



# News from Village Hall



Fall 2010

## From The Desk Of The Village President

If you're like me, you are starting to work on your fall chores as the first wisps of fall are in the air and a few trees are starting to show a bit of color.

**Snow plowing:** The Village is also beginning its preparation for seasonal change, having just renewed our contract with Cuba Township for snowplowing and winter road management. Like many other communities in BACOG, we have maintained an inter-governmental agreement with Cuba for a number of years for snow management. However, this year, I asked that this contract be rebid to the private sector to mark the price to the market. A review of the bid responses showed Cuba's salt and plowing costs were not only well below the commercial vendors, but their equipment and capability far exceeded those who responded to the bid. The GPS and other technologies onboard Cuba's trucks help to substantially reduce the amount of salt used. This protects surface water, groundwater, and wetlands from chloride intrusion, and reduces costs to the Village. From 2001 through last winter, the Village has steadily used salt more efficiently, and now uses only 1/8th the amount of salt per mile we used in 2001.

**Driveways and Easements:** Recently, there has been a

flurry of news stories regarding several property owners in the Village involved in a dispute over a driveway and access to the roadway. I have received a number of questions about this issue and there seem to be a number of misconceptions about the Village's role in such disputes so I thought I would cover it this month.



Many of the properties in the Village rely on an easement over a neighbor's property for access to a roadway. My parent's property is configured in such a manner. It is the sole responsibility of the landowners to acquire and maintain easement rights from their neighbors. Do not assume that just because you have been using a particular access drive for a period of time that you have the property rights to legally use the driveway in the future. It is important that your easement be documented and

continued on page 2

### Fritz Gohl, Trustee

#### Police Bicycle Patrol

Our community now has four officers that will do bike patrol on Saturdays and Sundays throughout our village roads, patrolling during daylight hours, north of County Line Road in Lake and McHenry Counties. Our officers will be able to enforce our current bicycle laws more



Meet the new Bike Patrol Unit.

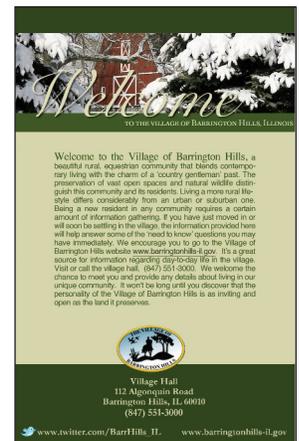
easily, with their primary focus being educating riders about our local regulations. Hopefully, the patrols will foster better communications between our police force and the bicycle community.

### Public Safety/Communications fgohl@barringtonhills-il.gov



#### Communications Committee

Our village Communications Committee has created a Resident Information Brochure to answer common questions of residents, new and established alike. The brochure contains useful telephone numbers, web addresses and contact information for utilities, local and county governments as well as for voter registration. There are updates on recent ordinances, and refreshers on the village websites, Twitter, and the popular Blackboard-Connect notification system. A copy of the brochure is included in this issue of the newsletter, or is available in the Village News & Info section of the website.



**From The Desk Of The Village President** continued from page 1

recorded along with the title to the property.

The Village has no authority to require access through a neighbor's private property, even emergency access. While the Village will assist residents who wish to work together to develop access strategies, the Village cannot impose any access requirements.

If you have such a configuration, I suggest you check with your attorney and your title company to ensure your easement is properly recorded. Additionally, it is helpful to have an agreement with your neighbor that outlines the maintenance and use of the easement to prevent future conflicts.

**Taxes:** In looking over the spring property tax bills, I believe there is a significant problem with the tax computation in some, if not all, tax bills. For example, my tax bill in McHenry County shows a 30% increase. The Village changed the latest levy by only 4.72% to address increases in the costs of goods and services. The total property tax levy for 2008 was \$6,268,839, and \$6,565,291 for 2009. Yet, at least some tax bills are showing 25% increases from last year to this year. We are working with the various counties who compute and issue the tax bills to address this problem and ensure the correct tax bills are being issued.

The Village Finance Committee will be holding a series of tax forums to discuss this issue. The first of these was held September 21 for McHenry County residents. The purpose of this forum was to have McHenry County describe their billing process in detail, and to provide a mechanism for the residents to give feedback to County officials.

If you have a tax question or concern, please contact Village Treasurer Rosemary Ryba at (847) 551-3002 or [treasurer@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:treasurer@barringtonhills-il.gov) so we can track the scale of this problem.

