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PATRICK POWERS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carie Anne Ergo, Village Administrator

FROM: Deanne Curelo, Assistant to the Village Administrator

DATE: February 12, 2026

SUBJECT Approving the 2026 Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration Budget & Contribution Totaling \$258,000

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Motion to direct staff to proceed with planning for the 2026 Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration and allocate funding in the amount of \$258,000.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this memo is to present the scope and budget associated with a potential Fourth of July fireworks celebration.

BACKGROUND

For 27 years, the Village's Fourth of July fireworks celebration has been held with the assistance of Hamilton Lakes Partners and has grown into a long-standing family tradition. The event draws the largest attendance of any Village-sponsored event.

Over time, both attendance and development within the Hamilton Lakes Business Park have increased. As a result, the scale of the event has gradually exceeded what the business park and surrounding roadway network can reasonably support without additional resources. Changes to traffic patterns following the construction of I-390 further reduced the ease of entering and exiting the area, contributing to increased congestion during the fireworks event.

In 2024, attendance reached its highest level after fireworks celebrations in both Chicago and the Arlington Heights Racetrack were canceled. Although the Village did not promote the event beyond its normal outreach, media coverage directed additional visitors to the Itasca fireworks show. As a result, the 2024 fireworks event drew an estimated 15,000 to 18,000 attendees, with more than 5,200 vehicles parked throughout the Hamilton Lakes Business Park.

While no major public safety incidents were reported, the scale of attendance created significant operational and quality-of-life concerns. The Village received a record number of complaints from residents and neighborhood groups related to congestion and visitor behavior. Complaints included blocked private

driveways, picnicking on private lawns, urinating on private property, drunken and disorderly behavior, illegal fireworks on private property, and other neighborhood impacts.

Traffic congestion extended well beyond the event area, resulting in hour-plus backups on adjacent highways and local roads. Emergency response was also affected, as police were unable to move quickly within and around the event area. During peak congestion, 18 calls for service went unanswered. Representatives from Elk Grove Village and the Illinois State Police contacted Village officials to express concerns related to traffic control, vehicles stopped or abandoned on roadways, trespassing, blocked access drives, and vehicles attempting to park along I-390 to view the fireworks.

Following the 2024 event, staff began discussions regarding whether the fireworks celebration could continue without a substantial increase in scope and cost to address traffic management and public safety concerns. Those discussions were later paused when the Village was notified of major construction along Arlington Heights Road that would further restrict traffic flow through potential lane closures. Given the likelihood that these conditions would worsen already severe congestion, the Village made the decision to cancel the fireworks event in 2025.

DISCUSSION

At the direction of the Village Board, staff evaluated whether the Fourth of July fireworks celebration could return in 2026, a milestone year marking the nation's 250-year anniversary. That evaluation resulted in proposed operational changes intended to address traffic congestion and reduce attendance. Even with these measures, planning must assume attendance levels comparable to 2024.

Under these conditions, the event cannot operate under the scope used in prior years. Expanded operations, staffing, and infrastructure would be required to manage crowd size, traffic congestion, public safety, and neighborhood impacts. Hamilton Partners has prepared a proposed budget that reflects the resources necessary should the Village decide to move forward.

Proposed changes include:

- **Portable Restrooms:** The number of portable restrooms has increased from 65 to 120 to better accommodate increased attendance.
- **Fencing:** Fencing will be added in new areas of the event footprint to improve crowd control and safety. Existing fencing around food and beverage vendors will be converted from soft fencing to hard fencing. In 2024, soft fencing was repeatedly moved or removed by patrons, allowing access into restricted areas behind vendors where generators, cords, and equipment posed safety risks.
- **Barricades:** Barricade quantities have increased, with heavier duty barricades planned for use both within the event footprint and in surrounding neighborhoods to better manage traffic and parking.

- **Entertainment:** Live music hours have expanded. In prior years, music was provided from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The proposed plan includes live music from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., to encourage earlier arrival and reduce peak congestion immediately before the fireworks.
- **Lighting and Power:** Additional light towers and remotely controlled specialty light balloons are included to improve visibility in food vendor areas and other high-traffic locations. Additional generators are required to support this expanded lighting.
- **Staffing Costs:** Overtime costs have increased over a two-year period due to collective bargaining agreements.
- **Event Management Support:** Consulting support for traffic, parking, and on site operations, including site surveys, coordination with Village staff and Police personnel, development of the traffic and parking budget and parking plan, review of traffic control schedules, support for day of event operations, traffic and parking communications, and identification of opportunities related to parking, VIP experiences, bar operations, and food and beverage packages.
- **Credit Card Payment Processing:** The budget includes rental of point-of-service devices to allow credit card payments. Prior events accepted cash only. Adding credit card capability is expected to improve efficiency, reduce lines, and support prepaid parking and vendor transactions.
- **Parking Operations and Prepayment:** The proposed plan includes encouraging prepaid parking through discounted early bird pricing. Offering advance purchase options is intended to reduce on-site transactions, speed vehicle entry, and shift arrival times earlier in the evening.
- **Park Entry Points:** Park Boulevard will remain open until a designated time prior to the fireworks, allowing an additional entry point into the park.
- **Vehicle Volume Reduction:** The number of vehicles permitted within the park will be reduced from approximately 5,200 vehicles in 2024 to approximately 3,500 vehicles. This reduction would be implemented through prepaid parking requirements and expanded advance communications intended to limit day of vehicle entry.
- **Traffic Control Support:** The Police Department will continue to utilize outside agencies to assist with traffic control. Hamilton Partners has assisted in coordinating support from Rosemont officers, with a target of securing approximately 30 outside officers. Final staffing numbers will be confirmed closer to the event.
- **Fireworks Display:** The proposed plan includes limiting fireworks shell size to a maximum of five inches to better align the scale of the display with the event footprint.

