



Sauk Village's Original Community Newspaper

THE SAUK VILLAGER

A Community News Service for the 21st Century



FRIDAY JANUARY 27, 2012

473 More days until a New Mayor gets sworn in!

Towers wins Circuit Court Ruling Losing in the Court of Public Opinion

By Joseph Wiszowaty
SAUK VILLAGE | The political poison of Sauk Village politics reached a crescendo at Tuesday night's meeting that lasted from 7pm until 12am Wednesday morning. The political posturing and verbal sparring continued unabated by Mayor Lewis Towers.

Towers won a court challenge earlier Tuesday morning when Judge Kathleen Pantle ruled in favor of the action brought by Towers stating the action taken by the Village Board limited the mayor's authority for appointments, "was not authorized under Illinois municipal code". Her decision on the fact that Sauk Village is a non-home rule municipality and the code is strictly read and does not authorize non-home rule communities to "limit or restrict a mayor's temporary or permanent appointment".

Pantle stated that the Village Board has three options: 1- go to referendum and change the village to a Home Rule community; 2- go to Springfield and have the State Legislature add language to the code authorizing limitations to mayoral temporary appointments or 3- wait out the political process for the next election.

The effect of the ruling means that Robert Fox can remain the temporary Chief of Police until the end of Towers'

term of office or when a permanent chief is appointed.

Another status hearing is scheduled for February 27th before Pantle. Village Attorney Michael McGrath of Odelson and Sterk, advised the Village Board in a memorandum to resolve the matter to avoid further cost and liability to the Village. Fox is suing the Village to get paid. Fox has been working without a contract and without pay since November 22, 2011.

Attorneys from Odelson and Sterk, attorneys from other law firms as well as Judge Pantle have all requested that the Mayor begin to work with the Village Board of Trustees to "work together, avoid all personality conflicts, and serve the residents in your community" the memorandum stated.

"We're very happy the judge ruled in our favor" Towers said following the lengthy meeting. "Attorneys warned the Board that they will rule in our favor, but the board refused to listen to the attorney" Towers said.

The Village has 30 days to appeal Judge Pantle's decision to the Illinois Appellate Court but McGrath said that is "unlikely"



Temporary Police Chief Robert Fox enters the Cook County Court House in Chicago on Tuesday meeting

and he would advise against it. "Democracy is based upon a difference of opinions and the right to express those opinions. I ask that you (the Mayor and Village Board) work together, whether you share the same opinion or not" McGrath said in his memorandum.

Trustee Enoch Benson did not want to comment on the court ruling. Trustee David Hanks said "we must comply with

**(See FOX-
Continued on page 3)**

Trustees call on Towers to Resign Votes No Confidence

By Joseph Wiszowaty

SAUK VILLAGE | In a historic and unprecedented action the Board took a vote of "no confidence" in the leadership of Mayor Lewis Towers. Never has there been such a vote by any village board for any mayor until Tuesday's meeting.

In a letter signed by Trustees Rosie Williams, Derrick Burgess, Edward Myers, David Hanks and Robert Chavez which

reads as follows:

"We the undersigned members of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Sauk Village, call upon you to step aside from your position as Chair of the Corporate Authorities. Our request is intended to find an individual who has widely recognized expertise in decorum, ethics and Village Policies, and in whom the Board's members could have full confidence.

Each of us respects the roles that have been placed upon us as elected officials. We have served as dedicated and informed officials. Since its inception, the Board of Trustees has remained an import force to address all concerns and procedures of the Village of Sauk Village. Some of us have been members for multiple terms, while others are relatively newly elected. Regardless of our terms in office, it is clear to

(Continued on page 3-RESIGN)

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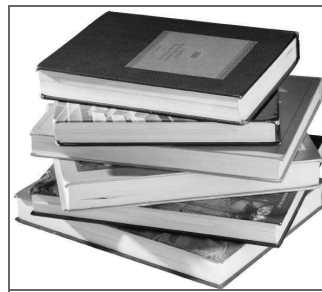


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SAUK VILLAGER- HISTORY



Former Mayor Edward W. Paesel prepares to deliver his remarks during the dedication of the Community Center in 1982. Paesel's administration secured funding grants to construct the center which bears his name. The Village Board named the Center in his honor the day he left office on May 9, 1989

