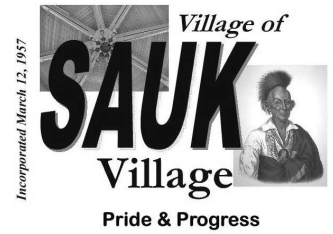


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THE SAUK VILLAGER

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30 2011

POLICE CHIEF POLITICAL PAWN?

By Joseph Wiszowaty

SAUK VILLAGE | When Lewis Towers appointed temporary Police Chief Robert Fox last week he did so without so much as a vote by the Village Board of Trustees.

The controversy over temporary Police Chief is not over, Fox will only be able to serve until January 21, 2012, that's because under the recently passed ordinance of the Village Board, the Mayor can only appoint "temporary appointees" to no more than two 30 days appointments.

Fox, will not likely garner enough votes to continue after January 21st and his re-appointment will not likely garner a second so his appointment will never be voted on.

Why has it come to this? In 2009, when Towers was first elected, then Police Chief Tom Lacheta remained



Sauk Village Mayor Lewis Towers gives a confused look at the November 22, 2011 Board meeting.

in the position, a hold over from the previous administration. Later that year, Lacheta retired, at that time Towers formed a "committee" to search for a police chief. Towers put Frank Martin's name into the mix

and he was appointed in January, 2010 by a 4 to 2 vote with Trustee Derrick Burgess and Rosie Williams voting no to that appointment.

Martin's command as police chief was the shortest in Sauk Village history, only 5 months. Martin was one of the primary sources of lawsuits filed by numerous police officers alleging, among other things, discriminatory actions. Martin was the first African-American police chief also serves as Alderman of Country Club Hills, Illinois. Martin was fired in May, 2010 "with cause" by the Village Board.

Holevis was pulled into the position as "interim Police Chief" and served there from June, 2010 until last week. Towers informed Holevis through the new Village Manager (Cont'd pg 7 see **CHIEF**)

TOWERS & D168: HIGHER TAX LEVY

BY Joseph Wiszowaty

SAUK VILLAGE | You may have noticed recently that your property taxes have gone up, well, hang on to your wallets again. School Board District 168 and the

Mayor Lewis Towers announced that they're both requesting higher tax levies for 2012. The School Board announced at its meeting that it will increase its tax levy by 4.9 percent to make up a \$1.8 million

dollar deficit it had in this years budget. The Village, on the other hand, is only increasing their levy a conservative 1.5 percent. Both bodies will approve the levies at their meetings in December after a 30 day public comment period.

HANKS TO SERVE ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Mayor Lewis Towers appointed Village Trustee David Hanks to the Human Relations Commission at the November 22nd meeting.



The vote was 5 to 1 with Enoch Benson voting no against the appointment.

Hanks voted to appoint Francine Anderson to the Zoning Board earlier this year, however, Benson gave no reason for his “no” vote.

Marva Pruitt, Chairperson for the Commission said she’s very please to have David Hanks as the newest member.

According to the Village’s website the Commission’s mission is to promote an open community with long term population diversity and integration. Also to stimulate the improvement of human relations among all persons, so as to provide all citizens with an equal opportunity to grow, participate in and share the best of their ability the economic, educational, political and social benefits of the village.



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Home Values Up

Home prices have increased in Sauk Village slightly in the third quarter of 2011, the second consecutive quarterly increase this year. After falling in 2009 and again in a “double dip” in the first quarter of 2011, prices have rebounded. This is likely attributed to the foreclosure process having played its way out.

Budget cuts in 2010 forced the Village Board to layoff the entire code enforcement department. With the lack of a code enforcement properties have deteriorated holding home values down and the Village has become an investment haven for investors.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Marva Pruitt, Chairman of the Beautification Committee of Sauk Village announced that her committee will begin a community garden project which will be located on the property of the Nancy L. McConathy Public Library on Jeffrey Avenue.



Details and plans have not been finalized but are under way according to Pruitt.

HOOK UP LICENSED REVOKED

By Joseph Wiszowaty
SAUK VILLAGER | The Village Board of Trustees voted unanimously to revoke the license for the Hook Up “effective immediately”. Kenneth Goff asked the Village Board to keep an open mind when deliberating the decision for his client Rusan Ramadan, owner of the

Hook Up who runs other stores in Harvey, Markham and Ford Heights. Village Prosecutor Dennis Gianopolus laid out the case against Ramadan and Sauk Village Police Detective Robert Grossman testified that stolen property was discovered following an incident

with a resident who discovered the Hook up had her stolen computer in a back room and they were willing to sell it. The resident notified police who began their investigation. Ramadan had no comment following the hearing as he left the Village Hall.