**2011 Budget:** The Village Board is presently working on the construction of the Village budget for 2011. The Village has little discretionary spending. The vast majority of the budget goes to police operations, fixed labor costs, and road building and maintenance. It is my goal not to raise our tax levy.

**Police Union Negotiations:** In October, we will begin the first discussions for the police union contract. Twelve of our patrol officers are represented by the Metropolitan Alliance of Police (MAP). The sergeants, lieutenants, and dispatch personnel are non-union. On the table will be salary, benefits, insurance, and working conditions. The Village will be working to control costs and pension obligations while maintaining the high level of police

protection.

If you are wondering what dealing with the MAP union is like, take a look at their spring newsletter: [www.mapunion.org/rapsheets/Spring10forweb.pdf](http://www.mapunion.org/rapsheets/Spring10forweb.pdf). While I am expecting this to be a difficult process, I do not believe any of this will impact the performance of our department or the safety and security of our community.

**Lighting:** The Zoning Board of Appeals has completed its review of the lighting issues and has made a recommendation to the Village Board. I am planning on having this on the October 25th regular meeting agenda. Please watch the online meeting notices for any changes.

In the meantime, I will be sending out a letter to all residents describing the process and the analysis basis, along with a copy of the proposed code amendment. This is an unusual step. However, given the interest in this issue, I believe it is essential to do this in order to have an informed discussion.

**Power Outages:** Some of you have experienced multiple and extended power outages. Some power outages are a fact of life in Barrington Hills as we are heavily wooded and much of our electric distribution is overhead. However, if you feel you have had excessive outages, please contact Director Robert Kosin at (847) 551-3004 or [rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:rkosin@barringtonhills-il.gov). We work closely with ComEd to address problem areas, but we need your operation history. See page 6 for tips on dealing with outages.

Well, that's a look at what is going on this fall. Please remember that our commissions and Board members are made up of your neighbors. The work our commissions are doing is difficult and they need your cooperative input. Let's work together in preserving this unique community that is shared by us all.

I encourage you to continue to communicate directly with me and the Trustees. We need your feedback and ideas. I invite you to attend our regular Board and committee meetings and get involved. I can be reached directly either by e-mail or phone and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,



Robert G. Abboud  
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## What's that code?

Are you wondering what the strange code is on the right? It is a QR (Quick Response) code and is just another way for you to link to village information. These two-dimensional barcodes, made up of black modules arranged in a square against a white background, can be read by most smart phones with built-in cameras. Snap a picture, and the phone's software will decode it and take you to the Google Favorite Place page for Barrington Hills. Give it a try!



## Community Corner



**Wendy Paulson (left) with Communications Committee Chairman Linda Fox.**

### Forest Preserve Honored as Illinois "Important Bird Area"

It's official: the Spring Creek Valley Forest Preserve is for the birds! Well, maybe not just for the birds, but this 4,000 acre grassland in Barrington Hills has been officially recognized as an "Important Bird Area" (IBA) in Illinois. The preserve was one of 21 public and private areas in the state to receive this designation in June.

Spring Creek was recognized as being a vital habitat for many species of native and migratory birds, and especially for grassland prairie birds such as Henslow's Sparrow, the Blue-winged Warbler, the Black-billed Cuckoo and the Willow Flycatcher. After experiencing the loss of their prairie habitat and encroachment in remaining land by non-native plants, many Illinois prairie and other rare birds declined until hardly any were left. Then, after volunteers worked to clear invasive vegetation out of Spring Creek, the birds slowly began to return. "It's something we all should be very proud of," said Wendy Paulson, Barrington Hills resident and Bird Monitor.

The Important Bird Area program was begun in the 1980's by BirdLife International, an international conservation organization. Today, more than 11,000 sites in about 200 countries have been designated as IBAs.

These places provide critical wintering, breeding or migratory habitat for avian species whose numbers are declining. In the United States, the program has been administered by the Audubon Society since 2000.

Local officials were on hand for a ceremony this summer to celebrate the designation, including: Steve Bylina, Forest Preserve District of Cook County; Janice Engle, US Fish and Wildlife Service; Wendy Paulson; Judy Pollock, Audubon Chicago Region; John Rogner, Illinois Department of Natural Resources; and other local conservationists.

Although these designations are not legally binding, conservationists hope that IBA status will encourage careful planning of land use for these properties, as well as help secure grants for future restoration work.



