



**Village of Barrington Hills  
112 Algonquin Road  
Barrington Hills, Illinois 60010-5199**

**Date:** Monday, May 06, 2013

**To:** BH Village Board Members  
Village Hall Staff Members

**Subject: PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2013 0506 – STATE OF THE VILLAGE**

**Fellow Board Members and Staff:**

Today is my last day as Village President. The following is the state of the Village. Given the various statements made during the campaign, I thought I would take a moment of your time to provide some clarity to the condition of the Village and correct the record.

I leave the Village to the next administration with the Village in sound financial, environmental, infrastructural, and zoning condition. It is each president's charge to steward the Village forward to the next generation and I believe we as a team have accomplished this task. However, as with all previous administrations, challenges do lie ahead.

Over the last 8 years, the Village has overcome a series of extraordinary challenges, while at the same time improving its operational efficiency and general infrastructure. Our success was based on establishing a position of strength and maintaining a state of preparedness. This formula has served the Village well in protecting its zoning, its character, public safety, and the environment.

In financial terms, the Village is in the best shape it has ever been in, and is considered one of the strongest in the state. Its bond rating is currently at aa1 up from aa3 when I took office in 2005. This is notable considering that the economy experienced a very severe recession during my first term.

The annual budget currently stands at \$8,281,305. The opposition statements that growth in the Village budget has been 83.5% during my term in office are a fabrication. The fact is that growth in the budget has been substantially less than the rate of inflation, starting at \$7,053,221. Over my term, the total Village spending has been under budget by \$642,263.

The opposition statements that property taxes under my administration had gone from \$2.4M to \$6.7M are also a fabrication. My first year property tax levy was \$5,760,229. The property tax levy currently stands at \$6,565,273. Additionally, property tax levies have remained flat 5 out of the last 8 years, and the property tax levy increments are well below the rate of inflation.

Our Village is extremely large, with some 30 square miles and only 4200 population. This requires each of us to maintain a substantially larger piece of property and infrastructure than our brethren communities. Those who attempt to compare our property taxes on a per capita basis truly must not understand the difference between Barrington Hills and Bellwood.

Relative to debt, statements that the Village took on \$1.6M in new debt are a fabrication. The Village has taken on no new debt since its \$3,155,000 bond issue under my friend and processor President Jim Kempe, and to whom I owe much gratitude.

Regarding cash reserves, again, opposition statements that the Village lost \$2M in reserves is a fabrication. The month I took office cash reserves were \$2,823,948.96. Today they are \$3,317,061.89. This represents an increase in cash reserves of \$493,112.93. They have remained stable during my entire administration and we were never threatened by any cash flow problem.



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Relative to our pension funds, the statements that the funds are underfunded and being ignored is a fabrication. The Villages pension funds, the IMRF and the DPPF, are both funded at or above the actuarial requirements. They are completely solvent and considered some of the best in the state. In fact the DPPF, or Police Pension Fund, is funded at nearly twice the actuarial rate. You should note that the fund is managed by an independent board who maintains professional asset management, auditing, and accounting. Currently, the Police Pension Fund, which just started in late 2004, is already 48% funded and its assets grew at 14% in the last 12 months. The plan's net assets are \$6,083,855.67 as of March 1, 2013. Since the average service time of our officers is at just 13.6 years, and only 4 officers are at or above 20 years of service, the DPPF has more than enough funds to cover all current and future cash requirements without any new taxes or burden on our residents.

Relative to transparency in governance, the opposition statements that I had discouraged videotaping and WEB casting of Village Board meetings as well as other committee meetings was a fabrication. The Village meeting minutes for December 19, 2011 documents that I voted YES for the expenditure of some \$35,000 for installation of equipment to webcast all meetings on our WEB site. While our Board decided not to video tape these meetings on a cost / benefit consideration, we do provide complete audio of our meetings on our WEB site. The President Elect himself sited the current audio system as working so well he did not need to attend the meetings in person.

Our Village WEB site has also recently received national recognition by the Sunshine Review Foundation who selected just 19 communities in IL for this award. Our Village news letter issues quarterly with articles written by each of the Board members themselves – not penned by someone else.

In 2005, I moved unlimited public comment to the front of the meeting to allow our residents the best opportunity to speak to the entire board within the limitations of the Open Meetings Act. While I recently needed to temporarily move the Public Comment back to the end of the agenda at the request of the Trustess to address a few individuals who abused the process, I have returned Public Comment to the front of the meeting.

Additionally, working with our Communications Committee, we have established the Mug Club which gives residents a chance to meet with one or two trustees at a time in a more relaxed public meeting atmosphere and still meet the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

The Village continues to maintain a high level of transparency by utilizing detailed agendas. While this adds time to each meeting over the so-called consent agenda process, it requires that each item be voted on separately so that the Trustees are held accountable for each vote.

Through a significant expansion of our committee structure, some 61 people now volunteer to serve inside the Village government. This brings a substantial amount of new diversity of thought to our governmental process. While all these different ideas can sometimes be somewhat difficult to manage, particularly when they serve a particular political wedge point, diversity of thought is what will continue to protect our unique rural equestrian village.

Our Police department is in excellent shape with three full CALEA accreditations during the last 8 years. The CALEA current operations manual is dedicated to the Village of Barrington Hills. Note that CALEA accredits police departments from all over North America.

