

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
BOARD ROOM
TUESDAY, MAY 27, 2025 7:00P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: President Tinaglia; Trustees: Bertucci, Dunnington, LaBedz, Manganaro, Santa Maria, Shirley and Zyck

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Schwingbeck

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Recklaus, Village Manager; Nicholas Pecora, Chief of Police; Greg Czernecki, Deputy Chief of Police; Joseph Pinnello, Deputy Chief of Police; Melissa Gallagher, Director of Finance; Mary Ellen Juarez, Assistant Director of Finance; Alexis Smulson, Accounting Manager; Kevin Baumgartner, Budget Coordinator/Accountant; Lindsay Dohse, Supervising Nurse; Tracy Colagrossi, Senior Center Manager; Hannah Kane, Social Worker; Sean Freres, Environmental Health Officer and Kim Peterson, Recording Secretary

President Tinaglia called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes

A. Committee of the Whole 05/12/25

Trustee LaBedz moved, seconded by Trustee Manganaro, to approve the May 12, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

A. Departmental Reports

Police Department

Mr. Recklaus stated there are three Departmental Reports being presented tonight, with the first being the Police Department.

Chief Pecora advised that he and his Deputy Chiefs will be providing the Board with a brief overview of the Police Department's accomplishments and what they see in the future in terms of challenges. Chief Pecora stated that he is extremely proud of the Police Department and those who represent the Department. He is also very proud of the fact that the Department is a nationally accredited agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), one of 5% of active law enforcement agencies in the United States that can claim national accreditation. Chief Pecora introduced Deputy Chief Czernecki, who oversees the Police Department's Support Operations Division and Deputy Chief Joe Pinnello, who oversees the Field Operations Division.

Deputy Chief Czernecki began the presentation by explaining the Police Department's organizational structure and how staffing has gone relatively unchanged since 2010, with 140.5 full time positions and one part time position. The Department has also seen a change in its organizational structure, as it has reduced the number of divisions from three to two, which was done in part due to the retirement of a Deputy Chief, as well as Staff recognizing that they needed additional administrative support, therefore an additional Commander was added to the Support Operations Division. Staff also consolidated some of their support units to ensure command level oversight for each bureau. Deputy Chief Czernecki stated that the Police Department's two divisions are the Support Operations Division and the Field Operations Division. The Support Operations Division serves as the overall management and organization of the Police Department as well as promoting safety focused initiatives. The Field Operations Division is the most public facing division of the Police Department. They are responsible for delivering core services to the community, including 911 calls and criminal investigations.

Deputy Chief Czernecki discussed the Police Department's workload performance, including criminal apprehension and crime suppression. Deputy Chief Czernecki advised that crime has gone down significantly since the early 2000's, and in the past 10 years, Arlington Heights has experienced about 1/3 of the violent crime compared to the State of Illinois and the United States. The Department's Calls for Service, or 911 calls, have remained relatively steady, averaging just over 22,000 a year. This number does not account for any of the proactive or directed field work for the officers, which accounted for an additional 24,800 assignments. One of the Department's primary Calls for Service are traffic crashes, which continue to remain at an all-time low. The Traffic Enforcement plays a vital role in keeping traffic crash numbers down through their selective enforcement activities, response to complaints and additional enforcement hours through grant supported traffic enforcement activities. Deputy Czernecki also discussed the increase in Freedom of Information Act requests as well as the increase in the complexity and volume of information being requested. He also discussed grants and how the Department prioritizes looking for funding opportunities, either for new programs or to reimburse costs originally paid through the annual budget. In the past two years, the Department has been awarded over \$1.5 million in grants. The Department further supports the community through proactive outreach efforts, including school safety presentations, response to active presentations and other community concerns. Earlier this year, the Department sent out an anonymous survey to a sample of Arlington Heights residents specifically related to police topics and the results revealed that the community generally feels

safe and is appreciative of police services.

