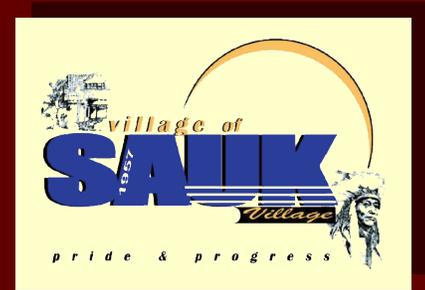


Sauk Talk

Vol XVIII Issue 1 Official Newsletter of Sauk Village, Illinois



\$10 MILLION GAS-N-WASH BREAKS GROUND

Sauk Village closed on the sale of 32.9 acres of vacant land owned by the Village on the northwest corner of Sauk Trail and IL Rt. 394. This land previously was vacant farmland for generations. The deal was the culmination of a year of hard work, due diligence, and on-going negotiations which finally resulted in a successful closing on Friday, July 20, 2018.

The Village sold this land and made \$1.35 million, which was the largest sale ever negotiated by the Village. A transaction of this size was a historic moment in our community.

The new owners have been working through the planning and permitting process since last year and propose a gasoline and diesel fueling station, a 12,000 square foot convenience store, car wash, coffee shop and restaurant for the development. *Gas-N-Wash* broke ground in mid-September and expect to be open for business by Spring of 2019.



Trustee Rodrick Grant, Budget and Finance Committee Chair of the Village Board, and **Interim Finance Director Judith Sutfin** recommended using approximately 60% of the proceeds of the sale to build up the Village's

depleted fund reserves.

Mayor Derrick Burgess has earmarked the remaining funds for long over-due infrastruc-

(Continued on page 2 See "\$10 Million")

Relaunch:

NEW Sauk Talk

By Beth Zupon, Trustee

This issue is a relaunch of an old concept with a new idea. Honoring our old traditions while embracing change! Sauk Village needed new ideas and new ways to communicate with our residents.

Over the course of the past several years, we've heard from many residents that they were not informed, or were receiving misinformation. We hope this newsletter is a solution to those problems. Information and communication are key to the success of any community and we look forward to fulfilling our commitment to you.

Today, we launch the *new Sauk Talk*, which is the official Village newsletter to our residents and businesses to keep everyone informed of what is really happening in Sauk Village.

Mayor Derrick Burgess

Over the course of the last year, we have made great strides in moving our Village toward a **Pathway to Progress**. But our work is far from done, and recently the naysayers and politically motivated are out spreading misinformation, half-truths, and stirring the pot of negativity. Despite their efforts, I have been working full-time putting in long hours each week for a job I knew was "part time." I am glad to do so because I am passionate about the success of Sauk Village despite the handful of political critics and naysayers. Here's a progress report:

Strategic Plan for Progress – Immediately after the election in 2017, I presented to the Village Board a copy of my Strategic Plan for Progress. This plan was Sauk Village's very first plan of action to get us back on the right track! The plan serves as a springboard for our Comprehensive Plan which is currently underway. I asked our Village Board to adopt this plan. I'm pleased to report to you that the Village Board did adopt our very first *Strategic Plan*, something



no mayor had ever put forth after being elected.

Legal Bills - We have saved taxpayers literally tens of thousands of dollars by reorganizing how we do business. In the past, many things were delegated to the Village Attorney, who does great work, but at great expense of \$175 per hour. Writing routine ordinances and handling requests for information have saved a massive amount

(Continued on page 3- see MAYOR)

Village Officials

Derrick Burgess, Mayor

Marva Campbell-Pruitt, Clerk

VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Cecial Tates, Trustee

Rodrick Grant, Trustee

Linda Todd, Trustee

Bernice Brewer, Trustee

Beth Zupon, Trustee

Ronald P. Carter III, Trustee

Village Board Meetings

2nd & 4th Tuesday
of each month at 7pm

Committee of the Whole

Meetings

1st & 3rd Tuesday of each
month at 7pm

All meetings are held in the
Rotunda of the
Municipal Center

Municipal Center

21801 Torrence Avenue
Sauk Village, IL 60411
708-758-3330



Police Station

21701 Torrence Avenue
Emergency: 9-1-1
Non-Emergency:
708.758.1331



Fire Station

1804 222nd Street
Emergency: 9-1-1
Non-Emergency:
708.758.2225

\$10MILLION GAS-N-WASH (Cont. from page 1)

ture repairs needed to the Village's water system and various capital expenditures.

