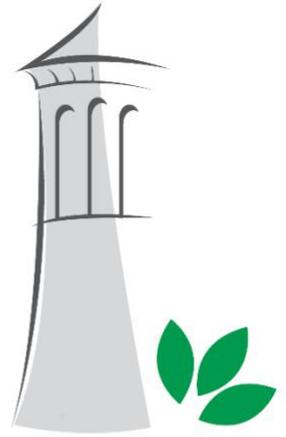


Western Springs FROM THE PRESIDENT

September 15, 2022



September 12 Board Meeting (the full agenda and meeting video is posted [online](#)):

The meeting began with a moment of silence to remember the events of September 11, 2001, and to honor the heroes of that day and those who continue to serve as first responders in our country, and around the world.

Manager Baer acknowledged John Mastandona, who attended his first meeting since being sworn in as Director of Finance/Village Treasurer. This was followed by the swearing in of Lt. Richard Griffith from the Fire Department.

Jodi Mariano from Teska Associates gave a presentation reviewing the [Downtown Streetscape Initiative](#), including the results from the August Open House that invited residents and business owners to share their input. A discussion followed regarding various options for funding the improvements, which include creating permanent outdoor seasonal dining and improved walkability along Hillgrove.

Committee Chairs gave updates on the following activity:

Properties & Recreation: The Committee proposed an ordinance approving an amendment to the standard water tower lease agreement relating to existing facilities located in Spring Rock Park and the Garden Market. The West Pedestrian Underpass is nearing completion – concrete has been poured and electrical work will take place next. The Wolf Road Bike Path Grand Opening event was announced – see the paragraph below for more information. The final numbers are in for engineering and construction costs from the East Platform improvement project. The Village will pay the total approved invoices and submit for partial reimbursement through grant funds previously awarded for this project.

Public Works & Water: The Village continues to collect information for the IEPA's lead service line project plan which includes a survey to determine how many lead service lines are in the Village and must be replaced. For more information on how to determine the material composition of your service line, please visit the [website](#).

The Village will apply for an Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program's (ITEP) grant for sidewalks in a portion of Forest Hills. The project has not been successful in two other grant proposals submitted for this purpose, however staff has taken comments from those agencies and worked to improve the project scope to potentially increase grant scoring. The Committee also recommended the bidding process be waived for the purchase of a spare well pump to have on hand, in case of emergency. Finally, the Committee reported that plans are moving forward to replace the Spring Rock Park water main in early 2023.

Planning & Zoning: The Committee requested permit approvals for the Historical Society's [Plein Air Paint the Tower](#) Event to take place on Sunday, September 25, and the Laidlaw Family 5K on October 1. In addition, approval of a setback ordinance exception was requested to preserve a number of oak trees in the Timber Trails subdivision.

Public Health and Safety: The Committee discussed the upcoming 2023 Police and Fire budgets and requested approval of proposed amendments to the Fire Code, and the adoption of International Fire Code regulations. Additionally, Lyons Township High School is planning to include a fireworks display as part of their homecoming celebrations on September 23.

Finance: The Committee introduced a resolution to levy a Library tax for construction and maintenance of library buildings and equipment from January 1 – December 31, 2023, as is done annually. Due to the Library’s designation as a public building, they must request the Village Board levy its tax for building maintenance. As it has done for many years, the Library Board has requested the Village Board approve a tax in the amount of 0.02% of the value of all taxable property in the Village. The Committee also brought forward two budget amendments: one for the purchase of extrication equipment for the new fire engine – part of which is covered by grant funds; and the other for additional fuel costs incurred by the Village, to take us through the end of the year.

General Government: The Committee supported a proposed addendum to the current contract with LRS to include the transport and disposal of leaves collected by Public Works during the Village’s annual leave collection program. The outsourcing of this service will provide significant savings and other benefits for the Village.

During my report, I noted that the Recreation Committee has two new proposed members. Their approval will be included in the omnibus vote at the next meeting. Advisory Boards and Commissions play a key role in advising the Village Board. If you are interested in getting involved in serving on a Board or Commission, please submit a [Candidate Resume Form](#).

The Board received a summary of the (Tax Increment Financing) TIF Joint Review Board meeting from Manager Baer and Finance Director Mastandona. They gave an overview of the annual financial audits and a number of improvements that have been made in the North and South TIF districts, as well as upcoming downtown streetscape improvements and a proposed building façade improvements plan.

New Director of Finance Sworn In:

- John Mastandona was recently sworn in as Director of Finance/Treasurer. Mr. Mastandona was hired as Assistant Director of Finance for the Village in May of 2019. His prior experience includes public accounting for the Village of Bloomingdale, and corporate accounting for a company in Niles. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Illinois Wesleyan University with a double major in Accounting and Economics and is in the process of completing a Master of Public Administration degree at Northern Illinois University. Congratulations Director Mastandona!

Storm Water Utility Fee – Phase II:

- The Storm Water Utility Fee will provide a long-term funding option for payment of debt service for issued bonds (if approved by referendum) for stormwater improvements and maintenance. The utility fee model represents an equitable method of allocating the cost of improvements and maintenance of the stormwater management system in that those properties that place a greater demand on the system will pay a higher rate. The fee generates funds by charging all property owners a stormwater fee, based on the property's impact to the stormwater system. A property's impact is calculated based on the amount of impervious area on the property (i.e. structures, driveways, walkways). During Phase II, Village staff and the Village’s contractor, Raftelis, will provide public education, collect specific data, and work on implementation planning. For more information, please visit the Village [website](#) or see the article in the upcoming issue of [Tower Topics](#).

Infrastructure Sales Tax Referendum:

- The Village is considering several funding sources to more completely address capital infrastructure needs. The Board has approved placing a referendum question on the November ballot that asks voters to consider a non-home rule infrastructure sales tax of 1% on tangible goods and prepared foods. The tax on groceries and medicine/prescriptions will not be increased. 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. 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 and in this month’s issue of [Tower Topics](#).

Urban Forestry Interactive Site:

- The Municipal Services Department is pleased to introduce a new, interactive [Urban Forest Management Plan](#) platform, created in-house and built on ESRI's ArcGIS Hub. This new site is the first of several ongoing initiatives from the Village's strategic plan, to share information in a more interactive and digestible format. The site allows for real-time data from the Village's forestry inventory to embed alongside relevant content from the Municipal Code, development documentation, and other sources.

WSBA's Fall Festival Returns:

- The Western Springs Business Association's [Fall Festival](#) will take place on Friday, September 23 from 4 – 9 pm on the Tower Green. Families are invited to join in some fall fun with pumpkin decorating, hayrides, a maze, and more! Please stop by the Historical Society's family-friendly [Paint the Tower Plein Air Event](#) on Sunday, September 25 from 10 am – 3 pm – perhaps after you visit the Sunday French Market.

Wolf Road Bike Path Grand Opening:

- Please join Village officials and staff as we celebrate the grand opening of the bike path on Wolf Road alongside Bemis Woods, with a brief ceremony on Monday, September 26 at 6 pm. Cycling enthusiasts and all of our residents are invited – there's more information on the [website](#). Bicycles are welcome (and encouraged!).

Until next time,



Alice Gallagher,
Village President