

Signs of the Season
August 2008



THIS MONTH IN ROLLING MEADOWS

August 2 — Corn Fest, Community Church, Kirchoff Rd. & Meadow Dr.

August 4-8 — Brush setout week, section 1

August 5 — Economic Development Committee, 6 p.m., Plan Commission, 7:30 p.m., both at City Hall, Library Board, 7 p.m., at the Library

August 6 — 9-1-1 Board, 3 p.m., Zoning Board of Appeals, 7:30 p.m., both at City Hall

August 11-15 — Brush collection week, section 1

August 11 — Board of Fire and Police Commissioners, 9 a.m., City Hall

August 12 — City Council Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall

August 14 — Adjudication Hearing, 1 p.m., City Hall

August 18-22 — Brush setout week, section 2

August 19 — City Council Committee of the Whole, 7:30 p.m., City Hall

August 21 — Adjudication Hearing, 1 p.m., City Hall

August 23 — Park District 50th Anniversary "Party in the Park" Kimball Hill Park

August 25-29 — Brush collection week, section 2

August 26 — City Council Meeting, 7:30 p.m., City Hall

August 28 — Adjudication Hearing, 1 p.m., City Hall

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NEWS

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& Views



3600 Kirchoff Road . Rolling Meadows, IL 60008 . 847-394-8500 . www.cityrm.org

Woodfield Stationary Patrol Point Best Way To Get Message to Gangs, Residents, City Says

It became controversial, but City officials are confident their decision to establish a stationary patrol point at the 12 Oaks at Woodfield apartment complex on the southwest side was the right thing to do. It was part of a carefully planned strategy to secure the safety of residents, as the community makes a transition to redevelopment.



Steve Williams

Police had been receiving three or more police service and criminal calls a day to the area. During and after the stationary patrol point, these calls virtually disappeared. Police were concerned about gang activity there. They saw many cars, probably carrying gang members, turn around before reaching the patrol point and leave the area.

"We needed to deliver a message to gang members and other outsiders: 'If you come with criminal intent, you're going to meet the Rolling Meadows Police.' We also wanted to tell the people of 12 Oaks, 'We're not leaving you,'" explains Police Chief Steven Williams. Rumors had been circulating that no one in the City cares what happens at the apartments, now that they are expected to be bulldozed for redevelopment.

"Our presence there has diminished the outside criminal influence dramatically. In friendly, eye-to-eye communication with almost everyone living there, we showed them our commitment to ensure they enjoy the same quality of life every other Rolling

Meadows resident has," Chief Williams says.

A rising crime rate is only one of the persistent problems the City has been battling at the 12 Oaks apartments, according to City Manager Tom Melena. Since mid-March, the City issued 600 citations for health and safety violations there. By early July, only 147 had been corrected, leaving 453 outstanding.

"It's become apparent to us that the 12 Oaks ownership is not taking our concern seriously," Melena says. "The only violations they fix are the inexpensive and easy ones. The 692 families living there are forced to live in housing that badly needs repairs to meet the standards for health and safety required by City code."

The Fire Department has had to empty the buildings for fire prevention, and the City has called on structural engineers to fix lateral cracks in the foundation of two buildings.

Extra police service needed to stem criminal activity added more than \$175,000 to the City's 2005 budget, \$216,000 in 2006, and \$190,000 in 2007. It's running much higher this year, \$142,000 for the first six months.

"We had already tried increased police

Continued on page 2

City Celebrates Independence Day. Photos on page 5.



"Party in the Park" to Celebrate Park District's 50th Anniversary, August 23...Story on Page 2

Rolling Meadows Park District's 12 community parks feature soccer fields, horseshoes, tennis courts, playgrounds, picnic areas and other recreational opportunities for City residents. For more information, visit www.rmparks.org or call 847-818-3200.

Games, Live Entertainment To Celebrate Park District's 50th Anniversary, August 23

Join friends and family for an afternoon of fun and community

● Headline performance by the Retrorockets, a seven-piece band specializing in rock n' roll, classic rock, and jazz.

Compete in the first "Rolling Meadows Idol" contest beginning at 4 p.m. Chicago-based Live Band Karaoke will provide an incredible assortment of pop, rock, retro, soul, country, disco, blues and other tunes during this afternoon event. Pick a song and sing along!

Judging the competition will be Mayor Ken Nelson, Chamber of Commerce Director Linda Ballantine, and Park Commissioner Patti Weicker, who will crown the winner.



pride when Rolling Meadows Park District celebrates its 50th Anniversary with a "Party in Kimball Hill Park," Saturday, August 23, noon – 6 p.m., at Kimball Hill Park.

