



VILLAGE OF CLARENDON HILLS

TRUSTEE TOPICS

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April/ May 2015

Message from the President

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I have had the great privilege of serving as the President of the Village of Clarendon Hills since May 2007. At almost the same time that I took office, we experienced the collapse of the real estate market and the beginning of the Great Recession of 2007. And while the Great Recession officially lasted only 18 months, its effects continue to impact municipal government and each of us individually.

But throughout this period, the Village has been able to continue to provide essential services to our residents while holding the line on costs and embracing opportunities to reduce the cost of services through a variety of measures, including the sharing of services with our neighbors and other units of government. And we will remain committed to maintaining municipal services while finding creative cost solutions.

Perhaps most importantly, however, we have accomplished all of this without sacrificing the future of the Village and without kicking the proverbial can down the road like so many other policy makers in Springfield and Washington. We have managed our resources frugally and have continued to save and budget for future capital needs and investments. The financial condition of your Village remains strong. The Village's General Obligation Bonds rating by Standard & Poor's remains at AAA – which is its highest credit rating. We have achieved these results, in part, because of the hard work and dedication of Peg Hartnett, our Finance Director, and her incredible staff. I think Peg may have been the first department head that the Board hired after I first took office eight years ago. She has gifted technical skills, and has been able to produce accurate and reliable financial information with minimal staff and the absence of audit exceptions.

I take pride in knowing that when I leave office on May 18th, I will be leaving with the Village financially well positioned for future generations. With the Great Recession now firmly behind us, the next group of men and women that will assume their duties as Trustees and President in May will have a clear path toward making Clarendon Hills one of the best places in the United States to live, work and play.

Most concerning, however, is Governor Rauner's call to reduce the local share of the State income tax (LGDF) by 50% which he announced in his Budget Address in February. The new Board, together with DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference members and its lobbyist, must actively work against any reduction in LGDF, and preserve a municipal revenue source that has been depended upon since the early 1970's. The local share was a compromise with the General Assembly, in lieu of municipal institution of local income taxes, as exists in other states. If the reduction in LGDF is approved in any form, and for an extended period of time, Clarendon Hills and most other communities will have to think long and hard about its budgetary priorities and service levels.

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-President Karaba



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Preliminary Budget estimates have the Village collecting \$834,000 for FY'16 in local income taxes. A 50% reduction, as proposed, for a full year would cost the Village approximately \$417,000 or 6% of the General Fund FY'16 Budget. The Governor is also recommending a two (2) year property tax freeze, which if "recklessly" implemented, would just be another nail in the coffin for municipal finance and proper pension funding. I urge you to contact our representatives in Springfield and urge them to vote against any reduction in the LGDF or the imposition of a mandatory property tax freeze.

On a brighter note, last year saw the completion of the new Downtown Master Plan and we have already begun its implementation. Thanks to Dan Ungerleider, our Director of Community Development, his staff and the many volunteers who contributed to the development of the Downtown Master Plan. Dan joined the Village only three years ago, but quickly improved the operations of his department and has been a huge contributor to paving the path for the future growth and vitality of Clarendon Hills. We have at least four parcels in the downtown area that need to be developed. New developments will reduce some of the pressure on real estate taxes, but more importantly new development creates its own energy and sense of revitalization, which in turn enhances the financial viability of our existing businesses. And these new developments should include additional housing options for residents that want to down-size or have become empty nesters. We are losing too many of our friends and neighbors to the more plentiful housing options available in Downers Grove, Elmhurst and Burr Ridge.

I have talked too often about reconstituting the Economic Development Committee (EDC), but now that the new Downtown Master Plan is completed and the economy is improving, I hope and expect the EDC to be up and running very soon. Volunteers will be needed that have a passion for the Village and a vision for its future. In addition to the downtown, the EDC will be tasked with continuing to develop the TIF district on Ogden Avenue and looking for opportunities along 55th Street.



The Village adopted a new road design several years ago that includes the installation of a concrete shoulder. The new design appears to be well received and despite the great inconvenience of having the road in front of your house torn up for several months, we continue to be asked, "When will my road be done?" The Village utilizes a report that grades the conditions of our roads and we try to schedule work according to which roads are in the poorest shape. However, sometimes we are not able to follow the report precisely because of the need to do the work in conjunction with water main replacement projects or simply because of contiguity issues.

The plan for a "catch-up" road program was incorporated in the current budget. I believe the broader scope implemented for this year's road and water main program has worked out well and encourage us to continue on this path of trying to do larger projects that take advantage of historically low interest rates which will allow for some economies of scale and be more attractive to bidders –leading to lower total costs.

