

Village Manager Association of Oak Park

Trustee Conduct Should Not Be Condoned

Editorial

On March 22 the Wednesday Journal reported that Trustee Robert Milstein joined a protest by the International Association of Machinists, a union representing a large percentage of the Village staff. It is Trustee Milstein's right to join a protest just as it is the Machinists' right to protest what they believe to be unfair treatment.

Statements attributed to Mr. Milstein in that same article that denigrated and, indeed, called the departing Village Manager a liar are uncalled for, counterproductive and damaging to the Village. Calls by Trustee Milstein for the Village legal staff and HR Director to seek employment elsewhere and innuendo that the Village is unfair to its employees confuses and compromises the Trustee's role. We fear that such conduct may have irrevocably damaged the ability of residents to entrust to him the stewardship of the Village.

The Village Manager form of government works because it trusts a Village manager to run the day-to-day business of the Village so that the Board can concentrate on developing policy that advances the Village as a whole. Trustee Milstein's recent conduct in denigrating its Manager and other Village staff undermines the Village manager form of government - indeed at a critical time when the Village is seeking a new manager! Ask yourself if you were an applicant seeking a Village Manager position whether you would apply for a position where your ability to run the Village's business is compromised and micro-managed by those very Trustee's who have entrusted you with your position?

Trustee Milstein's conduct should be publicly repudiated by the Village President and all other Trustees who wish to restore confidence and integrity in the Village's ability to govern.

Submitted on Behalf of the Board of Directors of the Village Manager Association.

Sincerely,

Bob Kane, VMA President