



# Village of Burr Ridge

Mayor Gary Grasso

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Board and Staff:

As we close out 2022, I always enjoy publishing a recap of the year to understand just how much work went on in the community and organization during the previous year. So much goes on that others are not aware of, that I find this is a good exercise to truly appreciate the scope and breadth of work which collectively occurred. These are merely the highlights; much more goes on every day!

## Board of Trustees

### Personnel

- Appointed Richard Morton and Deanna McCollian to the Plan Commission.
- Appointed Gary Rush to the Police Pension Board.
- Appointed Luka Kaplarevic to the Economic Development Committee.
- Appointed John McCracken and Anabel McFarlin to the Storm Water Management Committee.

### Achievements

- Completed two initial goal-setting workshops with NIU's Center for Governmental Studies to provide a policy framework for the Village's forthcoming two years.
- Approved annexation of Edgewood Valley Country Club, providing the Village with a premium amenity within its corporate boundaries as well as further expanding the Village's geographic scope.
- Re-zoned six downtown parcels from L-1 Light Industrial to B-2 Business and O-2 Office/Hotel in line with the development vision for the area.
- Adopted the FY2023 budget with a \$400,000 initial General Fund surplus.
- Approved a Resolution condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Flew the Ukrainian flag at Village Hall.
- Revised the Village's General Fund balance and Balanced Budget policies.
- Mayor Grasso was selected to Chair the DMMC Legislative Committee as well as appointed to the CMAP Project Selection Committee.
- Provided an additional 15% (nearly \$85,000) in additional funding to the Police Pension Fund's annual payment. The Fund is in the top third of DuPage communities at present valuation.

- Awarded a seven-year extension to the scavenger services contract with Groot, which provided a no-cost increase in 2023 and severely caps price increases in years 2-6, with no loss of community service level.
- Revised the Village's liquor code and restaurant hours of operation to create a unified 11 pm/midnight closing time at all establishments.
- Managed the migrant situation in September and October, including numerous public statements and media appearances by Mayor Grasso.
- Approved new entryway signs to be installed throughout the Village.
- Approved a resolution requesting changes be made to the SAFE-T Act. Many of the requested changes were in fact implemented by the State.
- Approved an innovative bonus program to ensure the Village's provided a competitive compensation program during a time of high inflation.
- Hosted all special event community partnerships for an end-of-year presentation of each participating organization.

## Public Works/Community Development

### Personnel

- Janine Farrell hired as Community Development Director in January.
- Crystal Beach was hired as the part-time Community Development Assistant (part-time) in May and promoted to the full-time position of Permit Technician in August.
- Annette Nyenhuis transferred from Administrative Assistant (part-time) in Administration to Community Development Assistant (part-time) in September.
- Michael Jones hired as a part-time General Utility Worker in January.

### Achievements

- The Road Program finished \$159,000 under budget, largely from savings in roadway patching that was anticipated but found to be unnecessary.
- County Line Road Sidewalk project was completed on Longwood Drive and 60th Street.
- The asphalt pathways along Kraml Drive and Madison Street were replaced
- The final remaining pedestrian gap on Garfield Avenue was eliminated by linking existing sidewalks in Burr Ridge and Willowbrook.
- A feasibility study led by Indian Head Park and Cook County was initiated to study future traffic and pedestrian improvements to Wolf Road.

- Six employees upgraded their CDL from a Class B to a Class A, having passed the rigorous State exams to achieve the higher weight rating necessary to transport some of the Department's larger equipment.
- Five employees (Janine Farrell, Nick Just, Alex Mezatis, Rich Scherer, and Buzz Herdzina) attended College of DuPage Professional Service Institute classes.
- 91 trees were removed in-house the recently purchased equipment; only nine trees had to be outsourced to the contractor.
- 52 water main breaks were repaired: 93% over the 5-year average, with 89% repaired in-house.
- Over 53,000 linear feet (10 miles) of sanitary sewers and 260 manholes were cleaned, tested, and televised.
- 387 building permit applications were received and 372 building permits were issued (including 16 new homes).
- 418 Citizen Requests for Action were received, with almost half in a four-month period between May-August.
- Over 177 acres of total land was annexed, including Edgewood Valley Country Club.
- Major progress was made in fleet upgrades – the oldest plow truck is now only ten years old (the program recently retired several trucks between 14 and 20 years old).
- Installed turn-lane channelizing devices on Madison Street at the Five Seasons to prevent head-on vehicle collisions in conjunction with the Police Department and DuPage County.
- Commenced the program to install automated metering infrastructure to provide faster, more accurate, proactive, and accountable water meter reading.
- Awarded grants totaling almost \$1 million toward the construction of the Elm Street culvert replacement and the mid-block pedestrian crossing at Wolf Road near the school and park.

