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January 10, 2013

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Opt-in electric aggregation approved

Board okays new interior lighting upgrades, solar compacting units

ELMWOOD PARK – Homeowners and eligible small business owners in Elmwood Park will soon have an opportunity to take part in a voluntary opt-in program for electric aggregation under a resolution approved by the Elmwood Park Village Board. The village will work with the Illinois Community Choice Aggregation Network to conduct a competitive solicitation process to select an Alternative Retail Electric Supplier to serve electricity accounts at prices lower than those offered by Commonwealth Edison.

"This is an opportunity to help our residents and small businesses save money on their electric bills," Village President Pete Silvestri said. "This is completely voluntary. No one has to join, but we certainly encourage as many homeowners and small businesses to consider participating as possible."

The village will hold its first public meeting to inform residents about the program on January 17 at 6 p.m. at the Elmwood Park Village Hall Board room on the third floor. The meeting will give residents an opportunity to ask questions and offer suggestions on how the program should be structured. "People might want us to include a guaranteed rate that ensures paying less than utility prices throughout the term of the program; consider renewable "green" energy as an option for residents to choose; or ensure residents are not penalized if they leave the program at a later date," Silvestri explained.

Village Manager Paul Volpe said he hopes to recommend a provider to the board in early March, at which time a second public meeting would be held to further explain the program to residents.

Board members also approved acceptance of two state grants that will be used for interior lighting upgrades at all municipal buildings in Elmwood Park. Material and labor costs will total about \$70,000, all of which will be provided by grants from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation.

The board also gave approval to the purchase of eight solar powered waste and recycling stations as part of the new streetscaping in the Harlem and Grand Avenue area, which is undergoing a major redevelopment. One side of the station will accept and compact waste, while the other side will be reserved for recycling. Both sides are enclosed and hold five times the capacity of a traditional waste container. Because the garbage is compacted, fewer pickups will be required. The units will be paid for with funds from the local Tax Increment Financing District.