

VILLAGE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the Annual State of the Village Address where we present an overview of the Village's accomplishments over the past year. Each of the Village's managers will share with you the items of interest in their respective departments. We will also have an opportunity to hear from the La Grange Park Chamber of Commerce, La Grange Park Public Library District, and Community Park District of La Grange Park. This year's presentation is a cautious return to an in-person presentation, where residents are able to join us here at Village Hall and where we will have a short reception afterwards.

As we enter year two of the pandemic, we recognize how it has impacted every aspect of our everyday lives. Still, the Village strived to exceed resident expectations in the delivery of services and as needs evolved, post Covid shut down. As we emerged from isolation, the Village became much more efficient through technology enhancements and we placed our energy into projects that were most meaningful for our community – like stormwater management, transparency in public safety and police response, and community development.

In this time of uncertainty, the Village has much to be grateful for, and there is much good news to share – but most of all, I want residents to know that we continue to look for ways to be innovative to ensure our capacity to respond to ever-changing situations. We remain steadfast in our commitment to a strong and resilient community.

It is my sincere pleasure to be a part of this presentation and provide the opening and closing remarks – because I am so proud of the work we do – and we do it for the best possible reasons – for the care of our residents. So, thanks for joining us – let’s get started – and at this point, I would like to introduce our Village Manager, Julia Cedillo.

VILLAGE MANAGER

Thank you Mr. President. It's an honor to serve as Village Manager where I am responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Village and executing the policies and vision as set forth by the Village Board and President. Today we are in a much different position than one year ago, but we remain focused on community safety as we plan our future. Covid-19 continues to be a very fluid situation and we learned early on that we must adapt quickly. This year, in partnership with the Village of Western Springs and Osco Drugs, we hosted a vaccine clinic for older adults in our communities – and we managed to serve 1600 adults in our area. Additionally, the Village monitors area covid hospitalizations and vaccination statistics and are glad to see that about 72% of our community is fully vaccinated. As infection rates are rising again in our state, we continue to encourage folks to get vaccinated or get your booster – appointments are available here in town at Osco.

It has been a challenging couple of years but we are able to forge ahead because we have hard working and team-oriented staff, we have the dedicated and supportive leadership of the Village President and the

Village Board, we have invaluable intergovernmental relationships with other districts and towns, we have committed organizations, and an engaged community of volunteers and wonderful residents. Together, we work to maintain a high quality of life in La Grange Park.

In reviewing the presentation, I noticed that a theme came to mind – and that is working hard to respond to changing needs as we reemerge and reinforce community. The Village is always looking for ways to do things better and smarter, but the need to social distance resulted in a sea change in work processes and the provision of services. Just briefly, I'd like to draw your attention to a few of areas you will be hearing about tonight:

1. A focus on technology. All of our departments have transitioned to streamlined systems whether it be our enterprise resource planning software, our new geographic information systems, new public safety applications and communications systems or our new internet based phone system, the village is progressing technology for enhanced services for our residents.
2. A focus on customer service. As folks worked from home, we received substantially more calls and more online requests for

services than in years past. As a result, we have conducted more tree evaluations, we expanded our sidewalk program and sewer back up prevention program - and had more communication with residents (got to know more folks) – despite social distancing.

3. Smart financial planning. The Village has been careful to manage resources through the pandemic. Part of that has been applying for grant opportunities in an effort to bring tax payer dollars back to our community. The Village has successfully obtained grants for road projects, a pavement study, green infrastructure for stormwater management, tree inventory, and new lighting for energy efficiency. We are working on new grant applications for our central area stormwater project and public safety community cameras.
4. We proactively plan. We are developing new plans to guide how we use our resources. We already have a plan for our water and sewer system, we just updated our road plan, we are developing our engineering plans to be shovel ready for an MWRD application, we are updating our commercial revitalization plan and we issued an RFP for a streetscape improvement plan for Village Market.

5. Finally, we know our employees are a critical asset. Whether a first responder or administrative staff, they are critical in the care for our residents. Since last year, we have added a new member to our management team - a new Assistant Village Manager, Maggie Jarr. Maggie comes to the Village after serving as a Senior Planner for the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). You will meet her tonight; she is terrific.

Everything we do as a Village starts with residents in mind - which helps form a vision and the Village Board and President work to articulate the vision for the community. This includes everything from:

- *Executing and enforcing the policies and programs as determined by the Village Board.*
- Assisting in the development of policies – by providing options and recommendations,
- Working together on strategic planning
- Service delivery accountability,
- Team building in terms of commitment to customer service,
- training and capacity,

- And the communication of information to residents, elected officials, other taxing bodies, legislators, and anyone who will listen (market, market, market!).

All together, we have our work cut out for us, BUT it is work for which all involved are passionate.

The Village utilizes strategic planning to guide and plan for challenges.

The following are the Village's Priorities, as determined by the Village Board:

1. Maintain Fiscal Responsibility with Sound Budget Practices
2. Improve and Maintain Infrastructure and Roads
3. Attract, Retain and Expand Business
4. Broaden Communication Practices, Methods & Outreach
5. Pro-Actively Plan for Our Future While Honoring our Community History, Character & Quality of Life (this is newer – because the Board felt that with change we want to maintain our identity)
6. Leverage Staff, Equipment and Technology Resources to Maintain & Enhance Services

In addition to setting the Village's priorities, the Village President and Board of Trustees are typically engaged in communicating with legislators about issues that affect our community - by traveling to Springfield. This year has been different due to covid and so our efforts were more local where we met with our legislators in an effort to garner their support in funding a substantial project - the Central Area Stormwater Project.

As a quick overview, the Village is a full service local government providing services through six departments. We have 42 full-time employees and about 80 part-time employees (many of whom are paid on call firefighters and residents). We also have a part-time elected Village Clerk, Meghan Kooi, whose duties are prescribed by state law.

Here is the list of Village employees - and let me tell you - they are the best around. The work they do each day is amazing - some you see and much more that you don't, but all in an effort to serve the community as they truly care.