The milestone event will feature a wide range of games and live entertainment suitable for the entire family, including:

- Kids carnival games and amusements.
- OD TAPO IMI, a Broadway Island musical review.

For more information on the "Party in the Park," contact the Rolling Meadows Park District at 847-818-3200.

Plans for Redevelopment At 12 Oaks Site

Northbrook-based Pine Tree Commercial Realty is negotiating a contract to purchase a 45-acre site at the intersection of I-90 and Route 53 that includes the 12 Oaks at Woodfield apartment complex for redevelopment into a multipurpose lifestyle center at a total cost of \$500 million to \$600 million.

City Council is exploring the possibility of creating a tax increment financing (TIF) district at the site to recover some costs of infrastructure improvement from abatement of future tax revenues. Additionally, other tools, such as friendly condemnation, sales tax sharing, and hotel tax sharing may be explored.

In a joint venture with Chicago-based Draper and Kramer Inc., Pine Tree plans a redevelopment on the 12 Oaks site and three adjacent properties next to the new Schaumburg Convention Center. It will include retail, restaurants, hotels, and a significant residential component, according to Pine Tree.

Pine Tree's partners in the project also include Los Angeles-based CB Richard Ellis, the project's exclusive representative for leasing and parcel sales. Draper and Kramer will focus on the residential portion of the development.

Woodfield Stationary Patrol Point . . . *Continued from page 1*

patrols, public education—just about every strategy in the book, and we had only a limited success. We knew we had to be able to get everybody's attention," Melena says.

The stationary patrol point did that. It attracted national media attention and led building owner Michael Sparks to hire attorneys to sue in federal court, seeking removal of the barriers that blocked 12 of the complex's 13 entrances. The City's intention had been to maintain the stationary patrol point for about three weeks. After the lawsuit was filed, City officials decided to remove the barriers a few days earlier.

The court denied the apartment owner's request for

a temporary restraining order, because the City had already taken down the barriers. An irony of the court proceeding, Melena points out, is that the City had created a 10-year Special Service District at the location to generate an additional \$678,000 to fund police and fire protection services. Property owners fund a Special Service Area, so the entire community will not have to pay for the increased costs.

Chief Williams concedes that the stationary patrol point, while cost effective for the City, caused residents an inconvenience. He distributed a letter to 12 Oaks residents in both English and Spanish, thank-

ing them for their "patience, cooperation and understanding...As we discussed with you, our intent was to provide you with vital information to help make your neighborhood as safe as any other neighborhood in Rolling Meadows."

The decision to establish a stationary patrol point came after a survey found that 40 percent of responding residents fear crime is high there and 77 percent want more police presence.

Police have been especially concerned about the rising number of complaints of sexual assault and burglary from apartments and parked cars. Officers at the patrol point gave residents crime tips on how to create a safe zone, including removing GPS systems and other valuables from cars, keeping

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Dominick's Redevelopment Would Boost Plans for Downtown 'Lifestyle Center'

Oak Brook-based Lincoln Property Company's proposed purchase of the 11-acre former Dominick's site on Kirchoff Road provides a boost to the City's plans to redevelop downtown Rolling Meadows into a vibrant "lifestyle center" that is open air and pedestrian-friendly, Community Development Director Valerie Dehner reports.

Lincoln Property presented concepts for a mixed-use development in July that features a blend of commercial, retail and residential units. Company representatives are confident there is a market for such a development, as Rolling Meadows currently lacks housing aimed specifically at young professionals.

"Downtown is no longer viable for a concentration of large retail stores such as Dominick's, but the area is ripe for redevelopment as a vibrant city center that offers ample opportunities to live, work, play and shop," Dehner explains.

Lincoln currently holds an option to purchase the property, following further evaluation of the site's development potential.

Woodfield...

Continued from page 2

valuables out of sight, locking doors, and carrying a cell phone. They also distributed a brochure describing social services available from the City's Police Neighborhood Resource Center (PNRC).

"We saw many violations of the law," Williams says, but they made no arrests during the two and half weeks that the patrol point was in place. After finding that many residents were not using child safety seats properly, police conducted a free child safety seat inspection there during the second week.

Police began noticing an alarming increase in crime in the 12 Oaks area in 2003, according to Williams, and began using direct patrols and other strategies, but the activity rate continued to increase.

Police also made increasing observations of gang members in the area. They were stymied by the difficulty of protecting an area that has 13 entrances with only two or three patrol officers. They considered establishing a second PNRC there, but the City budget would not permit it.