Deputy Chief Czernecki discussed some of the Department's accomplishments, including hosting their first Community Zero Harm event, that produced 230 unwanted firearms, which were turned in and then destroyed, the deployment of a NARCAN vending machine in the Police Department's lobby, which is available to residents 24 hours a day, every day, and solidified their successful crisis co-responder program. The Department has also put additional efforts towards critical response training and hosted a full-scale exercise at Forest View High School with over 100 Police Officers participating in a simulated critical incident. The Department also participated in a large-scale special events training hosted by the Department of Homeland Security, as well as public demonstration training. Deputy Chief Czernecki next discussed the upgrades the Department made to its technology, including the creation of the Arlington Real Time Information Center (ARTIC), which allows the user the ability to access surveillance throughout the Village during response to critical calls for service. This technology was supported through grant funding. License Plate Reader (LPR) cameras are now deployed at main gateways to our community and form a virtual network of cameras that assist in identifying stolen vehicles, as well as wanted persons. The Department currently has two drones that are out in the field 24 hours a day, every day. There are 20 certified FAA operators and a special purpose vehicle to deploy these drones. In regards to recruitment and retention, the Department has made some positive and proactive changes, including updating the Fire and Police Commission rules and implementing a Police Apprentice program. Deputy Chief Czernecki also discussed the Department's success in implementing the legislative changes and mandates, including the Pre-Trail Farness Act.

Deputy Chief Czernecki discussed some of the Department's current and anticipated challenges, including their response to organized criminal enterprises, recruitment and retention, which continues to be a regional and national problem and internally leads to an increased workload, the impacts of significant redevelopment on police operations, including new housing developments, as well as a potential development of a NFL stadium, and lastly training mandates, which continues to take up time and resources.

Deputy Chief Czernecki advised that in regards to potential new initiatives, the Department will continue to explore any updates to law enforcement technology, ways to engage with the community and officer wellness. Deputy Chief Czernecki stated that the Department's most important and impactful resource is their outstanding staff and prioritizing their well-being by seeking ways to address the underlying causes of any potential negative impacts of the job.

President Tinaglia asked about the current number of vacancies the Department is experiencing, as well as the number of Officers who, for whatever reason, are not available for deployment as first line resources. Chief Pecora advised that vacant positions are those that have either retired or separated, light duty assignments are either medical or those injured in the line of duty, Medical Leave of Absence and those that are in the Field Training program. Chief Pecora advised that of the 110 Police Officers, 82% are currently available to put a uniform on. This statistic affects morale, productivity and officer safety. Chief Pecora stated that they are doing the best they

can to recruit the next generation, although Law Enforcement is no longer the desired profession, which is a nationwide problem. President Tinaglia asked how this problem can get solved, which Chief Pecora advised that it is probably a legislative issue. Mr. Recklaus advised that because there is so much more mandated training, that 82% of available staffing is probably lower than that because there is always someone in training., which is part of the reason they are looking at adjusting staffing levels. President Tinaglia asked if there is a recruit out there who has several departments to choose from, would they make their decision based on pay, time off, benefits, which Chief Pecora advised that it all depends on the makeup of the candidate, however if someone is looking for a larger police department with more lateral and vertical diversity, Arlington Heights could be the ideal fit. President Tinaglia asked if overtime is a real deal breaker for some, which Chief Pecora stated that he thinks so.

Trustee LaBedz asked if new recruits always start off on the midnight shift and if there are opportunities for movement between shifts. Chief Pecora advised that during the Field Training program, new Officers have the opportunity to experience all three shifts and when they complete the program, Deputy Chief Pinnello will look to see where there is vacancy, which most often will be on the afternoon or midnight shift. Those with seniority tend to gravitate towards the day shift and sometimes it takes someone over 10 years of service to get a spot on the day shift. Trustee LaBedz asked if people are comfortable coming into the station to get NARCAN from the vending machine, which Deputy Chief Pinnello advised that it's usually not the people who are suffering from a substance abuse disorder, but family and friends coming on their behalf. Deputy Chief Czernecki advised the vending machine is being used regularly.

Trustee Shirley asked if there was specific legislation passed that reduced police officers protection when it comes to them having to make split second decisions that could potentially put their job in jeopardy, which Chief Pecora advised that he is unaware of any one piece of legislation, but believes that it could be the prosecuting State's Attorney's viewpoint on accountability, which is perhaps where the shift came. Trustee Shirley stated that he thinks the Police Department has done a great job taking on the challenges that make their job harder.