Marian Catholic Honor Roll Announced

CHICAGO HEIGHTS | Marian Catholic High School has announced its honor roll for the second quarter of the 2011-2012 school year. Along with a full complement of co-curricular activities in athletics and fine arts rigorous college-prep academics remain the focus as the following residents of Sauk Village are recognized for their efforts:

Parrish Carter, Jr., LaCoralyn Hilliard, Regine Hughes, Mary Beth McCarter, Kayla Robinson, Kyle Robinson, Clarence Wallace and Tyler Walton.

The SAUK VILLAGER congratulates these individuals for their hard work!



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THE SAUK VILLAGER

Towers- “I brought WinPak” REALLY?

By Joseph Wiszowaty

SAUK VILLAGE | Mayor Lewis Towers once again displayed his grandeur of illusions by telling the residents he brought WinPak to Sauk Village. WinPak just built a “three hundred square foot facility” Towers said. To which Village Trustee Derrick Burgess corrected the Towers “that’s 350,000 square feet not 300 square feet” Burgess said.

Towers had claimed in prior meetings that “the trustees were asleep when I was negotiating with WinPak” Towers has said. Former Mayor Roger Peckham, who has been silent since leaving office and hasn’t spoken publicly or to the media but he spoke out after Mayor Lewis Towers’ media circus meeting held on Tuesday, January 24th.

“There was an interest by Winpak back in 2007, while I was in office to locate in the LogistiCenter. DP Partners and Lou Vitullo were the ones who negotiated the deal” Peckham said. “If you want to thank someone you can thank them (DP Partners and Vitullo) for WinPak” Peckham said. Vitullo, of Wildman Harold Allen and Dixon, has served as Sauk Village’s Attorney and law firm for many years prior to Towers coming to office or even moving to town.



Village Trustee Derrick Burgess said that Towers’ involvement with WinPak once he took office actually jeopardized the closing of the deal. “Mayor Towers has trouble being consistent”, Burgess said. “He says ‘we’ when he means ‘I’ and ‘I’ when he means ‘we’” Burgess said. “Towers spouts that he wants to work with the Village Board, however, he has a real funny way of showing it” Burgess said. “If Lewis Towers wants to get credit for doing something for Sauk Village, he better not point to the LogistiCenter for accomplishments. Large corporate developments and businesses can

take years before they commit and come into fruition; no deals the size of WinPak happens over night” Burgess said.

“This Village Board worked with WinPak and DP Partners to ensure that we kept our commitments to our business partners. This wasn’t a unilateral act of one man to close this deal”, Burgess said “and it certainly was not dependent on Lewis Towers’ ability to make things happen” Burgess said.

(FOX- Continued from page 1)

the judge’s ruling, even if we don’t like it”.

While Towers may have won in the Circuit Court, he’s not likely to win in the bigger court, the “court of public opinion” according to Trustee Derrick Burgess said. “The voice of the people must be considered and must be heard. So long as I am an elected official, I will do so without regard to politics” Burgess said. “Lewis Towers is the same one who promised residents during his campaign for Mayor that he would bring leadership and transparency to Sauk Village. If you lie about one thing, you will most likely lie about everything” Burgess said.

(RESIGN-Continued from page 1)

those who have signed this that Lewis Towers has become ineffective in his ability to govern the Village of Sauk Village in the capacity of Mayor.

We believe that the Village of Sauk Village is most effective when chaired by an individual—whether male or female; Republican, Democrat or Independent—who demonstrates that he or she understands, cares about, and acts in a manner that is consistent with the best interest of its residents. Unfortunately, circumstances of the past several months have eroded our confidence in your ability to continue to lead this Board. This letter, therefore, is a formal communication of “no confidence” and a request for you to step aside as Chair of the Corporate Authorities for the Village of Sauk Village.

The reasons are clear: The recent tactics used when handling appropriations shows your complete disregard for Village procedure as well as your lack of knowledge and respect for the position of the Board of Trustees. You, Mayor Towers, have become reckless to the

point of dislodging the Government of Sauk Village. Possibly most destructive, you have participated in, encouraged and agreed with various discussions of suspected racism, misappropriations and slander toward the undersigned. This identifies your inept ability to govern ALL people of this Village regardless of their race, creed or color.

