



VILLAGE OF PINCKNEY

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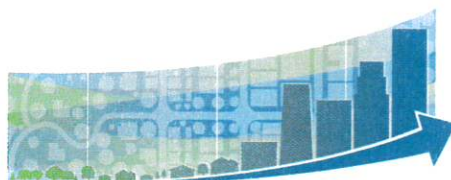
With the upcoming retirement of a full-time Department of Public Works employee, I am recommending that the Village proceed with filling the resulting vacancy with a full-time DPW Operator.

This position is not an expansion of DPW staffing. It is the replacement of an existing full-time employee and has already been accounted for within the Department's approved annual budget.

Earlier this year, the Department's seasonal part-time assistance was eliminated as a cost-saving measure. The duties previously performed by that employee did not disappear and have instead been absorbed by the remaining DPW staff. Allowing the upcoming full-time vacancy to remain unfilled would represent an additional staffing reduction while the Village continues to require the same essential services.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for substantially more than routine maintenance. As outlined in the proposed DPW Operator job description, responsibilities include:

- Operation, inspection, maintenance, and repair of the municipal water distribution system
- Water meter installation and replacement
- Underground utility locating
- Water main and service-line repairs
- Water quality sampling, testing, and operational recordkeeping
- Sanitary sewer and lift station inspection, maintenance, and repair
- Sewer cleaning, televising, backups, and emergency response
- Regulatory compliance and reporting
- Street, sidewalk, sign, right-of-way, pavement, and drainage maintenance
- Parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities, and cemetery maintenance
- Snow and ice removal from streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and municipal properties
- Operation and maintenance of trucks, tractors, backhoes, mowers, snowplows, and other equipment
- Building, facility, tool, and inventory maintenance
- Construction and infrastructure projects
- Community events and citizen service requests
- Emergency response involving storms, flooding, water and sewer emergencies, and other infrastructure failures



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Many of these responsibilities are time-sensitive and cannot simply be postponed because staffing is unavailable.

The workload/time-study program presented was specifically designed to evaluate DPW workload over an extended period.

The study outline recommends a minimum study period of six months, with 12 months preferred, specifically because DPW operations vary significantly throughout the year. A meaningful evaluation must capture seasonal conditions including winter snow and ice operations, summer maintenance, community events, construction activity, weather-related emergencies, infrastructure repairs, and other workload fluctuations.

Approximately two months of data does not represent a full operational year and should not be treated as sufficient evidence that the Village can permanently eliminate a full-time DPW position.

The study itself calls for evaluating factors including:

- Routine maintenance and emergency labor requirements
- Streets, utilities, parks, snow removal, and facilities
- Seasonal versus year-round labor requirements
- Emergency callouts
- Specialized certifications
- Single-point knowledge dependency
- Aging workforce considerations
- Emergency-response capability
- Future staffing and equipment needs

Those factors should be evaluated over the intended study period before conclusions regarding long-term staffing reductions are made.

Reducing staffing does not reduce the Village's infrastructure or its responsibility to maintain it.



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The Village will continue to have the same:

- Water and sewer systems
- Streets and sidewalks
- Parks and cemetery
- Municipal properties and facilities
- Vehicles and equipment
- Snow and ice responsibilities
- Regulatory requirements
- Emergency calls
- Resident service expectations

When staffing is reduced, that work must either be absorbed by fewer employees, delayed, performed through overtime, or contracted to an outside provider.

Therefore, the savings associated with leaving a position vacant should not be evaluated based solely upon the employee's wages and benefits. The Village must also consider potential increases in overtime, outside contracting, deferred maintenance, equipment and infrastructure deterioration, emergency-response delays, and the operational consequences of having too few qualified employees available.

Municipal public works operations require sufficient staffing to continue functioning.

Water, sewer, snow removal, and emergency infrastructure responsibilities cannot be suspended because of short staffing.

Maintaining adequate staffing also reduces the Village's dependence upon one individual possessing specialized knowledge, experience, or certification necessary to perform a particular function.

This is especially important in a small department where the loss or absence of even one employee represents a significant percentage of the available workforce.

One of the greatest risks associated with understaffing public works is that necessary but less visible maintenance is postponed while employees address immediate priorities.

That may create the appearance of short-term savings, but deferred maintenance frequently results in higher costs later.





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Preventative maintenance on streets, utilities, equipment, drainage systems, parks, buildings, and other infrastructure protects the Village's existing investment. Having adequate personnel allows the Department to address problems proactively rather than operating primarily in a reactive or emergency capacity.

As DPW Director, I am responsible for overseeing the Village's public infrastructure, assigning departmental workload, responding to emergencies, maintaining required services, and identifying the staffing and resources necessary for the Department to perform those responsibilities safely and effectively.

Based upon the Department's current responsibilities, the elimination of seasonal part-time assistance, the upcoming retirement of an existing full-time employee, and the year-round service obligations of the Village, my professional recommendation is that the Village maintain the existing full-time staffing level and authorize the replacement of a DPW Operator position.

The position has already been incorporated into the departmental budget. Filling it maintains the existing staffing structure rather than expanding it.

I respect Council's responsibility to oversee Village finances and evaluate expenditures. Likewise, staffing recommendations are part of my responsibility as the department head charged with the daily operation of Public Works.

If Council ultimately chooses not to replace the retiring employee, I recommend that the decision also include a discussion regarding which services, maintenance activities, response expectations, and projects Council is prepared to reduce or defer, because the Department cannot reasonably be expected to continually absorb staffing reductions while maintaining an unchanged level of service.

With respect,

Public Works Director
Dustin Moma

