



NEWS

Volume 18 Number 1



& Views

January/February 2014

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

City Secures New Electricity Rates, Saves Customers Money



City officials acted quickly to ensure that Rolling Meadows residents and small businesses continue to receive the lowest possible electrical rates, locking in a five-month contract extension with Akron, Ohio-based FirstEnergy Solutions to provide customers with electricity, City Manager Barry Krumstok reports.

A team of consultants from Good Energy, the firm that helped Rolling Meadows implement its electrical aggregation program in mid-2012, helped City officials review bids from several energy providers and secure electricity at a rate of 5.89 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) – even lower than ComEd’s new rate of 6.05 kWh.

The move ensures continued lower energy costs for Rolling Meadows residents and businesses, who have saved nearly \$1.8

million over the past 18 months.

“With the current contract expiring, we wanted to secure the best combination of low rates and service on behalf of our customers,” Krumstok explains. “Later this year, we will analyze the market again to see how rates compare with ComEd and other energy providers, and decide the best way to move forward.”

Besides saving residents money, the agreement allows the City to use Renewable Energy Credits that support development of alternative sources of energy and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Customers will continue to receive monthly bills from ComEd, which delivers energy and is responsible for service issues and emergency repairs.

For more information, contact FirstEnergy Solutions at 866-636-3749 or visit www.fes.com. Residents may also contact City Hall (847-394-8500) or visit www.cityrm.org.

Community Events Foundation Donations Surpass \$20,000 Milestone

Residents, local businesses and community groups have contributed more than \$20,000 to the City’s Community Events Foundation, which was established in 2012 to help offset the costs of staging community activities throughout the year.

The City’s efforts were aided last year by a series of fundraisers with local businesses that raised an additional \$7,873, and helped generate awareness of the Foundation and its mission. Participants included Buona Beef, McDonald’s, Oberweis Ice Cream & Dairy Store, Panda Express and Potbelly Sandwich Shop.

“We greatly appreciate the support from

our local business community. With their help, we were able to easily surpass the \$20,000 contribution milestone,” City Manager Barry Krumstok says. “Ongoing support from the community is critical to achieving the Foundation’s goal of supporting annual City events.”

The Foundation will fund City-sponsored events such as the Memorial Day parade and observance, Independence Day festivities and holiday tree lighting (at right). It will also help fund maintenance at the Rolling Meadows Historical Museum.

City leaders encourage community members to consider tax-deductible donations

as another way to grow the Foundation’s fund balance and ensure ongoing support of community events.

Make checks payable to *Rolling Meadows Community Events Foundation* and submit to:



City of Rolling Meadows
Community Events Foundation
3600 Kirchoff Road
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Contact City Officials: City Hall Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL

- Mayor: *Tom Rooney* 847-392-2254
- 1st Ward Alderman: *Mike Cannon* 847-925-8919
- 2nd Ward Alderman: *Len Prejna* 847-776-9442
- 3rd Ward Alderman: *Laura Majikes* 847-577-3746
- 4th Ward Alderman: *Brad Judd* 847-902-3248
- 5th Ward Alderman: *Rob Banger, Jr.* 847-818-1663
- 6th Ward Alderman: *John D’Astice* 847-409-9367
- 7th Ward Alderman: *James Larsen* 630-244-4228
- City Manager: *Barry Krumstok* 847-394-8500

SERVICES

- Fire & Police Emergency 911
- Fire 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 847-506-6030
- TDD 847-506-0490
- ComEd 1-800-EDISON-1
- Curfew . . . Sun. – Thurs. 11 p.m.; Fri. & Sat. Midnight



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- [@CityofRM1](http://www.twitter.com/@CityofRM1)
- Find Us on the Web:
www.cityrm.org

Increasing Service Demands Initiate Review of Fire Station Locations

by Fire Chief Scott Franzgrote



Scott Franzgrote

Data tallied by the Rolling Meadows Fire Department over the past 10 years confirms that a significant number of our emergency calls are concentrated in the eastern and southern areas of our City, particularly along the Algonquin corridor.

This has been a growing cause for concern, considering the current locations of our two fire stations: the Fogarty Fire Station (Station 15), 3111 Meadow Drive, and the Neuckranz Fire Station (Station 16), 2455 Plum Grove Road.

Increasingly, we are unable to achieve our benchmark response time of four to six minutes. This is unacceptable in a business where seconds often determine whether a patient survives or a fire is contained.