Collectively, these and other actions have led us to conclude that you have become impotent in your current ability to demonstrate effective leadership of the Village of Sauk Village. Respectfully submitted, Rosie Williams, Derrick Burgess, David Hanks, Edward Myers, Robert Chavez.”

Village Trustee Enoch Benson did not sign the letter.

Towers enumerated several things that he said he’s done for Sauk Village including bringing in WinPak, getting funds for a basketball court, getting turkeys but he did not defend any of the charges made in the letter presented to him.

The Sauk Villager

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*Editorials are welcome 200 words or less subject to editorial review.
News, photos and stories may be shared with the Southland Voice Newspapers*

Financial Storm Coming?

Opinion Editorial

By Joseph Wiszowaty

In a little less than 3 years Lewis Towers has pulled the financial plug out of Sauk Village and has driven it to the point of insolvency. With his delay and do-nothing tactics, he has not resolved not a single problem Sauk Village has had when his administration started nor has he stemmed the floodgate of problems he himself has exacerbated!

This man along with the cast-offs he has rescued from other communities have brought nothing but chaos coupled with endless lawsuits to what the “major news media” refer to as this small country town. It has become glaringly apparent that Lewis Towers sole goal for Sauk Village was to take it over and liquidate its assets for lawyers, inflated salaries for “friends” and questionable “no bid” contracts which have become the “norm”.

The new Village Manager Henrietta Turner has had a baptism by fire coming into a political struggle between the forces of a mayor without the confidence of the board and a Village Board of Trustees which is in polar opposition to mayor Towers, which was not the case when Lewis Towers enjoyed a 5 to 1

working majority, but that’s another story.

The Village may be running out of money! As the property tax flow slows to a trickle and state income taxes trickle in, the Village will be facing a serious cash flow crunch let’s say June or July according to historical data. The financial picture as I see it is now compounded because Mayor Lewis Towers wants to pay his temporary appointed Police Chief Robert Fox, which despite a valiant effort the Village Board will be forced to pay the man for his work—by Court Order.

A look at the Village’s budget and the salaries and over-time that have been paid out of the Police Department’s budget thus far do not in any way indicate that there is “extra money” to play with to pay the Police Chief without deep cuts in the Police Department budget to fund Fox’s paycheck. Additionally, the legal fees and lawsuit filed by Mayor Lewis Towers against the Village now must be factored into this equation of budget cutting. The Village Board balanced the village budget in October with a \$15 surplus which is long gone.

The cash flow crunch will likely reach its peak in early summer, but is now compounded with an expected \$150,000 in

additional costs courtesy of Lewis Towers . The Village could be facing layoffs of personnel paid out of the General Fund but nobody in Village Hall is saying this, at least not yet.

The Sauk Village Police Department has been operating without a contract *since April, 2011* which means any pay raise is not factored into that equation. A mere 2% increase in pay would mean a retro-active payroll increase that could exponentially compound matters.

Fox promises savings in over-time, but that’s not likely and so far no savings has been realized while he’s been in command over the last 60 days.

Trustee Derrick Burgess said “you can’t balance a budget on ‘what if’s’” you have to balance a budget with CASH and Sauk Village has no more credit card or even a bond rating to go out and borrow the money so significant cuts can be expected this year. Hopefully we’ll see these sooner rather than later so they can extend that cash-flow crunch from June to say August.

Stay tuned, I assure you, this won’t be the end of this story!

POLL: BURGESS TOPS HANKS AND TOWERS

by Joseph Wiszowaty

SAUK VILLAGE | A poll conducted on our *Facebook* page from Friday, January 20th until Wednesday January 25th show that if the election were held today Lewis Towers would likely loose and lose big. The poll surveyed village residents and non-residents and the non-residents were filtered out of the poll results.

Village Trustees Derrick Burgess and David Hanks would beat out incumbent mayor Lewis Towers in a landslide defeat according to the poll results. A record 968 people had taken the poll, a number of individuals voted multiple times and those were filtered out through the software vendor.

