

2006 Winnetka Caucus Survey

Village of Winnetka

LEASH LAW

Current law requires that all dogs be controlled with a leash on Park District properties, with the exception of the dog beach at Centennial Park. Otherwise, dogs must be "under the owner's control" (but not necessarily leashed) while on all Village public and private property, including the owner's.

- Park District property includes: Parks, playgrounds, ice rinks, playing fields, tennis courts, golf courses and beaches.
 - Public property includes: the Village Green, all streets not marked as "private," alleys, sidewalks, parkways, parking lots and other public thoroughfares.
1. Do you favor an ordinance that would require dogs to be kept on a leash **at all times** while on public property other than the dog beach?
 Yes No (please go to #3) Unsure (please go to #3)
 2. If "yes," do you also favor an ordinance that requires that **no dog be left unattended**, even if leashed, while on public property?
 Yes No Unsure
 3. Do you own a dog? Yes No

WILDLIFE CONTROL

Recently, many residents have experienced incidents with wildlife that they consider destructive (defined as causing bodily injury, loss of a pet or destruction of property).

4. How many destructive incidents involving wildlife have you personally experienced within the past 12 months?
 0 (please go to #7) 1 2 3 4 or more
5. Please indicate the animal(s) involved in these destructive incidents:
 Coyote Deer Raccoon Bird Dog
 Feral (stray) cat Rodent (e.g., squirrel, chipmunk)
 Other: _____
6. If you had one or more destructive incidents, whom did you contact? Please check all that apply:
 Police Department Fire Dept. Village Hall
 Public Works Dept. Pet Store Animal Shelter
 Other: _____ No one
7. Between June '05 and July '06, the Winnetka Police Department received approximately 354 calls classified as "stray dogs" and "animal complaints." While some surrounding communities employ animal control officers to deal with these calls, Winnetka does not. Instead, the Police Department draws from the Community Service and Patrol Officer squads as needed. The Department's procedures include:

- Working within the state and federal guidelines, contacting a licensed trapping service to trap and dispose of aggressive and/or dangerous animals when appropriate
- Lending traps, assisting residents with nuisance animals and removing dead animals when appropriate
- Asking residents to call "911" to report problem animals

Are you satisfied with this policy? Yes (please go to #9) No

8. If you answered "no" above, please indicate, bearing in mind the additional cost, which **one** option you would prefer:

- Establish a hotline to gather incidence data (i.e. animals and neighborhoods involved) to more accurately assess the situation.
 - Explore the **possibility** of sharing an adjacent community's animal control officer.
 - Explore the **possibility** of designating a full-time or part-time animal control officer within the Village Police Department.
 - Other: _____
 - Need more information
- Comments: _____

POST OFFICE PROPERTY

Winnetka's Post Office is located on a Village-owned two-acre site bounded by Elm, Chestnut and Oak Streets and Dwyer Park. In December 2004, the Village Council established the Ad Hoc Post Office Committee to study what to do with the property when the Post Office lease expires in 2009. The Committee meets on the first Monday of each month, and will submit its final recommendations to the Village Council at the end of 2006.

9. What is your level of awareness of the Committee and/or its progress? Please check all that apply. I have...

- attended one or more meetings of the Ad Hoc Post Office Committee.
- read one or more Committee reports.
- read about the Committee in the *Winnetka Talk*.
- read about the Committee in the *Winnetka Report*.
- read about the Committee on the Village website.
- Other: _____
- no awareness of this Committee.

10. The objective of the Committee is to transform the West Elm Business District into "a magnet attracting people day and evening on a year-round basis -- a gathering place for our families and friends." Do you agree with this statement of objective?

- Yes, I agree. The Village Council should adopt this as the objective.
- No. Please explain: _____

FIRE CODE

Winnetka requires that "automatic fire extinguishing systems" (i.e., sprinklers) be installed in all commercial and 2-or-more-unit residential buildings.

In recent years, the use of PVC rather than traditional copper piping has significantly reduced the cost of sprinkler systems to approximately 1% of the cost of construction. Believing that sprinklers save property, many major insurers offer a 5%-15% premium reduction for homes that include them. Believing that sprinklers save lives, the 2006 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101 Life Safety Code advocates that **all** single-family homes include them.

Although Winnetka has not yet adopted -- nor is it required to adopt -- the 2006 NFPA Code, the Fire Department would like direction from residents.

