

Village News



YOUR FRANKLIN PARK NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER, 2012

Mayor's Desk

FROM MAYOR BARRETT F. PEDERSEN



The Village of FRANKLIN PARK

Barrett F. Pedersen
MAYOR

Tommy Thomson
VILLAGE CLERK

TRUSTEES:

Tom Brimie
John Johnson
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VILLAGE HALL HOURS
Mon. Tues. Thurs. Fri.
8-4:30 pm
Wed. 8-6 pm
Sat. 9-12 pm

SPECIAL HOLIDAY HOURS

Friday, 12/21 - 8 AM to 3 PM
Saturday, 12/22 - Closed
Monday, 12/24 - Village Hall
will be closed but the Clerk's
Office will be open from
3 to 5 PM to allow candidates
to submit petitions for the
Consolidated Election on
April 09, 2013.
Tuesday, 12/25 - Closed
Monday, 12/31 - 8 AM to 4:30 PM
Tuesday, 1/1 - Closed

Village Bond Rating Raised

Our continuing efforts towards repairing the poor financial position we inherited are reaping benefits. I am happy to report that Standard and Poor's Rating Service, one of three internationally recognized bond rating agencies has raised the Village's bond rating two categories to A minus. Last year Standard and Poor's issued the Village's first investment grade bond rating, on its own and without credit enhancement.

An increased bond rating allows the Village to borrow money, if needed, at a lower rate and helps us to refinance to a lower interest rate on any existing debt. But more importantly, it indicates that our financial condition is strong and continues to strengthen.

We were awarded this upgrade because we produced general fund surpluses in FY 2011 and 2012 resulting in strong cash reserve levels. We were able to achieve these surpluses by implementing a number of cost saving measures and by professionalizing our budgeting process through strong management and an adherence to generally accepted accounting practices. We have been disciplined in our spending and applied best practices and a rigorous set of standards in our fiscal reporting.

The Village operates on taxpayer dollars. As such, you the taxpayer deserve strong financial management and extraordinary accountabil-

ity. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our staff and the leadership of our Board, the Village is now on solid financial footing.

It is an honor to work closely with a dedicated board and staff who demonstrate respect for the taxpayers in all their endeavors.

Bond Issue Rescinded

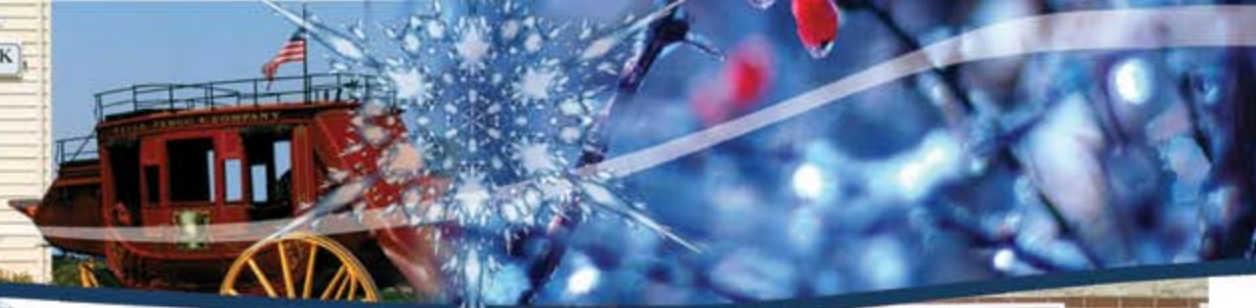
At a recent Village Board meeting, the Trustees unanimously voted to rescind the \$15.5 million Alternate Revenue Bond that was approved in September. The Board decided to move forward with the issue in a form that would not require an additional tax levy in the coming months.

The financing is needed to allow the Village to complete much needed capital projects including flood relief, in areas hard hit by storms. This badly needed relief was promised by the prior administration but never delivered. We want to fund storm water relief in several key areas, including increasing storm sewers and separating combined sewers. In addition, we hope to add a number of homes from the Crystal Creek area to the flood improvement project. This would result in a large number of homes from the special flood area no longer being obligated to purchase flood insurance. We also hope to utilize funding to help establish Quiet Zones to address the noise from train horns.

Make Your Home the Best Decorated for the Holidays!

The Village of Franklin Park is sponsoring a contest to see who does the best job of demonstrating their festive spirit by decorating their home this holiday season. Three residential winners and one business will be recognized for their creativity in outdoor holiday decorating. Winners will receive a prize and special recognition from the Board of Trustees for their creativity. Show us your creativity!

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Mayor's Desk ▶ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Happy Holidays

Each year I look forward to spending the holidays with my wife and our sons and to join our friends and extended family in participating in our holiday traditions of decorating our tree and visiting loved ones. We are fortunate to have each other and cherish the time we spend together. Unfortunately, for some people, the holidays are difficult, especially during these tough economic times.