652 individuals identified themselves as “village residents”. Burgess came out on top with 59% or 380, Hanks had 38% or 251 while Towers had a scant 21 or 3%. The poll while not scientific certainly provides some insight into the dynamics of what is likely to be a route of Towers. Village

Trustee Enoch Benson was also in the poll but received 0 and 0%.

Lewis Towers job approval rating numbers were abysmal. Only 2% of all surveyed said they share Towers’ values.

On the question of whether “Do you support Lewis Towers position that he should be able to make temporary appointments without the Village Board’s approval and that said appointments should be permanent?” Again, the results do not support the position of Towers 93.9% said “NO, he should respect and work with the Village Board of Trustees” 5.1% said yes and 1% were “unsure”.

As for Towers’ job approval rating, the results are not favorable 99% of those surveyed said NO they do not approve and 1% said they do approve. Among those who said they would vote for Towers only 28% said they approve of the job he’s doing. (Note— some percentages were rounded THANK YOU for your participation!)

Sauk Village Parks & Recreation

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
CLOSED	5:00PM-7:30PM Basketball 16 & under (Novice)	5:00PM-8:30PM <i>Family Fun</i>	5:00PM-7:30PM Basketball 16 & under (Novice)	5:00PM-6:30PM Basketball 16 & under (Novice)	5:00PM-7:30PM <i>Family Fun</i>	CLOSED
	7:40PM-9:30PM Basketball 17 & over (Experienced)		7:40PM-9:30PM Basketball 17 & over (Experienced)	6:30PM-8:30PM <i>Family Fun</i>	8:00PM-10:30PM Basketball 17 & over (Experienced)	

SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT THE SCHEDULE

****During Basketball, all Family Fun activities are still offered****

****During Family Fun, NO BASKETBALL IS OFFERED****

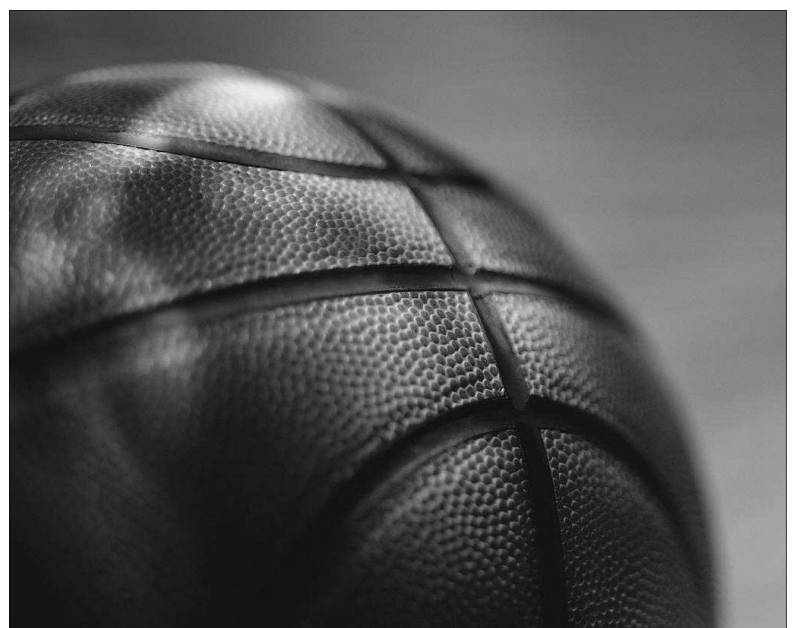


Family Fun is a time that people of all ages can come and join in the fun at the Community Center. This is a time for families to come together and enjoy some recreation time with your own family, as well as others in your community. The Community Center is not just for kids. In fact, we are very open to parent involvement and open to any new ideas. Currently we offer Board Games, Cards, Bean Bags, Ladders, Crafts, and more.

Registration for BOXING LESSONS started January 11th at the Community Center.
\$30.00 per month or \$75.00 for 3 months if paid in advance



Sauk Village Parks & Recreation announces **BASKETBALL** Registration begins on February 1st at the Community Center after 5pm



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Robert Chavez, Village Trustee
Chairman, Parks & Recreation Committee