Compounding matters is the fact that Station 15 is in need of major repairs to ensure the structural integrity of the building and prevent decline in the Fire Department's operational effectiveness.

It is obvious that something must be done. That is why Fire Department officials have been working with City Council and staff to identify ways to meet the challenge of providing our community with the highest levels of fire, rescue and emergency medical services using current available resources. These options include:

- **Relocate both fire stations** – Moving Station 15 further south and Station 16 further east would realign our two fire stations in a manner that is more appropriate to our community's geographical layout, population density, risk profile and service demand levels.
- **Relocate Station 15 only** – Finding a suitable new location for Station 15, while leaving Station 16 in its current spot, would also improve the Fire Department's ability to better meet the needs of the community it serves.

- **Repair/Rebuild Station 15 at its current location** – Updating Station 15 at its existing location would help improve service through improved engineering design but would not address concerns over the amount of time it takes to reach the southeastern portions of the City. Completing these repairs will require substantial investment.

The decisions we make over the next several months will most likely impact the Fire Department's operations for the next 50 years. The City will hold a series of informational meetings this winter and spring to update residents on the debate.

These gatherings will allow City officials to provide greater detail and cost estimates for each option being discussed, and give residents an opportunity to voice their opinions on the best option for the community as we move forward. The issue will be discussed in depth by Council members at the April 15 Committee of the Whole.

“The decisions we make...will most likely impact the Fire Department's operations for the next 50 years.”

– Fire Chief Scott Franzgrote

Look for periodic updates on the City's Website, www.cityrm.org, and in upcoming issues of *News & Views*. For more information, contact the Fire Department at 847-397-3352.

Rolling Meadows' Fire Stations – At a Glance

Fogarty Fire Station – Located at 3111 Meadow Drive, the Thomas Fogarty Station was built in 1958 by the newly-formed Rolling Meadows Fire District. At the time of its construction, the station was centrally located at the center of the Fire District's response area. A second floor and additional apparatus bay were added in 1965. The station is named for the City's first full-time fire chief, who served from 1958 – 1977. The station is commonly referred to as Fire Station 15, which is its designation within the Illinois Fire Services' Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS).



Fogarty Fire Station, 3111 Meadow Drive



Neuckranz Fire Station, 2455 Plum Grove Road

Neuckranz Fire Station – Built in 1980 to serve the western portions of Rolling Meadows, the Raymond Neuckranz Fire Station, 2455 Plum Grove Road, serves as the Fire Department's operational headquarters. It is named for former 1st Ward Alderman and community activist Raymond H. Neuckranz. A station modernization project in 2008 helped make better use of existing space, expanded the number of sleeping quarters for on-duty firefighters, and provided updated facilities for the Fire Prevention Bureau. The Neuckranz Fire Station's MABAS designation is Station 16.



Fire Department to Host Community Blood Drive, Friday, January 17

The Rolling Meadows Fire Department will partner with LifeSource to host a community blood drive, Friday, January 17. Residents will be able to give “the gift of life” from noon – 6 p.m., at the Neuckranz Fire Station, 2455 Plum Grove Road. To register, contact the Fire Department at 847-397-3352. Walk-ins are welcome.

Ask Public Works: Snow Removal Tips

The Public Works Department begins preparing for snow clearing operations long before snow blankets the City. As early as October, crews are inspecting snow fighting equipment and installing plows on the City's fleet of snow removal trucks. This advance preparation allows crews to go into action as soon as the first snowflakes begin to fall.



Their mission: clear the streets and help residents travel safely.

It is the City's policy to have all streets cleared of snow – from curb to curb – within eight hours after the snow stops falling.

Below are some common questions residents have about plowing operations and tips on how to help Public Works help you this winter.

Q. What streets get plowed first and why?

A. Snow plows are assigned to eight designated routes throughout the City. Crews tackle primary roads, such as Kirchoff and Rohlwing Roads, first. This helps guarantee open roads for emergency vehicles to get to any location in the City or in surrounding areas. Once these routes are open,

plows then begin to clear residential streets on their assigned routes.

Other roadways, such as Golf and Algonquin Roads or Euclid Avenue, are plowed by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) or the Cook County Highway Department.

Q. Can I shovel or blow snow into the street and let the plows remove it when they come by?

A. Blowing snow into streets can cause icy hazards for motorists. Snow should be placed to the sides of the driveway and into yards whenever possible. When plows return, the snow you've shoveled into the street is likely to land back on your driveway.

