



NEWS

Volume 14 Number 6



& Views

November/December 2010

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



Annual Budget Determines Priorities, Shapes Delivery of Essential Services

BY SARAH PHILLIPS, CITY MANAGER

Rolling Meadows' annual budget serves as a comprehensive financial guide for our organization. Our service-oriented philosophy attempts to balance the community's needs with fiscally responsible services to Rolling Meadows' residents and businesses.

The 2011 Annual Budget now being crafted by City Council and staff will reflect the uncertain economic climate. Some economic indicators suggest the recovery is underway, while others indicate it is still in the future. Regardless, we are aware that the future will clearly be

Budget Hearing Schedule

All public hearings on the proposed 2011 budget will take place Tuesdays in November and December, during City Council's regular meetings:

- November 2, 7:30 p.m.
- November 9, 7:30 p.m.
- November 16, 7:30 p.m.
- December 7, 7:30 p.m.
- December 14, 7:30 p.m.

different from the past.

The economic uncertainty was

cause to reprioritize all City services to make sure core programs that address the public health, safety and welfare of our stakeholders remain funded and delivered in an exemplary manner.

In addition to funding City operations and services, the budget performs several other important functions:

● It is a **legal document** through which City Council carries out its legislative responsibility to control the City's finances.

● It serves as a **public education document** to help Rolling Meadows

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Fire Department Challenges Residents to 'Keep Wreaths Red' Fourth Straight Year

Since 2007, when the Rolling Meadows Fire Department began participating in the "Keep the Wreaths Red" seasonal public awareness program, there has not been a single fire in the City caused by holiday decorations. Fire Department officials hope to keep that streak alive in 2010, Fire Chief Ron Stewart reports.

Once again this year, the festive centerpieces of the program will be two holiday wreaths on display at the Neuckranz Fire Station on Plum Grove Road and the Fogarty Fire Station on Meadow Drive. Each wreath is illuminated with red bulbs.

The Fire Department will replace a red bulb with a white bulb for each fire in Rolling Meadows that is caused by holiday decorations, but so far those white bulbs have remained in storage.

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

Mayor: Kenneth Nelson
 City Clerk: Lisa Hinman
 City Manager: Sarah Phillips
Aldermen
 1st Ward: John Pitzaferra
 847-655-1390
 2nd Ward: Barb Lusk
 847-567-2444
 3rd Ward: Lawrence Buske
 847-255-9126

4th Ward: Brad Judd
 847-902-3248
 5th Ward: Glenn Adams
 847-259-5875
 6th Ward: John D'Astice
 847-409-9367
 7th Ward: James Larsen
 630-244-4228

Services
 Fire & Police
 Emergency: 911
 Fire Department 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 Dept.:
 847-506-6030
 TDD: 847-506-0490
 Senior Services: 847-394-8500
 ComEd — 1-800-EDISON-1
 Curfew: Sun.-Thurs. 11 p.m.
 Fri. & Sat. Midnight

Look Us Up on the Web at: www.cityrm.org

City Welcomes Home Another of Its Heroes

U.S. Army Specialist Joshua Alvarado, his mother, Maggie, and father, Jesus (below), are visibly moved by the outpouring of community support he received upon returning home from a tour of duty in Iraq on October 9.

Members of the Warriors' Watch Riders, including Mark Bratkiv and Bob Smith (right), provided SPC Alvarez with a motorcycle escort from the Des Plaines Oasis to Rolling



Meadows. Upon entering the City, they were joined by Police and Fire Department vehicles for an honorary motorcade to his home on Cardinal Drive.

Welcome home, SPC Alvarado!

Annual Budget Determines Priorities

Continued from page 1

taxpayers understand the finances of their local government.

- It is a **management tool** that each City department uses to plan, administer, and improve its operations and customer services.

- It is a **decision making aid** designed to help Council make difficult public policy choices. There is more that we want to do for the community than we have resources to accomplish.

Throughout November and December, City Council will hold a series of hearings that will offer residents an opportunity to voice their opinions, comments and concerns about the 2011 budget. Aldermen are expected to approve the budget by year's end.

Residents who wish to review the most recent budget draft may access the document on the City's Website, www.cityrm.org, or at the Rolling Meadows Library.

Candidate Petitions Due December 20

Candidates planning to run for the offices of Mayor and City Clerk – and for City Council in Wards 1, 3, 5 and 7 – must file completed petitions the week of December 13 – 20 to be listed on the April 5, 2011 ballot.

Completed petitions may be delivered to the City Clerk's office at City Hall, 3600 Kirchoff Road, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Petitions delivered after 5 p.m., Monday, December 20 will not be accepted.

