Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers	05/05/2020	7:00 PM

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting is being conducted remotely. Public comment will be taken electronically. To submit a comment, please click on the "Submit Public Comment" link on the Current Week's Meeting page of the Village website any time before or during the meeting. Thank you.

1. Call to Order

Mayor Barnett said the Village continues to do its part to facilitate the Governor's stay at home order and to be mindful of social distancing. He announced that the majority of the Council team is participating by conference call including Commissioners Hosé, Earl, Walus, Sadowski-Fugitt, Kulovany and Gray, and Village Clerk Megan Miles. Present in the Committee Room in Village Hall are Mayor Barnett, Village Manager Dave Fieldman, Deputy Village Manager Michael Baker, and Village Attorney Enza Petrarca. The meeting was held in the Committee Room in an effort to improve the audio quality for those listening and participating. Public input was solicited prior to the meeting via a variety of sources. That information will be placed into the public record of this meeting. The Mayor said that every attempt will be made to respond to comments made at the end of the meeting in the comments section, but noted that in some cases a reply may take longer.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mayor Barnett led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Roll Call

Council Attendance (Present): Commissioner Hosé, Commissioner Earl, Commissioner Walus, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Gray, Mayor Barnett

Absent: None

MOT 2020-8553 — A. Motion: Conduct the April 21, 2020, Village Council meeting electronically.

Motion: Commissioner Hosé moved to conduct the meeting electronically. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

Votes: Yea: Commissioners Hosé, Earl, Gray, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, Walus; Mayor Barnett

Nay: None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried.

3. Proclamations

A. Police Week – Mayor Barnett proclaimed the week of May 10-16, 2020, as Police Week in the Village of Downers Grove.

B. Historic Preservation Month – Mayor Barnett proclaimed the month of May 2020, as Historic Preservation Month in Downers Grove.

4. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2020-8557 — A. Minutes: Council Minutes – April 21, 2020

Motion: Commissioner Hosé moved to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

Votes: Yea: Commissioners Hosé, Earl, Gray, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, Walus; Mayor Barnett

Nay: None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried.

5. Consent Agenda

COR 2020-8554 — A. Claims Ordinance: No. 6359, Payroll, April 10, 2020

BIL 2020-8556 — B. Bills Payable: No. 6522, May 5, 2020

Motion: Commissioner Hosé moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

Votes: Yea: Commissioners Hosé, Earl, Gray, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, Walus; Mayor Barnett

Nay: None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried.

6. Active Agenda

ORD 2020-8519 — A. Ordinance: Provide for an Amendment to Ordinance #5720 and the Village of Downers Grove Budget for Fiscal Year 2019

Summary: This adopts certain amendments to the 2019 budget.

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR AN AMENDMENT TO ORDINANCE #5720 AND THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

ORDINANCE NO. 5814

Motion: Commissioner Hosé, moved to adopt "An Ordinance Providing for an Amendment to Ordinance #5720 and the Village of Downers Grove Budget for Fiscal Year 2019," as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

Votes: Yea: Commissioners Hosé, Earl, Gray, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, Walus; Mayor Barnett

Nay: None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried.

7. First Reading

MOT 2020-8544 — A. Motion: Approve a Building Permit Fee Waiver in the Amount of $21,795.00 for a New Downers Grove Township Building at 4341 Saratoga Avenue

Village Manager Dave Fieldman said the Township will be constructing a new building to house a food pantry operations and other services. The Village supports this project and will be providing financial assistance from the Ogden Avenue Tax Increment Financing District. The Township has requested a waiver of building permit fees. The Village policy on fee waivers identifies fees that can be waived and those which cannot be waived. The policy further states that the fees for townships should not be waived except under extraordinary circumstances. Village staff and the Township have worked together and identified extraordinary circumstances which are noted in the agenda materials for this item. Staff recommends waiving $21,795.00 of the total of $44,960.00 in building permit fees. Mr. Fieldman said Township Supervisor Mark Thoman is on the phone to answer any questions.

Mark Thoman, Downers Grove Township Supervisor, said this have been a very productive process.

Commissioner Earl expressed her thanks to the Township for rapidly working to fill a need with this pantry.

Commissioner Gray commended the Village and the Township for their work. This is needed now and will be needed well into the future.

Commissioner Kulovany said this is a great example of intergovernmental cooperation. He said the pantry is very important.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she appreciates the Village and the Township working together. Food pantries and other services are very essential especially now. We appreciate the Township filling that gap.

Commissioner Walus said she echoes everyone's sentiments.

Mr. Thoman said there is another Meals on Wheels frozen food pack pick up program again this week. Signup is this week and pick up is next Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Please call the Township office for more information.

Mayor Barnett thanked Mr. Thoman for the information and for being available this evening.

ORD 2020-8559 — B. Ordinance: Repeal Ordinance No. 5785 and Amend the Rates Charged for Water

Mr. Fieldman said this and the next item address fees and licenses in response to the current economic conditions. This item would keep the current water rates in effect instead of increasing rates in July as previously approved by the Council.

ORD 2020-8558 — C. Ordinance: Provide for Emergency Orders Regarding Liquor and Massage Licensing and Temporary Use Permit Provisions

Mr. Fieldman said this ordinance would do three things: It would extend liquor licenses scheduled to expire June 30 to August 1. It would extend current massage licenses scheduled to expire on June 30 to August 1. It would also prorate fees for operating restaurant outdoor cafes based on the date the Governor allows such operations to begin.

