

Village Manager Association of Oak Park

Village Commissions

Editorial

February, 2006

The Village Manager Association (VMA) has long been a proponent of, and strongly believes in, the value of the Village Commission and Committee Systems. This belief is underscored in our guiding principle which supports accountable and responsive government. These bodies utilize the talents of our citizens; they aid the Village Board by keeping them in touch with the needs and concerns of villagers; and service on the Committees and Commissions provides an opportunity to develop future leaders.

For any outside organization to put pressure on the Citizen Involvement Commission in its selection process would undermine it. The Village would not be well-served by politicizing the process and returning to the form of “payback politics” which was prevalent in the 1950s and which precipitated the creation of the VMA.

At the February 6 meeting of the Oak Park Board of Trustees the Board postponed the re-appointment of a member to the Forestry Commission. During the discussion there was an implication that the VMA has, in the past, and continues to in the present, stack the deck and corrupt the process. That is false. The VMA has not and would not directly or indirectly intervene in the work of the CIC or with the Village President. To do so would be in direct conflict with our promotion of good and open government. Thank you for the opportunity to set the record straight.

We can only note that in the past consideration has been given to Commissioners who have served a term, who have an understanding of the work of the Commission, and who have the desire to continue their volunteer service. Given that, it seems odd that this reappointment was delayed.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Village Manager Association (VMA)

Janet M. Pate, VMA Vice President/Communication