sewer inlets throughout the Village to reduce the incidences of standing water created by rapidly melting snow.

**Tree trimming continued** – The winter parkway tree pruning cycle continued throughout the week, with Forestry Division crews working on the 900 block of North Harvey Avenue, the 900 and 1200 blocks of North Lombard Avenue and the 1000 block of Mapleton Avenue. The Village's private contractor, A&B Landscaping, began taking down parkway trees infected with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and removing stumps. In-house crews removed hanging branches from various locations throughout the Village and removed a parkway tree from 741 Forest Avenue that was in decline.

**Employee accomplishments** – Two Public Works Department employees recently made career training advancements. Charles "Rusty" Miller of the Fleet Services Division became an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Master Automotive Technician, which required him to demonstrate the knowledge and the skills necessary to diagnose, service and repair cars, sport utility vehicles and light duty trucks. Water & Sewer Superintendent Darrell King received his Illinois EPA Class C Water license, which required him to pass an exam demonstrating experience in water production, distribution, disinfection and reporting management.

**Viaduct mural contest begins again** – Fifteen artists are being sought for mural projects to continue the transformation of the railroad retaining walls along the Green Line corridor from dull, blank concrete into canvases. Each artist will earn a \$1,000 stipend. [Click here for the details...](#)

**Participants sought to learn to save money by not wasting food** – The Village is working with Seven Generations Ahead to seek participants for a free, two-month program to learn how to support sustainability and save money by not wasting food. Participants in the program, entitled *Food: Too Good to Waste*, will learn to save money by shopping smarter, keeping fruits and vegetables fresh, eating what they buy and composting what they cannot eat. A household of four is projected to save \$30 a week by using the program's toolkit. If you would like to sign up or know someone who might, just email [jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org](mailto:jennifer@sevengenerationsahead.org) or call 708.660.9909, ext. 7.

**Rebates offered for recycling gas lawnmowers** – If you or someone you know has a gas-powered lawnmower they can recycle it and get a rebate of up to \$150 on the purchase of any new electric, battery-powered or non-motorized push mower. Lawnmowers can be dropped off from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sat., March 29 at the Public

Works Center, 201 South Blvd. Participants in the program will be helping to clean up the air in one of the state's most heavily polluted regions. We chose to promote the program a week early to give residents a weekend to remove the gas and oil before the event. For more information call 708.358.5700 or email [publicworks@oak-park.us](mailto:publicworks@oak-park.us).

**Employee retirement** – Parking Senior Administrative Clerk Marijo Lopez retired on Mon., March 17 after more than 19 years of service with the Village.

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