## **Police**

### Personnel

- Ryan Husarik promoted to Deputy Chief.
- Kristopher Garcia promoted to Sergeant.
- Nicole Copp hired as Police Officer.
- Samantha Temes hired as Community Service Officer.

## Achievements

- Purchased and implemented a public safety drone with five certified drone pilots of varying ranks. The drone was successfully deployed at the Taste of Burr Ridge and used to assist in missing person cases.
- Ended a major workplace murder/suicide without further incident to the neighboring businesses or school.
- Fatal hit and run accident solved by excellent forensic work of the Detectives and through cooperation with local media.
- Two additional fatal accidents cleared through investigation, one a vehicle versus bicyclist, the other, a passenger of a vehicle that turned into oncoming traffic.
- Chief Madden was recognized as DMMC Governmental Leader of the Year for his leadership in creating MERIT, the DuPage County Metropolitan Emergency Response and Investigations Team.
- Numerous officers recognized by the Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists for their training and skill in identifying dangerous drunk drivers.
- Participated in numerous community events, including Shop with a Cop, National Night Out, and Cop on a Rooftop to Support Special Olympics. Officers participated in No Shave November and Double-Down December to raise over \$1800 to support Shop with a Cop, which benefitted local families.
- Started a pilot program with District 181, Hinsdale, and Clarendon Hills Police to provide extra patrols in D181 schools at no cost to the municipalities.
- Significant training occurred to comply with the SAFE-T Act, including Deputy Chief Husarik and Officer Lou Moravec attending the AXON Conference in Arizona to become certified body camera experts.
- Working with the Board of Police and Fire Commissioners, created a lateral hiring policy to allow for experienced and academy-certified officers from other municipalities to be hired in the Village.

## Finance

### Personnel

- Koula Michalopoulos hired as Utility Billing Analyst in July.

## Achievements

- The Village was again awarded the GFOA award for budget excellence with special mention for Capital (one of the very few communities in the State to receive two awards in one year).
- The Village was again awarded the GFOA award for audit excellence.
- Created the first-ever Popular Annual Financial Report in pursuit of GFOA Triple Crown recognition.
- Currently finalizing the Foundation Burr Ridge project, which will consolidate all capital assets and schedules into a single document for purposes of accurately tracking all capital needs in the Village in the long term.
- Alternative payment options are now offered to Village vendors, primarily via accepting credit card payments in lieu of paper check payments.
- Finalized a five-year water and sewer rate plan as well as a five-year water capital plan with the assistance of several consultants and in conjunction with the Public Works Department.
- Overhauled a significant amount of bank reconciliation and AP processes, which saves significant time and optimizes tracking.
- Completed a complete overhaul of the Village's purchasing policy.

## Administration/Central Services

### Personnel

- Pamela Foy hired as Executive Assistant in April.
- Lori Spindler hired as an Administrative Assistant in September.
- Hannah Weyant promoted to Special Projects Manager in December.

### Achievements

- Finalized labor agreements with all Village bargaining units; one is set to expire on May 1, 2024, with two further on May 1, 2025.
- Completed an overhaul and modernization of the Personnel Manual.
- Completed a lease of Village Hall office space with the Willowbrook/Burr Ridge Chamber of Commerce.
- Created the Employee Engagement Committee, a combined interdepartmental team to address issues related to the workplace, such as wellness, safety, and other such subjects.

- Managed 16 unique special events, including the new Burr Ridge Gala, and supported the new Mecca 5K. Over \$90,000 in event sales and sponsorship revenue was generated, a 400% increase over the Village's previous record.
- Published 25 unique Oak Leaf newsletter editions, all with at least 55% open rate (industry standard for local government is low-20 percent range).
- Published annual hard copy (with digital version) of Oak Leaf, the first of its kind, featuring an all-new Budget in Brief section.
- Gained over 550 new followers on Facebook.
- Received the highest-possible safety rating with Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA), which resulted in lower insurance fees in 2023.
- Managed the community survey process, which detailed very high satisfaction ratings for all departments and services in the Village.

Sincerely,

*EVAN WALTER*

Evan Walter  
Village Administrator