SAUK HISTORY—Our Mayors



Thomas Nichols
First Village President
1957-1965



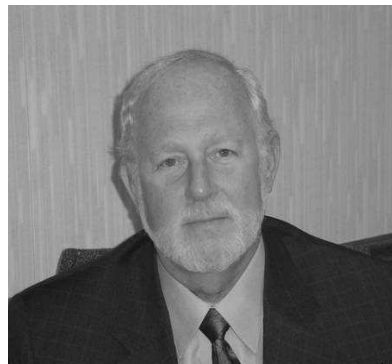
Roger Theisen
Trustee 1964-1965
Mayor— **1965-1977**



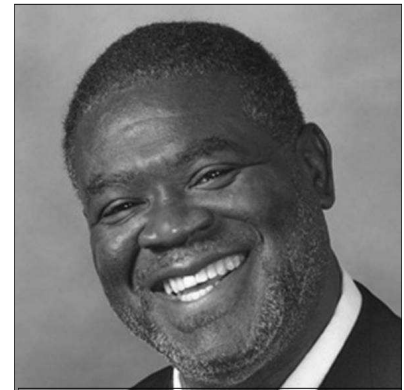
Edward W. Paesel
Trustee 1973-1977
Mayor— **1977-1989**



Mark J. Collins
Village Trustee 1987-1989
Mayor— 1989-1997



Roger Peckham
Village Treasurer 1987-1996
Village Trustee 1996-1997
Mayor— **1997-2008**



Lewis Towers
Mayor— **2009— present**
No previous elective office

Sauk Village has had only 6 mayors in its history, however the history of the village actually dates back to 1839 when the settlement of New Strassburg was founded.

Thomas Nichols became Sauk Village's first Mayor in 1957. In 1959, just two years after incorporation, the end of Sauk Village seemed inevitable and talks were under way to dissolve Sauk Village as a community. Nichols and the Village Board fought back and the commu-

nity remained and would soon become the fastest growing community in the State of Illinois. In February, 1959 Sauk Village would lead the area in home building permits.

In 1963, a record 5 of the 6 Village Trustee seats were up for election, 2 of which were unexpired terms. Matthew Murphy was the only Trustee who was not up for election. 5 new Village Trustees came to the Village Board in 1963, and a new Mayor would come to Sauk Village in 1965.

Roger Theisen who joined the Village Board one year earlier was elected Mayor. Under Theisen's administration, the Village experienced some of the fastest growth that has ever occurred in terms of residential growth in the Village's history.

Subdivisions such as St. James Estates, Bell Aire, Surreybrook and Indiana Hills all started to take shape.

(Con't pg 4—MAYOR)

MAYOR- (Cont'd from page 3) In 1973, Theisen was re-elected as the first full-time mayor and Sauk Village was experiencing unprecedented growth and was among the fastest growing communities in Cook County.

Theisen's final term in office saw significant residential growth and a battle with the Cook County Forest Preserve which was gobbling up land Sauk Village wanted for residential growth.

In 1977, the Theisen era came to an end. The tears had started to flow on election night before the final precinct reported in. Everyone knew it was the end of an era. Theisen's election night headquarters at the Personality Lounge (the now closed Tui's) was somber when the final precinct reported, Theisen had lost.

"I've been praying to God to do what he felt best. Apparently He has other things in mind for us" Ginger Theisen wife of Mayor Roger Theisen said.

"I'll always be proud of what I've done for Sauk Village. The election's over, we're all friends, let's look to the future again" Theisen said on election night.

Edward Paesel, defeated Theisen by just 96 votes. Theisen, moved shortly after the election and retired in Florida.

Paesel was 27 years old when he took office as the only other full-time Mayor. Paesel was a school teacher at St. Marks School in Sauk Village and served as principal.

There wasn't a long transition, only 1 week to get ready to take over and Paesel worked with Theisen after the election so he could hit the ground running. An instrumental part of the continuity Paesel credited was Village Administrator Ted Theodore.

Paesel brought a level of professionalism to the office that continued until he left office in 1989. Paesel worked to help expand Roadway and lured another trucking terminal to Sauk Village in 1988. Paesel's most aggressive economic

development was to bring a GM auto plant to property located in what is now the LogistiCenter west of Illinois 394. The auto plant would have brought hundreds of jobs to the area, however, the Saturn plant was built elsewhere.

