



**Village Manager's Report
The Week Ending March 4, 2016**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, March 7:
 - Village Board Executive Session, 6:30 p.m., room 130
 - Village Board Special Meeting, 7 p.m., room 101
- Tuesday, March 8:
 - No scheduled meetings
- Wednesday, March 9:
 - Civic Information Systems Commission Special Meeting, 7 p.m., room 215
 - Farmers Market Commission, 7 p.m., room 102
- Thursday, March 10:
 - Civic Information Systems Commission, 7 p.m., room 215
 - Historic Preservation Commission, 7:30 p.m., room 201
- Friday, March 11:
 - No scheduled meetings

New parking garage opens – The 300 spaces in the public portion of the new garage at Lake Street and Forest Avenue officially opened for business Monday as the ribbon was cut and the gates rose for the first time. Mayor Anan Abu Taleb was joined by representatives of the development partners and the downtown business community at the ceremony. A news story about the ceremony and a video of the event [are posted on the Village website](#).

Pertussis cases reported – Cases of pertussis, commonly called whooping cough, have been reported in Oak Park. Seven cases have been confirmed at Fenwick High School, three at St. Giles and one at Oak Park and River Forest High School. The OPRF case is considered an isolated incident and is not considered part of an outbreak there. None of the Fenwick cases were Oak Park residents, but two of the three St. Giles cases are residents. The Health Department is following preset procedures, including notifying local school nurses and health care providers about the outbreaks and urging them to be alert for possible additional cases. The Department's Communicable Disease Coordinator also is working with parents of the Oak Park cases to identify non-school contacts and provide proper care instructions.

Early voting underway at Village Hall – A steady stream of voters has been passing through Village Hall to cast early ballots in room 101. Voting hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and Saturdays, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sundays through March 14. Now that political analysts are saying Illinois may play a bigger role in the primary than initially thought, turnout could exceed previous primaries. Village Hall also is a grace period registration site, allowing eligible citizens to register in person and cast a ballot during the early voting period, which also could increase traffic. Disruptions to day to day duties have been minimal, although Parking Services reps have become adept at cordially directing wandering would-be-voters who may have missed the directional signs up in the building.

One Earth Film Festival returns – This annual One Earth Film Festival returned for its fifth year today and will continue through Sunday (March 4 – 6). The schedule includes a wide range of documentaries intended to foster understanding of climate change, sustainability and the power of people to make a difference. Films will be screened at multiple locations around Chicago and the near west suburbs, including Oak Park. Most films are free and open to the public. More information is posted at www.oneearthfilmfest.org.

New employee searches revving up – Human Resources has posted a wide range of municipal job openings over the past few weeks, including Assistant Village Manager/HR director, business license officer and assistant Village attorney. The positions are being promoted via a wide range of avenues, including sites that cater to specific careers and professional government job sites. Job descriptions also are posted on the Village website at www.oak-park.us/jobs.

Helping out a partner – The Fleet Services Division of the Public Works Department has been hired to rebadge [Park District](#) vehicles with a new logo. The Division already services Park vehicles. When our mechanics learned that the Park District was going to hire an outside firm to do the rebadging work, the Village team stepped up with a much better price. Each vehicle takes about three hours to do, including removing the old markings, cleaning surfaces and applying the new artwork. The rate will be about \$400 to \$500 per vehicle depending on size, which is a bargain for our partner government body and ultimately for taxpayers. In addition to the approximately 40 vehicles that will be rebadged, Division employees also will update the entry door markings at Park District Headquarters.

Bees and chickens report – A call from a reporter in Riverside generated some interesting information on how well the community has adapted to allowing residents to raise chickens and keep bees for at-home honey making. Since 2005, the Village has issued five permits to beekeepers and has received no complaints from neighbors. As for chickens, Village ordinance allows a resident to have up to two chickens. But since permits for chickens are not required, the chicken population is not tracked. However, the Health Department has fielded only seven complaints since the ordinance was adopted in 2002, ranging from noise to households exceeding the limitations.

Condo member training – Village Hall will host a two-part seminar to help condominium association members learn more about their responsibilities. Each of the sessions will feature presentations by an attorney specializing in condominium law. Village staff also will be on hand to discuss local requirements and support resources available in the area. Both

sessions will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Council Chamber at Village Hall, 123 Madison St. Registration is offered, but not necessary. The first session is March 9 and the second April 5. [More information on the sessions and registering is posted on the Village website.](#)

Public Works Activities – Light snow events had Public Works crews salting streets, overpass sidewalks and school crosswalks on Tuesday and plowing on Thursday. While the amounts were relatively small – about an inch Tuesday and nearly two inches Thursday – crews were out ensuring safe travel conditions for both motorists and pedestrians. Streets Division crews also applied temporary patches to streets where water line repairs had been made, with plans to return for permanent fixes when temperatures are more favorable. Crews also swept streets as weather permitted and installed signs by the development site near Lake and Westgate streets that visually identify alternative parking nearby. Water & Sewer Division crews thawed fire hydrants as needed throughout the Village and cleared sewer inlets in the north part of town to guard against potential flooding issues. A catch basin frame was repaired at 316 N. Taylor Ave. and the sewer line at 846 S. Euclid Ave. was traced at the request of the Engineering Division. In addition to responding to routine requests from residents, Forestry Division crews continued tree pruning and removing dead and dying ash trees. The Village’s private tree-trimming contractor currently is working on South Grove Avenue and Kenilworth Avenue between South Boulevard and Madison Street, as the winter pruning cycle enters what likely will be its final month.

Nicor gas main update – Nicor crews continued transferring gas services from the company’s new lines to individual residences. Work is occurring in the north part of the Village. Parkway restoration will be scheduled in the spring.

Free kids fest is Sunday – The Park District’s annual Kids Fest is set for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday (March 6) at the [Oak Park Conservatory](#). In addition to celebrating the birthday of George, the Conservatory's resident double yellow-head Amazon parrot, the free event will include hands-on children's educational activities and an opportunity to explore the tropical rain forest and other eco-climates. [More details are posted on the Park District’s website.](#)

Employee news – The week was a sad one that saw the passing of two retired, longtime employees. Retired Police Commander [Wayne Banta](#), who was with the Department from 1977 to 2008, passed away in Oak Park last weekend. Gerald "Jerry" Stephen, who worked in the Health Department from 1978 until his retirement in 2006, passed away Saturday. Visitation for Wayne was from 3 to 9 p.m. today (Fri., March 4) at Drechsler, Brown, & Williams Funeral Home, followed by private interment. A memorial service for Jerry is scheduled for 10 a.m. tomorrow (Sat., March 5) at the Loretto Convent, 1600 Somerset Lane, Wheaton – [private condolences to Jerry’s family may be posted online.](#)

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