FISCAL IMPACT

For 2026, the total cost of a Fourth of July fireworks celebration is anticipated to be approximately \$441,900, with the Village's out-of-pocket share estimated at approximately \$258,000. This total includes:

- The Village’s sponsorship contribution of \$142,400; and
- Approximately \$28,000 in kind services for Police and Public Works staffing; and
- Approximately \$76,700 for fencing, barricades, and traffic control security; and
- Approximately \$6,500 for event consult contract; and
- Approximately \$4,000 for miscellaneous event-related expenses.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends this item be forwarded to the February 17th Village Board meeting for discussion. If approved, a final budget will be prepared and presented by Rick Staback at the March 3rd Village Board meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit A – 2026 Budget

AFTER ACTION STEPS

- Submit the approved budget option to Finance for inclusion in the upcoming FY 26/27 Budget.
- Work with Hamilton Partners to coordinate event management meetings and promotions.

Village of Itasca / Hamilton Lakes Fourth of July Budgets					
TOTAL EVENT OPERATIONS	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	Variance	2026 Budget	24 Act. vs 26 Bud.
Sponsorship	\$ 119,576	\$ 119,576	\$ -	\$ 142,376	\$ (22,800)
Fees from Vendors	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,190	\$ 190	\$ 10,500	\$ (1,310)
Parking Fees \$35 per car / Pre pay parking	\$ 67,000	\$ 117,635	\$ 50,635	\$ 114,750	\$ 2,885
Police, Fire, Public Works, signage, fencing, barricades	\$ 69,554	\$ 69,554	\$ -	\$ 115,200	\$ (45,646)
Hamilton Partners coordinated sponsorship	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,500	\$ 500	\$ 25,000	\$ (500)
Reserve	\$ 11,573			\$ 34,164	\$ (34,164)
TOTAL	\$ 300,703	\$ 340,455	\$ 51,325	\$ 441,990	\$ (101,535)
ADVERTISING & PROMOTION - EXPENSES					
Public Relations / Daily Herald Ad/ Web Page	\$ 3,800	\$ 5,600	\$ (1,800)	\$ 6,500	\$ (900)
TOTAL	\$ 3,800	\$ 5,600	\$ (1,800)	\$ 6,500	\$ (900)
FOOD/BEVERAGE CONCESSIONS -EXPENSES					
Tents/Lighting	\$ 5,200	\$ 7,903	\$ (2,703)	\$ 9,500	\$ (1,597)
TOTAL	\$ 5,200	\$ 7,903	\$ (2,703)	\$ 9,500	\$ (1,597)
SITE EQUIPMENT & SERVICES - EXPENSES					
Ambulance Cart	\$ 775	\$ 398	\$ 377	\$ 450	\$ (52)
Drivers Golf Cart	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,340	\$ 160	\$ 2,750	\$ (410)
Altorfer (22)	\$ 9,500	\$ 7,881	\$ 1,619	\$ 8,750	\$ (869)
Portalets/Sinks	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,715	\$ (215)	\$ 9,950	\$ (4,235)
French Barricades/Bicycle racks	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,880	\$ (880)	\$ 2,100	\$ (220)
TOTAL	\$ 19,275	\$ 18,214	\$ 1,061	\$ 24,000	\$ (5,786)
LABOR - EXPENSES					
Private Security	\$ 5,500	\$ 7,364	\$ (1,864)	\$ 6,500	\$ 864
Parking Attendants/Cashiers/Auditor	\$ 13,500	\$ 19,198	\$ (5,698)	\$ 38,380	\$ (19,183)
DUFF POS Device Rentals			\$ -	\$ 5,050	\$ (5,050)
Itasca PD	\$ 15,561	\$ 15,561	\$ -	\$ 17,500	\$ (1,939)
Traffic Control - Contract Security	\$ 16,136	\$ 17,355	\$ (1,219)	\$ 19,200	\$ (1,845)
Public Works Services - labor	\$ 9,319	\$ 9,319	\$ -	\$ 10,500	\$ (1,181)
Fencing	\$ 5,118	\$ 6,911	\$ (1,793)	\$ 12,500	\$ (5,589)
Barricades, Traffice Control, Message Boards	\$ 22,092	\$ 21,850	\$ 242	\$ 45,000	\$ (23,150)
DUFF Consulting Contract	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,500	\$ (6,500)
Misc Expenses	\$ 1,329	\$ 3,100	\$ (1,771)	\$ 4,000	\$ (900.00)
TOTAL	\$ 88,554	\$ 100,657	\$ (12,103)	\$ 165,130	\$ (64,473)
STAGING & ENTERTAINMENT - EXPENSES					
Sound, Stage, forklift	\$ 39,000	\$ 39,000	\$ -	\$ 40,500	\$ (1,500)
Live Music	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,500	\$ (500)	\$ 21,500	\$ (11,000)
Generators (for stage, sound, vendors	\$ 7,800	\$ 9,437	\$ (1,637)	\$ 11,000	\$ (1,563)
Light Towers	\$ 3,500	\$ 4,707	\$ (1,207)	\$ 6,000	\$ (1,293)
Labor/Electrical	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -	\$ 5,500	\$ (500)
Generators (for delay towers and light balloons)	\$ 850	\$ 368	\$ 482	\$ 2,000	\$ (1,632)
TOTAL	\$ 66,150	\$ 69,012	\$ (2,862)	\$ 86,500	\$ (17,488)
MISCELLANEOUS - EXPENSES					
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 750				\$ -
Itasca Fire Protection - Ambulance	\$ 1,500				\$ -
Fireworks Display	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000	\$ -	\$ 120,000	\$ (10,000)
Lifts		\$ 3,561	\$ (3,561)	\$ -	\$ 3,561
Special Lighting Balloons		\$ 1,184	\$ (1,184)	\$ 6,550	\$ (5,366)
Contingency	\$ 5,000		\$ (7,621)	\$ 15,000	\$ (15,000)
Backstage drinks/ice/band		\$ 125		\$ 250	\$ (125)
Parking Passes (paper)/laminare for badges/lanyards	\$ 200	\$ 199		\$ 210	\$ (11)
Face Painting/Balloons		\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000	\$ -
Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 275	\$ 170		\$ 350	\$ (180)
Professional Services - Jenkins		\$ 2,512		\$ 1,500	\$ 1,012
Parking Tickets		\$ 726		\$ -	\$ 726
Band food buyout		\$ 600		\$ 1,500	\$ (900)
Equipment rental-forklift for stage/sound		\$ 2,076		\$ -	\$ 2,076
Site Signage - rules/scrim		\$ 1,581		\$ -	\$ 1,581
TOTAL	\$ 117,250	\$ 127,735	\$ (12,365)	\$ 150,360	\$ (22,625)
	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	Variance	2026 Budget	24 Act. vs 26 Bud.
Total Income	\$ 300,704	\$ 340,455	\$ 39,751	\$ 441,990	\$ (101,535)
Total Expenses	\$ 300,704	\$ 329,120	\$ 28,416	\$ 441,990	\$ (112,870)