The achievements of the Village would not be possible without the countless volunteers who provide service - we cannot build community

alone. Here is a list of advisory groups that provide recommendations to the Village Board or have specific authority as determined by state law.

We are so grateful for their service.

- Board of Police Commissioners
- Sustainability Commission
- Commercial Revitalization Committee
- Traffic, Safety and Engineering
- Youth Commission
- Planning & Zoning Commission
- Police Pension Board (duties prescribed by state law)

On behalf of the Village President and Board of Trustees, I extend our sincerest thank you to our community partners. Tonight is not only a time to reflect; it is a time to be mindful of one another's achievements and goals so that we are able to work together in the future. Taking stock and being proactive allows us to better anticipate challenges, look for opportunities and then forge ahead in the best possible manner for our community.

I will now turn it over to the first staff presenter, Finance Director Larry Noller.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

First, I would like thank the entire finance team, who strive to consistently provide excellent customer service to residents. If you have a question, a concern or a bill to pay, it is very likely you will start with our customer service desk located in the center of Village Hall, and who answer the Village's main phone line and assist walk in customers on a wide variety of topics.

The Finance Department completed a conversion to new financial software last year. The new software resulted in more efficient processes and improved data security. 2021 was the first full year with the new software and it allowed us to improve staff efficiency and offer additional online services to residents. We also transitioned to a new online vehicle sticker renewals system making renewals quick and easy for residents.

One of the primary responsibilities of the Finance Department is preparing and monitoring the village budget which gets approved by the Village Board each April. As always, the challenge is balancing the cost of providing core Village services against limited revenues. The Village's fiscal year 2021 budget was nearly complete when the COVID-19

pandemic introduced enormous uncertainty into the process. The Village immediately re-examined its revenue forecasts and reduced several planned expenditures to accommodate an anticipated decline in resources. Our careful planning continued into the current fiscal year where the Village maintained a pared down budget that largely “holds the line” through a second year of impact as a result of pandemic. Fortunately, no further budget modifications were necessary because Village revenues continued to perform at or better than projected. Furthermore, the Village received CARES Act and FEMA funding to assist with the costs of responding to COVID-19. The Village was also allocated \$1.79 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding.

The Village’s budget is available online and I encourage you to take a look at it. When you do, you will find that the budget is composed of 16 separate funds that account for the Village’s various revenue sources and uses.

If we look at a chart of all the fund’s expenditures, you will see that the largest is the General Fund, which accounts for most of the Village’s day to day operations. The Water Fund follows, and includes the cost of

purchasing Lake Michigan water from the City of Chicago and maintaining and replacing the Village's 42 miles of water mains. Similarly, the Sewer Fund includes the cost to maintain and replace the Village's network of sanitary and storm sewers. These two funds are supported by water and sewer fees. Due to the impacts of covid, the Village has held the fee levels for the last two years.

Several of the remaining funds relate to the maintenance of the Village's 35 miles of roads: the Motor Fuel Tax Fund, the Road Bond Fund and the Debt Service Fund which accounts for the payment of the Road Bonds. Other funds include the Police Pension fund, the Capital Projects fund, the Risk Management fund, and economic development funds that provide funds to support the Village businesses through tax increment financing and business district sales taxes. This year, the tax increment financing funds performed better than anticipated which will be very useful as the Village plans the public improvements for those districts.

If we look at a similar chart for the Village's revenues, we see that there are three primary sources of funding, property taxes, intergovernmental revenues and water and sewer fees.

This next chart shows the relative size of the Village’s various revenue sources. We can see that in the past year, the intergovernmental revenues have increased significantly. Both income and sales taxes experienced growth over the past year. Sales taxes have grown both due to local businesses and due to a change in Illinois law, which is now collecting taxes on online sales. The “Leveling the Playing Field for Illinois Retail Act” required out of state retailers and marketplace facilitators to collect and remit state and locally-imposed sales taxes for the location where the product is delivered starting January, 2021.

Finally, 2021 was the fourth year the Village received the Government Finance Officers Association’s Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The award program recognizes local governments that meet the high standards necessary to produce an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. This document contains much more than the statutorily required audit report and includes additional financial and statistical information about the Village. As such, it is considered one of the highest quality financial reports a local government can issue. Less than 6% of cities nationwide receive the GFOA’s ACFR

award. The current annual audit is available on the Village's website along with prior years.

Thank you, I will now turn it over to John Jandak.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Good Evening. My name is John Jandak, and I am the Public Works Foreman. I am speaking on behalf of the Director of the Public Works Department, Rick Radde, who could not be here this evening. Our department works to maintain five core Village functions:

- Streets – including the right of ways
- Urban Forest
- Water Distribution & Sewer Collection and Conveyance
- Fleet services
- And oversight of Capital Projects

This past April, the Public Works Department applied for and was awarded a ComEd Green Region Grant to initiate pollinator gardens within our community. We chose four locations, with three areas having a water feature. The new gardens changed the dynamics of these areas by adding native flowers and other landscaping elements to encourage butterflies – as well as residents – to visit frequently.

On a related note, the Village applied for and was awarded a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the USDA Forestry

Service for a Village-wide tree inventory and management plan. As part of the tree inventory, the contractor was chosen by the Morton Arboretum to collect data on 100% of the Village's tree canopy. The inventory will include information on the location, species (scientific and common name), size, GPS coordinates, condition rating, and available planting space, to name a few. The program will also include an update to our current management plan, including the adoption of a new Tree Protection/Preservation ordinance.

