



## Village Manager's Report Week ending March 16, 2018

### Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, March 19:
  - Village Board Executive Session, 6:30 p.m., room 130
  - Village Board Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m., room 201
  
- Tuesday, March 20:
  - Taxing Body Efficiency Task Force, 7 p.m., Public Works Center Multi-Purpose Room
  - Citizens Police Oversight Committee, 7:30 p.m., room 102
  
- Wednesday, March 21:
  - Community Relations Commission, 7 p.m., room 101
  - Housing Programs Advisory Committee, 7 p.m., room 215
  
- Thursday, March 22:
  - Transportation Commission, 7 p.m., Council Chamber
  
- Friday, March 23:
  - No meetings scheduled

**Bond rating report** – The Village received a rating of *A1* from Moody's and an *AA* from S&P in conjunction with the issuance of General Obligation Bond Series 2018A, which will refund Holley Court Series 2006. The S&P rating is considered high grade and only three notches from their top *AAA* rating. The *A1* rating by Moody's is considered upper medium grade and five notches from their top *Aaa* rating. The ratings did not change from the 2017 bond issues. These ratings reflect the Village's affluent tax base, strong Village management and economy, and a flexible budget, as well as its pension obligations. Both reports are [posted on the Village website](#).

**Livability recognition** – Oak Park earned a spot among the year's best places to live published annually by [livability.com](#), a website that compiles data on factors that affect life in small- to medium-sized cities. Oak Park was among the seven Illinois communities to make the list. According to the website, more than 2,100 cities with populations between 20,000 and 350,000 were evaluated to create the list. Data points included the categories of economics, housing, amenities, infrastructure, demographics, social and civic capital, education and health care. [Click here](#) to read what was said about Oak Park.

**Sales tax report** – Final sales tax data comparing activity for 2017 to 2016 by district has been compiled. Overall, 2017 sales tax revenue grew 2.86 percent over 2016. The Village collected about \$6.5 million from the home rule and municipal sales taxes in 2017 compared to \$6.28 million in 2016. The Chicago/Ridgeland/Austin,

Lake/Ridgeland/Austin and Hemingway districts saw significant percentage increases. Downtown Oak Park and the Madison Street District, which generated nearly 5 percent and 4 percent more respectively in 2017, remained the strongest performers in terms of actual dollars collected. [Click here to view the report.](#)

**Rain water management grants popular** – By mid-week, 180 Oak Park single-family homeowners had applied for the 30 grants available to help with the cost of installing landscaping features that will better manage rain water. The abundance of applications will give the Village a head start for marketing the program next year. The [RainReady Program](#) is a [Center for Neighborhood Technology](#) initiative that offers participating homeowners a free assessment of their yards, a customized landscape design and a grant of up to 50 percent of the cost of green landscaping solutions such as rain gardens and permeable pavement. The maximum grant is \$1,300. A community workshop about the *RainReady Program* is scheduled for 10 to 11:30 a.m., Sat., March 24 at the Oak Park Conservatory. The workshop will cover the benefits of smart landscaping and tips for caring for a rain garden. More information on the program is [posted on the Village website.](#)

**Mobile stroke unit coming to Oak Park** – With the Village Board's recent approval, Rush Oak Park Hospital is set to roll out its state-of-the-art ambulance designed to provide emergency stroke care on site rather than having to wait to reach an emergency room. The custom-built *Rush Mobile Stroke Unit* is one of only six in the nation. The ambulance is equipped with technology and drug therapies that are critical to accurately diagnosing and immediately beginning treatment for stroke, which doctors say can mean the difference between life and death. The Fire Department is excited to have this technology available to supplement its advanced emergency medical response procedures. [Click here to read more...](#)

**On-the-road recruitment** – Representatives of the Human Resources Department took their recruitment efforts on the road this week, participating in a job fair at the University of Illinois Chicago. Among the roles for which candidates were being recruited were firefighter/paramedics, data analysts and engineering technicians. Current firefighter/paramedics participated in the fair as well, offering the added benefit of having someone who knows the job participate in one-on-one discussions with potential candidates.

**Miscellaneous construction updates** – Underground utility work for the Lincoln Property redevelopment project on South Boulevard is expected to move away from Harlem Avenue early next week, ending the daytime closings of the northbound curbside lane on the busy state highway. As cleanup of the demolition site at Home Avenue and Madison Street wraps up, the developer's environmental consultant is expected to begin collecting samples needed before the redevelopment project can get underway. The contractor for Rush Oak Park Hospital's improvement project will begin relocating utility lines on Madison Street next week. Daytime traffic will be affected only during the day, with closures alternating between the eastbound and westbound lanes. Work on the pipeline to carry Lake Michigan water west through Oak Park resumed this week on Fillmore Avenue, just west of Austin Boulevard. The project is expected to continue into late May, with paving between Highland Avenue and Austin Boulevard to follow.

**Public Works Activities** – Crews faced a minor winter weather event on Tuesday, as light snow showers and cold overnight temperatures required spreading salt on bridges and overpasses. Street Division crews collected bicycles abandoned in Village parking garages, removed graffiti from about a dozen locations and placed soil in planters along Chicago Avenue in preparation for the upcoming planting season. Street Lighting Division crews repaired an outage on the 1200 block of North Harvey Avenue. Water & Sewer Division crews repaired a water main break at 213 S. Oak Park Ave. as well as replaced a water shutoff valve at 900 Forest Ave. and a damaged fire hydrant at Maple Avenue and Pleasant Street. Crews also inspected and repaired malfunctioning fire hydrants at various locations. Tree trimming has shifted from large trees to smaller trees, with crews working between Chicago Avenue and South Boulevard and Harlem Avenue and Austin Boulevard. Forestry Division crews are installing watering bags on young trees planted last fall in preparation for the new growing season. Staff also has begun marking locations for spring parkway tree planting, which is scheduled tentatively to begin the first week of May.

**Appreciating civil servants** – The Oak Park Arms hosted its Annual Civil Servant Celebration this week, honoring the men and women who serve the Oak Park community. Police officers and firefighter/paramedics are especially appreciated, the sponsors say, which is why they were invited to celebrate lunch with the retirement home's residents.



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