In 1988, Paesel decided not to seek re-election and his thoughts turned to when he took office. "There was nobody here that could take over" Paesel said. Paesel's answer was to hire a professional Village Manager and make the Mayor's position part-time once again, a controversial issue of the day. Paesel



Former Mayor Edward Paesel (2nd from right) listens to Governor Patrick Quinn- (D- Illinois). Paesel is Executive Director of South Suburban Mayors and Managers remains active in the Region

cast the tie-breaking vote on the matter and after a national search Richard Dieterich was hired.

On May 9, 1989, Paesel passed the gavel to his handpicked successor Village Trustee Mark Collins who during his term had one of the biggest single annexations since Roger Theisen with the annexation of the area west of Illinois 394. Collins's administration made obligations and took on many risks to the Village for the LogistiCenter without a developer ready to move forward. Collins was also facing investigation for improprieties with the Community Development Block grant program, allegations which were later resolved.

Collins was soundly defeated for a third-term by his appointed Village Trustee Roger Peckham. During

Peckham's term in office the Village experienced more industrial growth and a national developer DP Partners was found to develop and market the LogistiCenter and the park began to take off prior to the national economic downturn. Peckham campaigned for mayor on a platform of wanting to "keep the residents here in the Village" a promise he was not able to keep.

Under Peckham's administration the Village saw the most significant housing construction since the 1960's 281 new housing permits were added under his

term in office.

Facing demographic changes in Sauk Village and some personal health issues, Peckham announced he would not seek that elusive 4th term that Roger Theisen failed to achieve in 1977. Peckham bowed out gracefully after the construction of a new multi-million dollar Municipal Center which has not been paid for from tax dollars but from impact fees generated from the Logisticenter.

This made way for Lewis Towers' victory in 2009 since Peckham didn't seek that elusive 4th term and Peckham endorsed no candidate for mayor. Towers' history hasn't been written yet, but it will be the good bad and ugly. Will history be kind to Lewis Towers? We'll see, stay tuned!

The Sauk Villager

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Editorials welcome 200 words or less subject to editorial review.

News, photos and stories may be shared with the Southland Voice Newspapers

Temporary Appointments

By Joseph Wiszowaty

SAUK VILLAGE | The Village Board of Trustees voted 5 to 1 to limit the mayor's temporary appointment powers to ensure that they are temporary and not permanent.



The Ordinance reads "All appointive officers of the village shall be appointed by the mayor, with the advice and consent of the corporate authorities. A mayoral nominee for appointment failing to receive a majority vote of all elected trustees may serve as a temporary appointment for a period of 30 days. At the expiration of this 30-day period, the Mayor may resubmit the same nominee for appointment. If the nominee again fails to receive a majority vote of all elected trustees, the nominee

will remain in his or her position for a second 30-day period. At the expiration of the second 30-day period, the Mayor must submit a new name for consideration by the corporate authorities. No temporary appointment of any one person shall be made more than twice in any one fiscal year"

The ordinance was vetoed by Mayor Lewis Towers, however, the veto is not likely to stand since the Village Board will likely override the veto which requires just 4 votes to over-ride the veto.

The action taken by the board will impact the Police Chief appointment of Robert Fox since the ordinance was passed and in force at the time of the appointment.

The Village Attorney advised the Village Board that the action taken was appropriate that at no time were any other municipalities ever challenged on the matter with respect to the ordinance.

ROBERT FOX *No Confidence*

Guest Editorial by Mike Brown

SAUK VILLAGE RESIDENT | I have never been one to hold my tongue. While I have learned lessons in life that ya have to know when to hold em and when to fold em, I have to comment on this one. Sorry. Reader discretion is advised.

Interim Police Chief Robert Fox, while seemingly a person of "assumed credibility", has shown that he is just another self-aggrandized politician who has no concern for the people of this town. How can he, knowing or at least being in the same room with residents and Board Members who have stated of the Village's inability to pay him unless there is a sacrifice of police officers to support his salary requests, still accept the job of Police Chief? I, being a police officer, could not shake his hand. To do so would be to turn my backs on my fellow brothers and sisters of the Sauk Village Police Department that I so whole-heartedly and dearly support. He, by taking this appointment, is, in so few words, saying that I won't back you on the streets if you are in trouble because I am willing to sacrifice one of YOUR OWN, fellow police officer, to support my cause.