About one year ago, the Village implemented geospatial technology to its list of tools and capabilities. The Village became a member of the Geographical Information System Consortium (or GIS), which is comprised of over 40 municipalities in the Chicagoland area. GIS has been around for at least two decades, but the Village was not able to resource this valuable tool until recently. There are many benefits of having GIS, but first and foremost, it helps with the development of Next Generation Emergency software and the recording of village data, assets and infrastructure. Some of the highlights of our newest applications include Resident Interfacing maps that allow our website users to search

property information, and view (1) current capital projects, (2) the Village's TIF/BDD areas and incentive projects, and (3) our current Zoning map. In the future, the public will also have access to the Village's tree inventory. Behind the scenes, GIS includes all underground utility locations for water, sewer, and street lighting. GIS will continue to develop over the years and it will contribute greatly to the efficiency of the work we do related to maintenance, planning and response.

We are overseeing the finishing touches to a Road Paving Project, north of 31st Street. In December of 2020, the Village was awarded a substantial Community Development Block Grant (\$200K) to repave the 1100 and 1200 blocks of Meadowcrest and Woodside. To close the gap for the full cost of the project, the Village utilized remaining funds from the 2016 Road Bond and additional dollars from the Motor Fuel Tax Fund.

The Village recently completed an all new pavement condition index study which was 100% funded by a grant from the West Central Municipal Council and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). Consultants working for CMAP drove our roadways utilizing laser beams to determine the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) scores. Not only will we

have an accurate accountability of our current roadway system, but any future maintenance or projects that occur on our roads can be added to this program, and new PCI ratings will be recalculated. This PAVER tool will be instrumental in planning, prioritizing and budgeting for future street projects.

The Village is in the final stages of completing a major water main project along La Grange Road between Garfield and 31st Street, behind BP to Meadowcrest South of 31st Street and along Meadowcrest North of 31st Street and West along the alley to La Grange Road. This new 12" water main replaced a deteriorated main with poor fire flow characteristics. As part of the restoration efforts, the alley was reconstructed with concrete, providing more effective stormwater management and greater life expectancy vs. asphalt.

With recent roadwork at Meadowcrest and the new water main project taking place in the same area, the Village moved forward with enhanced design elements for the parking stalls at Meadowcrest and 31st. This improvement, which included stamped concrete, a decorative black stop signpost, some new curbing and a bike rack will make this location very

attractive for our community. This project was paid out of the Business District funds for that commercial area.

Over the last several years, significant rain events have caused severe flooding in the central portion of our community. As a result, the Village has been focused on the development of a sewer separation project for this area. The Village began schematic design in 2011 and we are now engineering the project to be shovel ready for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD's) Annual Stormwater Partnership Program. The proposed storm sewer will provide localized flooding relief to the area bounded by 31st Street on the north, LaGrange Road on the west, Homestead Road on the south and the IHB Railroad on the east. This area has topographical challenges and has experienced increased frequency of flooding and damage in recent years.

Funding this project is a priority for the Village and the cost is substantial – over \$10 million. The Village President and Village Manager have been focused on legislator outreach and staff has been busy exploring its options. In 2020, the Village applied for \$5 Million in funding for this project to the state's Rebuild Illinois Infrastructure Grant. The

announcement of awardees for this program has been delayed with no new time frame when awards may come available.

In 2020, the Village submitted an application for permeable paver intersections to the MWRD for a Green Infrastructure Program, a shared funding but competitive program. One year ago we received news from the MWRD that they will fund our project which consists of permeable paver construction of three intersections on Monroe: at Community, Robinhood, and Sherwood. These intersections will capture stormwater flow off La Grange Road to assist with the mitigation of flooding in the Central area. In October, the Village Board approved a contract with Copenhaver Construction for this project, but construction will be delayed until Spring due to supply shortages.

As I close, I wanted to quickly mention that after 21 years, the Public Works Department will say goodbye to our current John Deere Front End Loader. The replacement, a 2022 Caterpillar M30, will arrive before the end of the year. The Public Works Department utilizes a front-end loader for most of our core services. The machine is used for winter operations,

leaf loading, brush pick-up, loading trucks with gravel, or utility excavation material to name a few.

In closing, Director Radde, (Rick), asked that I thank all the men and women at Public Works for their continued support, dedication, and hard work this past year, especially given the pandemic. He also wanted to say thanks to other Village departments for their teamwork and thank you to the Village Board for supporting all we do.

Thank You, I'll now turn it over the Chief Contois.

POLICE CHIEF

Good Evening, my name is Tim Contois and I proudly serve as the Chief of Police for the Village of La Grange Park. I have been serving this exceptional village as a member of the police department since 2002. In keeping with La Grange Park's rich tradition of providing a high quality of life for its residents, I am proud to report that our community has been recognized for the sixth consecutive year as the 29th safest city in Illinois by Safewise, a well-respected, nationally-recognized home security company.

In 2021, our department welcomed 3 new additions to our police team. Danielle Heinz, Robert Weber and Christopher Cooper. Probationary officer Heinz came to us as a certified full time police officer while probationary officer's Weber and Cooper both graduated from the Cook County Sheriffs Police Academy in August. Each of them have completed our 12-week Field Training Program with Field Training Officer's Wilk, Rackow, Hon and Rosch and have been released for solo patrol.

In addition to the above, Sergeant Felix Hernandez retired after serving this village for 34 years. Again, we thank Felix for his dedication to the department and community. With Felix's retirement came the promotion of Tim Jania to the rank of Sergeant.

Training remains a high priority within the police department with approximately 85 percent of the police officers being certified as CIT Officers (Crisis Intervention Team). On a daily basis, the police department, with the assistance of Lexipol, continues to complete web based training that focuses on all elements of the department's policy manual. In addition to the daily training bulletins, all sworn members of the agency partake in monthly web based training by the Police Law Institute (PLI). I am proud to share that Police Officer Frank Slabenak, a 5-year veteran of the La Grange Park Police Department is a certified DRE (Drug Recognition Expert) which focuses on drug impaired drivers. In 2021, department staff took part in over 1100 hours of training, not including police academy and field training.

The Police Department's commitment to community outreach continued to look a little different in 2021 due to the pandemic. An abundant amount

of time and effort was put into weekly safety briefs along with social media messages and videos. While the Police Department still gathered for the Coffee with the Chief and staff, it was done every 6 months and not quarterly. Addressing the concerns of our residents continues to be a top priority.