### Grigsby Prairie: The Gift That Keeps On Giving

Peggy Grigsby Richards gave the land that became the Grigsby Prairie to Citizens for Conservation (CFC) because she understood the importance of protecting open space and the birds that inhabit it. An Audubon Chicago Region publication "Common Birds in Decline, A State of the Birds Report" tells readers that many of our most treasured birds are experiencing precipitous population declines. Illinois is home to our nation's two fastest declining groups -- grassland and shrubland birds.

The vulnerable species include the bobolink, red-headed woodpecker, eastern meadowlark, field sparrow and short-eared owl. The good news is that CFC has confirmed nesting at Grigsby of the first four of these birds, and, at least three times, restoration volunteers have seen the short-eared owl using this prairie as a fall migration rest stop. Amazing results have occurred since restoration work began in 1986, and these and many others have the habitat they need, thanks to this visionary gift.



### Dining for Open Spaces

If you've always wanted to experience some of Barrington Hills' special homes and open spaces, the Barrington Area Conservation Trust (BACTrust) will be presenting Dining for Open Spaces over the next several months.

This event encompasses 10 unique opportunities to join your friends and neighbors for an intimate meal and outdoor activity to celebrate the protection of our open spaces and support the work of BACTrust.

BACTrust board members and friends will be hosting intimate dinners and brunches with activities ranging from a Spring Creek walk, a Grassy Lake hike, a dinner with our state representatives, a farmhouse tour, a Fourth of July barbeque under the stars, and much more. These gatherings will present a wonderful opportunity to discuss conservation and open space issues in Barrington Hills and in the greater Barrington area.

Look for your Dining for Open Spaces brochure coming soon!

## TRUSTEE UPDATE—

**Beth Mallen**

**Health, Environment, Building & Grounds**

[bmallen@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:bmallen@barringtonhills-il.gov)



In order to keep Village Hall safe and accessible to all visitors, new warning pavers were added in September to the sidewalks at every entrance. These new detectable ramps are the standard design approved under Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines for hazardous vehicular ways, transit platform edges, and curb ramps. The domes have a unique design that can be detected underfoot and with a cane, while the yellow color is more noticeable for the visually impaired.

In addition, the Village of Barrington Hills recently joined as a partner in the newly-formed Spring Creek Watershed Partnership. A watershed is the land area that drains into a body of water, in this case, Spring Creek. The purpose of creating the partnership is to have local stakeholders give input, following IEPA guidelines, to determine the best uses of land and water resources to protect the water in the region. This is particularly important in a region that depends upon well water for its water use. The process takes a few years, and at the conclusion, a plan is created that will assist those same stakeholders in addressing local issues like flooding, groundwater protection, water quality, and land protection. Other partners in the project include: Dundee Township, Citizens for Conservation, Barrington Township, the Village of Fox River Grove, private landowners, the Friends of Spring Creek Stewards, the Flint Creek Watershed Partnership, BACOG, and the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission. For more information on the partnership or to join or donate, please contact Nancy Schumm at [www.schummconsulting.com](http://www.schummconsulting.com), or [nburg719@aol.com](mailto:nburg719@aol.com).

**Walter E. Smithe, III**

**Finance**

[wsmithe@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:wsmithe@barringtonhills-il.gov)

The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees met in late July for a second quarter review of the Village's financial position. The Village operates on a January 1 – December 31 fiscal year. Upon review of revenue, expenditures and monthly reports, the overall budget remains on course for the year to date.

At the suggestion of Trustees Ramesh and Mallen, it is the intent of the Finance Committee to meet with the Algonquin Township Assessor and the McHenry County Supervisor of Assessments. The main topic for discussion is the Equalized Assessed Valuation's (EAV) effect on property tax bills. Village residents have also requested the Assessors to facilitate efforts to ease the burden on future tax bills.

The 2011 budget process has begun. At the August 23, 2010 Board of Trustees Meeting, budget request worksheets were distributed to the Trustees. Committee members will review their departmental expenditures and submit their proposals to the Village Treasurer. The Finance Committee is scheduled to meet in October to review submittals by the Committee Chairs.

