

Village of Clarendon Hills

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Press Release

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Village discussing police department changes with Hinsdale

The Villages of Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills announced today that they are engaged in discussions regarding the possible merging of the two communities' Police Departments.

Conversations are currently in the initial stages, focusing on operational and logistical challenges of such a merger. However, leaders in both communities view combining the two departments as a way to maintain service levels with a new, more cost-sustainable model. Such an arrangement could achieve both operational cost savings and a reduction in manpower over the long term. Neither Village is contemplating layoffs or involuntary reductions in force as part of any possible merger, but rather staffing reductions through normal attrition.

“In this difficult economic time, the Villages of Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale are committed to looking at new and innovative ways to achieve the high level of services our communities demand,” Village President Thomas Karaba said.

Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale have engaged in a broader discussion of shared services with neighboring communities for over a year. Over the past six months that discussion has focused on a Hinsdale-Clarendon Hills partnership, given the communities' similar demographics and strong working relationship. Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale established an automatic aid agreement for their fire departments in 2010. Additionally, the two communities already participate in various regional cooperative law enforcement efforts such as dispatch, tactical response teams, and major investigations assistance.

Due to the high level of current cooperation and the low staffing levels, only minimal savings are available through the additional sharing of police services between our two communities. To achieve the level of savings sought by both communities, combining of the two communities' patrol functions would have to be achieved. Both communities recognize that in order to achieve consolidation numerous issues and obstacles will need to be overcome. Leaders in both communities believe the benefits of such a merger warrant a serious attempt to make it work. Once the fundamental challenges are resolved, the two communities will have to discuss implementation and impacts with their labor unions.

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, a state agency for improving the administration of criminal justice (www.icjia.state.il.us/public/), is lending research and legal assistance to the effort to the Village of Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills for this process.