Trustee Zyck stated that he is thankful for the emphasis the Department is placing on officer wellness, as the police officers are the most important and the Board needs to make sure they have everything they need to be successful. Trustee Zyck asked about the work life balance and what Staff meant in their report when they suggested it might not be feasible. Deputy Chief Czernecki advised that the Police Department is a 24-hour, 365-day operation, and some of the benefits of having a non-law enforcement job in terms of having weekends and holidays off, are not often reality especially for new recruits, which is why they are trying to come up with some creative solutions to try and achieve somewhat of a work life balance. Trustee Zyck also asked about field assignments and what those might be, which Deputy Chief Czernecki advised field assignments are more directed patrol activities. Trustee Zyck asked if the Police Department partners with retailers in terms of knowing what their shoplifting policies are, which Deputy Chief Czerrnecki advised they do reach out to businesses to help find solutions to theft problems.

Trustee Bertucci asked about the current method Schaumburg is using in terms of

recruitment and if our Police Department would ever consider using it. Chief Pecora advised that Schaumburg Police Department took a page out of Arlington Heights Police Department's playbook, with the exception of deleting the polygraph exam. Chief Pecora advised that the Arlington Heights P.D. works with Human Resources to establish a testing date and then an eligibility list, and with the new revisions in the Fire and Police Commission rules, the Police Department does a panel interview and gets a first look at the candidates. If they see that someone has potential, they expedite him or her through the background investigation. A detective then does the background investigation, followed by a polygraph and psychological examination, and then a physical exam is conducted. If all that comes back satisfactory, the candidate is then offered a job at Arlington Heights. Schaumburg P.D. is now doing almost exactly what Arlington Heights P.D. has been doing. Trustee Bertucci asked about CALEA and if our Police Department is at risk of losing this accreditation designation, based on the lower staffing level, which Deputy Chief Czernecki advised that there is not a staffing standard, therefore it is not an issue. Trustee Bertucci asked how the Citizens Police Academy (CPA) is doing, which Deputy Chief Pinnello advised that it still continues to be a very successful program and all Staff hears is nothing but positive responses from it. Trustee Bertucci recommends that any Trustee who has not gone through the CPA program should very much consider doing it. Trustee Bertucci asked about Ulta and Kohl's retail theft policies, as they seem to be victimized often. Chief Pecora advised that most retail establishments in town have directed their loss prevention agents to not go after anyone once they have left the business, as it could subject them to a workers compensation claim if they are hurt during the process.

Trustee Dunnington asked Randy if the work group recommendations from the Police Department that is working on staffing levels will be going to the Village Board soon, which Mr. Recklaus advised they will be. Mr. Recklaus stated that they are trying to go through some of the metrics to come up with a formula that indicates where the staffing levels should be. Trustee Dunnington asked about the current mental health initiatives and what the plans are for the future and if it will help with recruitment and retention. Chief Pecora advised that it certainly will and discussed the officer wellness team that the Department has. Trustee Dunnington asked if the Police Department is a proponent of speed cameras, as many of the complaints she hears from residents has to do with vehicles speeding. Chief Pecora advised that he is not a proponent of speed cameras, unless it is a data driven issue and the Department couldn't get officers out to do speed enforcement. Otherwise, he is not in support of them, as they may lead to bad will towards the Police Department.

Trustee Santa Maria asked if there is anything the Board can do to help the Police Department build morale among the police force, which Chief Pecora stated that just the Board's overall support is very helpful and much appreciated. Trustee Santa Maria asked if there are any emerging public safety tools that the Police Department would like the Board to consider. Chief Pecora advised that they have tools right now that are currently grant funded, but if they fall through, they may be going to the Board for funding. Trustee Santa Maria asked what steps has the Police Department taken to build or maintain trust with historically underserved or marginalized populations in Arlington Heights, which Chief Pecora advised that the whole community policing philosophy that allows members of the Department to go out and engage with those in the community has been vital in building bridges to the community. Trustee Santa

Maria discussed the trauma that some of the youth who receive services from her organization experience from being around police officers and asked if there are any interventions or suggestions to bridge this gap. Chief Pecora advised that he instructs his officers to treat someone how they would like to be treated unless someone gives you reason not to. Everything starts out on a positive interaction. Trustee Santa Maria stated that she loves that the Police Department is building relationships with anyone who has a substance abuse disorder and so excited that they have the NARCAN vending machine and thinks that everyone should have some.