The La Grange Park Police Department Citizens Police Academy was offered but after lack of interest, it was put on hold. Officer Chris Dempsey, the CPA Coordinator and I are hoping that post pandemic, this program will regain interest as people feel more comfortable about gathering.

The annual National Night Out event looked a little different in 2021. This year's event was a two-night event with a parade through town on Monday August 2nd and an all virtual event on Tuesday August 3rd. The police department continues to focus on strengthening the relationship with the community and business owners.

In 2021, the police department raised over \$16,000 dollars for the Special Olympics Illinois Torch Run. With the help of business owners, residents and department fundraisers, such as the burger bash, we were able to

exceed our goal of \$15,000. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Special Olympics Illinois in 2022.

A major focus of 2021 was the continuation of technological advancements to help streamline our operations while maintaining the same level of service. We recently implemented a Flock License Plate Reader (LPR) at the intersection of 31st and La Grange Rd. On average, this reader captures over 4000 license plates a day and notifies patrol staff of any hot file hit that has been entered into the statewide database. In addition, staff has spent a multitude of hours seeking information pertaining to outdoor pole mounted security cameras at various locations throughout town. These cameras are another tool to aid the police department in investigating and holding those individuals accountable for any and all crimes that they commit within our community.

On January 22nd, 2021, the Governor signed into law the Safe-T-Act. Amongst other things, this law mandates that law enforcement agencies must implement body cameras by January 2025. Staff is now actively researching its options, and since it is an unfunded mandate, we are

making plans to budget for the purchase of these body cameras in the 23/24 fiscal year.

We continue to participate in the National Drug Take Back initiative provided in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Partnership for a Drug Free Lyons Township. Additionally, the Department maintains a drug drop off box in the lobby in which unused medications may be deposited for proper and safe disposal. In October, we turned over to the DEA approximately 75 pounds of prescription and over the counter medication.

The police department continues its commitment to community with our Shop with a Cop program. This program provides our staff with a deeply-meaningful opportunity to provide gifts and resources for economically disadvantaged families that would otherwise go without during the holiday season.

2022 promises to be another proactive year for the Police Department. Staff have begun working with an outside vendor on administering a promotional eligibility list along with a partnership with 10-41 Inc, a

certified police chaplain service and wellness provider for emergency first responders.

In closing, the men and women of the La Grange Park Police Department look forward to building on community relationships throughout 2022.

Thank you, I will now turn it over to Fire Chief Dean Maggos.

FIRE CHIEF (DIRECTOR OF FIRE & BUILDING)

For just over 20 years, I have had the privilege of serving as the Fire Chief for the Village, and as the Director of the Village's Building Department. Throughout all of the turmoil in the nation over the past year, and all of the challenges we have and continue to face locally, our staff continue to do what they can to provide the best services possible.

COVID continues to affect the Fire Department in various ways, from the changes made in some of the ways we train, to modifications made in some of our policies. Thankfully, vaccines were made available very early to our EMS and Fire personnel, with many taking advantage of such and getting their initial doses before the end of 2020. Although many precautions were taken and remain in effect to protect employees, early vaccinations placed many of our response personnel at an advantage in having to deal with the many COVID patients we provided EMS care for in the field. As of today, all Fire Department employees have received the COVID vaccine.

As part of our response to COVID, the Village tracked expenses for equipment, supplies and modifications made to the work environment to help protect employees and residents. Many of these expenses were then submitted to FEMA through a Public Assistance Grant for reimbursement.

Aside from the daily impacts and adjustments made due to COVID, the Fire Department persevered with many other projects, programs and activities.

Last January, the Village recognized the 40th Anniversary of providing paramedic level care, or advanced life support care, to our residents. Decades ago, Village officials had the foresight to determine the need to provide such service. In July of 1980, through a special referendum, residents voted in favor of establishing a paramedic program. On January 1, 1981, as one of the first joint ventures of this type in the state, the shared LaGrange/LaGrange Park paramedic unit (Ambulance 426) became operational, providing both Villages paramedic level, advanced life support, ambulance service.

Throughout the year, the Fire Department continued to enhance and improve our equipment and facilities. The following were accomplished using a combination of budgeted municipal funds, our Foreign Fire Insurance Fund, and funding from the La Grange Park Fire Department Foundation. We purchased new battery operated rescue and roof saws, adding more reliability and efficiency to fire and rescue operations. New Rapid Intervention Team bags were obtained, which firefighters use to carry critical safety equipment when rescuing injured or trapped firefighters. A child-sized rescue dummy was purchased to help us in search training. Additional gear lockers were added to the stations. A “Jacob’s Ladder” exercise device was purchased by the Fire Department for use by all Village employees, which is considered one of the most effective pieces of equipment for low-impact high-energy workouts, helping to improve firefighter and overall employee fitness. Some long overdue maintenance was done to the Fire Station No. 1 sign. The façade sign was originally constructed in 1941 for the old fire station, and was relocated to its’ current location and incorporated as a monument sign in 1982.

In addition, all new carbon monoxide meters were obtained, replacing those on our fire vehicles that reached an end of life. These are used when we are called to homes and buildings to check CO levels. Now is good time to provide a brief reminder that you should have working Carbon Monoxide alarms in your home. The Fire Department responds to several incidents throughout the year where alarms sound, and we discover elevated, sometimes dangerous, levels of CO. If you do not have them, get at least one, and if you already have them, test them to make sure they are operating properly.

There have been several retirements and promotions during this past year. Division Chief Rick Ronovsky retired with 42+ years of service, Lee Kudia with over 30 years, and Joseph Palicka with over 21 years. We thank them for their significant contributions to our department and Village over the years.

Also during the past year, Division Chief Norm Rick was promoted to Deputy Fire Chief, and Firefighter Bill Drake was promoted to Lieutenant. Congratulations to both of them.