We also encourage residents to clear snow away from nearby fire hydrants so they are easily accessible to fire-fighters in cases of emergency.

Q. How do I prevent the plows from pushing snow onto the driveway after I've already cleared it?

A. Shovel snow to the right side of the driveway (while facing the street). This will limit the amount of snow that is pushed onto the driveway. Due to the plow's angle, snow piled to the left side or into the street is likely to be pushed back into the driveway.

Contact Elected Officials on Proposed Meacham Road Expansion Project

Rolling Meadows aldermen want to hear their constituents' opinions on the proposed Illinois Department of Transportation project to widen Plum Grove/Meacham Road between Emerson Avenue and Algonquin Road.

Contact information for City Council members is published on the front page of this newsletter.



Report Coyote Sightings to Police

Residents reported four coyote sightings along Salt Creek in November to the Rolling Meadows Police Department, a slight increase over prior years. Police remind residents that there is little to fear, as coyotes have become prevalent in a number of U.S. metropolitan areas – including Chicago. Report suspected coyote sightings to the RMPD at 847-255-2416.



Rolling Meadows Historical Museum, 3100 Central Road.

Historical Museum to Host January 12 Holiday Open House

Rolling Meadows Historical Society members invite residents to revisit fond memories of seasons past at the Historical Museum's annual community open house, Sunday, January 12, 1 – 4 p.m. Call 847-577-7086 for more information.

Welcome New Businesses

AJ's Pizza – *Pizza, Sandwiches and Salads*
1925 S. Plum Grove Rd (847-776-9000)

Architecnix Inc. – *IT computer consulting*
4410 Dawngate Ct (312-730-7370)

Clean And Science USA – *Sales office*
2775 Algonquin Rd (847-461-9292)

Divine Design & Marketing –
Marketing/graphic design
1645 Hicks Rd Ste. J (847-271-1008)

DWA Network Co. –
Amway product sales
1823 Hicks Rd, Ste. B (732-789-3832)

Grillers Café – *Café/deli*
3601 Algonquin Rd #101 (224-232-8450)

Linfu Corporation –
Plastic & paper product wholesaler
5714 Buckingham Ct (224-578-2721)

Reliance Home Care Inc. –
Home health services
3701 Algonquin Rd #315 (847-463-1250)

Umi Grill Buffet –
Seafood, sushi, hibachi & steak buffet
1440 Golf Rd (847-952-1838)



Mayor Tom Rooney (with scissors) and 2nd Ward Alderman Len Prejna (third from right) join in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Umi Grill.

January 2014

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
|  | Christmas Tree Disposal Public Works will collect Christmas trees for disposal December 30 – January 10. Remove all decorations and place trees at the curb (cut end facing the street) on regular refuse day. | | New Year's Day City offices closed. Refuse pick-up delayed one day. | Adjudication Hearing (Parking) , 2 p.m., City Hall | | |
| 5 | 6 | Crime Stoppers , 5:30 p.m. Plan Commission , 7:30 p.m., both at City Hall | Zoning Board of Appeals , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Holiday Open House , 1-4 p.m., Rolling Meadows Historical Museum (3100 Central Road) | Board of Fire & Police Commissioners , 9 a.m., City Hall | City Council Meeting , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 15 | Adjudication Hearing , 1 p.m., City Hall | Blood Drive , noon-6 p.m. Neuckranz Fire Station (2455 Plum Grove Road). Call 847-397-3352 to donate. | 18 |
| 19 | Dr. Martin Luther King Day City offices closed. Regular refuse pick-up. | Water bills due City Council Committee of the Whole , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 22 | Adjudication Hearing 23 (Red Light), 2 p.m., City Hall | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | Police Pension Board , 3:30 p.m., City Hall | City Council Meeting , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 29 | 30 | 31 |  |

February 2014

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|--|------------------------|---|
|  | |  | |  | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 | Crime Stoppers , 5:30 pm Economic Development Committee , 6 p.m. Environmental Cte. , 7 p.m. Plan Commission , 7:30 p.m., all at City Hall | Zoning Board of Appeals , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | Adjudication Hearing 6 (Parking), 2 p.m., City Hall | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | Board of Fire & Police Commissioners , 9 a.m., City Hall | City Council Meeting , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 12 | Adjudication Hearing , 1 p.m., City Hall | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | | City Council Committee of the Whole , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | Abraham Lincoln's Birthday | 19 | Valentine's Day | 22 |
| 23 | President's Day | City Council Meeting , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 26 | Water bills due Adjudication Hearing (Red Light), 2 p.m., City Hall | 21 | George Washington's Birthday |
| 23 | 24 | City Council Meeting , 7:30 p.m., City Hall | 26 | 27 | 28 |  |