Candidates must have lived in Rolling Meadows for at least one year and, if running for Council, must reside in the Ward they are running to represent. For more information on the April election, contact the City Clerk at 847-394-8500.

'Keep Wreaths Red' ... Continued from page 1

"Since our program began three years ago, we have had no fires that were caused by holiday decorations. Rolling Meadows residents have done a tremendous job in helping us keep our wreaths red," Fire Chief Ron Stewart says.

The Illinois Fire Chiefs Association adopted the "Keep the Wreaths Red" program in 1980.

"Departments across the state who participate in this program have observed that people are very interested in seeing whether their city has had a fire caused

by holiday decorations," Deputy Chief Scott Franzgrote explains. "It offers a unique approach for reminding Rolling Meadows residents to keep their families safe during the holidays."

Tips to help "Keep the Wreaths Red" in Rolling Meadows include:

- Check for fresh needles before purchasing a tree. Trees with brown or brittle needles pose a fire risk. Verify that artificial trees displayed in the home are flame retardant, and keep all trees away from fireplaces or heating vents. Never light candles on trees or evergreens,

E-Billing = Customer Convenience

The City's new Web-based utility billing service continues to attract residents who are drawn to the convenience of receiving their utility bills by email. Residents who sign up for the program at the City's Website, www.cityrm.org, receive an email each month that contains a link to their utility billing statement. The program allows customers to review a two-year billing history for their account, helps streamline the City's billing operations, and will save thousands of dollars per year in printing, processing and mailing costs.

For more information, contact the Finance Department at 847-394-8500.

near draperies or other flammable materials, and never leave candles unattended.

- Avoid using electrical ornaments or light strings on artificial trees with metallic leaves or branch coverings.

- Fireplaces are for burning wood or decorative logs only. Make sure flues are open to prevent carbon monoxide buildup.

- Use lights approved for outdoor use if decorating a home's exterior.

- Never leave a turkey deep fryer unattended, and always use it outdoors.

- Check smoke detectors regularly.

Police Records System Upgrade Enhances Operations, Cuts Costs

The Rolling Meadows Police Department upgraded its records management system in October, a move that will save taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars per year and enhance operations, Police Chief Dave Scanlan reports.

The new ID Networks system is fully compatible with surrounding law enforcement agencies and the regional dispatch center that handles residents' emergency calls. The software enables Rolling Meadows Police to easily share data with the 10 other departments served by the Northwest Central Dispatch System (NWCDS) and link to NWCDS' computer aided dispatch programs.

The system will cost the Department about \$6,000 next

year, compared with roughly \$60,000 for the former system, which was much more complex because Rolling Meadows operated its own dispatch center until mid-2009, Chief Scanlan explains.

"After joining Northwest Central Dispatch, we saw opportunities to reduce costs because we no longer required such an all-encompassing system," he says.

The transfer to ID Networks, a provider of integrated software solutions for law enforcement agencies, was completed at no cost to taxpayers. The Police Department bought out the remainder of its old service contract with funding provided through a federal law enforcement grant.

Public Works' Greg Larson Retires After 29 Years of Service

Greg Larson retired from the Public Works Department in October after 29 years of service to the City – an impressive accomplishment, considering the fact that when Greg was nine months old, doctors told his parents that their son would never walk or talk.

Determined to provide Greg with a better future, Gus and Marilyn Larson moved to Arlington Heights after learning about programs and services offered through Clearbrook, which offers opportunities, services and support to people with disabilities. Greg overcame the odds and graduated from Wheeling High School in 1973.

Greg's service to the City began in



Greg Larson

the early 1980s, when he accepted a series of temporary positions with the Rolling Meadows Police, Fire and Public Works Departments to help transfer old records to microfilm.

His easygoing nature, friendly attitude and commitment to the job earned him a regular part-time position at Public Works. Marilyn recalls former Mayor Bill Ahrens commenting on Greg's outgoing personality by telling people, "If you don't know Greg Larson, it's your own fault."

"Greg's service to Rolling Meadows is quite an achievement and we are very proud of him," Marilyn says. "He is a very happy person by nature and has lived the best life he could. His co-workers have made him part of the family and accepted him for who he is. We thank them for everything."

"Greg has been an integral member of the Public Works team – from his early days microfilming and managing the recycling center, to more recent responsibilities such as building maintenance," explains Facilities Superintendent Don Wenzel. "Greg knows how to stay busy, his contributions are significant, and we will surely miss him."

Public Works Gears Up for Winter

Each October, as residents turn their focus to raking leaves, Public Works crews are preparing for winter. The season's first winter storm may cover Rolling Meadows in a blanket of white at any time, so Public Works crews spend the fall months mounting plows to the front of Department vehicles, testing hydraulics, calibrating salt applicators, and more. Meanwhile, plow drivers conduct test runs along snow removal routes.