**Joseph Messer**

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

[jmesser@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:jmesser@barringtonhills-il.gov)



On August 18, 2010, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) approved a motion to submit to the Village Board of Trustees its findings and recommendations regarding adding a new Section 5-3-13 to the Zoning Ordinance regulating exterior residential and commercial lighting in the Village. The ZBA's proposed ordinance, along with relevant background information, is posted on the Village website at [http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/pdf/ZBA\\_Findings\\_Recommendations.pdf](http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/pdf/ZBA_Findings_Recommendations.pdf). Residents are encouraged to read through the proposed ordinance carefully, as many items have changed since the initial draft ordinance.

The ZBA significantly revised the initial draft of the ordinance to address concerns as voiced by residents at public hearings and in their written comments to the Village. Main concerns included security lighting and the financial impact of modifying or removing costly lighting previously installed by residents. The new draft exempts security lighting, and allows property owners 20 years to become compliant to the ordinance as recommended. Importantly, lighting that counts toward the lumen output limitation primarily involves landscape lighting and decorative lighting. Also, the ZBA increased the allowable lumen output to 15,000 for the acre upon which the home sits, whereas the original proposal prohibited output in excess of 10,000 per acre regardless of the location of the structure on the acre. (The light emitted by a 60-watt light bulb is approximately equivalent to 800 lumens).

To allow sufficient time for residents to review the proposed ordinance, the topic will not be on the Village Board's agenda until its October 25 meeting. The Board may, at its option, approve, deny or modify the proposed ordinance.

## TRUSTEE UPDATE—

### Steve Knoop

From David M. Stieper, Chairman, Plan Commission

### Planning

[sknoop@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:sknoop@barringtonhills-il.gov)

Recently someone asked me why, with such a full schedule practicing law and raising two young boys with my wife, I spend so much time and energy as a volunteer member of the Plan Commission. My answer to this is simple. I can think of no better way to serve our community and get to know the residents of our village. A few of the acquaintances I have made over the years have even evolved into meaningful friendships, while others have provided fruitful exchanges of ideas. From some of our more tenured residents, I have gained an insightful historical perspective of the village and from others a smile or laugh.

We are very fortunate to live in Barrington Hills. Many of us enjoy parcels of land consisting of five acres or more. The vast land which surrounds our homes affords us with an oasis amidst the hustling and bustling from the greater Chicagoland area. Our secluded homesteads against the backdrop of a non-existent downtown commercial area make the village hall, local organizations, schools, and houses of worship the focal points and primary places which bring us together as a community.

For the most part, my sense of community comes from the many wonderful people I have met through village meetings and local community social events. For those of you who have not attended a public meeting, I encourage you to attend at least one village meeting this year and become involved in our community. Your participation will not only serve to educate village officials on issues which may otherwise go unnoticed, but, also, provides you an opportunity to meet fellow residents and even make a new friend or two. For those of you who already participate in village matters on a regular basis, thank you for your service to our community and keep up the good work.

### Elaine M. Ramesh

### Roads and Bridges

[eramesh@barringtonhills-il.gov](mailto:eramesh@barringtonhills-il.gov)

There has been an extraordinary amount of rainfall this year, which means that we are all subject to a great deal more standing water than usual, and, consequently, an elevated mosquito population. Please be sure to check your driveway culverts and drainage ditches along the front of your property. Keep them clear of debris and fallen tree limbs for optimum functioning of the stormwater drainage system. Before you undertake projects on your property which involve either filling in of low spots or re-direction of water, it is important to check with the Village Building Department as such work may require Village and/or County permits. Although we normally do one roadside mowing per year, in light of the total rainfall, there has been increased growth of vegetation along the roads. Therefore, the Village has arranged to do a second roadside mowing in September.

Our resurfacing project for this year is well underway, after some delay due to a strike. Chicagoland Paving estimated that they would complete the project by early September.

The Village is also in the process of engaging a contractor for drainage improvement work to take place this fall. The drainage contracts will include completion of the two-year project to improve drainage along Three Lakes Road, and replacement of certain cross-culverts running under roadways throughout the Village that have failed as identified by an engineer's survey.

We've already begun planning for next year's major drainage improvement project, which will be for Chapel Road. In 2011, culvert replacements will also continue.

### Seen in the Hills



## Stormy Weather

This summer's storms resulted in power outages for many residents – some lasting for minutes, but some for days. The key to coping successfully is proper preparation in advance. Here are some steps you can take to keep your family comfortable and safe.

