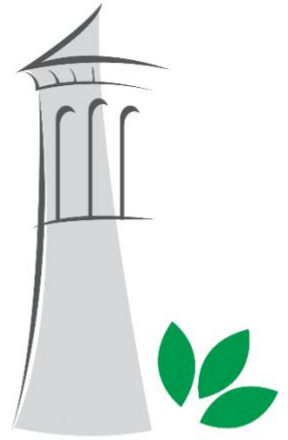


Western Springs FROM THE PRESIDENT



October 27, 2022

October 24 Board Meeting (the full agenda and meeting video is posted [online](#)):

The meeting opened with a citizen comment regarding pedestrian safety concerns at the site of the new west underpass. Village staff is looking into the issues raised as we work to complete the underpass project. Next, the Board approved the sale of two right-of-way properties. The remaining items on the agenda passed on an omnibus vote, including a contract for engineering relative to asphalt work throughout the Village next year; and changes to [parking restrictions](#) at Field Park School, intended to improve safety, and at Lawn and Burlington Avenues, to better serve our downtown businesses. The Board approved increases in the competitive bidding threshold (for budgeted items) and the Village Manager's purchasing authority, from \$10,000 to \$25,000. The omnibus also included the adoption of the Board's [meeting schedule](#) for 2023. Many of these items were discussed in detail at our last [meeting](#), and more information can be found in our [last issue](#) of this newsletter.

Monthly Financial Report: Trustee Rudolph, Chair of the Finance Committee, presented highlights of the August and September Financial Reports. Investment opportunities for the operating funds have increased as the Federal Reserve raised rates. Sales and local use tax income are up from this point last year. The second installment of the 2021 Property Taxes still have not been collected by the County, but current information estimates those payments will be collected by the end of December 2022. As a result, the Finance Department is closely monitoring expenditures. Year-to-date water/sewer consumption is up 1.67% compared with last year. The Village's portion of the Police Pension Fund decreased 2.66% in August and has a 12-month trailing return of -17.5%.

Village Manager's Report: The Village's [leaf collection program](#) began this week and residents are asked to ensure that leaves do not block sewer drains, especially during periods of rain. Additional items contained in Manager Baer's and my report are detailed below.

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on Monday, November 7.

November 8 Referendum:

- The Village is considering several funding sources to support capital infrastructure needs. A referendum question is on the November ballot that asks voters to consider a non-home rule infrastructure sales tax of 1% on tangible goods and prepared foods. 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 requires approval by referendum. Our neighboring communities, including La Grange, La Grange Park, Hinsdale, Countryside, Indian Head Park, Westchester, and others, already charge this additional 1% sales tax. The [Finance page](#) on the Village website includes more information, including the [2022 General Election Ballots](#). The paper ballot for this election will be two pages and the referendum question can be found on the back of page 2. FAQs about the proposed sales tax are also in the September/October issue of [Tower Topics](#). For voter and election information, visit the website of the [Cook County Clerk](#).

Stormwater Utility Fee, Phase II:

- The Village Board is considering a Storm Water Utility Fee that will provide long-term funding for payment of debt service on issued bonds 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 by assessing a higher fee on those properties that place a greater demand on the system. Under this model, all property owners will be assessed a stormwater fee based on their property's impact to the Village's stormwater system. A property's impact is calculated based on the amount of impervious surface area on the property. In the next months, Village staff and the Village's contractor, Raftelis, will undertake the process of public education, data collection, and determining the final fee structure. If adopted, the utility fees will be applied to the water/sewer bills in early 2023. For more information, visit the [website](#), or see this month's issue of [Tower Topics](#).

Leaf Collection Program/Pumpkin Smash:

- While the greenest method of leaf disposal is to mow/mulch or compost, residents also have the option of disposing of leaves in kraft brown bags (with sticker)/LRS yard waste carts or raking them to the curb for collection by the Village. The Village's leaf collection program runs through the week of November 28. Details are available on the [website](#) and an orange postcard was mailed out to each household. Please: no branches, plants, or pumpkins in the curb. Instead, bring your pumpkins to the popular [Pumpkin Smash](#). This annual composting event will take place November 5 in the St. John of the Cross School parking lot.

Halloween Hoopla and Trick-or-Treating Hours:

- The Recreation Department hosts their annual Halloween Hoopla this Friday, October 28, from 4:30 – 6:30 pm inside the Recreation Center and outside at Safety Village. Come in your costume to enjoy games of chance, trick-or-treating, crafts, and more. Preregistration is required at wsprings.recdesk.com. Volunteers are needed for this event – if you can help, please contact rbartelt@wsprings.com. Trick-or-treating hours in the Village of Western Springs (and La Grange, La Grange Park and Countryside) will be 3 – 8 pm on Monday, October 31.

Metra Budget Hearings:

- Metra has proposed its 2023 budget and will hold public hearings on November 2 and 3. Learn more, including how to submit comments and register to attend the hearings virtually, on the Village [website](#).

I-294 Northbound Ramp Closure:

- As part of the Tollway's I-294 Expansion Project, the ramp connecting westbound Ogden Avenue to northbound I-294 is closed on Monday, October 24, and is scheduled to remain closed through the end of the year. Details, including a detour map, are available on the [Village website](#).

ABCs of Recycling:

- While LRS offers a fairly robust recycling program for the Village, the rules of recycling can be confusing. It's important that we get things right in order to maximize the potential benefits. The [Green Team](#), in partnership with SCARCE, is offering a Zoom event on the evening of November 2, to help clarify information and answer any questions about recycling. Click on the Green Team link above for details, and to register.

Styrofoam Recycling:

- Regular Styrofoam collection will take place on Saturday, November 5 in the Recreation Center parking lot from 9 am – 12 noon.

This Monday, please be sure to exercise caution as you drive around town, keeping close watch on all the little ghouls and goblins. Have a safe and happy Halloween!



Alice Gallagher,
Village President