Gas-N-Wash will invest \$10 million in construction and land acquisition in the Sauk Village facility. This is the largest commercial development since 1998 when Walgreens came to Sauk Village.

As part of the deal negotiated with the Village, the owner requested a Class 8 property tax classification. Without the tax incentive deal, the development would not have happened. The Class 8 incentive was approved unanimously by the Village Board on August 14th.

The Village is expected to receive approximately \$578,000 annually from sales tax, property taxes and other revenues including business licenses from this new business development. That equates to about \$5.8 million in revenue over 10 years. The property had been sitting vacant since the Village annexed it back in 1993, and had received \$0 in property taxes since the Village owned the property, so this is a big win for the Village from a revenue perspective.

This project will provide 55-70 union construction jobs and creates 38 permanent jobs. Preference will be given to Sauk Village residents first for employment opportunities at the Gas-N-Wash when they open in Spring 2019.

TOUGHER STANDARDS MEANS BETTER HOUSING

Landlords and Investors take notice!

Sauk Village will begin enforcing tougher standards for issuance of Certificates of Re-occupancy. These include verifying ownership and ensuring that property code issues are addressed before any occupancy is permitted. These new directives were handed down by Mayor Derrick Burgess in hopes of raising the Village's standards which have lagged for at least the last 10 years.

The Village will be requiring independent inspections of properties which began August 1st instead of allowing investors and homeowners to pick contractors to perform "certifications" for such things as the roof, HVAC, plumbing, and electrical. The independent inspectors are licensed by the State of Illinois as inspectors. The cost is about the same as the cost of the certifications so there net financial impact is virtually zero to the investors and homeowners.

The Village will also be exploring mandatory Crime Free Housing for all rental properties, a Vacant Home Registry for all vacant homes, and registration and regular inspections of non-owner/rental properties. The Village passed a Crime Free Housing Ordinance in 2014, however, the Village has not properly implemented the program. The Crime Free Housing Ordinance requires that landlords take a mandatory training course and requires an addendum to all lease agreements and will force tenants out who are becoming a "nuisance" to the community or violating the law.

Stated in the Village's Strategic Plan for Progress is: "***Addressing vacant and abandoned homes will need some creative thinking...***" The Village wants to promote homeownership opportunities for residents to make our Village stronger and raise our property values.

Veteran's Day

Monday, November 12th

Ceremony 11:00 am

Sauk Village Municipal Center ◇ 21801 Torrence Avenue

Luncheon for all Veterans to follow in the Senior Center

(MAYOR—Continued from page 1)

of money. Where Sauk Village was routinely paying \$30,000 to \$50,000 each month, we have dropped those bills way down!

Housing - I am sure you have seen the state of our housing with over 300 plus vacant and abandoned homes scattered throughout the Village. Grass as high as the houses in some cases. The deterioration of conditions did not just happen this last year; these conditions have been an ongoing problem for the last 20 years. We have now tightened and are raising our standards. Stricter enforcement of property maintenance codes and higher standards for landlords, investors, and owners will begin to take effect and have a positive impact. The Village has once again instituted re-occupancy inspections by State Licensed inspectors where before there was no inspection. We want to ensure that investments made by homeowners in Sauk Village are protected and property values rise again and we move out of the stagnation we have experienced in the last decade.

Additionally, we received a grant for \$75,000 to help the Village mow the grass at many of the abandoned homes. We began mowing vacant properties in May of this year thanks to this grant. A big thank you to our Village staff who applied for and have managed this program.