### General preparations

- Residents who use oxygen or other home medical equipment, such as heart monitors, or use medications which require refrigeration, such as insulin should have a 24-hour back-up plan in case the power goes out.
- Assemble an emergency kit which includes flashlights, battery-operated radios, spare batteries and non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener. The kit should also include a supply of bottled drinking water to use in case of emergency. You should allot one gallon of water per person per day.
- Consider the purchase of a gasoline-powered generator or battery back-up system to operate essential items like sump pumps or refrigerators. Whole- or partial- home generators are also an option, but you should first check with the Building Department regarding permit requirements, and also consult a licensed electrician regarding power and installation requirements.
- Maintain at least one wired phone connected to your landline -- most cordless phones require electricity and will not operate during a power outage, unless they are equipped with battery back up. Obviously, cell phones will work, but when the electricity goes out, you may have no way to recharge them.
- Know how to operate your overhead garage door manually. Check with the manufacturer if you are unsure how.

### When there is threat of a major storm

- If your home is served by a well, fill your bathtub, sinks and/or spare containers with water. This water can be used for drinking, bathing or gravity flushing of toilets.
- Unplug sensitive electronic equipment (like computers, televisions, and stereos) which could be damaged by surges when electricity is restored.
- Keep an adequate amount of gasoline on hand to operate your generator, along with properly rated heavy-duty extension cords to connect to essential appliances.

### When power is lost

- Call 1-800-EDISON-1 immediately to notify Com Ed of your outage. Once you have made a report, you may call this number again for updates on the status of power restoration for your home. Do not assume that a neighbor has already reported the problem. Please do not call 9-1-1 to report a power outage.
- DO NOT draw water from your faucets! Nearly all BH homes rely on private wells for their water. Your well pump will not operate when there is no electricity. If you attempt to draw water during an outage and the pressure in the well tank drops below a critical level, you could damage the pump permanently. Keep in mind that flushing toilets also requires water from your well.
- When operating a gasoline generator, make sure to locate it only outside of the home and far enough away that the exhaust fumes will not enter your home.
- Remember that your outage could last anywhere from hours to days, so open your refrigerator sparingly to minimize food spoilage.

### If your basement floods

- Electricity and water create a dangerous mix, so don't go into your basement or attempt to turn off the electricity in your basement if it's already flooded.
- Water damage may be covered by your homeowner's insurance policy. Your insurance agent can advise you on reputable clean-up contractors.

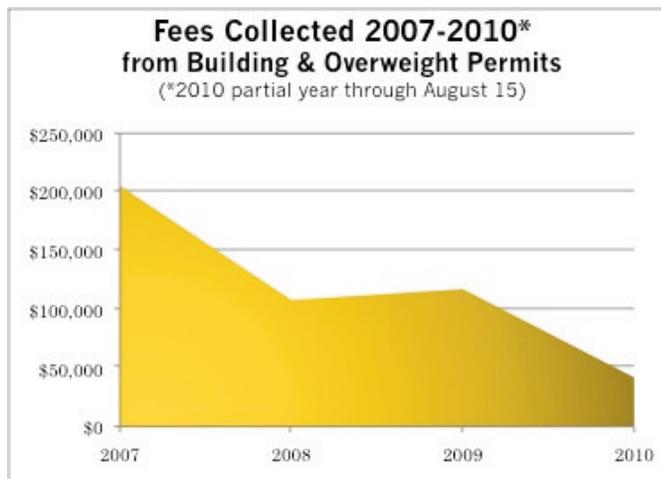
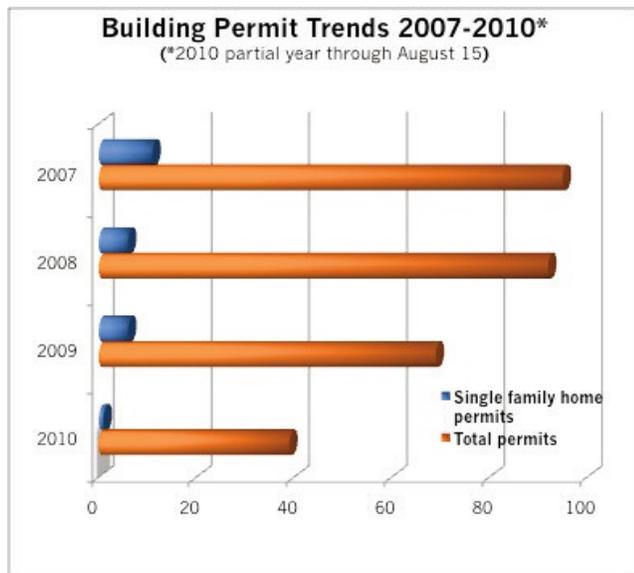
More tips on emergency preparedness or dealing with power outages may be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.ComEd.com](http://www.ComEd.com)



