

The Village of Hazel Crest's new village manager is James L. Whigham Sr., a former U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Illinois. The board appointed Whigham at its August 16 board meeting. He replaces Robert Palmer, who retired in June.

Whigham brings to Hazel Crest a wealth of administrative and executive experience. In addition to his years as Cook County's chief of staff for the late John H. Stroger, he is a former deputy superintendent of the Chicago Police Department. Whigham was also an executive member of the city's 911 governing board. After retiring from the city, he was appointed by former President Bill Clinton as the first African American U.S. Marshal for the Northern District of Illinois and served in that capacity during the 9-11 attacks. Whigham holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Chicago State University. He is a graduate of Northwestern University's Public Safety Institute and a graduate of the Executive Strategic Management Program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

"I relish and welcome the opportunity to be your servant," Whigham told the more than 100 residents attending the meeting. "I believe in partnerships. I will let my results and not my words determine any future assessment of what I am doing. I will always give you 150 percent of what I know."

A native of Chicago, Whigham was raised in the East Garfield Park neighborhood on the city's West Side. He received a Catholic school education and graduated from Quigley Seminary. He served two years as an enlisted soldier during the Vietnam era and left with an honorable discharge.

He is the father of three adult children: James Jr., a Chicago police officer; Summer Lenora, a juvenile detention counselor at Cook County's juvenile detention center, and Jonathan Otis, a banker with Bank of America Corporation.

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