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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Veterans Comprise 12% of Village Workforce: Bring Leadership, Teambuilding Skills**

WILMETTE, IL. (November 9, 2018) – The Village of Wilmette recently reviewed the numbers and found that 25 Village employees are veterans representing the Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy. Veterans are employed in full- and part-time positions providing civilian service in the police, fire, water management, village administration, community development and engineering and public works departments. The wide range of departments employing veterans is a testament to the diverse skill sets veterans bring to any workplace.

Transitioning from active duty to civil service offers a variety of opportunities for veterans. Some choose to pursue new career paths. Others combine a new professional challenge with on-the-job training or going back to school. For veterans who experienced deployments, the work-life balance found from a more predictable work schedule allows our veterans to spend more time for family, travel, hobbies and volunteering. The Village's Deputy Police Chief, Pat Collins served in the Marines. His enthusiasm for Special Olympics has caught on within the police department resulting in many officers now volunteering for and participating in the Torch Run, Plane Pull and Polar Plunge.

When some career military veterans transition to civilian work, a challenge some face is preparing a job application. Assistant to the Village Manager and Police Chief, Alex Cease, an Army veteran, suggests that veterans seeking civilian employment think about their skills in a creative way. Leading a platoon is not a direct equivalent to working on a small team in a village department but military service offers unprecedented opportunities to develop leadership, confidence and management techniques. Ms. Cease advises veterans to identify these "soft" skills on a resume or in a cover letter. Employers are looking for talented candidates and the ability to remain calm in a crisis, maintain detailed records or build camaraderie transfer to any job.

Firefighter Guillermo Bonilla is a veteran of the Army who was stationed at Fort Pork, LA, and in Kissingen, Germany. He served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry division completing tours in Kosovo, Bosnia and Iraq. After all that travel, Mr. Bonilla offers this advice to veterans seeking employment in the area, "Don't pass up Wilmette. It is a small community and can be easy to miss." He goes on to say that working for the Village is like an extension of family and offers strong professional support.

One way the Village offers professional support is encouraging veterans who work in dual roles as a civilian employee and in the Reserves or National Guard. Police Officer Jeffrey Bell is active in the Illinois National Guard. He loves both jobs and finds synergy between skills required for both professional commitments. During weekend training, service during special

events or time of war, the Village recognizes that its employees are honing strengths that will benefit the local community as a result of the service.

“The Village extends its gratitude to all the women and men who have served in the Armed Forces,” said Village Manager Tim Frenzer. “We are honored that many of our local veterans have chosen to live and work in Wilmette.”

Mr. Frenzer encourages everyone to join American Legion Wilmette Post 46 and the Wilmette police and fire departments in honoring veterans on Sunday, November 11 at 11 a.m. at Veterans Park across from the Wilmette Theater. Police department volunteers will provide the honorary rifle guard for this ceremony.

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Wilmette Police Honor Guard at Veteran's Day Ceremony