

Guest commentaries

Commitment to frugality

The public hearing for the Village's 2011-2012 Fiscal Year Budget will be held at the April 4, 2011 Village Board Meeting.

The Village Board and Staff have again taken a frugal and prudent approach to developing and presenting a balanced budget this year.

The proposed \$42 million budget maintains the same property tax rate that the Village has had since 2005.

This, as well as continued cost containments across all departments will enable the Village to provide quality services in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The proposed budget reflects the Village Board's commitment to addressing needed traffic and infrastructure improvements in the community.

However, the capital projects budget is austere and totals \$2.5 million for roadway, bridge, and signal engineering and improvements, of which the Village anticipates to receive approximately \$1.5 million in grant revenues to help offset the costs.

While the budget does not propose any tax increases, residents will see an increase in the Village's water rate as a result of the City of Chicago's 44% increase from 2008-2010.

The Village Board realized that this entire increase could not be passed on to residents all at once.

Therefore, the Board came up with a three year plan that included cost containment measures, staff reductions, and step increases in the water rate.

In May of 2009, the Board approved a 6.5% increase in the water rate in an



Mike Collins
From The Mayor's Desk

effort to address the Water and Sewer Fund's operating loss.

This was the first water rate increase that the Village had approved in over five years and the Village's sewer rate remains unchanged since 2003.

In May of 2010, the Village approved a capital charge to offset water and sewer infrastructure costs.

Although rates will increase this year, the good news is that Chicago did not impose a rate increase for the current year.

We continue to work on making the Village a more competitive environment for businesses and new development and we are preparing for the future and the eventual upturn in the economy.

As the Village moves forward with its economic development plans, it is important to not only recruit new businesses but to work to retain our existing businesses as they provide the foundation for future commercial growth. It is our hope that these initiatives will help set the tone for a more competitive business environment in the Village.

There are still many opportunities for the Village of Plainfield and we are looking forward to the successes and challenges of the upcoming year!

Finally, I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for all of their hard work and feedback throughout the budget process. In addition, thank you to the Village Administrator, Department Heads, and Village Staff for all of their hard work and diligence in creating this document and in continuing to provide the highest level of service to our residents.

Be sure to stop by the Village Hall for coffee on April 13th at 9:00 a.m.

Coffee with the Mayor is a great opportunity to learn more about the Village and to ask a question or two!