- 11. Please choose **all** that you support: The Village should...
 - require sprinklers in all **new single-family residential construction**.
 - require sprinklers in all **renovations** of at least 50% of an existing residence and **additions** adding at least 50% to the size of the existing residence.
 - require that homeowners **retrofit** their existing residences **in their entirety whenever there are renovations or additions ≥50%**.
 - maintain the present policy.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

At this time, Winnetka does not have an official Property Maintenance Code to specify what responsibilities homeowners have to maintain their properties in accordance with community norms. Instead, the Village relies on the goodwill of residents. The Village's Public Nuisance Code requires that both homeowners and private construction contractors maintain their properties in a way that is neither bothersome nor dangerous and prohibits those "buildings" that are so "dilapidated or out of repair" that they are "dangerous, unsafe, unsanitary or otherwise unfit for human use."

- 12. Do you believe the Village Code should address less egregious instances of property neglect?
 - Yes (please answer #13) No (please go to #14)
 - 13. If you answered "yes," what other signs of neglect do you believe the Code should address?
 - Decaying fencing or porches Peeling paint
 - Broken windows or shutters Other: _____
 - 14. Are you currently experiencing a problem caused by the neglected property of a neighbor? Yes No
- Comments: _____

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE VILLAGE

- 15. Many communities have installed a virtual "Suggestion Box" on their website's homepage. Would you like this feature added to the Village website, www.villageofwinnetka.org? Yes No

Winnetka Park District

MAPLE STREET BEACH HOUSE

The Maple Street Beach House provides facilities for beach goers and for individuals who rent the beach house for parties. In 2005, the beach house was rented 36 times between April and October; in 2006, as of August 22, it had been rented 24 times. However, the beach house is in poor condition.

The Winnetka Park District is evaluating various repairs and improvements, and the possibility of making the beach house handicapped-accessible. Alternatively, the Park District could completely renovate the beach house, or demolish it and build a new facility as it did at Elder Lane beach in 2004. The Park District has no cost estimates yet for these options.

16. How should the Park District proceed? Please choose **one**:
- Make **necessary repairs and improvements** and study the costs and feasibility of making the beach house **handicapped-accessible**.
 - Study the costs and feasibility of **completely renovating** the beach house.
 - Study the costs and feasibility of demolishing the beach house and **building a new facility**.
 - Demolish** the beach house **AND do not build** a new facility.
 - Other: _____

PARK DISTRICT LAND

In 1965, the Nielsen family donated the monies to build the Tennis Center. The 1972 Ice Arena was funded through a bond issue. When asked, many residents donated their bonds, which resulted in 70% of the Ice Arena's construction costs being paid for with private funds.

The Park District owns approximately 1.8 useable acres southwest of the Winnetka Ice Arena (the 5th hole of the Par 3 golf course is currently on this land, but it can be shifted westward within Park District property).

17. If the Park District could fund a facility primarily through **private donations**, should it evaluate building a facility on this property?
- Yes (please answer #18) No Not sure
- Need more information, such as: _____
18. If you answered "yes" above, which facility would you like the Park District to evaluate? Please choose **one**:
- A second indoor ice skating rink
 - An outdoor swimming pool
 - An indoor recreation center with an indoor swimming pool
 - Other: _____

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Winnetka Park District hosts a number of special events throughout the year, such as the 4th of July parade and festivities, Memorial Day parade and commemoration, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Hayride, Winter Carnival, Water Carnival, Movies in the Park, Concerts at the Beach, Oktoberfest and Touch A Truck.

19. How should the Park District measure the success of its special events? Please choose **all** that you support:

- Attendance/Participation
- Community tradition
- Variety of events offered
- Other: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The Park District owns 22 neighborhood parks in Winnetka. Some of these parks have extremely low utilization.

20. What action should the Park District consider for these parks? Please choose **one**:

- Continue to maintain low-utilization parks.
- Endeavor to increase the utilization of these parks through enhancements such as landscaping or playground equipment.
- Sell or swap the land comprising some underutilized parks and use the proceeds for other parks and Park District projects.
- Other: _____

Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District

The Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District has been focusing its energies this year on the recommendations gathered from the 2005 Caucus survey. In response to one recommendation, to improve awareness of the libraries' many services, the District has engaged the services of a professional public relations expert. In response to another recommendation -- to improve the atmosphere at the main library in Winnetka -- the library has installed better lighting and footstools in the "quiet room."