Congratulations are also in order for personnel hired last January, who graduated in May from the fire academy. Robert McDermott, Colin McManus, Spencer Schattauer and David Skiba. Three of our personnel graduated with a higher than 90% grade.

During the past 12 months, the Fire Department responded to approximately 1700 EMS requests, and nearly 500 Fire and Rescue calls.

In order to continue providing quality care to EMS patients, and handle fires and other emergencies effectively, paramedics, EMT's and firefighters continually train. During the past year, we were lucky to receive permission to use several structures and homes scheduled for demolition, for necessary training. Doing so better prepares the department for actual fires and other emergencies. When we train on these homes, we can create noise and some inconveniences for the neighbors – so we are greatly appreciative of your patience and tolerance.

We also regularly send personnel to other training events, such as those held in nearby communities, or other sites, such as the Illinois Fire Service Institute, located on the campus of the University of IL in Champaign-Urbana.

During the past year, our fire department responded to a number of significant incidents, several occurring within our Village and others occurring in other communities, where we provide assistance through automatic-aid and mutual-aid agreements. In June, we sent an engine as part of what is called a strike team to Rockton, IL, to assist with a chemical fire. We also responded to Willow Springs to assist with a chlorine leak at an industrial manufacturing facility along the canal. One incident of note within the Village this past June was the Village brush pile fire, in which at one-point firefighters had four hose lines flowing, and a Public Works loader helping to separate the pile, in order to completely extinguish the fire. Another rather significant incident of note was an early morning semi-truck fire delivering food to Plymouth Place. Parked immediately adjacent to the building, damaged diesel fuel tanks helped the fire quickly spread to building HVAC equipment and wood fence screening. Firefighters quickly attacked and extinguished the fire, but firefighters also had to take additional important actions concurrently, such as ensuring skilled nursing patients on the third floor were moved

to safer areas of the building, and diesel fuel flowing towards the retention pond was stopped.

As part of our participation in receiving from and providing aid to other agencies, we belong to Division 10 of MABAS, or the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System. Through MABAS, we are able to support several specialty response teams, and their equipment, that we would not be able to afford or run on our own. I happy to report that through MABAS Division 10, and formally sponsored by one of our members, the Westmont Fire Department, a federal grant was awarded for over \$600,000.00 for a new state-of-the-art Communications vehicle. This vehicle responds to all extra-alarm fires, and other specialty team responses, and will replace a twenty-six year old vehicle.

Finally, a highlight from the past year was our first ever Santa Parade and Food Drive, taking place last December, organized and coordinated by the Fire Department. A great deal of thanks goes out to residents who came out to participate and donated so much food, and to all of our Village staff and departments who helped with this event. It was organized in less than two weeks, and we delivered seven pick-up trucks and a minivan full of

food donations to the St. Francis Food Pantry and Beds-Plus. It has been decided that the parade will happen again this year, and will take place next week on Saturday evening, December 18th. Please check the Village's website, e-briefs, and social media for additional information about this year's event. We look forward to seeing you, and if possible, your food donations again!

I will now turn it over to Patrick.

BUILDING OFFICIAL

Good evening, my name is Patrick Boyle. I am the Building Official and Deputy Building Commissioner for the Village and have held this position for almost five years. I oversee most of the day-to-day operations of the building department. I work directly under Dean Maggos, the Director of Building and Fire and I am fortunate to work alongside Allison Chorley, the Building/Fire Specialist, who has worked for the Village for almost 40 years.

The Building Department has continued to operate under COVID protocols by providing a contact free permitting process. All permit paperwork and related submissions are handled through the Building Department kiosk located in the lobby of the Village Hall, and permit fees and contractor registrations can be paid online. While some building department processes have returned to normal throughout this year, maintaining the contact free permit process as an alternative allows for continued safety for residents and contractors. Going forward staff will monitor the effectiveness and modify the procedure if or when appropriate.

This year, the department has experienced another strong construction season; permit activity even outpaced last year's statistical high. The outdoor living improvement trend continued, as many residents have installed decks, patios and fences. Repair permits also held steady, consisting mostly of roof, siding and window replacement. Larger remodel and addition permits also showed an increase toward the end of this season.

Over the last twelve months, we have processed a record 1,053 permits compared to last year's total of 855. As a result, permit inspections increased. The building staff completed 1,744 inspections, while 1,528 inspections were completed the previous year. Similarly, La Grange Park's new home market has seen a healthy increase with six new single-family homes permitted, and another three to follow shortly.

The Building Department Staff has continued to train and expand their working knowledge of the ERP software (BS&A) launched at the end of 2020. The focus with the permitting software has been strengthening our "tech" skills, improving permit processes and gaining a greater understanding of the program's capabilities. The greatest change to

operations was moving primarily to paperless permit files for small projects, as permit paperwork can be stored within the BS&A program and accessed in the field. Both Allison and I utilize desktop scanners, a simple way to input paperwork while processing permits. I received a laptop/tablet used primarily to perform inspections and related duties in the field. As a result, all inspections reports are automatically generated through the permitting software and emailed directly to the resident and/or contractor. I also employ a mobile printer in case a hard copy is needed on site. Allison is the BS&A expert and continues to find new ways to improve functionality, ultimately making my job easier, and streamlining the permitting process in general.

The Village has continued the use of a contracted Code Enforcement Officer, working two days a week. The Code Enforcement Officer both responds to complaints received and completes routine surveys throughout town looking for obvious property maintenance issues. A total of 416 site inspections have been completed and 302 complaint cases have been filed. The BS&A software has also made improvements to code enforcement activities. Complaints and related information can now

be entered, tracked and managed through the software. A tablet for field work is also being utilized for property maintenance activities, allowing for onsite data entry, photo documentation and even creating notices in the field.

We had another very strong year of property owners who have taken advantage of the Sewer Backup Prevention Reimbursement Program. Residents have utilized this program due, in part, to the flooding the Village experienced the last two years. The reimbursement program was initially budgeted at \$50,000.00, but the Village Board approved an additional \$25,000.00 in late July due to the high demand. Those funds were encumbered quickly by those submitting applications and completing work.

