



**Village Manager's Report
Week ending Feb. 15, 2013**

Meetings scheduled for next week:

- February 18:
 - Village Hall Closed
- February 19:
 - Village Board Executive Session, 6:30 p.m., room 130
 - Village Board Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m., room 201
 - Citizen Police Oversight Committee, 7 p.m., room 102
- February 20:
 - Community Relations Commission, 7 p.m., room 101
 - Oak Park Area Arts Council, 7 p.m., room 102
 - Housing Programs Advisory Committee, 7 p.m., room 215
 - Comprehensive Plan Visioning Event, 7:30 p.m., 19th Century Club, 178 Forest Ave.
- February 21:
 - Building Codes Advisory Commission, 5:30 p.m., room 215
 - Special Plan Commission, 7 p.m., room 101

Save the date reminders (see calendar for all future meetings):

- March 4, Candidate Forum, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m., Public Works
- April 20: Board Outreach Event - Earth Fest, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Public Works

* * *

Village Hall closed Monday – [Village Hall](#) will be closed on Mon., Feb. 18, in observance of [Presidents' Day](#). Residents are reminded that they may call the Police Department non-emergency number 708.386.3800 for assistance should an incident that doesn't quite rise to the level of a 9-1-1 emergency occur when Village Hall is closed.

Building Codes outreach update – Staff drafted a letter to the business and construction communities concerning gathering further input on the proposed revisions to the building codes. The letter explains that two additional public meetings will be scheduled in time to report back to the Village board by March 19. The letter also provides a link to a web page – www.oak-park.us/codeamendments -- where the Feb. 4, 2013 presentation to the Village Board and the proposed changes are posted, as well as a link to the meeting video at www.oak-park.us/boardtv. More details on the meetings will be provided as soon as the times, dates and locations

are confirmed. In the meantime, Building & Property Standards Director Steve Witt and Fire Chief Tom Ebsen are scheduled to speak to the [Oak Park Area Association of Realtors](#) regarding the proposed sprinkler requirements at 9 a.m., Wed., Feb. 20, in the Columbian Room of the Carlton Hotel, 1110 Pleasant St.

Health Department grant – The Health Department will receive a \$10,000 state grant to support West Nile Virus prevention activities during the spring and summer months of 2013. The Village has received annual funding each year over the past decade to help prevent the mosquito-borne disease. Because of the dramatic increase in infections reported locally and statewide in 2012, the Illinois Department of Public Health has allocated significantly more dollars this year than in the past to certified local health departments for increased prevention activities. As in the past, Oak Park will use the grant to support a summer intern to help staff survey the community for mosquito-breeding sites and in education efforts to reduce the risk of infection, primarily among the most vulnerable.

Police talk collaboration with D97 – Police Chief Rick Tanksley and Commander LaDon Reynolds met this week with members of the leadership teams and administrators from School District 97 to discuss the importance of collaborative preparedness. Commander Reynolds gave a formal presentation on preparing for and responding to a school emergency, be it natural or man-made, followed by a question and answer period. Chief Tanksley reports that the information was well received by the nearly 40 district staff members who attended. The meeting evolved from past conversations with D-97 Superintendent Albert G. Roberts, PhD., about how police and the district could work together to be prepared should an emergency arise.

YMCA picked to earn funds for energy efficiency projects – The [West Cook YMCA](#) was chosen over a coalition of six PADS locations to be the Nicor Gas Community Challenge grant recipient by a Village-sponsored online poll that drew more than 2,500 votes. Oak Parkers who sign up for and link their utility bills to a free online energy-use tracking tool will help the Y earn up to \$25,000 to improve the energy efficiency of its facility. Participants also will receive free assessments and rebates for efficiency improvements of their properties. The tracking tool – EnergyBUZZ – offers access to a range of programs for residential, multi-family and business properties. More information on the program – including how we stand toward reaching the \$25,000 goal – is posted at www.nicorgasrebates.com/Challenge.com. The challenge ends April 30.

Celebration to say goodbye to old ice arena – Residents are invited to be part of history on Sat., Feb. 16 as the Park District of Oak Park bids farewell to the old Ridgeland Common in preparation for a major renovation of the flagship facility at Lake Street and Ridgeland Avenue. Alumni from Oak Park River Forest and Fenwick high schools will get things started at 4 p.m. with the last hockey game played on the old rink. The game will be followed by a special figure skating exhibition and then two hours of public skating to music performed by Chicago Blackhawks organist Frank Pellico. Appearances by former Blackhawks players, games on the ice and photo portraits on the Zamboni also are planned. Prizes will include an hour ice rental and a birthday party package in the activity room when Ridgeland Common reopens, as well as autographed hockey jerseys and pucks. Admission is \$6 or free with a rink pass.

Skate rentals are available for an additional \$2 and the concession stand will be open. For more details on the event and renovation, visit www.ridgelandcommon.org.

January Fire Department report – The Fire Department responded to 556 calls in January, reaching the scene in an average of four minutes and 23 seconds, well below the industry standard of six minutes. Emergency medical service calls were the largest category in January, representing about 58 percent. General service requests represented about 20 percent of calls followed by alarm initiated (18 percent) and fire/hazard conditions (4 percent). The Department transported 110 patients to Rush Oak Park Hospital, 84 to West Suburban Medical Center and 11 to Loyola Hospital. Four fire incidents occurred in January – two minor and two significant. A fire at 1138 S. Taylor Ave. on Jan. 9, believed caused by discarded cigarettes in a plastic garbage can adjacent to the house, caused \$15,000 in damage. The owners attempted to put out the fire with a garden hose prior to calling 911. A late-afternoon fire at 835 N. Lombard Ave. on Jan. 23 resulted in a total loss, which is rare in Oak Park. The fire started in the basement of the unoccupied home and burned for some time before a neighbor saw the smoke and called 911. The structure was so involved when crews arrived, that they could not safely enter and focused on protecting the homes on either side that were separated only by five-foot-wide gangways. The fire spread throughout the structure and eventually the roof and interior floors all collapsed. The house was later deemed structurally unsound and has since been demolished to the foundation.

Public Works activities – The Water & Sewer Division repaired a sink hole at 552 N. Marion St. and the public side of a sewer lateral at 232 N. Harvey Ave. Tree pruning continues between South Boulevard and Chicago Avenue, from Austin Boulevard to Harlem Avenue, with crews from both the Forestry Division and the private contractor involved. Streets were salted and plowed to ensure public safety following the latest snowfall on Thurs., Feb. 7, which accumulated less than two inches.

Housing and CDBG programs staffing update – Janis Akerstrom, a Grants Supervisor for the Village, has given notice that she is leaving for another opportunity. Janis oversaw the Village's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grant processes and worked closely with the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC). We wish her the best in her future endeavors. Housing Programs Manager Tammie Grossman will be the contact for the CDBG/ESG programs.

Public Works staff promotion – Bill McKenna, an engineer in the Public Works Department, has been promoted to Assistant Village Engineer. Bill has been a civil engineer with the Village since 1997 and has been active managing the water and sewer capital improvements program. Bill will assist Village Engineer Jim Budrick in managing the Engineering Division.

###