Trustee Manganaro agrees with Trustee Santa Maria that everyone should have NARCAN in their home because you never know if you may need it. Trustee Manganaro asked if the Department plans to hire from within to fill the upcoming supervisor vacancies, which Chief Pecora advised that promotions from within the Department up to Deputy Chief are codified in the Village's ordinance. Trustee Manganaro asked if the organized criminal activity is local, regional or national, which Deputy Chief Czernecki advised that it is mainly a regional issue, which is why the Arlington Heights Police Detectives meet often with detectives from the surrounding suburbs to discuss what type of cases they're getting and what the trends are. Trustee Manganaro stated that he appreciates the prudence with which the Department is applying AI.

President Tinaglia stated that he is worried about the officer wellness concerns that the Department has pointed out in their presentation and is challenging Staff to find a way to solve this, whether it be pay raises or vacation time. It is time to start thinking creatively and outside of the box to help find some work-life balance. President Tinaglia also stated that he would like to celebrate the Police Department's new hires and have them come before Board to get sworn in.

Health & Human Services

Mr. Recklaus advised that the Health & Human Services Department is currently without a Director, as James McCalister retired last week, therefore Supervising Nurse and Acting Director Lindsay Dohse and Senior Center Manager Tracy Colagrossi will be presenting the Health & Human Services report tonight.

Ms. Dohse advised that the Health & Human Services Department responds to the physical, environmental and social needs of the community. The Department is comprised of four divisions, including Environmental Health, Nursing Services, Social Services and the Senior Center. The Environmental Health Division consists of three Environmental Health Officers and works to protect the public safety of the residents. The Nursing Services Division consists of two registered nurses who provide comprehensive life-long care to Village residents with a focus on preventative health and screening for all age groups. Ms. Colagrossi advised that the Social Services Division consists of two team members who empower residents through a holistic approach that builds self-efficacy and delivers solution focused services that connects individuals to meaningful and effective resources. The Senior Center consists of five team members and is committed to creating enriching experiences and fostering social connections for adults aged 55 and over. Additionally, the Health & Human

Services Staff serve on a variety of Commissions and Foundations.

Ms. Dohse discussed the workload and performance data, beginning with the Environmental Health Division, who saw an increase in food health inspections and a decrease in complaints. Nursing Services has seen a significant growth in the number of individuals obtaining services at the Senior Center, as well as an increase in the number of home visits. Social Services helped over 50 Arlington Heights residents avoid eviction and served 75 families through their holiday sponsor a family event. They also provided 45 holiday dinner baskets to residents. The Division also continues to serve the highest number of residents in crisis. The Senior Center has not only rebounded, but exceeded pre-pandemic visitor numbers. This growth reflects the collective focus on effective marketing, high quality services in programs and meaningful opportunities for the community and social connections.

Ms. Dohse discussed the key accomplishments, beginning with the Environmental Health Division, who continued promotion and collection of items for the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County's recycling program, including holiday lights, rechargeable batteries, fluorescent bulbs and plastic bags. They also hosted several latex paint recycling events, as well as a document destruction and textile recycling event. The Environmental Division implemented the use of Tyler for all permitting, licensing and complaint management. The Nursing Services Division developed a new parent support group at the Arlington Heights Memorial Library. They also obtained a portable hemoglobin A1-C machine for resident and employee diabetes screening. The Nursing Services Division is now providing hearing and vision screening for students at Futabakai School, and is now collaborating with the Fire Department and Social Services to identify residents who might need more support in their home. Ms. Dohse advised that they also provide education for the community and Village employees, which includes offering CPR training and Lunch and Learn programs. Ms. Colagrossi advised that the Social Services Division launched an evidence-based matter of balance program in partnership with the Senior Center to help older adults increase activity and reduce their fall risk. They also established a grief support group and formed a new partnership with the Arlington Heights Library to offer bi-monthly office hours expanding community access to social services. They also promoted mental health educational programs and enhanced crisis response with law enforcement. The Senior Services Division created a strategic plan with their partner agencies to focus on planning for future growth and programming, rebranding and revitalizing the Senior Center's image and enhancing communications. They are expanding intergenerational opportunities and partnering with Gerry's Café to host a pop-up café in their lobby to offer baked goods. The Senior Center also developed a Facebook page and is hosting "road shows" to extend their outreach to the community. The Senior Center is also hosting multi-cultural programs.