This detailed preparation is essential for maintaining the effectiveness of the City's snow removal operations, explains Public Works Director Fred Vogt. "Day or night, our mission is to completely clear the streets of snow and ice to make driving safer for our residents," he says.

Once again this year, Public Workswill use road salt that has been pre-treated with environmentally friendly de-icing materials, such as corn or beet by-products, in combination with magnesium or calcium chloride.

"Salt treated with calcium or magnesium chloride and vegetable by-products tends to stick to the pavement better than untreated road salt," Vogt explains. "That allows us to reduce our salt usage during heavy storms."

Police Plan to Staff Front Desk 24/7

Residents will soon be able to contact a police officer for non-emergency service requests – such as overnight parking – 24 hours a day, as Police Department officials embrace new operational efficiencies that will let them reassign staff to cover the front desk around the clock.

An upgrade of the Department's Records Management System (*see above article*), combined with a project to replace police records currently on microfilm with digital files, created an opportunity to reassign Records Division employees, community service officers (CSOs) and part-time assistants to the front desk, Police Chief Dave Scanlan explains.

"Converting microfilm records to a digital format makes them more portable and, in the process, less labor intensive. That opened up an opportunity to reallocate staff resources to the front desk," he says. "Due to the current economic and budgetary climate, the Police Department cannot simply hire additional staff to address the issue."

Currently, residents may call the Department's non-emergency number, 847-255-2416, weekdays between 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. to speak with an officer. 24-hour service should be in place by year's end, Chief Scanlan says.

November 2010

	1	2 Election Day City Council Meeting/Budget Hearing, 7:30 p.m., at City Hall	3 Zoning Board of Appeals, 7 p.m., City Hall	4 Adjudication Hearing, 1 p.m., City Hall	5	6
7 Daylight Savings Time ends. Clocks fall back one hour.		8	9 City Council Meeting/Budget Hearing, 7:30 p.m., City Hall	10	11 Veterans Day. City Hall closed. Regular refuse pickup.	12
13	14	15	16 City Council Committee of the Whole/ Budget Hearing, 7:30 p.m., City Hall	17	18 Adjudication Hearing (Red Light), 2 p.m., City Hall	19
20	21	22 Water bills due	23	24	25 Thanksgiving Holiday. City Hall closed. Refuse collection delayed. Thursday routes will be collected Friday; Friday routes collected Saturday.	26
27	28	29	30			

December 2010

			1 Zoning Board of Appeals, 7 p.m., City Hall	2 Holiday Tree Lighting, 6 p.m., in front of McDonald's on Kirchoff Road	3 Yard waste collection ends.	4
5	6	7 City Council Meeting/Budget Hearing, 7:30 p.m., City Hall	8 Zoning Board of Appeals, 7 p.m., City Hall	9 Adjudication Hearing, 1 p.m., City Hall	10	11
12	13	14 City Council Meeting/Budget Hearing, 7:30 p.m., City Hall	15 Plan Commission, 7:30 p.m., at City Hall	16 Adjudication Hearing (Red Light), 2 p.m., City Hall	17	18
19	20 Water bills due	21	22	23 City Hall closed for the Christmas holiday. Early refuse pickup on both days.	24	25 Christmas Day
26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve City Hall closed. Early refuse pickup.	



City Officials Take a Walk in Firefighters' Boots

Several Rolling Meadows officials participated in an interesting Fire Department operations training day at the Northeastern Illinois Public Safety Training Academy in Glenview, Saturday, October 2.



Alderman James Larson (above) suits up for a trip up the truck ladder, while former Alderman Tom Rooney (right) is spotted right after coming down from the ladder.



To show public officials what a fireman has to do, there were four demonstration sites: an engine with a large ladder to climb, a simulated fire rescue, a live fire demonstration, and emergency medical services. Mayor Nelson (at left) is pictured in the simulated fire rescue, and Alderman Barb Lusk (above) takes part in an emergency medical demonstration.

City Partners with Marines In Toys for Tots Campaign

Rolling Meadows has partnered with the United States Marine Corps Reserve to collect toys for less fortunate children through the Marines' Toys for Tots program.

Beginning November 1, drop boxes for new, unwrapped toys will be located at City Hall, 3600 Kirchoff Road; Rolling Meadows Library, 3110 Martin Lane; the Neuckranz Fire Station, 2455 Plum Grove Road; and the Fogarty Fire Station, 3110 Meadow Drive. Toy donations will be accepted through Friday, December 3.

To find other drop off locations, or to make a monetary donation in support of the program, visit www.toysfortots.org.

