

New options if you get fine in Lombard

Village adds extra hearings to expedite process

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Lombard police don't want an inconvenient court date to slow or stop drivers from paying parking fines.

Beginning as early as next spring, drivers ticketed for parking violations in Lombard can come to village hall and have their cases heard on a Saturday or on one weeknight each month.

Village trustees have endorsed the creation of a new adjudication system in Lombard for ordinance tickets that include standing and parking violations.

Motorists' cases would be heard by an administrative adjudicator, an attorney hired by the village.

The new procedure doesn't take away the rights of ticketed motorists to have their cases heard in traffic court if they choose. And motorists who don't want to challenge a ticket will still have the option of simply paying the fine without appearing in court or in front of the local adjudicator.

Parking ticket fines in Lombard start at \$25 for certain violations but can go up to \$250 for failure to pay. A ticket for parking in a handicapped spot illegally is \$250 off the bat.

There are two main reasons behind beginning a new system.

"We want to address a situation where people simply ignore these tickets or they have to take a day off to go to court," Police Chief Raymond Byrne said.

Having an adjudication program would mean the village would also collect more ticket revenue, Byrne said. And there's a cost-saving element for the village and its taxpayers.

Village Manager Bill Lichter said in-house ticket processing means the village wouldn't have to pay overtime for officers to appear in traffic court.

The department has a target date of May to start an adjudication process, but that could change, Byrne said.