

D233 board selects Clinton Alexander next H-F principal

BY MARILYN THOMAS
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Clinton Alexander will be the next principal of Homewood-Flossmoor High School.

The District 233 school board voted unanimously in a special session Friday, Dec. 17, to approve Alexander's hiring. He will be part of the new administrative team at H-F when superintendent-elect Scott Wakeley assumes the superintendent's position. Both Alexander and Wakeley will start their new positions July 1.

Alexander was selected after a search conducted by BWP & Associates educational consulting firm. He comes to H-F from neighboring Hillcrest High School where he's been principal since 2020.

After the board vote, Alexander told the Chronicle he applied for the H-F principal spot "because of the symbol of excellence that it's always exuded." He believes H-F "resonates with my style and my vision



Clinton Alexander

of education, so I connect with kindred spirits. I've always admired Homewood-Flossmoor from afar and now it's finally time to solidify the relationship and make it official and become a Viking."

Wakeley said: "From our initial meeting it was evident that Clinton was a leader who exhibits an excitement and passion for working with students, staff and parents. He recognizes the importance of developing and supporting teachers in order to foster the very best for every student."

Alexander received a bachelor's

degree in English from Eastern Illinois University. He attended on a football scholarship. He received a second bachelor's degree in English from Governors State University and a master's degree in education and principal licensure from Concordia University. He is pursuing his doctorate degree in educational leadership at National Louis University.

He started his career at Bloom Township High School teaching English. He next was a teacher at Proviso East High School. During his time there, he received the Illinois State Board of Education's Those Who Excel Award for his contributions to data-driven instruction.

Alexander next was named associate principal for curriculum and instruction at Rich East High School, and then associate principal of operations at Rich South High School. He was selected principal at Hillcrest High in July 2020.

The Hazel Crest resident has a son who graduated from H-F in 2011.

The principal's position opened up in June 2021 when Jerry Anderson resigned to take the principal's job at Bloom Township High School. James Mitchem is currently serving as principal on a one-year contract.

Terms of Alexander's contract are being negotiated and will be finalized at the District 233 school board meeting Jan. 18.

As schools across the country continue to deal with the consequences of the pandemic, there have been concerns raised about lagging student achievement and social/emotional well-being. Alexander said he recognizes there are challenges to the principal's position.

"I feel that it's work always to be done," he said, but added that H-F is "in a unique situation because we have such a strong sense of community and we have a legacy that we're standing on ... I believe we're in a good situation but we are prepared to make the necessary adjustments to stay on top."

Haney new village manager as Marino leaves after 22 years

BY ERIC CRUMP
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Homewood Village Manager Jim Marino, one of the Homewood's top administrators for more than two decades, left the village to become city administrator for Crest Hill.

On Dec. 18, Assistant Village Manager Napoleon Haney stepped into the village manager's position.

Haney had been Homewood's assistant village manager from 2017 until Oct. 1, when he took the job of village manager in Olympia Fields. He returned to his Homewood position Dec. 1.

When Haney left his job, he vowed that he would remain connected to Homewood, where he and his family live, and he continued to attend village board meetings and stop by the weekly Meet the Mayor sessions on Saturday mornings in village hall.

When Mayor Richard Hofeld learned of Marino's resignation, he got approval from the village board to hire Haney as the new village manager.

Haney has extensive experience in lo-

cal government management. He has a bachelor's degree in political science and government from Norfolk State University and a master's degree in public administration from Bowling Green State University.

He is a Marine Corps veteran who has served in village government in various management capacities in Matteson, Orland Park, Robbins and Reno, Nevada.

Haney said he admired Marino's leadership style, especially his calm demeanor.

"He was never rattled, never shaken. He's a good leader," he said.

He said the main challenges he will face as village manager are similar to what many communities face all the time, economic conditions, unfunded mandates and recruiting the best people to serve as staff.

As for strengths he brings to the job, Haney said he believes he is good at managing people and has the ability to "see the big picture."

"That's the same as most managers," he said. "That's what we're trained to do."



Napoleon Haney

For the most part, he indicated he aims to continue the course the village is on.

"Most of the heavy lifting has already been done in Homewood," he said.

Marino joined the Homewood staff in August 1999 as assistant village manager. In 2012, he was promoted to village manager.

"It has been a great honor and privilege to serve such a highly regarded community for nearly 23 years," Marino said. "Homewood is an extraordinary community that I will dearly miss."

He thanked the village board for its support and the staff for its hard work.

"I want to recognize the immense contribution, support and dedicated work of the village staff," he said. "This incredible team of employees works un-

selfishly and diligently every day to improve the quality of life for residents and support our businesses."

He believes he is leaving the village in a good position, with a number of projects under way or soon to begin that will make a difference for the community.

"I wish the community the very best as it continues to grow and prosper," he said.

Mayor Richard Hofeld said that in addition to managing the staff and daily operations of village government, Marino's biggest strength was his ability to analyze the financial aspects of big projects.

Marino has been involved in a number of significant initiatives over the years, most recently the current move to shift the village's water source from Chicago/Harvey to Hammond/Chicago Heights and the ongoing major renovation of the train station. He also helped guide the project to redevelop the site of the former Triumph Building downtown.

"He's done a wonderful job and we wish him well in his new position," Hofeld said.



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