

Silvestri, Sutter bid farewell after combined 46 years of service

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Saviano inaugurated as new Village President

ELMWOOD PARK – Angelo "Skip" Saviano was sworn in as Elmwood Park Village President Monday while Gina Pesko took over as Village Clerk. Saviano replaces Pete Silvestri, who served as Village President for 24 years. Pesko replaces Elsie Sutter, who served 22 years.

“I want to express my gratitude to the people of Elmwood Park for their support,” Saviano said. “It is an honor and a privilege to serve you. I am looking forward to the future.”

The Village Board also welcomed two new board members, Angelo Lollino and Anthony Del Santo.

Saviano, addressing a large crowd at the Elmwood Park Parks and Recreation Center, outlined his agenda for the next four years. The first item on the agenda is public safety and maintaining the village’s status as a safe place to raise a family or to live on your own, and to grow old.

The new village president also wants to increase services for seniors. He said one of his first tasks will be to hire a senior advocate to be a liaison and an advocate for the village’s older residents. Saviano talked about the expansion of the parks over the years and declared his intention to continue to expand programs for youth.

Saviano went on to outline his aggressive plans for economic development and his desire to take the burden off residents by keeping a lid on property taxes and fees. The new village president noted that Elmwood Park was recently given a AA rating by Standard & Poor’s. “We’re a village that’s fiscally sound. S&P recently affirmed our ‘AA’ credit rating. That allows us to borrow at lower interest rates and that’s a savings to taxpayers.”

Saviano also said that he has already begun the pursuit of an underpass at the Grand Avenue grade crossing. Making Grand Avenue more accessible would play an important role not only to enhance public safety but would also to relieve traffic congestion and help spark additional economic development.

“It’s a question of both public safety and economics,” Saviano said. “People avoid the trains crossing Grand Avenue, and the businesses there suffer as a result.”

Saviano, a former State Representative in the Illinois General Assembly, has been helping to support legislation to create the Elmwood Park Railroad Relocation Authority, which would spearhead the underpass project.

“As a State Rep, I was involved in the creation of the underpass at Grand Avenue in Franklin Park. It took many years, but it greatly improved the lives of our citizens,” Saviano said. “We want to do the same here in Elmwood Park.”

Flood mitigation is also high on the list of Saviano’s priorities. The new Village Board voted in support of a \$1 million disaster recovery grant application that Saviano said will be used to help fund the village's flood mitigation project. The village broke ground on the flood mitigation project just last month.

The Village Board also expressed its support for the upcoming Mont Clare - Elmwood Park Chamber of Commerce Neighborhood Business Fair. Local merchants will be on hand at the Parks and Recreation Center to showcase their businesses and network with fellow business owners. The event will be this Saturday, May 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It is open to the public.

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