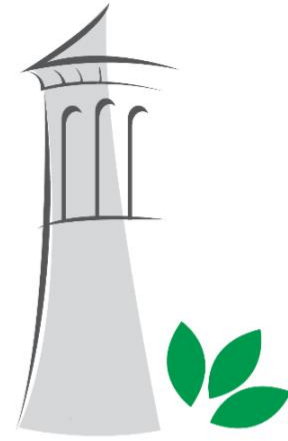


# Western Springs FROM THE PRESIDENT



December 22, 2022

**December 19, Board Meeting** (the full agenda and meeting video is posted [online](#)):

During the final meeting of 2022, the Board voted in favor of an omnibus bill approving a number of items, including: the Village's 2023 Operating Budget; the 2022 Property Tax Levy; a change order for the water treatment plant generator project; a contract for the 2023 Harvey Avenue road reconstruction project; a contract for the installation of new, "smart" water meters; and a contract renewal with the Village's paramedic service provider. These items were discussed by the Board during at least one previous meeting, and more information can be found in our [last issue](#).

**Monthly Financial Report:** Trustee Rudolph provided the monthly financial report for November. The General Fund ended with a deficit (due to the delay of the second installment of 2021 property taxes, though disbursements have begun). LGDF (the local share of state income tax revenue) collection is higher than the same period last year, and sales taxes continue to exceed year-to-date (YTD) results from this time last year. Water/sewer consumption rates were 16% lower than the same period in 2021, but YTD billing is 1.2% higher than this time last year. The Police Pension Fund investment income was up slightly in November - just over 5.4% - while still maintaining a negative 12-month trailing return of - 19.3%. The Board voted to accept the financial report for November 2022.

**President's Report:** I relayed to the Board that a resident has submitted a proposal for a liquor license for a wine tasting/retail wine shop in the downtown business district. The General Government Committee and the Liquor Commission reviewed this proposal favorably. More to come on this new concept as the application process is completed. On December 14, the West Central Municipal Conference Central Council Transportation Committee met and approved the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Transportation Resilience Plan. This Plan identifies risk factors, such as flooding, for the region's CMAP eligible projects. A third plan, the Central Council's Comprehensive Complete Streets and Green Infrastructure Regional Master Plan, is in the works. These plans were made available through grants, and at very low cost to the Central Council's 15 member municipalities.

I noted that 2022 was a year of change and resilience for our municipal organization. We said a fond goodbye to several senior staff members and welcomed new Directors to these key leadership roles. Director John Mastandona heads our Finance Department, Director Tony Budzikowski heads the Community Development Department, and Deputy Chief Ashlee Niezgoda leads the day-to-day operations in the Police Department. Several projects of note were completed this past year in the Village of Western Springs, including: the Bemis Woods Bike Path; the West Pedestrian Underpass; and the 47<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian Bridge (a collaboration between the Village, the Toll Highway Authority, the Western Springs Park District, and Hinsdale). The Municipal Services Department launched the new Interactive Urban Forest Management plan, which identifies both the short- and long-term management of the Village's urban forest to maximize environmental and aesthetic benefits, while minimizing risks and costs. This year the Village received a new fire engine through a state grant secured by Representative Jim Durkin. In addition, the Village's Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan is well underway. This study will identify and prioritize the Village's many infrastructure maintenance and improvement projects and is a first step in a multi-year strategy to address infrastructure needs. It's been a busy year! For more details on the year in review, please look for my annual address in the upcoming January issue of Tower Topics newsletter.

**Village Manager's Report:** Manager Baer noted several items related to the holiday season, many of which are called out below. Refuse/recycling collection will be [delayed by one day](#) for the entire weeks after the Christmas and New Year holidays. Also, Village Hall will be closed on December 23 and 26, and again on January 2.

The first Board of Trustees meeting of the new year will be held on Monday, January 9. The public meeting schedule for 2023 is available on the [Village website](#).

#### New Pedestrian Bridge:

- Officials from Western Springs, the Illinois Tollway, and Hinsdale officially opened the new Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) [pedestrian bridge](#) on December 14. The bridge offers a convenient connection between Veeck Park and Spring Rock Park for pedestrians and bicyclists. The pedestrian bridge crossing was relocated from its location near Ogden Avenue to the new location adjacent to 47th Street following public input from residents and both village boards in 2019.

#### Overnight Street Parking During the Holidays:

- As mentioned by Manager Baer, the WSPD is [suspending overnight parking restrictions](#) for the holidays, from December 24 - January 2. Residents and their guests may park on Village streets overnight during this period. Please note, however, that snow parking restrictions remain in effect. If there's a snowfall of 2 inches or more, street parking is prohibited for the following 12 hours, to facilitate snow removal. [More information](#) can be found on the Village website.

#### Keep the Wreath Red:

- The "Keep the Wreath Red" program promotes fire awareness during the holiday season. Holiday wreaths adorned with red light bulbs are hanging outside both firehouses. Should a holiday-related fire occur within the Village, a red bulb will be replaced with a white one. Please see the Fire Department's [full announcement](#) for tips on how to prevent holiday fires, "Keep the Wreath Red" and, most importantly, keep you and your loved ones safe.

#### Holiday Light Recycling:

- [Holiday light recycling](#) continues in the Village Hall lobby, at Thomas Ford Library, and at Village True Value Hardware. Bring your unwanted strings of lights and leave them in the collection boxes at these locations through January 31.

#### LRS Tree Collection:

- LRS will collect live trees from the curb at no charge for the first two weeks in January. Please ensure that trees are free of all lights, decorations and that they are not placed in bags.

We are bracing for some [severe weather](#) over the next couple of days - please stay safe and warm. Wishing you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season!



Alice Gallagher,  
Village President