Significant new and improved services include: 1,500 downloadable audiobooks available for patrons with MP3 players and similar devices other than iPods; and 44 databases, accessible 24/7 on the Library website by entering one's library card number.

21. Please offer suggestions for improvements or comments below:

School District 36

FAMILIARITY WITH DISTRICT 36

22. Do you *currently* have any children or grandchildren in Winnetka District 36 (K-8) schools?

___ Yes (please answer #23) ___ No (please answer #24)

23. If you answered "yes," please check all schools in which you have a child or grandchild enrolled:

___Crow Island ___Greeley ___Hubbard Woods ___Skokie ___Washburne

24. If you answered "no," have you ever had a child or grandchild in a District 36 school? ___Yes ___No

MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

This year, the Caucus Council is seeking resident opinion about two specific schools, Skokie and Washburne.

25. If you currently have a child attending **Skokie School** or **Washburne** or had a child attend in the past **3 years**, please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of the school experience:

1 = Very dissatisfied; **2** = Somewhat dissatisfied; **3** = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; **4** = Somewhat satisfied; **5** = Very satisfied

	<u>At Skokie</u>					<u>At Washburne</u>				
Facilities (classrooms, common areas) and outdoor space	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Instructional staff and curricular instruction	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Administrative staff and services	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
All-school events and special programs (e.g., benefit, holiday & spring sings, go-to-school night)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Communication about student progress at parent-teacher conferences, written reports to parents, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Before- and after-school programs (chess, music, sports, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
School "culture" or atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Staff responsiveness to parent inquiries, complaints, concerns	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Transition from elementary to Skokie	1	2	3	4	5	-----				
Transition from Washburne to high school	-----	1	2	3	4	5				

26. If you rated any item in the previous question a 1 or 2, please explain:

TUTORING

27. Have you hired a tutor for any of your children in the past five years?
 Yes No (please go to #32)
28. If you answered "yes," for what subjects? Please choose **all** that apply:
 Math Science Reading English Social Studies
 Foreign Language Computers General study skills
 Other: _____
29. Which school did your child(ren) attend during the tutoring? Please choose **all** that apply:
 Crow Island Greeley Hubbard Woods Skokie Washburne
30. In what grades did your child(ren) receive tutoring? Please choose **all** that apply:
 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
31. What were the reasons for seeking the assistance of a tutor? Please choose **all** that apply:
 To maintain skills over the summer
 My child's educational needs were not being met by the curriculum
 My child's educational needs were not being met by a teacher
 To provide fun and educational enrichment for my child
 To pursue an individual interest of my child
 To compensate for learning difficulties
 To follow a teacher's recommendation for my child
 Other: _____

QUALITY ASSESSMENT TOOLS

32. Beyond standardized test scores, what types of information (gathered at taxpayer expense) would you find most helpful in assessing the quality of education in District 36 (K-8) Schools?

1 = Not at all helpful; **2** = Minimally helpful; **3**= Moderately helpful;
4 = Very helpful; **5** = Extremely helpful

Annual staff surveys	1	2	3	4	5
Staff exit surveys	1	2	3	4	5
Annual end-of-year parent surveys	1	2	3	4	5
Current student surveys	1	2	3	4	5
Recent graduate surveys	1	2	3	4	5
Community-wide surveys	1	2	3	4	5

33. Please offer any comments or suggestions concerning quality assessment below:

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Since tax caps were imposed, the District 36 School Board has balanced its budget by presenting cyclical referenda to the voters. Residents approved two operating rate referenda, in 2000 and 2003, and a 2000 bond referendum for capital improvements to facilities. Due to better-than-expected fiscal performance, the School Board does not anticipate another operating referendum until after 2008.

Deferred Life Safety and Other Capital Improvements

The School Board has identified \$12.1 million in capital improvement projects for all five schools. Included in this figure are \$9.6 million in State-mandated "life safety" projects, such as fire doors and alarm systems, which must be completed within the next ten years. The \$12.1 million also reflects the cost to update ventilation systems, plumbing, bathrooms and lighting fixtures, and to repair and replace windows and roofs. The District currently spends \$500,000 annually on Life Safety projects. The scope of the capital projects reflects: (1) the 74-year average age of the schools (the national average is 42 years); and (2) the District's deferral of capital expenditures due to tax caps and residents' consistently expressed desire for fiscal restraint.

Over the next two months, the School Board will hold community meetings to consider what portion, if any, of these life safety/capital improvements it will seek to finance in a 2007 referendum along with the facilities expansion discussed below.