Human Resources - Over the course of the last 8 years, Sauk Village was under siege by lawsuits filed by employees for a variety of reasons caused by the lack of proper human resource guidance by Village management. When I took office as Mayor, a Human Resource Consultant was available, however, management had not been utilizing this valuable asset and continued to refer matters to the Village's attorney for employee/management issues. I immediately stopped that practice and realigned it by utilizing the consultant who was already here and getting paid.

Not only was the Human Resource Consultant well versed in employment law, but she had experience in collective bargaining negotiations. In the past, the Village would pay \$175 per hour for the lawyers to do the negotiations for the Village. Now, we have contracted these services to our consultant, saving the Village approximately 52% of the cost for contract negotiations.

Planning - Sauk Village had a bad track record regarding planning for the future prior to this administration. I put forth my Plan for the Village Board to adopt and this was the very first "Strategic Plan for Progress" ever adopted by the Village. This is our roadmap to getting us on a Pathway to Progress. Now we have begun a new Comprehensive

Plan, which was last updated 20 years ago. This new Comprehensive Plan is being done because of a grant my administration applied for and received. This is saving our taxpayers \$150,000, and in the end, we will have a clear planning document to use for the next 10-15 years.

Village Finances - When I took office as your Mayor, the Village finances were in shambles. With absolutely no transition from the previous administration to mine, and with nothing started on the new budget, we literally had days to get a budget submitted to the Village Board. Despite our best efforts, revenue projections were not realized and we ran a shortfall all year. We took a much more practical approach to our current budget, which is a true reflection of our revenues and represents more realistic numbers. Department Heads will be challenged and held accountable for meeting their budget goals on an ongoing and managed basis.

Additionally, we paid down our backlog of bills that historically climbed to over \$1 million each year.

Economic Development – Economic development is critical to the growth of a community. We have focused attention on Economic Development in Sauk Village and this has definitely paid off.

The Village closed on the sale of 32.9 acres of land at the northwest corner of Sauk Trail and IL Rt. 394. The Village did not hire a broker, saving the Village \$67,500 along with earning \$1.35 million as the owner of the land. The new owner proposes a 12,000 square foot convenience store, gas station, fast food restaurant, and a Car Wash at this location.

Parks, Recreation, and Youth Services – 16 months ago as I came into the office of Mayor, there was nothing for the youth in terms of sustainable and ongoing programs. I have included in this year's budget a part-time Parks and Recreation Director, who will be directed to thoroughly evaluate the needs of the community and begin implementation of ongoing sustainable programs. Getting the kids off the streets and providing a safe environment for them to have recreational activities is a priority. Cleaning and improving our parks is a priority identified by our existing conditions report in our new Comprehensive Plan. We have much more work ahead of us, and this has been an identified priority for the coming years.

Stay Tuned Sauk Village! We have many good things that have been happening in Sauk Village over the last 16 months. We have many more to come.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS UNDERWAY



Our new Comprehensive Plan will provide a much clearer vision for our future. This project would not have been possible without the financial support of CMAP's Local Technical Assistance Grant which we were successful in securing in the fall of 2017.

We look forward to working with Scott Goldstein, Mike Hoffman, and Teska's team as well as with the staff of CMAP.

Getting our Comprehensive Plan updated is a big part of our Strategic Plan for Progress and is a very big step on our Pathway to Progress.

The Comprehensive Plan will cost approximately \$130,000; the Village will only have to pay \$5,800 thanks to the grant we secured.

The Advisory Committee has been holding

regular meetings and the Zoning Board of Appeals and Village Board held a joint meeting to review the existing conditions report which is being drafted.

ABOUT TESKA: *Teska was launched in Evanston, Illinois in 1975 by the man himself, Robert B. Teska. Famous for saying "Good design is good business," Bob Teska's team of creative planners, designers and landscape architects has since grown and expanded, now with offices in both Evanston and Plainfield, IL. With over 40 years of experience, Tesak is a leader in urban planning, landscape architecture, site design, economic development and community engagement.*

We are pleased to announce that the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) approved a contract for Teska and Associates to serve as our consultant. As you may recall, the Village's last Comprehensive Plan was updated in 1999 and is truly outdated.

