

From: [Neukirch, Ghida](#)
To: [All Users](#)
Subject: From City Manager Neukirch
Date: Wednesday, October 28, 2020 1:04:01 PM
Attachments:

Good afternoon colleagues,

“The one who falls and gets up is much stronger than the one who never fell.” – Unknown

I hope you and everyone around are safe, healthy, and doing well. We are approaching 9 months of operation in a pandemic. How are you? I didn't realize it was possible to feel blessed, exhausted and inspired in one day, but it has happened. Overall, our organization has unquestionably risen to the challenge of responding to this pandemic. I applaud all of you and can't commend you enough for your professionalism, hard work, providing support to others in our organization and your continued exceptional service.

As you likely know, today the Governor announced that Region 9 (Lake and McHenry County) will operate under a resurgence mitigation framework due to significant community spread and 8 days of positivity increases. Please see the website for the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#) for Region 9 details for Highland Park and others in our region, including number of COVID tests, positivity rates and hospital admission increases. Following is a link to the [Lake County Press Release, dated 10/28](#) which details the mitigation measures taking effect October 31, 2020. We are issuing information publicly and directly to businesses momentarily.

We continue to update our web site daily, issue enews twice per week and use every other mode of communication available to relay information to the public. If you have questions or recommendations, please feel free to contact your supervisor or contact me directly.

On Monday evening at the City Council meeting, we held the public hearing pertaining to the [FY 2021 Proposed Budget](#). Special thanks to Director Logan, other Directors and Supervisors, all Finance staff and other employees for their work on the budget. Every employee has an opportunity to make a positive impact on the City's budget. Thank you for understanding this is a challenging economic time and recommending opportunities to operate in a more fiscal responsible and creative manner. Below are a few highlights of the budget. If you have any questions, please contact your supervisor or me. We will also hold virtual meetings in a few months so we can discuss the State of the City face-to-face (virtually).

- The FY 2021 budget is balanced on an operating basis and based on a comprehensive analysis of FY 2020 monthly revenue trends. Financial projections and our economic analysis were prepared based on review of the City's recovery from the Great Recession, and conservative forecasting using data from the State of Illinois.
- Total expenditures of \$86 million are budgeted to exceed total revenues of \$79 million by \$7 million, pursuant to policy-permitted strategic draw-downs of excess reserves for capital investment, public safety pension contributions, and other post-employment benefit reserve. Fund Balances are forecasted to continue meeting or exceeding the minimum fund balance targets for all funds after these drawdowns.

- The budget includes a \$1.1 million property tax increase to replace revenues from the vehicle sticker program which was eliminated in April. This does not present any new revenue to the City understand the economic challenges many of our residents and businesses are facing.
- There are no fee or other tax increases proposed.
- We are going into the new year with a 10% reduction of our workforce which I understand is not easy. Please stay in communication with your supervisor if challenges arise managing workloads, and of course if you have any recommendations for our operation.
- The FY 2021 budget reflects the City's current estimates within an evolving COVID-19 pandemic economic environment. The City monitors revenue trends monthly for changes vs. expectations. If future amendments are warranted, we will advise you and any formal budget amendments would be approved at a public meeting.

[Video of the meeting](#), including the FY 2021 Budget Public Hearing, is available online. Detailed information about the City's FY 2021 Proposed Budget is available at cityhpil.com/budget.

Most important, please take care of yourself and your families. We WILL get through these unprecedented times. Your hard work, dedication, creativity, flexibility and professionalism are noticed, acknowledged and appreciated!

Ghida S. Neukirch, CM
City Manager



1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

Direct: 847.926.1003
gneukirch@cityhpil.com