Rest easy, INTERIM CHIEF Fox, for you, sir will never have my support. Amazingly, he is just a suit. He won't patrol, if he even knows what that means. How dare he take a position at the behest of other police officers' careers? He is, to me, no less dispicable than a cop killer. I find it quite ironic that the same people who showed their support for Robert Fox were from Dolton and praised his supposed "good works", yet could not give a reason as to why a person of stated "great character" could not still be the police chief in Dolton. If he was such a great asset to Dolton, what does that say about Dolton to have allowed such great talent to go to waste? SCENE!!! "All that is needed to good to triumph over evil is that good men (and women) stand by and do NOTHING." - Edmund Burke.

Who is Lewis Towers?

This is a second in a series of articles which will feature officials from Sauk Village. We continue the series with the "top dog or dawg" Mayor Lewis Towers.

By Joseph Wiszowaty



LEWIS TOWERS

Current Elected Office– Mayor
 Previous elective office– none
 Year first elected– 2009
 Term expires– 2013

Just who is Lewis Towers? Let's examine his record and his promises over the next few articles... Stay tuned to next week's edition to find out more about Lewis Towers....

Lewis Towers was born and raised in the south in Mississippi and when he was about 17 years old he worked to make some money picking cucumbers. Lewis would earn 5 cents for every cucumber he picked, regardless of size, some would be larger than others but that made no difference to the establishment who hired him.

Lewis decided in protest against the establishment, he would go on strike, after all why should he be paid less for getting larger cucumbers than for smaller ones?

Lewis would win his argument and got the extra 10 cents for the larger cucumbers. So what does this have to do with money or cucumbers? Well this tells a lot about the person and who Lewis Towers really is. Lewis has always had aimed high and big so the little things

“rest assured we will have an open and transparent government”

don't matter to him. The bigger battle, the bigger the win and bigger the price and that is what truly matter to Lewis.

So when the vote is 5 to 1 where is Mayor Lewis Towers? Well, recently he appointed Police Chief Robert Fox without even a vote of the Board of Trustees, he got his bigger cucumber without so much as a vote, a big win for Lewis Towers, no matter how long the person serves or who gets hurt in the process– including the taxpayers apparently.

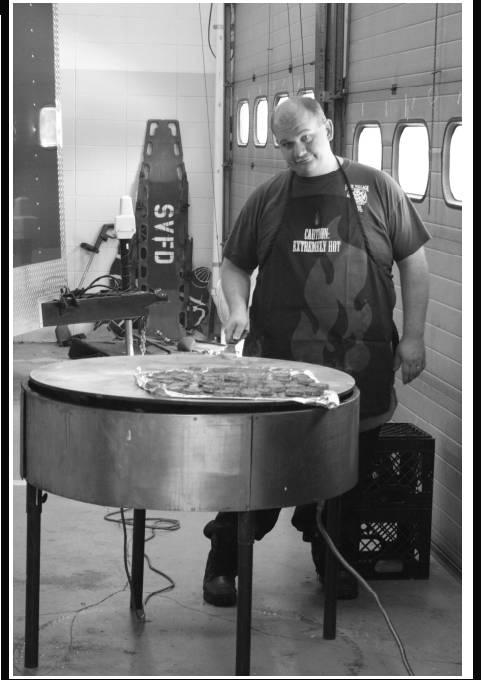
The story is true, this speaks a lot about the person of who Lewis Towers is and what kind of Mayor he has become.

One of the main objectives the Lewis Towers administration wanted to address after taking office was open government, ***“We're going to bring open and transparent government to Sauk Village. As mayor I will be accessible to the people to address their needs and concerns”*** Towers said in a prepared statement to *the Times* of Munster, Indiana on May 13, 2009.

Towers lack of a process by which he pick candidates for appointive office and lack of a transparent process by which residents would have input and potential appointees would have an open process do not seem to support his statement made.

Annual Pancake Breakfast with Santa at Fire Station.

The Sauk Village Fire Association is having a Pancake Breakfast with Santa on Sunday, December 4th from 8am to noon at the Leroy Hawkins Fire Station 1804 E. 222nd Street, Sauk Village. \$5.00 for Adults \$4 for children 11 and under and also for Senior Citizens 60 and over.



Towers has appointed a chief of staff and now a “temporary police chief” without any process other than the fact that these were his appointees that he wanted and he seemed to not be to concerned with the “process” as Village Trustee Derrick Burgess stated at a Village Board meeting.

Towers does not speak to the media and has not responded to emails requesting interviews which clearly is not consistent with what he said that he “will be accessible”.

Next week we'll examine other promises and commitments Towers had made...

CDBG HEARING ROAD WORK COMPLETE

By Joseph Wiszowaty
SAUK VILLAGE | The Village completed some much needed road repairs on Ross Crescent, Strassburg Avenue from Clyde Ave to 223rd Place and 215th Place according to Village Engineer Jim Czarnik. The work included replacing the road base and surfaces, some sidewalks and curb replacements were also done.