Ms. Dohse discussed some of the current and anticipated challenges, including updates to the state food code, which the Environmental Health Officers are doing a great job educating the restaurants of the new rules. The Nursing Services Division is experiencing an increase in-home resident care, as people are living longer and suffering from more chronic illnesses, and there is currently a nationwide caregiver shortage. The Social Services Division understands that housing costs remain a significant challenge for local residents and older adults on fixed incomes, as well

addressing homeless, which is their biggest challenge. The Senior Center is looking to rebrand, which includes evaluating the name or educating people what a senior center is. The Senior Citizens Commission is focusing on community transportation.

Ms. Dohse advised some of the new initiatives by the Nursing Division include more collaboration with food pantries in the community and establish a chronic disease support group at the Senior Center. They also hope to collaborate with the houses of worship in the community to provide resources, as well as continuing to work with social services to improve health care outcomes. Social Services new initiatives include exploring partnerships with neighboring municipalities to homelessness response and is looking to join the International Hopeful City initiative to foster hope through collaboration efforts. The Senior Center is planning on renovating the center in 2030 and will continue working with Gerry's Café to explore a permanent café.

Trustee Shirely asked Mr. Recklaus if the Village is locked in on renovating the current Senior Center building or if there has been any discussion of a new build on the old Arlington Park property. Mr. Recklaus advised that anything is a possibility, although a fair amount of planning has already gone into the renovation based on the Board's direction a few years ago. They developed and spent some money on a plan that works for this site, as parking is a big issue. Mr. Recklaus advised that if the Board would like to revisit this discussion they can, however Staff would need to know soon. Trustee Shirley stated that the Arlington Park redevelopment should have land that's dedicated to the Village for recreational uses.

Trustee LaBedz asked about the Nursing Services home care and how someone accesses it. Ms. Dohse explained that it could be as simple as an individual recognizing that they need a little more help, children concerned about their parents, or referrals from physician's offices or home health agencies. They predominantly assist senior citizens but their services are available to residents of all ages. Trustee LaBedz asked about the AARP Age Friendly program and if being a part of that comes with any financial perks, which Ms. Colagrossi advised it does not. Trustee LaBedz stated that there are so many challenges for the senior population, especially in regards to affordable housing. Trustee LaBedz asked about the Hopeful Cities initiatives, which Ms. Kane advised that this program came through the Board of Health and is a national movement suggesting that hope can be fostered in many different ways to improve outcomes in communities and effect change.

Trustee Zyck advised that one benefit of the Senior Center's current location is that it gives a library presence in the southern end of the Village. Trustee Zyck asked about the high risk, medium risk and low risk that was discussed during the Environmental Health report, which Mr. Freres advised that they adopt the Illinois Food Code and are mandated to classify each restaurant based on the way they prepare food. There is more opportunity for food borne illness in medium and high-risk restaurants. Trustee Zyck asked about the meaning of the Village Model, which Ms. Colagrossi advised that it's a non-profit model where older adults could choose to pay a membership to be a part of this consortium that contains contact information of trusted handymen, plumbers, etc., to allow people to continue to age in place safely.

Trustee Manganaro asked if Staff knows the cost of the Senior Center's feasibility

study, which Ms. Colagrossi stated she does not, but will find out. Trustee Manganaro asked if Staff has statistics on the rate of rise in residential rents, which Ms. Kane advised she doesn't have specific statistics with her but could definitely get that information. Mr. Recklaus advised that the recent community needs assessment that was done as part of the Community Block Development Grant program for the Planning Department has some of that data in it. Trustee Manganaro also asked about the reason for the drop in the number of vaccines that the Nursing Services Division provides, which Ms. Dohse explained that this number has dropped because the number of individuals who have gotten vaccines has decreased. He also asked about the reason for the increase in Tuberculosis tests, which Ms. Dohse advised that the population they serve the most for this type of testing is the school district and park district and the increase is most likely due to an increase in their staffing.