They consulted three important documents in seeking approaches to the problem: a report on designing safer communities by the National Crime Prevention Council, a report on "hot spot" law enforcement by the Police Executive Research Forum (made up of police chiefs from major cities), and a study

Resumes from City Manager Applicants Due August 8

Applicants to succeed Tom Melena as City Manager face an August 8 deadline for submitting resumes.

"This is a national search. We are directly contacting more than 100 potential candidates who might be interested, or know people who might be interested, in the position," says Mark Morien, Vice President, The PAR Group, Lake Bluff, the City's professional recruiting consultants.

The PAR Group will carefully review all resumes received and check references before submitting a confidential report to City Council during the first week of September that will name 10-12 finalists.

City Council will review information about each of the finalists and select six for interviews scheduled October 3. After interviewing all six on October 3, Council will invite up to three candidates back for a second interview on October 4. The objective will be to select a new City Manager by the end of October, with time for a transition before Melena retires at yearend, after more than seven years on the job.

City Earns Award for Excellence in Risk Management

A comprehensive risk management program to reduce Rolling Meadows' insurance costs helped the City capture the 2007 award for Excellence in Public Risk Management, presented by the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA).

IRMA is comprised of 75 municipalities and municipal agencies – including Rolling Meadows – that pool their resources to offer self-insurance as an alternative to conventional insurance.

The award recognizes the City's efforts to establish practices that reduce potential for accidents involving City employees, equipment or other assets, Finance Director Jim Egeberg explains.

"An effective risk management program helps the City lower its insurance premiums and saves taxpayers considerable sums of money each year," he says.

"On behalf of the entire Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency, I wish to convey enthusiastic congratulations to the employees of Rolling Meadows for achieving the award," IRMA Executive Director Larry Bush wrote in a letter to City Manager Tom Melena.

on creating defensible spaces by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The latter included an extensive discussion of gating, which is what police believe the stationary patrol point achieved for 12 Oaks.

The stationary patrol was the first phase of the City's crime prevention strategy. Phase two includes "identifying outside criminal elements who have attempted to infiltrate that neighborhood," Williams says. If there is probable cause, the police will seek warrants.

In addition to bicycle patrol, walking police beats

and ongoing stationary patrol points, phase three will focus on introducing the City's social services programs to the community. It will include information about relocating and finding relocated housing, as the time for redevelopment draws closer. City officials are especially concerned about 200 children living in the complex and will see that demolition and reconstruction schedules respect the school calendar.

"We believe this three-phase strategy will eliminate the gang element and help create a safe neighborhood. We are hopeful that we will not have to commit so many of our police resources there in the future," Williams says.

Experienced Deputy Fire Chiefs Key To Molding Department's Future

Deputy Fire Chiefs Brian Dempsey and Scott Franzgrote have applied their combined 48 years of fire service experience to the task of preparing the Rolling Meadows Fire Department for future challenges with considerable success.

"Brian and Scott are committed to the safety of all who call Rolling Meadows home," Fire Chief Ron Stewart

growing community. He is in charge of the Fire Prevention Bureau, manages the Department's public education activities and oversees fire investigations.

"It's been an honor to serve with the Rolling Meadows Fire Department for the past 29 years," Dempsey says. "As Deputy Chief, I consider it a privilege to work with Chief Stewart and Deputy Chief Franzgrote as we develop plans to ensure continued service excellence to the City's residents and businesses."



Wal-Mart Manager Frieda Crispin presents two \$1,000 grant checks to

Deputy Fire Chiefs Brian Dempsey (left) and Scott Franzgrote. (See story at right).

says. "Their proven ability to work well with other City departments and elected officials are the result of a career devoted to public service."

Deputy Chief Dempsey joined the RMFD in 1979, after two years as a paid on-call firefighter with the Village of Buffalo Grove. He served as a firefighter and paramedic before being promoted to lieutenant in 2000. He was elevated to Deputy Chief, Operations, in 2006, following the retirement of longtime Department veteran Roy Woodruff.

"Brian has served the Rolling Meadows community with pride and professionalism for nearly 30 years," Chief Stewart says. "His leadership skills have been essential to our efforts to mold the department into the effective service organization it is today."

As Deputy Chief, Dempsey is responsible for determining how best to deploy Fire Department resources to maintain service excellence in a

Scott Franzgrote, Deputy Chief, Support Operations, joined the Fire Department as a firefighter/paramedic in 1990. He never believed that he would one day be part of the Department's management team.

"I was happy being a firefighter," he admits. "I eventually grew to respect the opportunities to provide leadership in the Department. I began preparing to take the lieutenant's exam because I wanted to see if I was up for the challenge."

