



Village Manager's Report
Weeks ending February 24, 2017

Meetings scheduled for the next week:

- Monday, February 27:
 - Village Board Special Meeting, 7 p.m., room 101
 - Transportation Commission, 7 p.m., room 201

- Tuesday, February 28:
 - First Time Homebuyer Seminar, 6 p.m., room 201
 - Board of Health, 7 p.m., room 130
 - Citizen Police Oversight Committee, 7:30 p.m., room 101
 - Liquor Control Review Board, 7:30 p.m., room 124

- Wednesday, March 1:
 - Citizen Involvement Commission, 7 p.m., room 124
 - Public Art Advisory Commission, 7 p.m., room 215
 - Zoning Board of Appeals, 7 p.m., room 201

- Thursday, March 2:
 - Plan Commission, 7 p.m., room 201

- Friday, March 3:
 - No scheduled meetings

Training begins for accounting software – Village staff began training this week to use the new Employee Resource Program that soon will begin to replace PeopleSoft and other legacy financial software systems used to provide accounting, water billing, cashing and other financial functions. Representatives from [BS&A Software](#), the vendor selected to provide the financial technology suite, set up a training room at Village Hall to work with Finance Department, IT and VMO personnel on configuration tweaks and teach them how to manage the system once it goes live. BS&A personnel will be back in the Village the week of March 13 to train employees in other departments who manage financial and payroll functions for their operations.

Call issued for art and artists – The Oak Park Area Arts Council has begun the process of identifying new pieces for the annual outdoor Sculpture Walk, with plans well underway for the sixth season. As in past years, at least 12 works will be part of the outdoor exhibit, which this year will be in the Oak Park Arts District on Harrison Street between Austin Boulevard and Ridgeland Avenue. The deadline to apply is March 24. In addition, the Arts Council also has begun to seek 12 artists to create

murals on the railroad retaining walls along the Green Line corridor. The deadline to apply for the first six slots is Fri., April 21, with the deadline for the second six set for Mon., June 19. More information on both programs is posted at www.oakparkareaartscouncil.org.

Temporary Westgate closure – Westgate Street will be closed along the frontage of the new Emerson development by Lennar Monday and Tuesday (Feb. 27 and 28) as crews dismantle the tower crane. Two flaggers will be on hand to ensure access to the professional offices from Marion Street during the work. Westgate will be reopened to one lane of traffic next to the work area at the end of each day, with signs posted to indicate narrowing of the road. Businesses and waste haulers that may be affected were notified well in advance of the work.

Facebook marketing experiment – The [Communications Department](#) is experimenting this week with paying to *boost* a Facebook post beyond the Village's 7,000-strong fan base. Staff will spend less than \$50 for the three days to see if paid promotion can increase the number of respondents to the [internet speed survey](#) currently underway. The effort targets residents of Oak Park ages 18 and older. The post about the survey will appear on the Village Facebook page as usual, but then will be promoted to news feeds of others beyond our current fans. While the topic may have narrow appeal beyond those already interested and not significantly increase the number of survey respondents, it may help to attract new fans to the [Village page](#). Staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the effort to determine if this approach could be effective with other topics and issues.

Safer school crossing for OPRF students – A new *rapidly flashing beacon* (RFB) crosswalk light was recently installed by Public Works crews at the designated pedestrian crosswalk at Chicago Avenue and Scoville Avenue, which becomes Fair Oaks Avenue north of Chicago. The new light should improve safety at this heavily used crossing for the high school students on foot and bicycle, especially during the morning rush hour when drivers do not consistently yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. The intersection stays busy year round year with summer school and sports camp students crossing throughout the day. The flashing LED light fixtures, which also had been installed previously at Jackson Boulevard and Cuyler Avenue, are mounted on posts and activated by pedestrians with a push button.

Spring yard waste fever – Residents ready for spring have been taking advantage of the unseasonable weather to work outside and put their yard waste out for collection. Unfortunately, regular yard waste collection does not begin until April 3, so the Public Works Department has had to remind residents to hold on for a few more weeks. The beginning of the annual yard waste collection program is promoted in the March/April issue of the [OP/FYI newsletter](#), which also includes the annual refuse and recycling guide insert. The newsletter typically reaches mailboxes the first week of March, but [already is online](#). This timeline has never been a problem in the past given the typical average daytime high for late February has only begun to push 40 degrees by now.

Miscellaneous construction updates – All bicycle parking projects are substantially complete, except for some restoration work that will be done in the spring. A pre-bid meeting was held this week for the demolition of the buildings at 932 - 946 and 970 Madison St. In addition to building demolition, work will entail asbestos abatement, and restoring the site with gravel and fencing. Proposals for this project will be received on March 2 and presented to the board on March 20.

Public Works Activities – Taking advantage of the week’s record-breaking temperatures, Street Division crews repaired the yellow post *delineators* in the median and around the curve on Jackson Boulevard, cleaned the area at Jackson Boulevard and Maple Avenue and installed bicycle racks at Harrison Street and Harvey Avenue. Street crews also continued sweeping streets, picking up litter in the business districts and Village parking lots, and cleaning problem areas under the viaducts. Water & Sewer Division crews repaired a leaking fire hydrant valve at Washington Boulevard and Clinton Avenue, a broken sewer lateral at 1134 S. Humphrey Ave., a broken water service at 1013 S. Harvey Ave. and water shut-off valves at 334 S. Kenilworth Ave. and 316 Washington Boulevard. Tree pruning continued in the area between Chicago Avenue and Division Street and East Avenue and Austin Boulevard. Forestry contractors also continued removing diseased and damaged trees as needed throughout the Village. The Village Hall renovation project resumed this week with new paint and carpet in conference room 215. Building Maintenance staff held a pre-bid meeting for additional painting at Village Hall – bids are due March 1. Contractor proposals to upgrade electrical and lighting in the Fleet Shop were due today (Feb. 24).

Employee news – Natalie Gougassian has been hired as a new Account Clerk II in the Parking & Mobility Services Department. Natalie recently moved to Oak Park from Los Angeles, where she had worked for the [City of Glendale](#) since 2007. Prior to joining the Parking Services team, she had worked in the Utility Operations Center of Glendale’s [Water and Power Department](#).

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