

September 5, 2014

What a spectacular summer! After such a brutal winter, we certainly deserved some respite from Mother Nature and she could not have been more kind.

This summer at Village Hall was quite a busy one. We have been collaborating with Cameron Engineering for over 20 months on the design of our new pool facility. Cameron Engineering & Assoc. is a recognized leader in aquatic recreation facility design. Throughout the design process Cameron's design team proactively assessed our needs; attended and attentively listened to our residents at the many public information sessions and incorporated these ideas into their final design. We are very pleased with the plans which were put out for bids due in July. Bids were received and the difference among the four lowest bidders was less than 8%. The winning bid was submitted by Phillip Ross Industries who was awarded the project on August 5th.

Phillip Ross Industries, established in 1984, is recognized as one of the leaders in the public works construction industry. They have completed many pool projects, most recently a pool upgrade for the Village of Garden City. They are capable of handling multimillion dollar projects. Construction began even before the pool officially closed. We have a very aggressive construction schedule and Phillip Ross Industries' management team exudes the greatest confidence in meeting our target dates. With good design, plans and specifications, efficient construction management, planning, onsite supervision and a responsive payment schedule; we are optimistic that our opening day will be met. Of course, prayer for a mild winter wouldn't hurt either!

I mentioned payment schedule - that has been the acute focus of our Village Administrator Gerry Bambrick, as our fiscal condition would be analyzed and rated by Moody's before the sale of municipal bonds. On August 21, 2014, Moody's improved VFP's already strong credit rating of "Aa3" rating and assigned an improved credit rating of "**Aa3:Outlook Positive**". Moody's fiscal summary included the following, "The positive outlook reflects an established trend of structurally balanced operations and ongoing improvement in the village's financial position". Moody's also noted the Village's "Strong Financial Operations" stating that "Floral Park's financial operations are expected to improve and remain strong given conservative budgeting of expenditures." and noted that "Management has been able to contain expenditures through position attrition and general efficiencies." Given this analysis and positive outlook, VFP's bonds were sold at a very favorable interest rate of 2.799%.

This past Labor Day, at 5:00 pm, Pool Director Tom Dillon announced, for the last time, that the pool was closed. He then asked all in attendance to stand along the edge of the pool for one final jump into the water. The entire perimeter of the pool was lined with people, three and four deep in places. I stood on the diving board and said, "Fifty-one years of fun – a lifetime of memories." I counted down and we all jumped in! There were some tears as it was a bittersweet moment for many, myself included. I was there on opening day in 1963, learned to swim, swim team practices, locker baskets, got my pool pass revoked (it wasn't my fault, really Mom), the rite of passage of diving from the three meter board, rode the pool bus, so many memories. Later, as a parent, it was the pool again. We enjoyed the kiddie pool, family nights,

movies, dances, friends and fellowship over the decades.

Serving as Fire Commissioner, together with the FPFDD Picnic Committee, we moved the FPFDD Family Picnic from Lido Beach to the FP Pool, its location ever since. Great fun, great locale and great participation has been shared by the department among its members and families. Bit of trivia, I am a proud winner of the famed belly flop contest, a highlight of the FPFDD picnic and I still have the bruises to prove that! So many memories..!

But it is not just the concrete and water that makes our pool great, it is the people, the vitality of our community; our families who have supported and laughed and splashed for over 51 years. I know with our new pool, that will never change and Floral Park will be even greater - let's go for the century mark!