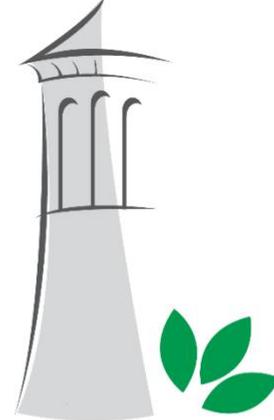


Western Springs FROM THE PRESIDENT



August 18, 2022

August 15 Board Meeting (the full agenda and meeting video is posted [online](#)):

The meeting began with special recognition of Director of Finance, Grace Turi, who is retiring after more than 29 years in Western Springs. Under Director Turi's leadership, the Finance Department has received annual awards for 27 consecutive years, for going above and beyond reporting requirements to facilitate transparency and full disclosure in the Village's annual comprehensive reports. Director Turi is well-respected by Board and staff alike, and she will be missed.

A public hearing regarding multiple proposed right-of-way sales took place, with the Board approving two of the proposed sales and referring one back to Committee for further consideration. An overview of the Village's annual financial audit report was given by a representative from auditors Sikich, LLP. The independent auditor noted that the Village's financial report was given an "unmodified opinion," indicating that the financial positions of the Village's activities and funds information were presented fairly and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, free of material mis-statement – the highest level of opinion that can be received. The Board voted to accept the report, and it has been posted to the [website](#).

There were reports from various Committees:

Properties & Recreation: Trustee Chen reported on, and the Board approved a number of items, including an upcoming manhole replacement on Fair Elms, the installation of a new fuel station for Village vehicles, and the interactive [Urban Forest Management Plan](#) page, which is now live on the [Forestry](#) page of the Village website. The direct link to this valuable resource for residents is: <https://arcg.is/1L4aOO>.

Planning & Zoning: Trustee John reported on, and the Board approved, an ordinance amendment specifying that no permit, license, certificate or approval shall be issued to anyone who owes a fee, fine, or debt to the Village. He also announced that the Field Park Fit Family 5K will be held on Saturday, September 17.

Public Health and Safety: Trustee Lewis reported that the Fire Department promoted Richard Griffith to Lieutenant last month, and official recognition will take place at our next meeting.

Finance: Trustee Rudolph discussed, and the Board approved, a number of items, including a proposed ordinance with respect to ambulance transport fees, a resolution requesting approval of an amended paramedic personnel agreement, a proposed ordinance requesting a budget transfer of \$100,000 to the operating budget, a resolution appointing John Mastandona to the role of Treasurer and Director of Finance, and the water meter and lead service line replacement programs. The Village's water meters are outdated and beyond their useful life. The Board approved a request for proposals to replace water meters using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

Village Manager Baer recently received well-deserved recognition from the Illinois City/County Management Association for her role as a founding member of the Legacy Project, which supports women in public service. The Board extends our congratulations to her.

Manager Baer's report included a number of staffing items. She thanked Director Turi for her dedicated service and noted that John Mastandona will be officially sworn in as Director of Finance and Village Treasurer on August 29. John has served as Assistant Director of Finance since May of 2019 and brings a wealth of knowledge to the role.

On a bittersweet note, Director of Community Development, Marty Scott, will be moving on to a new opportunity in another village at the end of this month. Manager Baer recognized the many contributions that Marty has made to the Village over the years, and we all wish him well in his future endeavors.

Director Supert gave a brief Tollway project update. The mainline corridor work is anticipated to begin later this fall. The Hinsdale Oasis demotion is in progress. The BNSF rail bridge project is largely complete, and landscaping should take place in the next few months. Pedestrian bridge work on 47th street is ongoing, and it is anticipated that it will be substantially completed by the end of the year, with restoration taking place in the spring of 2023. The Ogden Avenue interchange project is underway as well. Ramp improvements are scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. For more information, visit the [Tollway's project website](#).

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for September 12.

WSPD Announces New Deputy Chief:

- As mentioned in the Board meeting notes above, the Village is pleased to announce that Ashlee Niezgoda has been appointed [Deputy Chief of the Western Springs Police Department](#), and was sworn in earlier this month. Deputy Chief Niezgoda has served numerous roles within the WSPD since she joined in 2013: patrol officer; field training officer; school resource officer; officer in charge; detective; and senior detective. Deputy Chief Niezgoda holds a bachelor's degree in Technical Management and Business Administration from Devry University and is currently pursuing graduate studies in Project Management at the Keller Graduate School of Management. We congratulate her and wish her well in her new role!

Infrastructure Sales Tax Referendum:

- The Village is considering several funding sources to more completely address capital infrastructure needs. One option is increasing local sales tax revenue up to an additional 1%. The Board has approved placing a referendum question on the November ballot that ask voters to consider a non-home rule infrastructure sales tax of 1% on tangible goods and prepared foods. The proposed 1% non-home rule sales tax would increase the existing 1% sales tax the Village currently collects and would require approval by referendum. This tax revenue alone would not cover the actual cost of infrastructure projects but would help service the debt incurred for any bonds issued (also only if approved by referendum) for this purpose. The added 1% non-home rule sales tax would be paid by all shoppers, capturing revenue from non-residents who utilize our streets and other infrastructure. Consumers currently pay this additional tax when shopping in many neighboring communities as outlined in the information at the link below. The Board voted to include a referendum question regarding this sales tax on the ballot in November. Learn more on the [Finance page](#) of the Village website.

Styrofoam Recycling:

- [Styrofoam collection](#) takes place on the first Saturday of every month, from 9 am – 12 noon in the Recreation Center parking lot. All block Styrofoam and clean Styrofoam food containers accepted. No packing peanuts please. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Dan Rusk at dnrusk@gmail.com.

Sunday French Market:

- Be sure to stop by the French Market each Sunday (through October) from 9 am – 1 pm on Hillgrove Avenue, in front of the Tower Green. The French Market offers a variety of fare, such as produce, meats, cheeses, breads, artisan-made goods and flowers, when in season. Learn more on the [website](#).

Western Springs Ranked #1 Place to Live in Illinois:

- Many of us who live here already know it, but [HomeSnacks](#) recently ranked Western Springs the #1 place to live in Illinois for 2022. The rankings were based on categories such as: median home value, median income, population density, unemployment rate, commute time, crime, education levels, health insurance coverage, and poverty rates.

Until next time,



Alice Gallagher,
Village President