I hope this holiday season you will consider brightening the lives of others who may not be as fortunate. There are many ways to spread cheer this Christmas like donating to a Food Pantry or lending your time to a local charity. Leyden Family Services, located here in Franklin Park, provides a wide variety of services to the less fortunate. There is no better time to demonstrate your goodwill by offering assistance to an elderly neighbor or visiting a lonely hospitalized veteran.

May the joys of this holiday season be bestowed upon you and your family and I wish for a healthy, happy new year to us all.

Barrett F. Pedersen
BARRETT F. PEDERSEN



Mayor Barrett Pedersen, Trustees John Johnson and Tom Brimie and Village staff helped cut the ribbon to welcome Red Rose & Gifts located at 9645 W. Grand Ave. The owner, Irena Petkova and her husband Rafael are residents of Franklin Park and moved their business here from another town.



Mayor Barrett Pedersen, Clerk Tommy Thomson, Trustee John Johnson and Village staff cut the ribbon with Jay Chavda, owner of Hopscotch, a new specialty pub located at 9743 Franklin Avenue.



Mayor Pedersen was joined by Trustees John Johnson, Bill Ruhl, Tom Brimie and Cheryl McLean and Village Clerk Tommy Thomson in welcoming Big Lots to Franklin Park in the Grand Avenue Plaza.

Police Department Sponsoring



The Franklin Park Police Department will be helping to make many children happy again this year by sponsoring their annual Toys for Tots Campaign. If you would like to donate, please bring an unwrapped new toy to the Franklin Park Police Department and drop it off in the lobby at 9545 Belmont Ave. before December 14. Thanks!

Mayor for a Day

Mayor Barrett Pedersen and Kamila Trela, a 5th Grader at Passow School plant a tree outside Village Hall. Kamila was the winner of the Mayor for a Day Writing Contest and got to spend time shadowing the Mayor at Village Hall recently.





Update on Train Quiet Zones in Franklin Park

While the noise can be a problem, it is important to remember that train horns are sounded to warn motorists and pedestrians of the hazard presented by an approaching train. Federal regulations allow for the establishment of Quiet Zones that eliminate the requirement to sound the train horn. Franklin Park has six crossings that need to be evaluated and modified to be eligible for Quiet Zone consideration. Safety measures are put in place at each rail crossing in a specified reach of track that compensates for the safety factor that the train horn provides. These additional safety measures can be expensive to implement. Once established, Quiet Zones can be effective for up to 24 hours a day; however, a train engineer is given the discretion and authority to sound the horn at any time a dangerous situation presents itself.

In October, Village officials met with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to obtain input on the Quiet Zone process. One of the outcomes of these meetings was the determination that a new traffic signal configuration was required at the Ruby Street-Belmont Avenue-Franklin Avenue intersection and at the Ruby Street-Pacific Avenue intersection, with interconnections to the rail crossing signals, to ensure that vehicles are not trapped on the tracks when an oncoming train approaches. This improvement had to be implemented before further consideration could be given to establishing the Quiet Zone.

The Phase I and Phase II engineering work for the traffic signal modification and railroad signal interconnection project

has been underway for the last year and is expected to be completed in the near future and construction of these improvements will be completed after the engineering is approved.

Beyond this prerequisite work at Ruby Street, it is estimated that millions of dollars of safety measure improvements would be required at the six rail crossings to allow for the Quiet Zone establishment. More precise estimates will be determined as the process progresses. It was determined that the cost to make improvements would be the same for a 24-hour Quiet Zone as the 10 PM to 6 AM designation.

The Village will continue to work closely with officials from the Illinois Commerce Commission and the FRA to establish a Quiet Zone in the Elm Street to Scott Street corridor. We are also aggressively pursuing grants and revenue sources so that we can make the very costly required safety improvements in order to qualify for the Quiet Zone designation. In addition, we are considering the possibility of placing a referendum on a future ballot that asks the electorate if they support this discretionary spending and authorize the required funding to modify our crossings.

If you believe that a train engineer has sounded the train horn excessively, complete the on-line Alleged Violation Reporting Form on the FRA website at: www.fra.dot.gov/rts/ViolationReport.aspx#.

Nicor Gas Supports Energy Efficiency Improvements

Investing in energy efficiency can improve a building's value and make it easier for property owners to attract tenants. Improving energy efficiency also reduces operating costs and enhances comfort. However, the process can be challenging and any building owners aren't sure where to begin or are concerned about the expense of energy efficiency upgrades.

The Nicor Gas Economic Redevelopment Program helps overcome these barriers and makes investing in energy efficiency easy and affordable for owners of commercial, industrial and multifamily buildings. The program offers financial incentives and extensive technical consulting assistance. Building owners get help with every step of the process, from evaluating energy

efficiency needs and identifying equipment options to applying for rebates and finding qualified contractors.

Projects that complete the recommended energy efficiency upgrades can qualify to receive up to \$100,000 in rebates. The exact amount of incentive is based on the energy efficiency features implemented and energy saved. The program also offers extensive technical assistance (valued at up to \$20,000) to help building owners through every step of the process.