He was promoted to Lieutenant/EMS Coordinator in 2000. In July 2006, Franzgrote was named Battalion Chief/Shift Commander, then promoted to Deputy Chief, Support Operations, in early 2007.

These days, Deputy Chief Franzgrote manages the Fire Department's emergency

medical service (EMS), coordinates emergency management operations, and oversees training of all Fire Department personnel.

"We have been reviewing what made us successful in the past and used that as a starting point to determine the best ways to improve our service," he says.

The career paths of both Dempsey and Franzgrote are the result of a Department-wide system that strives to develop future leaders from within.

Since 2006, the RMFD has promoted a new Chief, two Deputy Chiefs, a Battalion Chief and four new lieutenants from its ranks – a 75% changeover rate in its management team.

"Rigorous training keeps our firefighters and paramedics at peak effectiveness and gives them a thorough understanding of the Department's culture and values," Deputy Chief Dempsey explains. "We want to keep that institutional knowledge base intact. It allows us to plan effectively for the future."

Wal-Mart/Sam's Club Presents Fire Department with \$2,000 Grant

The Rolling Meadows Fire Department accepted \$2,000 in grant funding from Wal-Mart/Sam's Club in June that will support the purchase of advanced life support equipment for the Department's Engine Companies.

Wal-Mart Manager Frieda Crispin presented two \$1,000 checks to Deputy Fire Chiefs Brian Dempsey and Scott Franzgrote, as part of the company's Safe Neighborhoods Heroes Grant.

Each year, the grant program funds organizations that make a difference in the communities, according to Crispin.

"The Rolling Meadows Fire Department greatly appreciates Wal-Mart and Sam's Club's generosity in supporting ongoing Department programs that contribute to a safer community," Deputy Chief Dempsey explains.

Recent Fire Department Accomplishments

In the past two years, the Rolling Meadows Fire Department has:

- Embarked on a fleet modernization program that bolsters its ability to provide enhanced fire protection residents;
- Initiated a modernization of Plum Grove Fire Station (Station 16),
- Developed concepts for a new Algonquin Road fire station scheduled to begin construction this fall,
- Instituted a public education program that offers CPR and first aid training to City residents, employees and local businesses;
- Developed a future staffing and equipment needs analysis,
- Strengthened existing mutual aid agreements with surrounding municipalities.

City Announces Freeze on New Hiring As Staff Retirements Accelerate

The City of Rolling Meadows in 2008 will lose more than 150 years of combined public service experience following the retirement of at least eight long-time City employees, City Manager Tom Melena reports.

Budgetary constraints caused by the weak economy will force City officials to keep those positions vacant in 2009, he adds.

Four vacancies in the Fire Department, three in Public Works, one in Community Development and four part-time Police Department positions demonstrate the challenge Rolling Meadows faces as many of its senior level professionals leave City service and take their lifetimes of experience with them.

"Municipal governments across the country are facing a shortage of skilled leaders as the current generation of senior level professionals takes retirement," Melena explains. "It is tough to replace that level of talent even in good economic times. Due to rapidly rising costs and declining revenues, City Council and staff will take a hard look at keeping these positions vacant as a way to reduce spending for fiscal year 2009," he adds.

In 2006, City departments implemented a restructuring program designed to help newer employees gain the skills necessary to rise through the ranks and fill vacant management positions created by the pending retirement of 78 million baby boomers. The program emphasizes filling senior-level managerial positions "from within" whenever possible.

Fire Chief Ron Stewart, Deputy Fire Chiefs Brian Dempsey and Scott Franzgrote, and Deputy Police Chiefs Dave Scanlan and Ed Goodman are among the most visible of many long-time City employees who earned promotion to higher-level management following their predecessors' retirements.

"Encouraging current employees to gain the skills that will serve the City in the future allows us to retain the people who understand the culture and expecta-

tions of customer service in Rolling Meadows," Melena explains. "We've had great success in developing and retaining qualified professionals who earned an opportunity to advance their careers here in Rolling Meadows.

Despite the current economic environment, Melena believes the City has an employee promotion program that will benefit the City for years to come.

2008 Staff Retirements

Community Development
Gene Mackin

Fire Department
Charles "Chuck" Graetz
Nick Konnen
Terry Till
Jan Yates

Police Department
Rose Herzog

Public Works
John Gaddini
Al Steinhoff

Retired Community Development Director Rod Blane and his family (top left) were among the many families lining the parade route as Grand Marshal Carolyn Krause (top right) led the 2008 Independence Day parade. Adding to the celebration were several clowns, the Rolling Meadows High School Cheerleaders and Mustang Marching Band, as well as Paul Hall's Warriors, adorned in plumed head wear. Alderman Glenn Adams and daughters waved from a jeep while participants in the City's first Public Works Citizens Academy tossed candy to onlookers. Later in the day, youngsters plugged their ears as fire truck sirens blared.