Firefighters' 'Fill the Boot' Campaign Raises \$4,700 for Muscular Dystrophy

Rolling Meadows firefighters earned high praise for their efforts during a "Fill the Boot" fundraiser that generated nearly \$4,700 in donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

In a letter to Fire Chief Ron Stewart, MDA Fundraising Coordinator Amber Pichiotino wrote how she was "very impressed with the professionalism and active role that Rolling Meadows firefighters have taken in the program. You

have a wonderful group of firefighters that should be commended for their hard work."

The funding helped fund MDA summer camp for children affected by neuromuscular disease, as well as a variety of services such as clinics, support groups and research for a cure. For more information on MDA, visit www.mdausa.org.



Recycling Program Collects Holiday Lights, Cords, Wire

Rolling Meadows has joined with the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC) and Elgin Recycling to conduct a recycling program that collects holiday lights, electrical cords and wire.

Materials suitable for collection and recycling include holiday lights (all colors and lengths), extension cords, household cords and wiring and computer cords/wires.

A collection box is located at City Hall, 3600 Kirchoff Road. The program runs November 28 through January 21, 2011.



Holiday Season Lifts Spirits, Shines Spotlight on Family

BY MAYOR KEN NELSON

It's hard to believe, but 2010 is nearly over. We've officially entered the end-of-the-year holiday period. Thanksgiving is right around the corner, with Christmas exactly one month later. Celebrations during this time include Hanukkah, Bodhi Day, Al Hija, Las Posadas, Kwanzaa and many others.

For people of all faiths and backgrounds, this is an important time of year. For me, this time of year has always meant a greater than usual emphasis on family. From the traditional Thanksgiving dinner to gathering in anticipation of Santa Claus on Christmas Eve, the spotlight shines on the

family. I hope all of your families share the joys of the season, whichever holiday you're celebrating.

I'd like to invite you to join your City family for the annual holiday tree lighting. It will take place on Thursday, December 2, at 6 p.m. outside the McDonald's on Kirchoff Road. There's something special about seeing the lights come on up and down the street when the switch is thrown. It not only brightens our downtown, but our spirits, as well.

Even if you can't be there, please know that our entire city staff and I wish you the happiest of holidays!

Rolling Meadows Merchants Offer Great Holiday Selection, Competitive Prices

BY LINDA LILES BALLANTINE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROLLING MEADOWS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Rolling Meadows stores are gearing up for the holiday season and offer a great selection of popular goods and products at competitive prices.

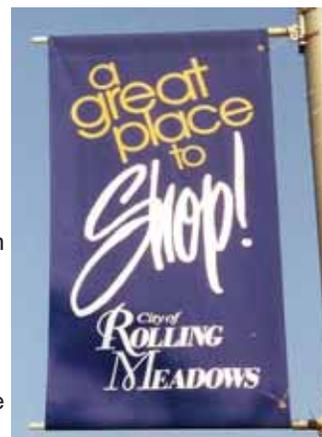
Local retailers such as Jewel, Meijer, Staples and Walmart can save residents time and money while providing the latest in gadgets, electronics, specialty and seasonal items. Ample parking offered by these retail giants is always an added plus, especially during the busy season.

by Design, Honey Baked Ham and Roberta Williams Salon/Day Spa. These shops offer a range of unique products, gift baskets and services.

Need more help or creative ideas? Visit the Chamber of Commerce's Website, www.rmchamber.org, to access the Chamber Business Directory and Dining/Banquet/Lodging Guide. Restaurant certificates and gift cards – another great gift idea – are available for purchase through many local merchants.



Rolling Meadows retailers offer a great selection for holiday gifts and entertainment.



Police Notification Program to Enhance Public Safety, Reduce Criminal Activity

Rolling Meadows Police have launched a community notification program designed to reduce crime and increase public safety by alerting residents of situations observed by patrol officers that may lead to criminal activity, Police Chief Dave Scanlan reports.

Using a Crime Opportunity Alert form, police officers are able to leave a written record of situations they observe – such as valuables left in plain view inside a vehicle or an accumulation of newspapers or mail at a home – that potentially increase the odds of a crime being committed. Police officers will follow up by phone or in person, when appropriate.

“Crime Opportunity Alert forms are designed to help police officers notify residents, business owners and business employees about situations that may invite criminal activity,”

Chief Scanlan explains. “They are not police violations. Rather, their purpose is to help reduce the chances of someone becoming the victim of a crime.”

Other “crime opportunity” examples cited by Chief Scanlan include:

- Bicycles left on a lawn or unsecured at a business.
- Unlocked vehicle doors or open windows.
- Unsecured businesses (unlocked or open doors and windows).
- No visible house address numbers.
- Obstructed view of premises.
- False burglar alarms.