***Don't wait for storm clouds to gather before planning for power outages.***

## FOCUS on BUILDING

In recent years, the Barrington Hills residential real estate market has followed the national trend of a slowdown in overall building activity, especially in the category of construction of single family residences. Accordingly, revenues from building permits and overweight truck fees have also shown a decline from their pace in the first half of the decade.



## SHINING STARS

### News From the Barrington Hills Police Department

Barrington Hills Village President Robert Abboud recently traveled with Chief Michael Murphy and Community Service Officer William Walsh, the Department's Accreditation Manager, to receive the Police Department's 3rd Accreditation Award from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies [CALEA] on July 31st in Las Vegas.

The Department underwent a favorable hearing and was reaccredited following a successful on-site inspection in December, 2009. Every three years, police agencies must reapply for accreditation, which is formal recognition that an agency has an excellent record of service and operation. Accreditation is an ongoing process rather than a triennial event. The Police Department works daily to maintain compliance with the standards. In the next two years, an annual report will be required to attest to the fact the department remains in compliance with applicable standards and is ready for the next official assessment in 2012.

Barrington Hills Police Department is the only accredited police agency in the Barrington Area Council of Governments, and was first in the McHenry County Council of Governments to achieve accreditation.



Left to right: Village President Robert Abboud, Officer William Walsh and Police Chief Michael Murphy.

## News in Brief

- Safety improvements on Route 62 continue. Look for new blinking caution lights at the intersection with Bateman Road, and at Old Sutton Road.
- The Board of Health recently approved an ordinance that includes consideration of soil classification in addition to percolation test information when applying for a building permit for a septic system. A Restricted Soils Map and other perc test information to assist residents is available at <http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov/building.htm>



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 Pamela Cools.  
 Page 8 photo by Debbie Stone.**

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### TIME FOR THE TRASH ROUNDUP!

The fall roadside trash pick-up event is scheduled for Saturday, October 30. Please meet at the Village Hall at 8:25 a.m. to register. Safety vests and trash bags will be provided by the Village, and the Police Department will give safety instruction. Remember to dress appropriately for the weather and bring your own water-proof gloves and sunscreen.

Anyone over twelve can participate. Community academic credit is available, but students' participation forms must be signed by parents in advance. To pre-register your teams, or if you have questions, please call the Village Clerk at (847) 551-3000, or email the Beautification Committee [green@barringtonhills-il.com](mailto:green@barringtonhills-il.com).

## Directory

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Village of Barrington Hills</b>          112 Algonquin Road          Barrington Hills, IL 60010-5199  <b>Web address with e-mail</b>  <a href="http://www.barringtonhills-il.gov">www.barringtonhills-il.gov</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Phone</b>          847-551-3000</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Village Hall Hours</b>          Monday-Friday          9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Director of Administration</b>          Robert Kosin</p>	<p><b>MEETINGS</b></p> <p><b>Village Board</b>          4th Monday of the month, 6:30 PM</p> <p><b>Equestrian Commission</b>          1st Monday of the month, 7:00 PM</p> <p><b>E-911 ETSB</b>          2nd Monday of the month, 6:30 PM</p> <p><b>Plan Commission</b>          2nd Monday of the month, 7:30 PM</p> <p><b>Zoning Board of Appeals</b>          3rd Monday of the month, 7:30 PM</p> <p style="font-size: small;">All meetings are held in the Alexander MacArthur Room of the Barrington Hills Village Hall.          Should you wish to comment at any of these meetings, your advance notice, by telephoning the office of the Village Clerk at 847-551-3000, is appreciated.</p>	<p><b>Board of Trustees</b></p> <p>Robert G. Abboud  <i>President</i></p> <p>Fritz Gohl  <i>Pro-Tem</i></p> <p>Walter E. Smithe  <i>Trustee</i></p> <p>Steve Knoop  <i>Trustee</i></p> <p>Beth Mallen  <i>Trustee</i></p> <p>Elaine Ramesh  <i>Trustee</i></p> <p>Joseph S. Messer  <i>Trustee</i></p>
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