



Village Manager's Report
Week ending September 13, 2019

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- Monday, Sept. 16:
 - Village Board Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Council Chamber
- Tuesday, Sept. 17:
 - No meetings scheduled
- Wednesday, Sept. 18:
 - Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee, 6:30 p.m., Council Chamber
 - Community Relations Commission, 7 p.m., room 101
 - Housing Programs Advisory Committee, 7 p.m., room 215
- Thursday, Sept. 19:
 - Building Codes Advisory Commission, 5 p.m., Council Chamber
- Friday, Sept. 20:
 - No meetings scheduled

Another housing first – The first facility in Cook County dedicated specifically to helping bridge the gap between shelters and permanent housing for those facing homelessness was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony this week. Sojourner House, located at 324 N. Austin Blvd., was a cooperative effort of a wide range of organizations and individuals, including the Village, Housing Forward, the Oak Park Housing Authority, the Oak Park Residence Corporation and MacNeal Hospital. In addition to our locally administered federal CDBG funds that helped with the rehabilitation of the building, the Village also has pledged more than \$268,000 from the Affordable Housing Fund over the next five years.

Fire equipment grant – The Fire Department has been awarded a \$268,160 federal *Assistance to Firefighter Grant* through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to purchase new equipment. The grant will be used to replace the Department's aging self-contained breathing apparatus and purchase power loading systems with cots for two of our ambulances. The loading systems not only provide greater stability for patients as they are placed in an ambulance, but also help protect our firefighter/paramedics from injuries caused by lifting and moving patients.

Remembering 9/11 – A solemn ceremony was held Tuesday at the Central Fire Station in remembrance of the first responders who lost their lives in the World Trade Center attack on Sept. 11, 2001. The ceremony also served to remember the Oak Park Fire Department personnel who died in the line of duty – Gus Camphausen

(1926), Al Voight (1953), Pat Luby (1992) and Ken Harris (2016). Also in remembrance of the tragic events of 14 years ago, members of [The Center of Concern Senior Companion Program](#) delivered a bag of stars taken from American flags that had become too tattered or torn to fly. The stars were distributed to officers in honor of the first responders who lost their lives on 9-11.

Paper shredding, clothing collection -- Residents are invited to shred sensitive papers and recycle old clothing from 9 a.m. to noon tomorrow (Sat., Sept. 14) at the Public Works Center. Each household is limited to two bags or small boxes of paper items with personal information such as canceled checks, documents containing credit card numbers, social security numbers and medical information. Residents also can recycle just about anything textile-related and receive a tax donation receipt through a cooperative program with the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago. More information on these events is [posted on the Village website](#).

Police recruitment – The Police Department is accepting applications for entry-level officers through Oct. 11, with the written exam set for Nov. 9. Candidates must be at least 21 years of age at the time they apply and no older than 35 on the application closing date. Other requirements include 60 accredited college semester hours with a minimum C grade-point average, U.S. citizenship and a valid Illinois driver's license. Candidates also must successfully complete the Police Officer Wellness Evaluation Report (POWER) test within one year prior to the date of the written exam. More information about the testing and hiring requirements is [posted on the Village website](#).

New aging-in-place award – The Aging in Place Commission and the Development Customer Services Department are seeking nominations for a new award created to recognize businesses, organizations and other entities that provide extraordinary accommodation for older residents and their families. Selection criteria include providing easy physical access, creating an inviting space and offering a welcoming, helpful, service-oriented attitude. The deadline for nominations is Oct. 4. Nominations may [be made online](#), via email to development@oak-park.us or in person at Village Hall. Other awards currently seeking nominations include [accessibility](#), [historic preservation](#) and [sustainability](#). Nomination deadlines vary, but presentations typically occur at a single Village Board meeting in December or January. More information on these awards programs are [posted on the Village's website](#).

Pie-baking contest results – The mother-daughter team of Jennifer Smith-Garcia and Bella Garcia took top honors in the Oak Park Farmer's Market annual Pie Bake Off contest. The duo's entry, *Bella's Favorite Peach Pie*, was the winner among the 10 entries judged at last Saturday's Market. Second place went to Emily Paster for her *The Red (Apple) and Black (Berry) Pie*. Alexandra Smith's *Fruit Basket Pie* was third. The recipes for all entries judged Saturday are posted under the Special Events heading on the Village website's [main Farmers' Market page](#).

Showcasing accessibility – Working with the Disability Access Commission, the Communications Department has produced three educational videos that help illustrate the Commission's role as policy advisors to the Village Board. Two of the videos feature businesses that were recognized for their work with physically and

intellectually challenged individuals, while a third video illustrates the obstacles physically and visually impaired individuals face as pedestrians. This latter video, [posted here](#), serves as a great discussion starter and demonstrates courteous actions able-bodied people can take to make it easier for persons with disabilities to navigate our community. All of the videos are posted on the [Village's YouTube channel](#).

Madison Street update – Preparations continued this week for paving, which is now scheduled to begin the week of Sept. 23. Police will coordinate crossing guards at key intersections during the paving operations, which likely will take about four days barring any unforeseen weather delays. Any construction updates, including scheduling changes, will be distributed in the weekly email to subscribers and posted on the dedicated project website www.madisonstreetconstruction.com.

Utility projects – Preparation will begin next week for a sewer and water improvement project on Scoville Avenue adjacent to the Turano development project. Crews will erect information and construction signs, prune tree roots, install tree protection and stage construction equipment. Water service installations wrapped up this week on Clarence Avenue between Roosevelt Road and Harvard Street. The street remains closed, with restoration slated to start next week. The project is expected to wrap up in early October. Restoration work related to the Berkshire Street water and sewer project will continue into next week, as crews replace concrete curb and pavement. This project should be completed later this month.

Street resurfacing projects – Paving is set to begin next week on Wisconsin Avenue. Surface milling is underway on Clarence Avenue, Randolph Street and Iowa Street with paving to follow. Traffic on Marion Street will continue to be detoured to Harlem Avenue via Ontario Street and Chicago Avenue as patching and paving on Marion Street continues next week. Local access on Marion Street is being restored at the end of each work day. All paving projects should be completed by the end of September. In other street-related updates, crews are applying special surface treatments to various Village streets to extend the life, improve the ride quality and preserve the deeper layers of pavement.

Home Avenue bridge update – [Major improvements](#) to the Home Avenue pedestrian bridge are well underway. The work likely will keep the bridge closed for the rest of the month, but directional signs have been installed and strategies implemented to ensure safe pedestrian and bicycle travel along the [designated alternate routes](#). Staff also has maintained communications with District 97 administrators and staff at the schools whose students are most likely affected by the project.

Employee news – Shaniece Elzie has joined the Health Department as the new Public Health Nurse. She brings eight years of nursing experience to the job, including as a surgical and school nurse. Shaniece earned her nursing degree from Loyola University and most recently worked in case management with medically fragile children. In her role as Public Health Nurse, she will help coordinate and manage community clinic activities, case management, social service referrals, home visits and communicable disease control, as well as HIV prevention services, including education, counseling and referrals for testing and treatment. In other employee

news, Battalion Chief David Wenzel retired this week after 30 years with the Fire Department. He had been Battalion Chief for Shift 3 for the past five years.

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