Trustee Bertucci asked about battery disposal and education, which Mr. Freres advised that the Village belongs to the Solid Waste Agency of Cook County (SWANCC) who offer a bunch of recycling programs, which the Village participates in some. The Village has also partnered with Groot Industries, as they also offer some recycling programs. Trustee Bertucci discussed the dangers associated with rechargeable batteries and the recent house fire in Antioch that was caused by one. Mr. Freres advised that when they recycle the rechargeable batteries, they have to bag them separately and place them in a designated box. Trustee Bertucci asked if Staff was combining efforts to educate the public about these dangers, which Mr. Freres advised that he was unsure if the Fire Department was doing anything, but they can certainly partner with them. Mr. Recklaus stated that this is a serious issue and people need to know that once a battery is charged, the unit needs to get unplugged. The Village can definitely do a better job at getting the word out. Trustee Bertucci asked what Staff is doing to support and partner with the senior living facilities in town, which Ms. Dohse advised that they are partnering with Cedar Village to offer monthly wellness clinics and educational sessions. They also do outreach at Lutheran Village. Trustee Bertucci stated that he thinks it's a good idea to rebrand the Senior Center.

Trustee Dunnington stated that she recently attended the Aging in Place seminar and really enjoyed it.

Trustee Santa Maria asked if Catholic Charities is closing, which Ms. Colagrossi stated that they have terminated certain federally funded services but they do still do intake and referral out. She also asked what outreach efforts have been most successful in reaching the underserved population in Arlington Heights. Ms. Colagrossi advised that just being out in the community and making themselves available is a great step forward. Ms. Dohse advised that they do have one established food pantry in town. Trustee Santa Maria asked what investments would help them scale or improve their services, which Ms. Dohse stated that she would like to partner more and collaborate with the community. Mr. Recklaus stated that the Health & Human Services has dramatically increased their partnership with the library in recent years. Ms. Kane advised that the library makes an announcement when they're there offering services. Mr. Recklaus advised that Social Services along with the Fire Department has started doing "pop ups" at some of the apartment buildings in town to make connections.

President Tinaglia stated that he thinks the Senior Center needs a higher profile and

his concern is the location. President Tinaglia stated that before the Village spends a lot of money on renovations, perhaps they should explore a relocation, whether it be a new build or renovation. Mr. Recklaus advised that they can have that discussion, but wanted to make everyone aware that the Senior Center has expanded their outreach and is now offering programs at some of the local park district buildings.

Finance Department

Ms. Gallagher advised that the Finance Department directs and manages the Village's operations overseeing a \$232 million budget for the current fiscal year. They have strengthened their operations over the last several years with the implementation of the new ERP software, from optimizing processes to implementing new technologies. Ms. Gallagher introduced members of the Finance team, including Mary Ellen Juarez, Assistant Finance Director, Alexis Smulson, Accounting Manager and Kevin Baumgartner, Budget Coordinator/Accountant. Ms. Gallagher advised that in the past two years, the Finance Department successfully met every milestone of the ERP project while ensuring the seamless execution of their core responsibilities, including payroll, paying bills, collecting payments and completing the annual budget process and audit. The Finance team serves both internal (Village Board, Manager's Office, employees, pensioners) and external customers (residents, vendors, businesses, other government agencies).