It Was A Star Spangled Celebration!



City Feels the Pain

BY MAYOR KEN NELSON

I sure don't need to tell you that times are tough these days. Each of

us is feeling the pinch of skyrocketing gasoline prices, the downturn in housing prices and all the other negatives that are happening in our economy. As a city, we're feeling the same sort of pain.

We, too, are paying the higher fuel costs. I'm sure you heard us talk about the big jump in salt prices we had to pay because of the severe winter. Sales tax revenues are down, building permits have dropped dramatically and many of our major developments have been slowed, put on hold or even abandoned. When we do our annual budget projections, we try to be very conservative in our income estimates. Still, we anticipate a possible

shortfall for this fiscal year of \$600,000 to \$1 million dollars.

In an effort to close that gap, we are reducing personnel costs by not hiring replacements for some of our long-time employees who have retired. Currently, there are nine vacancies within our operational departments. By not filling those positions, we'll save nearly \$500,000 for the rest of this year.

Our department heads are also cutting other planned expenditures to offset the rest of the anticipated shortfall. I want you to know that City staff constantly monitors our financial position and takes steps to make sure our income and expenses are balanced at the end of the year. You can expect to hear more about this as the economic picture for the rest of 2008 and into 2009 becomes clearer.

Prevailing Economic Conditions, Lower Revenues Foreshadow Tough 2009 Budget Deliberations

Prevailing economic conditions are requiring businesses across the board to raise prices and/or cut costs in order to maintain profitability. City Council and staff are faced with these very dilemmas as we begin the process of crafting a 2009 annual budget.

A Five-Year Financial and Capital Plan presented to City Council last month concluded that Rolling Meadows is not immune to the current economic environment: the City is faced with declining revenues and rapidly escalating costs, which have resulted in a steep reduction in its cash reserves.

The Five-Year Plan, which combines current economic conditions and future projections, helps determine options for funding City services for the upcoming year and over a longer time frame. It marks the first step in crafting the Fiscal Year 2009 budget, which City Council will approve in December.

City leaders over the

next several months will be required to make some very difficult decisions in order to deliver a budget that protects the City's financial well-being and continues to deliver the services residents expect.

For example, City departments are feeling the pinch of a 43% jump in fuel and vehicle costs. Fuel has also increased refuse pickup costs by another 9%. A 15% increase in the cost of purchasing water from the City of Chicago means Rolling Meadows must pass along these costs to its residents.

In addition, the Five-Year Plan projects a shortfall in the City's General Fund. This gap forces us to consider implementing a revenue surcharge on natural gas or electricity use.

The Five-Year Plan recommends a three-pronged approach to helping the City weather the current economic downturn:

● **Hold costs down** – In preparing 2009 budget requests, department heads

BY JIM
EGERBERG,
FINANCE
DIRECTOR



were instructed to cut \$1.1 million in expenses to maintain 2008 funding levels.

● **Align fees with current market conditions** – Review the City's fee structure and consider adjusting certain fees to offset rising costs.

● **Delay new hires** – Keep staff positions created by retirements vacant until the economy improves.

The overriding challenge we face is to provide proper funding levels for essential City services while simultaneously guaranteeing that taxpayers get the most for their dollar. Painful choices will need to be made in order to keep Rolling Meadows financially sound, provide effective services and limit costs for those we serve.

City Of Rolling Meadows

Mayor: Kenneth Nelson

City Clerk: Lisa Hinman

City Manager:
Thomas M. Melena

City Hall Hours:
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday-Friday

Curfew: Sun.-Thurs. 11 p.m./Fri. & Sat. Midnight

Aldermen

1st Ward: John Pitzafarro
847-655-1390

2nd Ward: Barb Lusk
847-567-2444

3rd Ward: Lawrence Buske
847-255-9126

4th Ward: Tom Rooney
847-392-2254

5th Ward: Glenn Adams
847-259-5875

6th Ward: Kathy Kwandras
847-398-7113

7th Ward: James Larsen
630-244-4228

Fire & Police Emergency:
911

Fire Department non-emergency:
847-397-3352

Police non-emergency:
847-255-2416

Public Works
847-963-0500

Finance/Utility Billing Questions — 847-394-8500

Community Development Dept. — 847-506-6030

TDD: 847-506-0490

Senior Services
847-506-2061

ComEd — 1-800-EDISON-1

PNRC — 847-506-2059

City Council, Committee of the Whole, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Plan Commission Meetings are televised on Cable TV Channel 6