To apply for this program or for more information, please contact the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Economic Redevelopment team at 773-328-7040 or ERP@cntenergy.org or visit NicorGasRebates.com/programs/economic.



Mayor Barrett Pedersen (standing, center) was on hand for the signing of the final Elgin O'Hare Western Access planning document with Illinois Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur (seated, left) and Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary Ann Schneider.





BLOOD DRIVE Remember to donate blood at the Village of Franklin Park Blood Drive on December 14 from 3-7 PM at the Franklin Park Community Center! The drive is being held in partnership with LifeSource and our Senior Citizen Commission. This will be the LAST blood drive for 2012. Blood donors allow many adults and children who rely on blood transfusions to overcome diseases, illnesses, unforeseen accidents or surgeries.

FIRE DEPARTMENT'S DRILL TOWER RECEIVES FINANCIAL SUPPORT The Franklin Park Fire Department received \$7500 to support repairs for the Drill Tower in Fire Station #2. The funding was provided through Fire District 20 MABAS program. Our Drill Tower is utilized by 18 towns to conduct specialized training classes and emergency exercises and drills as part of a mutual aid agreement with area municipalities. As part of this initiative, our Fire Department will receive \$2500 per year to maintain the Drill Tower facility.

WINTER PARKING RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT No Parking on designated Snow Route streets after a 2" snow fall until snow clearing operations is complete. Secondary streets have a No Parking restriction after a 2" snow fall from 9 AM to 9 PM on the odd address numbered side of the street and 9 PM to 9 AM on the even address side.

VILLAGE SUPPORTS FOOD DRIVE FOR LOCAL PANTRY The Village is encouraging residents to donate non-perishable food items to support the Leyden Food Pantry's Holiday Food Drive. A drop-off box will be located at Village Hall through-out the holiday season. Please help those in need during the holidays.

SENIOR ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AT VILLAGE HALL Having problems accessing senior services? A representative from West Suburban Senior Services will be available at Village Hall, on the fourth Wednesday of the month, from 9 AM to Noon to help. Assistance is available for a variety of programs including helping you complete Circuit Breaker applications, and to sign-up for Medicare and Medicaid. For details, call 708-547-5600.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM A representative will be at Village Hall every Tuesday from 9 AM – Noon beginning on November 20th to process LIHEAP applications. Please bring the following documents with you: a Social Security / SSI (monthly) benefit letter for 2012, your pension letter for the last 30 days, a valid Photo ID, Social Security Cards for all members in the household, proof of income for the last 30 days for all house members 18 years or older, a current NICOR and ComEd bill (disconnect notices have to be included if you are applying) and bring your Medical Card.

MEALS ON WHEELS AVAILABLE FOR OUR SENIORS Senior citizens, 60 years old and older, who are unable to get out to shop for themselves can receive a hot lunch delivered to their home. The Meals on Wheels Program provides a hot lunch five days a week, delivered between 10 AM and 2 PM. A spouse or caretaker living in the household can also qualify even if they are not 60. In addition, frozen meals that can be easily prepared on the weekend, are available. The Program also provides a well being check of the senior every weekday. The Meals on Wheels Program works in partnership with West Suburban Senior Services (WSSS) and conducts a background check on their drivers. The cost of a daily meal is a suggested donation of \$3.25-\$3.50 but anyone in need of the program should apply. To learn more about the program, please call WSSS at 708-547-5600 or contact Meals on Wheels at 847-678-8777 to sign up.

THE CAFÉ AT THE CENTRE AT NORTH PARK HOSTS DAILY LUNCH FOR SENIORS The Franklin Park Community Café is open to all seniors, age 60 and over, and serves a daily hot meal at 11:30 AM, Monday through Friday, at an affordable price. The Café is located at the Centre at North Park, located in the Park District facility at 10040 West Addison, and most days it also includes an optional Soup / Sandwich / Salad Bar. The Café opens at 9 AM and closes at 2 PM and features daily Bingo! In addition, the Café schedules movies, guest speakers, Health Fairs, Day Trips, parties. It's a great place to get together with friends and neighbors over a cup of coffee. For more information, call 847-678-8777, or stop by to pick up a menu for the month. The suggested donation is \$2.75 - \$3.00. Your first lunch is always free! This program is part of Cook County's Community Nutrition Network.

DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE AVAILABLE IN FRANKLIN PARK Franklin Park residents can utilize the RTA's Dial-A-Ride service for assistance getting to medical appointments and for transportation to shopping destinations within Leyden Township and to select locations outside the area. This service is open to everyone and requires advanced call-in of up to seven days for medical appointments and up to one day for all other trips. Fares are Disabled \$1.25, Senior \$1.25, Student \$1.25, Other \$2.50. To make a reservation, call 1-888-699-6999, 1-800-504-7689 TTY.

**FDT
PRO
FLER
DLR**



Energy Assistance



**Meals
on
Wheels**
Franklin Park

