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**MANAGER'S REPORT FOR DECEMBER 21, 2011**  
**GENERAL INFORMATION AND RESPONSES TO MAYOR & COMMISSIONER REQUESTS**

***Places to be this Week...***

**There is no Village Council meeting this week.**

***Future Calendar Reminders...***

**December 23 – December 26, 2011** – Village Hall will be closed for the Christmas holidays on Friday, December 23 and Monday, December 26, 2011.

**Tuesday, January 3, 2012** – The Village Council meeting will be held in the Village Council Chambers at 7 p.m.

**Village Recognized for Innovation** - On December 12, 2011, the website MuniNet posted the attached article regarding how innovation drives results in the Village of Downers Grove. MuniNet Guide ([http://www.muninetguide.com/about\\_us.php](http://www.muninetguide.com/about_us.php)) is an online resource specializing in municipal matters and has been covering municipal bond research, public finance, urban administration, and public sector agencies since the mid-1990s. The article summarizes the strides Downers Grove has taken to create a culture where employees are a large part of the Village's innovative approaches to save resources and money.

**Stormwater Utility Public Engagement** – Staff launched the stormwater utility public engagement effort. A 5-part informational video series is now posted on the stormwater utility website at <http://www.downers.us/res/stormwater-management/stormwater-utility>. Responses to Council questions have also been posted. Staff will be hosting three information and discussion meetings in January. All meetings will take place at the Public Works facility according to the following schedule:

- Residents – Monday, January 23, 2012 at 7PM
- Businesses – Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at 7PM
- Not-For-Profits and Churches – Wednesday, January 25, 2012 at 7PM

In addition, staff has scheduled information and discussion meetings with the Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Management Corporation and other Governments. These meetings will also take place in January. Staff has also created an e-mail address that can be used to determine the estimated financial impact on specific properties. Property owners may email their property address and staff will respond with the estimated stormwater utility payment and reduction in Village property taxes.

Staff will be using a variety of communication tools to create awareness about the public engagement efforts including the Village newsletter, E-newsletter, Twitter, Manager's Report and direct mailed meeting invitations.

**Parking Enforcement Software** – At the December 13, 2011 meeting, the Village Council asked staff to provide a report on the effectiveness of the license plate recognition software that is used for parking enforcement. The license plate recognition system was installed in March and is primarily used to enforce time restricted parking spaces in the downtown area. The license plate recognition software has enabled the parking enforcement officer to increase the enforcement passes through downtown, which had been previously limited to once or twice daily due to the workload necessary to chalk tires. As a result, the number of two-hour zone

citations has increased from 289 in 2010 to 475 in 2011. Additionally, the number of supertickets issued for two-hour zone tickets increased from 14 to 37. A superticket is \$100 and is issued for the third violation and all subsequent violations within a 60-day period in the Downtown Business District.

**Open Meeting Act Training** - Early this year, Governor Quinn signed HB 1670 into law. This law amends Section 1.05(b) of the Open Meetings Act to require that all elected and appointed members of a public body complete an electronic training course. Officials that are members of a public body on January 1, 2012 have until January 1, 2013 to complete the course, and new members appointed after January 1, 2012 have 90 days to complete the training course. All members are required to provide a certificate of completion to the Village Attorney. The AG's office does not have the training available yet, but according to a representative from the AG's office, the training course is expected to be up and running by January 1, 2012. The Village Attorney will provide the link to all of you once it becomes available.

**ComEd Enhanced Tree Trimming** – In November, ComEd notified Village staff that it had completed a review of the areas that were identified in the Village's reliability report as vulnerable to tree and weather-related power outages. ComEd submitted tree trimming and removal plans, which were reviewed by the Village Forester, and has scheduled work to begin in January 2012. At staff's request, ComEd sent a letter to all residents affected by this targeted tree trimming. In some cases, ComEd identified trees for removal; in such cases, the tree will not be removed unless the owner gives written permission. Staff has posted a map showing the affected areas on the Village website.

**Scavenger Licenses** – The following companies have applied and submitted payment for Class B Scavenger Licenses. Pursuant to Village Code, the licenses will be issued by the Village Manager prior to December 31.

Republic Services  
Disposal Waste Services LLC  
Veolia Solid Waste  
RSI, Inc.  
D + P Construction  
Disposal Management  
Waste Box, Inc.  
K. Hoving Recycling Disposal  
Groot Recycling  
Flood Brothers, Inc.

#### **Attachments**

MuniNet article on Downers Grove Innovations

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# Innovation Drives Results in Downers Grove, Illinois

December 12, 2011

The lights are on - in more ways than one - in Downers Grove, Illinois, a suburb located approximately 20 miles west of Chicago. In 2010, Downers Grove became the first city in the nation to install a hybrid solar and wind powered street light system in one of its subdivisions. The Prentiss Creek Lighting System project earned the Village an American Public Works Association (APWA) Technical Innovation Award.

Innovation is not just a fancy buzzword in Downers Grove; rather, it has since become an official ingredient in the Village's recipe for success.

"Continual innovation" was adopted as an official Village goal in 2011. To keep this goal in focus, Downers Grove has a 10-member Innovation Team, which meets once a month. A five-member team meets once a week to keep projects and meetings on track.

The Innovation Team serves as ambassadors for the organization's three key management themes:

- Good ideas come from anyone and anywhere;
- Communication makes us better; and
- Tough on issues; easy on people.

## Staff encouraged to submit ideas

To pilot the program, the Innovation Team issued a staff challenge, a two-week competition in which employees were encouraged to submit their innovative ideas to improve policies and procedures, management practices, and daily activities. They were also encouraged to submit ideas that increased productivity, decreased waste, and saved money. The challenge was a huge success, with 64 ideas submitted.

## Innovation: from idea to reality

The Team prioritizes and analyzes the feasibility and value of each idea that it receives. Some ideas are delegated to appropriate staff members and simply put into action. More complex ideas are passed along to small implementation teams, comprised of six to eight members, who create plans and budgets for the idea. For example, the Innovation Team has created teams to work on employee wellness, a Village volunteer program, and text messaging code complaints.

## Innovations - big and small - reap results

From two-sided printing on all Village Hall printers (estimated savings of \$1,000 per year) to consolidation of dispatch services between Downers Grove and neighboring Westmont (approximately \$300,000 in savings per year), considering new and different ways of doing things has paid off.

The Fleet Services Department, in particular, has realized significant benefits from the implementation of ideas resulting from the Village's culture of innovation. The Village operates a fleet of 77 percent alternative fuel vehicles. Its compressed natural gas vehicles achieve 35 miles per gallon at a cost of under \$1.00 per gallon.

To increase the life of Village vehicles, the fleet uses nitrogen tire fills. Fleet Services purchased a \$7,000 nitrogen tire fill machine which replaces oxygen in vehicle tires with nitrogen, generating a first-year savings of \$6,000 in fuel and \$9,000 in tire replacements.

A good idea in and of itself does not necessarily result in innovation. Positive change requires open-mindedness, a willingness to listen, and cooperative efforts in research, development, and implementation. Seems Downers Grove has this recipe mastered.

**Editor's Note:** A special "thank-you" to Steven Sanderson, Downers Grove Budget Officer/ Investment Officer, and to members of Downers Grove's Innovation Team who contributed the content for this article.

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