Finally, I would like to highlight some commercial projects and new businesses in town. **Bethlehem Woods** obtained a permit to replace the exterior monument and directional signage throughout site. In addition to displaying the new ownership, the existing signage was outdated. They have also submitted a permit to renovate the memory care floor, which is planned to commence before year's end. A permit was issued for the

expansion of **Murphy's Transmission and Auto**, which includes two new vehicle bays, additional storage, new fire sprinklers and water service and replacing the parking lot which includes the installation of new landscaping. **Ino's Tacos** opened their doors early this spring, after a complete renovation of the space. The owners have worked exceptionally hard operating during the pandemic, like many of our restaurateurs. **The Hop District Community Brewers**, which is resident owned, is currently under construction and hopes to be completed by January of 2022. While the area will not be utilized until warmer weather, a special use was granted for an outdoor dining area behind the building. The **Community Park District** obtained zoning approval to renovate the multi-use courts located at Memorial Park. In addition to adding pickle ball courts and other amenities, the park district partnered with a local business, Strive 4 Fitness, to create a fitness court. Speaking of Strive 4 Fitness, the owners have expanded operations and opened a smoothie/ recovery café, called **Level Up Café**, directly next door to their gym at Plaza 31. The business owners are focusing on a wellness themed café with a dedicated area for recovery after workouts.

Other improvements that have been completed at Plaza 31 include the completion of the vanilla box buildout of the last remaining vacant unit. Exterior improvements include the re-paving of the parking lot, installation of the outdoor patio, completion of the perimeter landscaping and installing the new multi-tenant monument sign. The exterior upgrades have really highlighted the transformation of this property, there has been a noticeable increase in traffic to the shopping center. The new owners of 1201 Barnsdale, Dubak Electric, have received permits to complete a full renovation of the interior and exterior of the building, including the installation of a new parking lot with storm water management and perimeter landscaping. The owner is moving swiftly as they hope to operate a portion of the business within the building by late January.

Thank you for your time, and I'd like to turn it over Maggie, our Assistant Village Manager.

ASSISTANT VILLAGE MANAGER

Good evening. My name is Maggie Jarr and I'm the Assistant Village Manager. In my position, I have the pleasure of working closely with the Commercial Revitalization Committee (CRC) to support community and economic development efforts in the Village. The CRC's mission is to identify how the Village can best support new and existing business and enhance the commercial areas in La Grange Park. Regular meetings resumed this summer after a brief hiatus.

The Village also resumed some in-person events this year to celebrate new businesses and project milestones along our commercial corridors. Most recently, we held a ribbon cutting event with the owners of Level Up Café & Recovery. This unique, wellness-centered café offers great coffee, smoothies, and local baked goods, as well as leg compression services to help with post-workout recovery.

We look forward to more businesses opening their doors in 2022.

- Hop District Brewing is preparing to welcome you to its new “community-centered” craft brewery at 23 E. 31st Street. To

complement the brewery, the Village completed much needed and aesthetically pleasing public improvements, funded by business district dollars – and the area is really taking shape.

- Happier Now Market and Café is kicking off its project down the road at 1016 E. 31st Street. Happier Now will offer casual dining and a selection of prepared meals to-go, as well as coffee, tea, and other beverages.
- As Patrick described, the redevelopment of 1201 Barnsdale is also underway. Dubak Electric will open DuFab prefabrication in the former International Molding Company building. This is a unique project that includes Dubak University, a four-year industrial electrical trade apprenticeship program.

There are several other notable projects moving through the Village’s development review process and we expect to see additional progress into next year.

- Plymouth Place intends to redevelop the rear of its property and replace the cottage structures with a series of new buildings to better meet the needs of current and future residents. A total of 94

independent living units and construction of a new Center for Healthy Living are proposed.

- A proposal from Andy's Frozen Custard is also being considered for 531 N. La Grange Road, just north of Phillip's Flowers. Andy's is a national chain of "quick-service" frozen custard stores with drive-through and walk-up service windows. It's sure to be a hit with La Grange Park families.
- The Village also learned this year that the American Nuclear Society is planning to leave its current location at 555 N. Kensington. We met with ANS and their broker in the spring to discuss the future sale and development of the property. The property is currently on the market.

I also wanted to provide an update on the Village's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts and Business Development Districts, which were established in 2017. These public financing tools are used to promote redevelopment, invest in public infrastructure, and fund other community improvement projects. This year we utilized our GIS services to develop an online "story map" that presents information on all of the

various projects funded by these districts. The latest projects incentivized by the Village are the redevelopment of 1201 Barnsdale and the multi-use courts project at Memorial Park.

The CRC is taking a proactive and strategic approach to planning for public improvements, and starting with the Village Market area. The Committee is in the process of evaluating consultant responses to a Request for Proposals to develop a Streetscape Improvement Plan. This plan will encompass recommendations for signage, landscaping, lighting, and other enhancements aimed at improving the visual appeal and creating a sense of place. The plan will also include strategies for enhancing safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists and identify opportunities for incorporating environmental sustainability along the public rights-of-way. We look forward to involving residents, business owners, and other community stakeholders in this planning process next year.

It is now my pleasure to introduce Chamber President, Sheri Sauer.

LA GRANGE PARK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Good evening, everyone. My name is Sheri Sauer and I am the President of the La Grange Park Chamber of Commerce. It's very exciting to be here this evening to present all the great efforts that the Chamber does throughout the year to promote our local business community.

First, I would like to mention the Chamber's great group of volunteers and Board Members.

Next, I would like to provide an overview of the events we held which supported our local businesses. A summer wellness took place in Memorial Park. Our Annual Dinner was held at Mattone this fall and we honored Hitzeman Funeral Home with the Business of the Year Award. And most recently, we participated in the Village's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony, where a number of the trees were decorated by local businesses.