The repairs were part of the Village's Community Development Block Grant Program. "Once we have the final invoice, the county will release the remainder of the money for final payment" Czarnik said during the hearing.

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The Village was awarded \$270,000 of CDGB funds and used \$22,000 from the state motor fuel tax revenue to fund the repairs according to Czarnik. Czarnik stated that Robinson Engineering's expenses consisted of 5% of the project cost during the only question raised at the public hearing.

CHIEF (cont'd from pg 1) Henrietta Turner that he is to stand down as Chief a move Williams called "tacky".

Now enter Mr. Fox who served as Chief in Dolton, but not without controversy. Fox was named as a defendant by white police officers in a lawsuit alleging, among other things, discrimination.

Former Chicago 9th Ward Alderman Bobby Shaw serves as Inspector for the City of Dolton since his late brother William Shaw was mayor of Dolton. Mayor Towers's sister-in-law Gail Towers served on the Dolton Police and Fire Commission during the time Fox was taking the Sergeant's test. Gail Towers is alleged to

have added 20 points to Fox's test score. Fox allegedly received a 63 but with the 20 points he was the highest scorer on the test allegedly.

Now Sauk Village has gone from an "interim" Police Chief to a "temporary" Police Chief in the political game of semantics but still is without a permanent Chief of Police and has been so for 540 days or 1 year 5 months and 14 days for those of you who are actually counting.

"He (Fox) took on a position free of charge. And he knew he wasn't going to be paid" Trustee David Hanks said following the over 1 1/2 hour long closed session meeting Tuesday night.

"I'm not sure where the Mayor thinks he's going to get the money to pay for the position. He has not given us any ideas or made any suggestions to the Village Board on how he plans on paying this person" Trustee Derrick Burgess said.

"The mayor has advised that he has vetoed the ordinance limiting the temporary appointment ordinance the board passed last week" Trustee Rosie Williams said.

"There's no money to pay this man, there's nothing to negotiate" Williams said. Towers and Trustee Enoch Benson were not available following the closed session and were unable to give comment.

25 days until Christmas!

Village Approves 2011-12 Comp

By Joseph Wiszowaty
SAUK VILLAGE | The Village Board of Trustees approved the Compensation for all non-union employees on November 22nd by a vote of 5 to 1 with only Trustee Enoch Benson voting no. The following is public information and available at Village Hall. These are your tax dollars and some individuals who work for you.

All salary increases are retro-active to November 1, which is the beginning of the fiscal year.

Salary for part-time Mayor Lewis Towers- \$19,000

Salary for part-time Village Clerk Debbie Willians- \$16,000

Salary for part-time Treasurer Genorise Carmichael- \$6,000 per year

Village Trustees each \$125 per meeting actually attended about \$6,500 per year annualized-

Salary for Village Manager- Henrietta Turner \$90,000

Salary for Public Works Director- Kevin Weller \$77,885

Salary for Finance Director- Mohan Rao \$69,000

Salary for Director of Administrative Services- Sherry Jasinski \$63,634

Salary for Fire Chief- Al Stoffregen \$61,440 per year

Salary for Deputy Chief- Rich Atwood- \$60,570 per year

Salary for Telecommunication Supervisor- \$46,206 per year

Salary range for Administrative Clerks range from \$33,425 to \$44,574 per year plus over-time

Salary for Public Works Foreman- \$56,867 per year plus over-time

Salary range Public Works Field-worker- from \$38.480 to \$51,313 per year plus over-time

Telecommunication Operators, Police Officers and Police Sergeants are covered by collective bargaining agreements and are eligible for over-time.

All full-time employees are eligible for benefits including medical, dental, vision and life insurance.

Part-time/temporary positions Crossing Guards earn \$10.00 per hour; Fire Department Clerk \$10.50 per hour and Station Employee/Firefighter \$11.00 per hour.

Probationary Firefighters are paid from \$8.25 per call to as high as \$16.75 per call for Assistant Chief.

ESDA Coordinator Arthur Johnson "aka- ESDA MAN" earns \$8.50 per call plus \$75.00 per week

General ESDA personnel earn from \$6.50 to Assistant Coordinator \$8.00 per call.



Marva Pruitt, Chairperson of the Beautification Committee and her volunteers have helped throughout the year cutting grass, pulling weeds trying to make the Village look just a little nicer. Thank you to all those who have volunteered and done your part for Sauk Village



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