RESOLUTION NO. 1694-26

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2026 FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS BUDGET
AS PRESENTED BY HAMILTON PARTNERS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$441,900**

WHEREAS, the Village of Itasca has partnered with Hamilton Partners for more than 27 years to host a Fourth of July fireworks celebration at the Hamilton Lakes Business Park, which has grown into the largest Village sponsored event; and

WHEREAS, increased attendance, expanded development within the Hamilton Lakes Business Park, and changes to regional traffic patterns have significantly impacted event operations, traffic management, public safety, and neighborhood conditions in recent years; and

WHEREAS, Hamilton Partners has prepared a proposed scope and budget reflecting the expanded operations, staffing, infrastructure, and event management support required to safely conduct a Fourth of July fireworks celebration in 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Village Board has reviewed the proposed scope and budget framework for the 2026 Fourth of July fireworks celebration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Village President and the Board of Trustees of the Village of Itasca, DuPage County, Illinois, as follows:

SECTION ONE: The Village of Itasca hereby approves the budget proposal submitted by Hamilton Partners for the 2026 Fourth of July fireworks celebration in the total amount of \$441,900, including a Village out of pocket cost of approximately \$258,000, consisting of a \$142,400 cash sponsorship and approximately \$115,200 for staffing, traffic control, fencing, event management support, and other event related expenses

SECTION TWO: The Village President, or his designee, is hereby authorized to sign any necessary documents relating to the Village's participation and expenditure of funds in the 2026 Fourth of July festivities at Hamilton Lakes Business Park.

SECTION THREE: SEVERABILITY. If any section, paragraph, or provision of this Resolution shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity or unenforceability of such section, paragraph, or provision shall not affect any of the remaining provisions of this Resolution.

SECTION FOUR: REPEAL OF PRIOR RESOLUTIONS. All prior Resolutions and Ordinances in conflict or inconsistent herewith are hereby expressly repealed only to the extent of such conflict or inconsistency.

SECTION FIVE: EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall be in effect immediately following its passage, approval, and publication in pamphlet form.

	Trustee Aiani	Trustee Christensen	Trustee Daly	Trustee Gavanis	Trustee Leahy	Trustee Powers	Mayor Pruyn
Aye	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Nay	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Absent	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Abstain	<input type="checkbox"/>						

APPROVED and ADOPTED by the Village President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Itasca this 3rd day of March, 2026.

APPROVED:

Village President Jeffery J. Pruyn

ATTEST:

Village Clerk Jody Conidi