VILLAGE RECEIVES GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE TOTAL \$1.5 MILLION

Sauk Village has been very fortunate to have been awarded many grants recently in our effort to get Sauk Village back on a Pathway to Progress. Here is a listing of those grants:

◇ Federal Grant 2017 (223 rd Street/Cornell Ave)	\$560,000	Project underway!
◇ Invest in Cook Grant 2017 (223 rd /Cornell Ave)	\$ 75,000	Project underway!
◇ Comprehensive Plan Grant	\$135,000	Project underway!
◇ IHDA Grass Mowing/Demolition Grant	\$ 75,000	Project underway!
◇ Cook County Engineering Assistance	\$100,000	Project underway!
◇ CDBG Street Maintenance Grant	\$200,000	Project to begin in 2019
◇ Invest in Cook 2018- Economic Development	\$350,000	Project to begin late 2018
◇ Police Camera Grant	\$8,483	Project Underway
◇ Police Bullet Proof Vest Grant	\$2,400	Project Underway

COMING SOON! UPDATED WEBSITE DESIGN: we have been working on a new and improved website design for Sauk Village (www.SaukVillage.org). It has not been launched yet, but stay tuned! We are working on this as a volunteer effort to ensure we're spending tax dollars wisely.

I hope you enjoy reading about what's really happening in our community. So many times people get frustrated reading the negative social media posts where often times misinformation is easily spread. Stay tuned Sauk Village! More great things to come!

Trustee Beth Zupon

COMMUNITY MEETING SUCCESS



Sauk Village held a Community Meeting for the Village's new Comprehensive Plan which was hosted at Village Hall. Scott Goldstein, lead consultant with Teska Associates, broke the group into smaller break-out sections to address various community needs and assess the community's desires. Topics included Commercial, Industrial, Residential, Transportation, and Economic Development planning.

Residents are encouraged to take the Survey which is on the Village's Comprehensive Plan page at

www.SaukVillagePlan.org



MIKE BARTNICKI AND MAYOR DERRICK BURGESS

Happy
Retirement

STATEMENT BY TRUSTEE CECIAL TATES



Dear Residents and Friends:

God has blessed me my entire life. I have served our nation proudly and humbly and today I serve our residents as Village Trustee.

Late last fall I was challenged with a health issue for which I am still recovering. Anyone who knows me knows that I am a very private individual. I do not like my personal business out in the public. To those of you who have respected that I want to thank you from the

bottom of my heart. I still am working to recover from my challenges, one of which is aphasia which currently affects over 2 million Americans, so I am in good company.

What I do not appreciate, is attacks upon veterans and individuals with disabilities. Recently, I have seen social media posts attacking people who are afflicted with disabilities. I fought for our nation so that we can protect the rights of Americans, including those with disabilities, and I will fight to protect them today. Even though my speech has been slightly impacted, I communicate well and understand my public role very well. I continue to make improvements as my recovery continues.

I continue to do my job as I was elected to do, and God willing will work on my recovery. I do not seek sympathy or pity, but simply want to clear the air! Know this, CECIAL TATES is back and will continue to fight for the residents of Sauk Village!

I ask for prayers for all who are afflicted with challenges, for our nation, and our Veterans.

Humbly,
CECIAL TATES, (Ret LTC US Army)
Village Trustee
Sauk Village

VILLAGE FINANCIAL WATCH

Mayor Derrick Burgess reports that the Village was approved for, and we have completed a transaction where we borrowed \$535,000 in tax anticipation warrants. The interest rate on this transaction is 2.5% and these will be paid back in full by March 15, 2019.

For 8 years, the Village has been unable to borrow any money, and our bond rating had been suspended in 2011. The reason we issued these warrants was because monies have been used from the Village's water fund to pay for payroll and Village bills, effectively serving as a "piggy bank" and that needed to stop..