The Special Service Area (SSA) program is not, however, the most efficient method to pay for these infrastructure improvements. I encourage the new Board to explore alternative ways to finance projects of this magnitude. But realistically, the only way to replace the SSA program is with some type of general tax that will require the approval of the voters. As you know, my record on referendums in the Village has not been too stellar.

In addition to roads, sidewalks and water mains, the Village must continue its investigation for solutions to storm water control and periodic flooding issues. This has proven problematic because costs are so high and the number of flood events continue to increase. The Village also provides forestry services and while we have been able to manage the emerald ash borer problem, the feisty beetle is still with us and threatens the potential destruction of the 450 remaining ash trees on Village Property.

Our Public Works department does an unbelievable job for our residents. Mike Millette has been the head of the department for almost three years having replaced the incomparable John Hayes who served the Village for more than 30 years. Mike and his team of dedicated veterans are on call 24/7 and do a fantastic job for us. This winter has not been as bad as 2014, but throughout the periods of cold and large accumulations of snow, the streets of Clarendon Hills are always plowed and made safe for travel. Be sure to thank the crew when you have an opportunity.

The largest function of the Village is Public Safety with expenses of almost \$4 million or 57% of government activities functions. The police department is the lion's share of this number. Thanks to the cooperation of our officers, last October we reached a new contract with FOP that will run until April 30, 2016 and keeps cost-of-living increases to a reasonable 2.25% 2.25% and 2.50%. The Chief of the Police Department, Ted Jenkins, just celebrated his 30th year with the department and many of his loyal and hardworking staff have worked here just as long. Chief Jenkins and his team have done a remarkable job of adapting to a challenging economic environment and maintaining exemplary police services with a minimum staff of officers and patrolmen.

The Fire Department remains one of the best and cost effective municipal benefits available. Our paid on call model and service sharing agreement with Hinsdale are second to none and provide first rate fire protection at the lowest cost per call and lowest cost per capita of any other fire protection system. I will forever be indebted to Chief Brian Leahy who will be celebrating 33 years of service this year with the department and to the dedicated men and women that serve

Around Town

Board Meetings

April 6th and 20th at 7 PM
May 4th and 18th at 7 PM

ZBA/Plan Commission

April 16th at 7:30 PM
May 21st at 7:30 PM

May the 4th be with You!

The Library will Celebrate Star Wars all day long! Come take your picture with C3PO and R2D2, and search for the hidden Yodas. Discover more information at www.clarendonhillslibrary.org

Park District Pool

Opens May 23 @ 11:30 AM find out more at www.clarendonhillsparkdistrict.org

Daisy Days are

June 12 and 13 this year. Find out more at www.clarendonhillschamber.com

Dancin' in the Street

concerts will run for six consecutive Wednesdays, beginning June 17 and ending July 24. The Village's Special Events Committee members volunteer many hours to plan and run the concerts.

Want to be a sponsor? Contact Zach Creer at 630- 286-5402 or email zcreer@clarendonhills.us

Daisy Dash

Sunday, June 21st register at www.daisydash.com

under his leadership. Our fire house is over 50 years old and this past year we replaced the roof, HVAC units, windows, apparatus floor, and tuck-pointed the building. But more work is needed and expansion of the fire facility is sorely needed.

A space needs study for the Fire Department Building was conducted this summer and confirmed that the existing station is inadequate for the department's evolving needs. The study identifies several options for expanding the building. The most economical of the options identified was a \$1.6 million expansion of the station. More study and funding options will need to be explored by the Board. I hope the new Board can make this a priority.

The Village is responsible for two pension trust funds for the Police and Fire Pensions. Due to recent changes in accounting standards, a larger than normal percentage of any increase in our property tax to be levied this year and in the years to come will have to be dedicated to cover increases in our pension expenses. It is estimated that out of an estimated \$98,000 in additional property tax revenues next year, \$83,000 will automatically go to fund the additional pension requirements. Meaning only \$15,000 in additional property taxes will be available to fund other cost increases, including any potential reduction of the Village's share of the State income tax.

I am often asked how I find the time to serve as President. I always answer by saying that Clarendon Hills has a superior professional and exceptional group of department heads, a dedicated group of employees and a talented Village Manager that makes my job fairly easy. In the last eight years, I have never been surprised because they always keep me well informed. In our form of municipal government, I believe that we are best served by a Board that develops policies, hires smart hardworking leaders, and gets out of their way and lets them do their jobs. They are absolutely to be held accountable by the Board, but micro management by a President or the Trustees will never work.