2014 Budget Avoids New Taxes, Fees for General Fund Operations

The Fiscal Year 2014 budget approved by City Council in December maintains essential services, funds ongoing improvements to Rolling Meadows' aging infrastructure and strengthens fund balances without new taxes or fee increases for operations that are covered by the City's General Fund, Finance Director Melissa Gallagher reports.

"The hard work City Council members and staff have been doing over the past several years – budgeting conservatively,

rebuilding fund balances and holding the line on spending – is reaping benefits," she explains. "Those efforts, combined with economic growth that has boosted City sales tax revenues near pre-recession levels, helped offset the need for other revenue sources to fund services."

In crafting the 2014 budget, aldermen and City staff committed themselves to discussing the City's financial situation over an entire calendar year. Gallagher says that commitment to open communication was just as important as the overall improvement in the City's economic fortunes.

"There were no surprises when we came together in September to begin discussing the proposed budget because we had maintained an ongoing dialogue about the City's fiscal health since January," she explains. "Staff members had a clear understanding of what City Council wanted to achieve. We were able to

propose strategies that met those goals while continuing to promote long-term fiscal discipline."

For example, the budget increases funding for animal control while eliminating two negative fund balances tied to the creation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts many years ago.

City officials' commitment to minimizing residents' tax burden extended to Rolling Meadows' pension obligations. The budget contains a 1.3% increase in the City's property tax levy – the smallest in six years – to raise an additional \$159,461 for police and fire pension funds.

Based on current estimates, a homeowner with a \$4,000 tax bill would pay an additional \$8 in property taxes to the City.

Small increases in the City's water, refuse, storm water and sewer rates will cost an average family of four an additional \$7.64 per month.

2014 Property Tax Levy Increase: Public Safety Pensions (Per Household)

| Total Tax Bill | City Share | 2014 Increase |
|----------------|------------|---------------|
| \$2,500 | \$385 | \$5 |
| \$4,000 | \$616 | \$8 |
| \$6,000 | \$924 | \$12 |
| \$7,500 | \$1,155 | \$15 |
| \$10,000 | \$1,540 | \$20 |

City Prepares to Launch Bi-Monthly e-Newsletter

The City's coverage of important news, events and items of community interest will expand in February with the first issue of *e-News & Views*, an electronic sister publication to the printed newsletter you now hold in your hands.

Residents will continue to receive printed versions of *News & Views* in January, March, May, July, September and November. Issues of *e-News & Views* will be available on the City's Website (www.cityrm.org) every other month.

Alderman to Spearhead Community Garden Project



Rob Banger

Fifth Ward Alderman Rob Banger is spearheading the creation of a Community Garden this spring on a City-owned parcel of land along Salt Creek, adjacent to the Jewel Shopping Center in downtown Rolling Meadows. Residents

who are interested in participating, or learning more about the project, may contact Alderman Banger at jrbanger@att.net.



Historical Society Seeks 1950s Washing Machine

The Rolling Meadows Historical Society is asking for help locating a 1950s-era washing machine for display at the Rolling Meadows Historical Museum.

Residents able to help should contact Historical Society President Alice Fitzgerald at 847-255-8656.



Facebook, Twitter Help City Connect



Follow the City of Rolling Meadows on Twitter (@CityofRMI) or Face-

book (www.facebook.com/cityofrollingmeadows) for real-time delivery of City news, updates on upcoming community events, and other information.



Community groups that wish to promote upcoming activities on the City's Social Media platforms may complete and submit the "Community Sign Request Form" (available on the "Online Forms" page at www.cityrm.org) to the City Manager's Office for approval. Call 847-394-8500 for more information.

A Tale of Two Cities

by Mayor Tom Rooney

Last year, some Rolling Meadows citizens asked for a referendum on the outsourcing of our refuse pickup. A divided Council agreed to place the measure on the ballot, sparing the concerned residents the process of gathering petition signatures. When the votes were tallied, citizens spoke with a 2 to 1 margin to keep our garbage service.