I have instructed **Interim Finance Director Judith Sutfin** and Budget and Finance Committee chair **Trustee Rodrick Grant** to develop some new strategies on how we will be addressing our financial shortfalls. For the first time in nearly 10 years, we were not forced to use the Village's water fund, nor the recent windfall we made from the sale of Village land. I do not wish to take the same path we have been on in paying our obligations. Despite some negative and factually inaccurate reports made on

social media and print media, that paying our obligations and living within our means is not a way to run a Village government, Mayor Derrick Burgess and the majority of the Village Board of Trustees beg to differ! Know that we are headed in the right direction.

These Tax Anticipation Warrants have given the Village some much needed financial relief. Over \$250,000 of this obligation has already been repaid. We will continue to explore more consolidations, realignments, efficiencies, and cost savings that will be necessary in order to balance our budget and live within our means. The past practice of spending beyond our means is over! Fiscal discipline is being restored once again and we have a fiscally responsible team in place to ensure our Village's long term financial success.

Know that this administration will maintain a course of putting us back on a **Pathway to Progress**, including the Village's finances.

\$754,000 ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS UNDERWAY



The Village has been completing work on 223rd Street and Cornell Avenues using a Federal grant, Motor Fuel Tax revenues, and Invest In Cook grant funds awarded in 2017. The total project cost was estimated at \$754,000 and will take about 40 days to complete. It will resurface just over a mile of roadway: Cornell Avenue from Sauk Trail to 223rd Street and 223rd Street from Cornell Avenue to Torrence Avenue. Some curb and sidewalk repairs will also be made along with some driveway approaches in the parkways along the route.



223rd Street

Beginning in 2019, roadwork repairs will be made on 221st street from Sauk Trail to Orion Avenue in addition to Paxton Avenue, 222nd Place, and Shirley Avenue thanks to the Village being awarded an additional \$200,000 Community Development Block Grant in 2018.

While we have made some progress on our roads, we know we have much more work to do. We continue to seek out resources from County, State, and Federal grants to assist the Village.

CASH RESERVE WILL STABILIZE VILLAGE FINANCES

Trustee Rodrick Grant, who serves as the chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee, presented a Cash Reserve Policy proposal to the Board of Trustees. The Village has never had a cash reserve policy in place, and since the Village recently sold the 32.9 acres of land for \$1.35 million, Grant's recommendation is to place \$808,000 of the \$1.35 million in reserve to support the Village's finances during times when revenues are slow to be received.

Over the past 8 years, the Village has carried an aging report of over \$1.1 million until this year, when the aging report was effec-

tively reduced to almost zero, as expenses have been greatly reduced and the Village issued \$500,000 in tax anticipation warrants. Mayor Derrick Burgess did not favor using the sale proceeds of the land for operational budget expenses as this is a "one time" windfall, and no revenue stream will be in place next year to sustain the ongoing expense.

Interim Finance Director Judith Sutfin believes this will help the Village establish long-term financial stability.

SUBSCRIBE NOW

We understand some residents may prefer to receive the Sauk Talk Newsletter via email while others may want to pick up a hard copy. We want to accommodate your preference as best we can.

OPTION 1— FREE Electronic Copy This will be delivered to you via email. Simply subscribe by sending us an email today at SaukTalk@SaukVillage.org and request to be added to our distribution list.

OPTION 2- FREE! You can pickup a free printed copy at Village Hall each month. We will provide free copies of the Sauk Talk Newsletter at Village Hall. We may have other locations as well.



HALLOWEEN 2018 ♦ IMPORTANT DATES & TIMES

Sauk Village's Annual **Parade & TRUNK or TREAT** Saturday, October 27th

Costume Parade leaves Rickover Jr. High 11:30 am

Trunk or Treat follows at Paesel Community Center 12:00 pm—2:00 pm

Village **TRICK OR TREAT** 4:00 pm — 7:00 pm on Wednesday, October 31st

**Official Newsletter of
Sauk Village**

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
US POSTAGE PAID
SAUK VILLAGE, IL
Permit No. 346

VILLAGE OF SAUK VILLAGE
21801 TORRENCE AVENUE
SAUK VILLAGE, IL 60411