I have worked with four wonderful Village Managers, all of whom have left for larger and more complex communities or positions. When Randy Recklaus left for Arlington Heights in early November, the Board hired Marty Bourke as an interim part-time Manager. Marty is a real veteran, took control and we did not miss a beat; thank you Marty. The Board's search for a permanent replacement resulted in the unanimous hiring of another veteran manager, Kevin Barr, who started on March 1st. Please welcome Kevin, introduce yourself, and give him your support. Zach Creer, Assistant to the Village Manager, will continue to assist Kevin and has been especially helpful to me in the ghost writing and editing of many prior President Messages thank you Zach.

One of the projects that Kevin and his staff will be taking up is the development of a process to create a long term plan for the area south of 55th street. Recent storm water issues near our southern boundary have reinforced the importance of developing a plan for the area. I believe that this effort is of high importance for the Village both for storm water management but also from a utility planning, and community and economic development perspective.

This is my final President's Message. I have served with scores of volunteers, all of whom love our Village, and who are truly the backbone of our town. I also owe a debt of gratitude and offer a special thank you to all of the Village Presidents, Trustees, and women and men with whom I have worked with at the Village. There are too many people to thank individually by name, and a simple thank you seems so inadequate – but nevertheless, **THANK YOU** one and all! I have volunteered on behalf of the Village of Clarendon Hills for 29 years; 13 years as a member or chairman of the ZBA/PC, eight years as a Trustee and eight years as President - and I have lived in the Village for 32 years. So leaving municipal office, downsizing our residence, and moving back to Chicago to reduce our commuting time will be both bittersweet and exciting, but it is now time for me to bid you all adieu.

Best wishes and thanks,

Tom Karaba

Village Hall Closed

Monday, May 25th in observance of Memorial Day

Trustee Topics

Village of Clarendon Hills

1 North Prospect Avenue
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SPRING CLEANING INFORMATION

Spring brings spring cleaning, so be prepared for it with this helpful guide to properly disposing the various types of waste.

Yard Waste

Yard waste collection runs each year April through November. This year, yard waste collection begins April 1. Yard waste is collected on regular refuse days. Yard waste must be placed in biodegradable paper bags or 33-gallon garbage bins clearly labeled yard waste. Brush and tree trimmings should be tied into a bundle no larger than four feet long and 18 inches in diameter. Each bag, bin or bundle must include a yard waste sticker, which can be purchased at Village Hall, Clarendon Hills Hardware or Jewel-Osco.

Hazardous Waste

Hazardous Waste only can be dropped off at one location. The County's household hazardous waste (HHW) drop-off facility is located behind Fire Station No. 4, located at 1979 Brookdale Road in Naperville. Facility hours are Saturdays and Sundays, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., excluding holidays.



Household hazardous waste items are materials purchased for cleaning or maintaining a home. Business waste is not accepted. The HHW facility in Naperville is open and available to all residents of Illinois.

Accepted Household Items:

- Automotive fluids
- Batteries (automotive and sump pump)
- Cleaning products, drain openers
- Fertilizers
- Fire Extinguishers
- Flammables
- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Fluorescent bulbs, CFLs
- Mercury
- Mineral spirits, strippers, solvents
- Paints (oil based and alkyd only)
- Prescription medications
- Propane tanks (20 lbs or less)
- Thermostats
- Unknown hazardous substances

Electronics Recycling

Since 2012, electronic devices cannot be deposited into landfills. The Downers Grove Township Highway Department hosts a drop off the 3rd Saturday of each month (except holiday weekends) from 8:00 a.m. to noon at 318 E. Quincy St., Westmont. Contact (630) 719-6625 for questions.

Contact Us

Village President:

Tom Karaba 630-286-5420

Village Trustees:

- Don Knoll 630-286-5421
- Eric Stach 630-286-5423
- Paul Pedersen 630-286-5424
- Paul Flood 630-286-5425
- Ken Hall 630-286-5426

Village Clerk:

Dawn Tandle 630-286-5403

Village Hall: 630-286-5400

- Finance Dept.: Press 2
- Building Dept.: Press 3
- Administration: Press 4

Public Works: 630-286-4750

Non-Emergency:

- Police: 630-286-5460
- Fire: 630-286-5430

Community Numbers:

- Park District: 630-323-2626
- Public Library: 630-323-8188

www.clarendonhills.us

Find Recent Village Board Actions at
www.clarendonhills.us/AgendasandMinutes2015.cfm