With the continuation of the pandemic, the Chamber has continued to use virtual platforms to spread the word about La Grange Park businesses. I've continued posting Facebook Live videos and we also have a new

online newsletter that highlights Chamber members, events, and much more.

The Chamber membership meets every fourth Thursday of the month offering educational speakers on timely and engaging topics. The meetings also provide a forum for networking and a chance to keep informed about present and future happenings within the Chamber and the Village.

We are always looking for ways to improve and promote commerce and to foster an energetic business climate in La Grange Park. Remember to “Shop Local”. Thank you President Discipio for having us here for the Annual State of the Village Address.

VILLAGE PRESIDENT

The Village has a long history of working closely with our partner taxing bodies, the Community Park District of La Grange Park and the La Grange Park Public Library. This year, we are fortunate to have representatives from both organizations here to share with us some of their current and upcoming initiatives. It is my pleasure to now introduce the Jessica Cannaday, Executive Director of the Community Park District.

COMMUNITY PARK DISTRICT

Thank you, President Discipio, and the Village of La Grange Park for the opportunity to provide this update. My name is Jessica Cannaday, and I am the Executive Director of the Community Park District.

It is the mission of the Community Park District to provide affordable and accessible programming designed to improve the overall quality of life for everyone here in La Grange Park. This year, our staff and board were completely humbled by the community's continuous and generous outpouring support for this mission.

Our residents, local businesses, and organizations have demonstrated that equitable access to recreational and leisure opportunities for all people is an essential component of the welcoming fabric of La Grange Park.

We rang in the new year with more than \$57,000 in pledged support and donations for the completion of the Memorial Park Multi-Use Courts. The space was designed to remove physical, social and emotional barriers to fitness opportunities and provide a place where people of all ages and

abilities can get outside, get active, and have fun together. The innovative design considered input from resident pickleball enthusiasts, tennis players, our special recreation association, and more.

In addition to the numerous residents, businesses and families that donated more than \$7,000 towards the realization of these goals, Strive La Grange Park committed \$25,000 over the next five years for the installation and maintenance of a state-of-the-art outdoor fitness court. Our Village staff and trustees recognized that the improved amenities fell well within the parameters and goals of the Village Market TIF District and dedicated \$25,000 in TIF funding for the project. Throughout the project, the Village staff were a huge support as the park district navigated the process.

By the end of September, we opened this incredible new outdoor facility, which includes two resurfaced tennis courts, three new pickleball courts, an outdoor fitness court, gaga ball pit, a sensory-friendly fitness walk, mini-race track, and tetherball – all under lights. Residents now have increased access to high quality pickleball opportunities – a sport proven to increase intergenerational social interactions. Parents now have a

place they can exercise without having to worry about finding childcare, and commuters have a larger window of time where they can work out near home - for free.

The space was also designed to support the ecological health of La Grange Park. The new landscaping around the courts replaced a monoculture shrub line with 213 native plants leading downhill to the existing rain garden. This not only improves safety by removing sight-line issues through the park, but the new landscape also supports the rain garden's function by naturally mitigating stormwater runoff and improving groundwater quality.

The large Memorial Park landscaping design was part of the district's 2021 plant diversification goals and green initiatives. This past year, our parks department renovated each park's monument sign landscape bed and installed an additional 130 native perennial plants throughout La Grange Park providing important waystations and support for pollinators.

Thanks to our strong partnership with the village, we are also proud to have completed a comprehensive tree inventory and management plan that was made possible by the Urban and Community Forestry Grant funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and USDA Forest Service. The Community Park District now has a comprehensive inventory and health analysis of all 257 trees in our jurisdiction and clear goals on how to better care for them, increase our tree canopy, and diversify La Grange Park's tree population, which will improve the health of our environment for generations to come. This data now lives alongside the village's tree inventory in the Village of La Grange Park's GIS system, ensuring that future leaders will always have access to the trends and history of this critical infrastructure. It is also illustrative of the village and park district's deep commitment to work together for the overall wellbeing of the La Grange Park community.

Through the deepening of another critical partnership with the La Grange Park Library, the park district was able to offer new, innovative, and free programs such as story time in the park and the Community Campfire. This year, the library also helped increase access to the new Multi-Sport

Courts in Memorial Park by investing in new equipment such as pickleball paddles, gaga balls, and jump ropes that people can check out for free at the Library of Things with a valid Library Card to use at the multi-sport courts. We are also so very proud to unveil the new winter story walk in Memorial Park this year. Thanks to the time and talent of the staff at the library, residents and neighbors can experience an inclusive and diverse celebration of winter holidays around the world without leaving La Grange Park.

From the La Grange Park Chamber to the scouts of BSA and Little League, so many partners have stepped up to help improve recreational operations here in La Grange Park. However, there is one new little group that needs a special mention. It began this past spring with a phone call to the park district after a mom at Stone Monroe personally witnessed that her neighborhood park was not particularly welcoming to another mother and her daughter with special needs.

That concerned mom was Molly Martin. Her compassion and activism initiated an exciting new movement here in La Grange Park that resulted in the formation of the LGP Parks and Recreation Foundation – a new 501

(c) 3 dedicated to supporting the park district in its efforts to improve accessibility, parks, and recreation for all in La Grange Park. Molly now sits on an independent board along with residents Kate Wharton, Erin Melone, John Jandek, and Matt Huffman. Over the past year, this group has volunteered at multiple park district events, provided pro-bono advice on special projects, organized a toy drive for Ready Teddy Preschool, helped to get new accessible swings and surface improvements at Stone Monroe and Beach Oak parks, and they have several exciting new Community events planned for 2022.

