

COMMENTARY

OUR OPINION

Alderman, staff doing great job

After the wonderful job they did last week hosting a COVID-19 vaccination clinic, 19th Ward Ald. Matt O'Shea and his staff are to be commended.

The event, co-sponsored by Jewel-Osco, was held at Mt. Greenwood Park on March 23, and it was smooth sailing from start to finish.

O'Shea promoted the free event through multiple emails and social media, which directed vaccine seekers to sign up at eventbrite.com.

For those who have jumped through hoops in filling out forms only to find no available appointments, this first step was a masterpiece. The user needed only to meet the criteria of the clinic to get to the sign-up form, which clearly showed available slots.

A steady stream of people showed up at their appointed times, and although the line went out the door, an efficient team of volunteers kept it moving. All in all, the whole process took about 35 minutes from beginning to end for a slot at 3:30 p.m., including the 15-minute wait time after the inoculation.

With 1,530 people receiving jabs in just six hours, the volunteers still managed to keep everyone socially distanced. All in all, the effort was impressive.

The clinic was just the latest event that the alderman has managed to successfully accomplish in recent weeks. On March 18, O'Shea's office hosted a food drive for the Maple Morgan Park Food Pantry—collecting \$59,000 and 21,000 pounds of food—and on March 21, he hosted the seventh annual Get Behind the Vest Pancake Breakfast, which raises money to offset the cost of replacing worn-out protective vests for Chicago Police Department officers through a program conducted by the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation.

On top of those jobs well done, O'Shea's office has consistently been responsive to ward residents in taking care of the less exciting details of public service such as replacing old garbage cans, filling potholes and replacing streetlights.

The 19th Ward office also sponsors numerous community events such as blood drives, seminars and public meetings.

Chicago politics will always be aggravating, but the 19th Ward is blessed to have an alderman with a team that gets things done. O'Shea, 51, and his staff are running the ward like a well-oiled machine.

Lately, it's apparent that the businesses and residents who call the 19th Ward home are fortunate to have O'Shea, a lifelong resident who's also a husband and father of three, working the long hours to do a great job.