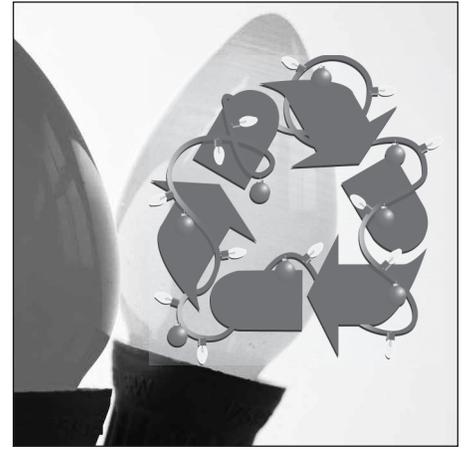
Even though it was a non-binding referendum, the Council unanimously let the decision of the people stand. To the credit of my colleagues who voted against putting the referendum on the ballot, they all honorably accepted the vote and followed the will of the people without a second thought.

Residents might think that's no big deal. If so, consider the example of another Chicago-area community where residents, by a 3 to 1 margin, voted for term limits on their local government officials.

In response, that community's elected leaders created a committee and hired a consultant to study the issue. While the consultant concluded that term limits have a positive effect on government, the committee instead saw the evidence as inconclusive.

Although I am a staunch supporter of term limits, I don't begrudge the committee their stand. It may be correct that term limits don't measurably improve the workings of local government because that's not their main purpose. Term limits prevent elected officials from becoming entrenched. The larger point is that these elected leaders used the study to override the voice of the people.

Rolling Meadows is a community that imposes term limits on its elected leaders, and Rolling Meadows has elected leaders who uphold the democratically-expressed wishes of our residents. Perhaps that is no coincidence.



Program Helps Residents Recycle Holiday Lights

The Solid Waste Agency of Cook County (SWANCC) and Elgin Recycling offer a seasonal recycling program for safe disposal of old holiday lights, electrical cords and wire.

Residents may drop off materials for recycling at a collection box outside City Hall (3600 Kirchoff Road) through Friday, February 7.

For more information, visit www.elginrecycling.com or www.swancc.org.

Sanitary Sewer Backups? Contact Public Works Department First

Homeowners experiencing clogged or backed up sanitary sewers should call the Rolling Meadows Public Works Department before calling a contractor, Underground Utilities Division Supervisor Dan Seveska reports.

Public Works staff members will identify the causes of residential sanitary sewer backups at no cost, which helps protect homeowners' interests. Seveska says that Department employees have encountered situations where residents

hired contractors without first contacting Public Works and may have been charged for services that were not required.

“Rolling Meadows is one of only a few Chicago suburbs that limit homeowners' liability for sewer line maintenance.”

“We want homeowners who experience sewer problems to call us before calling a plumber,” Seveska explains. “Our maintenance crews will check the main sanitary sewer and determine the problem. This information helps residents make informed decisions if they need to hire a contractor.”

Public Works crews use a sophisticated lateral camera that is fed through a property's cleanout. It allows them to inspect the line's interior for blockage caused by tree roots, debris, defects or other problems, such as a collapsed pipe.

Rolling Meadows is one of only a few Chicago suburbs that limit homeowners' liability for sewer line maintenance. While residents are responsible for clear-

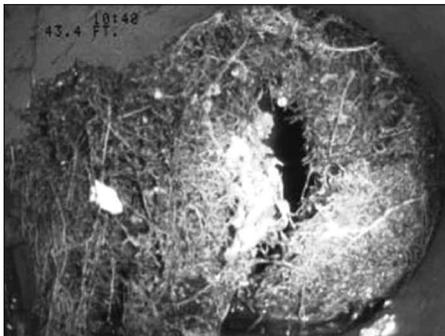
ing any blockage in the lateral sewer lines that connect their homes to the City's main sewer system, City crews will repair damaged or collapsed lateral lines at no cost to homeowners.

For more information on services provided by the Underground Utilities Division, contact Public Works at 847-963-0500 or visit www.cityrm.org/PublicWorks.

Sewer Back-up Warning Signs

Signs of potential trouble homeowners may experience include:

- Water bubbling from the ground.
- Standing water in an otherwise dry area.
- Water gurgling in the toilet or bathtub while doing laundry.
- Water above ground level at existing cleanout.



Tree roots clog a sanitary sewer lateral.