As we continue to look towards the future, your Park Board Commissioners Lucy Stastny, Bob Corte, Peggy Ronovsky, Alex Zuck, and MJ Dorris have begun work on a new comprehensive Strategic Master Planning process. This collaborative plan will examine and refine all aspects of the park district's policies and procedures; evaluate the existing quality and level of our services; assess our indoor and outdoor spaces; and create an exciting plan for continued improvements. We anticipate the process to be completed in June, and we are looking to our businesses, community partners, and residents to help us develop a

roadmap that ensures we are providing the very best programs, spaces, and places that uniquely serve the needs of our community. Together, we look forward to working with you to continue to make La Grange Park the very best place to live, work, and play.

Thank you.

LIBRARY DISTRICT

Slide 1: Good evening fellow residents of La Grange Park. My name is Laurie Whitman, and I am the President of the Board of Library Trustees of the La Grange Park Public Library District. Tonight we get to see a glimpse into the many projects and initiatives that our Village governments and local organizations have worked on all year. On behalf of the library board and staff, I am pleased to share this update about what the library accomplished in 2021 and what we are looking forward to in the coming year.

Our primary goal has been to continue to work towards ensuring the safety of our visitors and staff while offering robust services and resources. Many of you have returned to the library and taken advantage of the many opportunities available to visitors every day. Whether you are checking out one of our mobile hotspots, attending a book club program, getting a document notarized, or enjoying a board game in our children's department, the library is proud to be a welcoming community center for people of all ages and all walks of life.

Slide 2: The Children's Services Department was pleased to welcome children back to in-person programs and play. With the help of a grant, we added a brand new Technology Bar featuring iPads loaded with educational games and apps. Our preschool play area has reopened and many families are taking advantage of the space once again.

Our Winter Reading program, Blizzard of Books, will begin December 20 and run through January 31. Anyone can participate in this reading incentive program so check out our website for details.

Many of the entertaining and educational programs we offer are back in-person, however we are still offering a variety of virtual programs as well. Remember to check the library Events page for details on individual program registration.

Slide 3: During the height of the pandemic our creative librarians started a special campaign to bring hope to people who could not leave their homes. This program was so successful, we have continued it ever since and have seen many people touched by the kind gesture of sharing a handwritten card with someone who needs a message of kindness. Our

Community Caring Cards program is for kids and teens who want to send messages of hope to hospitalized children or senior citizens. This is exactly the kind of initiative born from the pandemic that shows the spirit of La Grange Park and makes us proud to serve in this community.

Slide 4: Much like our youngest visitors, teen programming is also now in-person. We are encouraged to see our middle grade residents return to the library to meet with one another, study for school, and stock up on the latest young adult bestsellers. For teens who aren't ready to be back in person just yet, we offer take home kits for a variety of fun and educational purposes.

Our teen department has focused on community partnerships throughout the pandemic with both the local schools and surrounding libraries. One of the most recent and exciting partnerships is with the LaGrange Area Teen Theater Ensemble -also known as LATTE- who can be seen performing at Memorial Park.

Slide 5: Several successful pilot programs were tested during the quieter months when the library had reduced hours and fewer in-person

programs. Now that the library is fully operational and back to our original hours, we are pleased to report back on these new efforts.

La Grange Park residents can now use their library cards to get up to \$2.50 of free copies or print outs every day using the library's equipment. Faxing and scanning are always free. Staff are available to answer questions and help those who have not used these services in the past.

The online catalog was also recently completely updated at the end of October to provide better search results and a more smooth, pleasant experience. If you use the catalog to search for books or to place items on hold, we hope you have found the new system to work better.

We would like to remind everyone that the library has quiet places to meet or study. Our upper level offers a small 2 person meeting space and a larger Conference Room, both of which are available for up to 2 hours a day. They can be reserved online several weeks in advance.

Slide 6: The library also made significant progress in our building project during calendar year 2021. Along with our architects and construction management partners, we've held two community meetings, sent out a

survey, done stakeholder interviews, reviewed multiple sets of design options, applied for a State grant, and received funds from a successful bond issuance. Due to delays in the availability of construction materials, our hopes for a summer 2021 construction project were made impossible. We anticipate further delays may push the project back once more, as labor markets remain tight and material shortages continue. The library board is committed to completing the project with the best possible outcome for our community. Stay tuned for future updates on the project by checking our building project webpage often.

Slide 7: We would like to take a moment to thank the Friends of the La Grange Park Library for their fundraising efforts during the last year including several book sales, a photo shoot with the Easter bunny, and a wildly successful chrysanthemum sale this fall that raised over \$4,000 to help purchase a book bike that can be used in outreach events all over town this coming spring and summer. We are thankful for the countless volunteer hours and generous donations given in support of the library via the Friends of the Library organization.

Slide 8: As we look towards a new year, our library is excited for the challenges and opportunities that are yet to come. The board of trustees and the staff of the La Grange Park Public Library thank you for your continued support as we seek to enrich the lives of those who walk through our doors or visit us online.

Thank you.

VILLAGE PRESIDENT

As you have heard this evening, there are many wonderful things happening throughout our Village. The reasons that so many of us love to call La Grange Park home are evident all around us, thanks to the efforts of many of you.

Thank you all for taking the time to attend the State of the Village Address this evening and to those who tuned in on Channel 6 or Channel 99. Before we conclude, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the many volunteers who serve on Village committees and commissions. We are fortunate to have their leadership and dedication. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve with them.

I would also like to recognize my fellow members of the Village Board, some of which are with us this evening – please stand when I call your name:

- Trustee Bob Lautner
- Trustee Jamie Zaura
- Trustee Amanda Seidel

- Trustee Karen Koncel
- Trustee Michael Sheehan
- Trustee Jermaine Stewart
- Village Clerk, Meghan Kooi (pronounced “coo-ee”).

I would also like to say thank you to our consultants who go above and beyond in providing the Village excellence in expertise in a number of areas:

- Village Attorney, Cathleen Keating
- Village Engineer, Mark Volk

And to LTTV, for providing broadcasting services for tonight’s presentation and our regular board meetings.

And most of all, thank you to our residents for all that you do to make our community great. Please enjoy some cake and refreshments. Village staff and Village officials will be available if you have any questions or comments you would like to share.