Our police department is equipped with the most modern tools, weapon systems, and technologies. We continue to maintain the highest caliber training with our officers providing both service and public safety. The department is recognized throughout the region as the place to work, and for their leadership in the field of public safety. To say I am simply proud of our department is a huge understatement. I am very thankful to Chief Murphy and his predecessor Chief Clauser for their leadership and their friendship. And to the officers, sergeants, lieutenants, dispatchers, and staff, and I am ever so grateful for all the assistance they have provided.



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Because the department is the first line of protection for public safety, it is important to continue to properly fund, train, and equip our police department to maintain a position of strength. Continuing to attract the best officers and dispatchers demonstrates our commitment to protection of our community, and any loss of readiness and strength will send a signal to those who wish us harm.

The Village continues to maintain a highly qualified array of legal resources to help protect the Village against a wide variety of threats and to manage contracts and agreements. While we utilize many special talents given our unique circumstances, we use less than 9% of the budget for these resources.

Our roads and bridges programs today serve us well. Those of you who lived here before 2005 know just how bad our roads were. With 41 miles of Village maintained roads, and some 100 miles of roads total in the Village, our road mileage per capita is very high. We have put in place a program that has enhanced the quality of our roads and put us on a level and controlled budget process. Our process and engineering was recognized by IDOT when they asked the Village for help on reducing fatalities on Rt 62. This resulted in design changes and a reduction in fatalities from 5 or more per year to none at the present time.

Our intergovernmental agreement for road and snow management with Cuba Township has served us well, saving us millions of dollars over private firms. In addition, we have reduced our road salt utilization by a factor of ten. I thank all our Trustees and staff who were involved in creating and maintaining these agreements.

Our Planning and Zoning have been preserved. We have not resorted to feathering and other deleterious strategies in order to maintain our very unique rural and equestrian environment. In part, because of our strength in zoning protection, we have not been challenged by any new disconnections or zoning issues.

The Village is highly interconnected through its Council of Government relationships. This includes the Barrington Area Council of Governments, the McHenry County Council of Governments, where I served as Vice President and Chairman of Legislative Committee, the Lake County Municipal League, Northwest Managers and Mayors Conference, the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, and the Illinois Municipal League, just to name a few. With the help of Trustee Gohl, we also now maintain a series of critical boarder agreements that help protect the Village.

In particular, our relationships with BACOG and MCCG were critical in establishing the necessary protections against the East Dundee / IAA proposed facility which threatens our ground and drinking water. These COG and intergovernmental relationships will be critical as we take on the challenge of chloride intrusion into ground water from road salt and water softening.

Thank you to Janet Agnoletti and Anna Moeller who serve as the executive directors of BACOG and MCCG respectively. Their insight has been enormously valuable to our community.

Our Village infrastructure is sound with our Village building and facilities, while modest in décor, serving the functional needs of the Village. Efforts to improve the cellular communications have resulted in Village wide coverage of 4G capability through the expansion of DAS and 23 new cellular antenna nodes. In addition, some 100 miles of new fiber has been installed and terminated at the Village Hall which lays the ground work to provide 10 Gb/s bandwidth on fiber to every home in the Village. This is some 1000 times the bandwidth of the already high speed capability of our relatively new Comcast cable infrastructure. This architecture will help to revolutionize the home occupation business capabilities of our community while making no outward impact to zoning, our environment, or our character.

To our volunteers on the committees: Planning, Zoning, Communications, Equestrian, Health, HEC, Legal, Police Pension Board, and E911, and general volunteers to the Village - THANK YOU!

To my fellow Mayors, County Board members, and Township members who gave so much help to our Village - THANK YOU!

To our employees Bob Kosin, Dolores Trandel, Rosemary Ryba, Anna Paul, Wendy Friesen, Chief Murphy, Deputy Chief Semelsberger, Bill Walsh, and the entire Police Department – THANK YOU!



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Remember that the Village employees do not live in the Village. We must go the extra mile to make sure they are taken care of as our family. They are there when the going gets tough. Just ask the horses at 363 Bateman Circle South, whose lives were saved just today by the perseverance and actions of our staff and police department, along with residents who brought expertise, and worked to bring in the Department of Agriculture. Without their efforts, these horses would have starved to death.

And of course to our residents - THANK YOU!

For the new Board, there are many challenges ahead. Continuing to manage costs, new legislation, increasing demands for Village services, CN trains, shrinking state revenues, and developers are but a few of these. Certainly, those who have served know how difficult and threatening the outside developers were to our environment. However, my perspective is that the greatest threat we face is from within. In this last election, the new president was elected with just 15% of the population. If our community does not become engaged and informed and participate in the electoral process then we are doomed to be another casualty on the roadway to sprawl and strip malls.

The last piece of advice that President Kempe gave me, which I will pass on to the next Board, was to ensure that we had competent and qualified candidates step up to serve, and to ensure that the electorate participates in voting. It is my belief that anonymous blogs, the use of video cameras to intimidate, calls for so called civility and being 'neutral', all work against the goals of vigorous public debate and full participation by the electorate. Those who preach civility are rarely civil, and more often have an agenda of suppression. It was Thomas Jefferson in a January 30, 1787 letter to James Madison, who said *"I prefer the tumult of liberty to the quiet of servitude. It prevents the degeneracy of government, and nourishes a general attention to the public affairs. I hold it that a little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical."*

Be sure of your mission. I recently read that the new administration will consider the next 4 years a success if they can cut the budget by 25%, thus saving each tax payer about \$300. I suggest that the real success is protecting the safety of our residents, our environment, and preserving our very unique rural and equestrian character.

It has been an honor serving with you all, and I wish our next Board success. Thank You.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert G. Abboud  
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Cc:  
BH Village Counsel / BACOG / MCCG