

Mayor, officials: Future bright with new consultant

Subdivision development, overcoming tragedy key among officials' narratives

By **ANDREW KING**
Shaw Media correspondent

GENOA – Joseph Misurelli cast a long shadow at the first Genoa State of the City meeting, since he died two days before last Christmas.

“Joe made time for everyone. He listened. He cared,” Mayor Mark Vicary said of the city’s long-serving late administrative consultant.

During the annual public luncheon at the Genoa City Hall on Tuesday, Vicary announced a new program that will honor Misurelli and his long commitment to Genoa, and provide an opportunity for Genoa residents to pay tribute to their own loved ones. The City of Genoa Tree of Honor Program will allow participants to purchase engraved golden leaves that will be displayed in the shape of a tree at Genoa City Hall.

A portion of the proceeds from the leaves purchased will be placed in the city’s tree fund to pay for the city to plant trees throughout the community.

Vicary described the time after



Genoa Mayor Mark Vicary gives a presentation on the city’s new Tree of Honor program at the annual State of the City luncheon.

Andrew King
for Shaw Media

Misurelli’s passing as a dark time for Genoa.

“The storm we weathered could easily have brought us down,” he said.

However, Vicary said, he was proud that, within two weeks of Misurelli’s death, the city had found a replacement in administrative consultant Bill Nanek, who was hired at the beginning of 2018. Nanek provided an overview of the city’s finances Tuesday afternoon, detailing the ways the annual \$7 million budget is divided up between 17 separate funds.

Police receive 51 percent of the budget,

with 17 percent going to streets and forestry, 13 percent devoted to garbage services, and 12 percent reserved for administration and finance.

“The city is doing a good job,” Nanek said. “I’m not finding there’s much, if anything, to trim.”

Next, Management Assistant Alyssa Seguss, presented the building projects that have come to Genoa in the past year or will be arriving in the next year. Most noteworthy, the Riverbend subdivision – which was abandoned, unfinished, roughly a decade ago, during the Great

Recession – will be getting a new lease on life.

Seguss said the city has been approached by a developer about finishing the so-called “zombie subdivision.”

“If completed,” Seguss said, “this development would increase the city’s population by 10 percent.”

For reference, the city’s population, as of 2017, was 5,220.

Public Works Director Rich Gentile and Police Chief Robert Smith gave brief updates before the meeting’s close. Gentile outlined the department’s recent spending, noting that the Public Works department had spent \$100,000 to build an equipment storage building where large equipment will be kept during the winter months. Smith outlined the Police Department’s recent hires, stating that one part-time officer had been bumped up to full-time, one auxiliary officer had been promoted to part-time and three new auxiliary officers had been hired.

The meeting closed with remarks from Vicary, who said the city was very pleased with the current state of things, especially considering how 2018 began.

“We’re simply beaming from ear-to-ear with the success we’ve had this year,” Vicary said, throwing a smiley face emoji up on the projector, “despite a rough start.”

DeKalb County Board chairman opposes DeKalb TIF agreement

By **KATIE FINLON**
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DeKALB – The DeKalb County Board chairman said he will recommend that the county does not recommend county approval for the proposed City of DeKalb tax increment financing district.

The DeKalb County Executive Committee will discuss whether it would recommend approval for an intergovernmental agreement about the TIF district during its meeting Wednesday night.

DeKalb County Board Chairman Mark Pietrowski Jr. said he also shared his anticipated recommendation regarding the proposed DeKalb TIF district agreement with DeKalb Mayor Jerry Smith as a courtesy.

“We believe that there’s more that needs to be talked about,” Pietrowski said.

The announcement came after DeKalb County officials abstained from voting on the agreement with the city during a meeting between city officials and taxing bodies, or the Joint Review Board, on Friday, citing a Nov. 21 County Board meeting that will give further direction on how to vote. Other



Mark Pietrowski Jr., DeKalb County board chairman, waits to make a point during a Oct. 24 DeKalb County Planning and Zoning Committee meeting.

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taxing body representatives from DeKalb School District 428 and Kishwaukee College also abstained from voting during the joint review board meeting.

Pietrowski said he will bring up reasons why at the Wednesday meeting and said more information on his rationale for the recommendation will be further discussed then.

He said more related information also will be coming from the State’s Attorney’s Office before the meeting Wednesday night.

The Daily Chronicle has not received any related materials as of 4:10 p.m. Tuesday.

DeKalb School District 428 officials previously raised concerns about administrative fees being incorrectly

charged on various TIF projects. The amount ranges anywhere from \$500,000 to \$800,000 a year over at least the past decade, District 428 Superintendent Jamie Craven had said.

Craven had said the district’s lawyer came across the information after reviewing annual TIF reports from the city over the past few months.

He had said administrative costs fit within the acceptable uses of TIF funds according to Illinois law, but school district officials had brought the information before the review board because they thought \$800,000 was excessive for the city to transfer to its general fund for only administrative costs.

The committee also is set to discuss intergovernmental agreements regarding the DeKalb Sycamore Area Transportation Study and the DeKalb County sheriff’s new radio communications system, according to the agenda. The recommendations for the three agreements would go before the county board next week.

The Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Five Season’s room at the DeKalb County Community Outreach Building, 2500 N. Annie Glidden Road.