A. Why Might the District Propose Expansion?

The District is studying expansion plans for Greeley (K-4) and Washburne (7-8) schools. Expansion will enable the District to maintain class size in light of projected increases in enrollment; to ensure that safe building use levels are not exceeded; to provide adequate space for curricular programming; to reflect changes in classroom support services, and, at Greeley, to accommodate more children remaining at school for lunch.

B. What Might Expansion Entail?

The School Board has not yet made a final decision to proceed with a facilities expansion referendum, much less a determination about the *scope* of any such expansion.

However, the expansion plans that the District is currently studying for Greeley include new classrooms and cafeteria space. For Washburne, they include additional classrooms (specifically for science, foreign language, music and kinetic wellness); new bathrooms; and additional space for technology, extracurricular and multipurpose uses. The Washburne plan may also include a reconfigured entry and office space, and enhanced student flow between the two wings of the building.

C. What Might Expansion Cost?

The District's preliminary cost estimates have not been formally presented to the Board. The preliminary estimates developed thus far range from \$4.8 - \$12.1 million for Greeley and \$19.0 - \$22.5 million for Washburne, or a total range of \$23.8 to \$34.6 million.

D. What's Next?

The District plans to finalize its capital improvement program by the end of October, and a referendum could be presented to the voters as early as April

2007. It also plans to hold a series of meetings this fall at which residents can learn more about the facility plans and voice their opinions. Details of these meetings will be posted on the District website (www.winnetka36.org).

34. Please choose **one** of the following options for addressing facilities needs at Washburne and Greeley:

- Make do with existing facilities.
- Use temporary on-site facilities (e.g., trailers).
- Expand facilities to maintain class size and safe building use **ONLY**.
- Expand facilities to maintain class size, safe building use **AND** provide adequate space for curricular programming, current educational practices and changes in classroom support services.
- Don't know/unsure/no opinion

Comments: _____

Caucus

TOWN MEETING

The Caucus Council would like as much participation as possible at its Winter Town Meeting, which, because of election laws, must be held in December or early January. At the meeting, the community discusses and then votes on the platforms and candidate slates presented by the Caucus Council. In addition to publicizing the meeting in flyers and in the *Winnetka Talk*, the Caucus Council mails notice of the meeting to all Winnetka households.

35. What would encourage your attendance at the meeting? Check all that apply:

- Better notice
- Holding the meeting on a Sunday afternoon
- Providing childcare
- Other: _____

Comments or other suggestions: _____

CAUCUS SURVEY

In conjunction with the debut of the electronic survey, the Caucus Council is permitting up to two heads of household to complete the 2007 survey. (See front cover for instructions on requesting an additional copy.)

36. Assuming comparable costs for the options below, what future policy would you favor? Please choose **one**:

- Permit all Caucus members (residents of voting age) to complete the survey.
- Permit up to two heads of household to complete the survey.
- Allow no more than one survey per household.
- Substitute statistical sampling for the written and electronic surveys.
- Don't know/need more info, such as: _____

TERM LIMITS

The Caucus Council nominates candidates for the Village Council and the Library, Park and School Boards. Although it has been the custom of the Caucus Council not to nominate a candidate for more than two consecutive terms, its bylaws do not expressly or implicitly limit the number of terms for which a candidate can be nominated.

- 37. Should the Caucus amend its bylaws to expressly provide that it cannot nominate or slate a candidate for more than two consecutive terms?
 Yes No

Demographics

- 38. How many **years** have you been a resident of Winnetka? Please check **one**:
 0-2 3-5 6-9 10-15 16-25 >25
- 39. How many **persons** in each age range reside in your household? Please indicate number(s):
 0-4 5-9 10-13 14-17 18-24 25-34
 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75 or older
- 40. Do you own or rent your home? Own Rent
- 41. What is your gender? Male Female
- 42. Would you like to receive your 2007 survey electronically? Yes No
If yes, please provide your e-mail address:
_____@_____

Nominations

- 43. The Caucus Council is seeking nominees for Village President, Village Council and the Library, Park District and School Boards. Please suggest candidates below.
All nominees will be contacted, and all interested residents, interviewed.

Name	Phone Number	Board
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete the 2006 Caucus Survey!
The deadline to return the survey is September 30, 2006. Please see front cover for: instructions on returning the survey by mail or to courtesy drop boxes; and information on requesting a second survey for an additional head of household.