Ms. Juarez provided a snapshot of the Finance Team and advised that they are always evaluating the best needs for the Department. She explained the core Village services that the Finance Department provides, including answering general inquiries, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, utility billing, and following best practices in terms of purchasing and investments and incorporate internal controls. Ms. Gallagher advised that they also manage \$160 million in cash and investments and follow state statute. In addition, Ms. Juarez discussed the Village Clerk position who not only safeguards records, but also coordinates all of the voter registrations and elections, as well as all of the FOIA requests, which have increased over the years. Ms. Gallagher explained the budget and audit process, which are quite complex and take a lot of time. She also discussed the Village's long-range financial planning strategy which aligns their mission driven goals and helps them with their financial stewardship. Their approach combines a five-year capital plan and a three-year financial forecast for the operating or general fund, which is the largest fund, and the water and sewer fund. The Village has been very fortunate to end the year with general fund surplus' and they have made financially prudent decisions to invest those funds into capital planning and the pension funds. The Village has also been keeping property taxes as low as possible. Key revenues, such as sales taxes and income taxes, have been moderating and the Village is seeing a slight moderation in the food and beverage tax. Ms. Gallagher stated that their best practices and solid financial footing really tells the story when you look at the Village's strong credit rating, which is Aa1 for Moody's. Ms. Gallagher discussed the Village's staffing and how it has decreased over time and how each time there is a vacancy, each Department carefully evaluates the need of not only the Department, but the Village at that time and what the industry is telling them.

Ms. Gallagher discussed the Finance Department's key accomplishments, including the Memorandum of Understanding that they worked with the Manager's Office on to address some of the open issues related to the property taxes and the protection of the Village and school district's interests, as well as help lead the way, along with the Public Works Department, for the water and sewer rate study and the Lead Service Line planning project. They were also instrumental in planning for the issuance of bonds last year, as well as the fifth ambulance and revenue planning.

Ms. Gallagher advised that they will continue to keep an eye on revenues, as well as unfunded mandates and grants. Ms. Gallagher explained how there are proposals in the current legislative session to change all of Tier 2 pensions to Tier 1, which would affect the Village's finances. Ms. Gallagher advised that the Finance Department will be part of the Arlington Park redevelopment project and continue to identify key investment aspects to ensure that it is a net fiscal benefit for the community. The Finance Department is currently working on an inter-departmental fees review, to see what types of fees potentially need to be modified, increased or added. Lastly, with the State of Illinois eliminating the 1% grocery tax, Staff will be coming to the Board for discussion and a recommendation, as well as evaluating the streaming tax, which was identified as a potential revenue source for the fifth ambulance.

President Tinaglia asked about parking fees in the parking garages and if Finance reviews these fees on a regular basis, which Mr. Recklaus advised that it is a team effort, and it's probably time to review these fees.

Trustee Santa Maria asked what changes, if any, Staff recommends to strengthen the Village's long-term financial position, which Ms. Gallagher advised that there is nothing specific that stands out right now.

Trustee Bertucci asked about the cable tax and how much the Village has lost in the last few years, which Ms. Gallagher advised that the Village has lost quite a bit over time, and in terms of expenditures there are things the Village has to maintain on the right-of-way. Trustee Bertucci asked if the streaming tax will bring in more than the cable tax or less, which Mr. Recklaus advised that the Village is not projecting anything close to the revenues the tax on cable brought in. Trustee Bertucci asked about the availability of the parking spaces and if the Village is experiencing an increase in commuters now that more companies are requiring their employees to return to the office, which Mr. Recklaus advised that they are and Metra usage is back up to 75 – 80% of what it was before.

Trustee LaBedz advised that although commuter parking has changed, some of it has come back since the pandemic. Trustee LaBedz asked about the Tier 2 pension benefit, which Ms. Gallagher stated that there are currently a variety of proposals being discussed in Springfield and if the decision is made to eliminate Tier 2 and have all Tier 1 pensions, that would have a significant effect on the Village, therefore they will continue to monitor it. Trustee LaBedz asked if everyone pays the same into their pension, which Ms. Gallagher advised they do. Mr. Recklaus stated that the benefits are less for Tier 2.

Trustee Shirely stated that he is concerned with the Tier 2 pension discussions and

hopes that legislatures understand the burden changing Tier 2 to Tier 1 would put on a municipality.

Trustee Manganaro asked if the decrease in the telecom revenue is a result of less land lines, which Ms. Gallagher stated yes.

Trustee Zyck stated that the most important thing is the budget and a zero percent tax levy is always a good thing. He would like to see some creativity by Staff as they fill in these revenue gaps.

President Tinaglia advised that a Village like ours isn't as good as it is without a strong Finance Department.

Other Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

Trustee Bertucci moved, seconded by Trustee LaBedz, to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 p.m. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.