These are offered as a courtesy and convenience to our valued businesses.

Commissioner Hosé thanked staff for bringing this forward. Given all of the current conditions, this is the right thing to do and he looks forward to supporting this next week.

Commissioner Earl said she also supports this. She thanked staff for looking to see where we can help people.

Commissioner Gray said this is a great example of the Village being proactive and lessening the burden on residents when it is so needed.

Commissioner Kulovany echoed the sentiments of his colleagues. This is a tough time for the Village government and residents.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt thanked staff for their excellent work.

Commissioner Walus thanked staff. She said this lessens some of the financial challenges on our residents and our businesses.

Mayor Barnett said he supports this and he appreciates looking for opportunities to be helpful. He also reminded everyone that the Village is going to find itself in real challenging times. Each opportunity we take to try to be helpful is an opportunity that chips away at our ability to extend the period of time with which we are able to continue to provide the services everybody expects. It is a tough balance and a tough environment. This is an unscripted and uncharted territory balancing act that we know is likely to end in a pretty tough spot.

8. Manager's Report

Mr. Fieldman provided more financial information in a pre-recorded presentation.

Mr. Fieldman said he has an update to the COVID-19 Pandemic Financial Response Plan. The COVID-19 Pandemic is significantly negatively impacting the national, regional and local economy. According, many Village revenue sources will be negatively impacted. At the same time, expenses related to responding to the pandemic are projected to increase.

Our goal is to be a sustainable and resilient Village government. Our objectives are to continue to provide essential services during this crisis, throughout 2020 and into the future. We also need to be financially prepared to respond to a future emergency or disaster. These goals and objectives are consistent with the Village's strategic goal of being a "Steward of Financial Sustainability."

Additional objectives in the financial response plan include:

Using a multiple fund response – The General Fund may not be in a position to respond effectively without the resources of other funds.

Maintaining robust balances in the Health and Risk Funds in anticipation of an increase in claims and costs.

Aligning the Village's response with the timing and magnitude of the issue as well as the approaches being used by the State or federal governments.

Maintaining at least half of the reserves in the General Fund so that we could respond to future emergencies or disasters.

Mr. Fieldman said staff used a range of revenue projections in the preparation of this financial response plan. The most conservative revenue projections show most revenue sources declining by 50% or more and property taxes declining by 25%. Applying the most conservative revenue projections, total General Fund revenues would decline by about 42% in 2020. This would result in a $20.7 million financial gap. The plan calls for a multi-tiered approach, consisting of four tiers. This approach allows the Village to scale our financial response as the situation unfolds. We will progress through the tiers as the crisis persists and the conditions dictate. Nearly $21 million is available in this tiered response plan. While the tiers appear in order of planned use, financial conditions may prompt the Village to use a mix of all of the tiers to respond to the crisis. As a first step, the Village will seek reimbursement and financial assistance from the federal and State governments using all legislation and programs available to us. It is important to note that the funding for local governments in the

federal stimulus package does not provide for guaranteed direct funding to municipalities with populations less than 500,000. This means the Village of Downers Grove is not guaranteed to receive financial support, although staff will vigorously pursue such funding. He said because the Village population is below the 500,000 we do not count on receiving funds in this category. Tier 2 includes over $1.8 million in expense reductions by implementing a hiring freeze, eliminating all but the most essential purchases of supplies, equipment and vehicles, and eliminating staff travel and training and educational reimbursement. Tier 3 includes deferring the construction of capital projects in the Capital and Major Buildings funds and transferring the funds on hand intended to pay for these projects to the General Fund to help cover operational expenses. About $6.5 million could be transferred into the General Fund with this approach. Capital projects in these two funds were recently suspended and will continue to be suspended until revenues return to originally budgeted performance levels. Mr. Fieldman said the Village is actively implementing the first three tiers now. Tier 4 includes using money from the Asset Forfeiture Fund and up to half of the General Fund reserves. About $12.4 million is available in this tier. The actions included in tiers 2 and 3 can be used to address a 17% decline in revenues, a gap of $8.3 million. Applying all of the four tiers would allow the Village to address a 42% decline, a gap of $20.7 million.

Deciding when to implement the actions in the tiers and to what extent will be challenging given the significant delay in receiving information about revenue performance. Decisions about all potential action steps will take place throughout the balance of the year. On or around the first day of each of the next three months, decisions about the implementation of the financial response place will be made. Each month we will have a little more information about our financial condition.

Mr. Fieldman provided an update with information on revenues we recently received. The good news is that January sales tax revenue and April income tax revenue (paid to the State in March) both came in better than the budget. March, Food & Beverage tax revenues were about 40% lower than budget. March hotel taxes were down 76%. April building permit revenue was down about 35%.

The pandemic is also affecting Village operations. Demand for services has declined sharply. Fire Department calls for service in April declined by 23%. Police Department calls for service in April were down by an estimated 56%. Building permit activity in April was down about 37% and water system usage declined by 9%. Because of these service demand declines, staff now has capacity to work on tasks and projects that are typically performed by consultants. Staff members in all departments are now working on the Priority Action Item Replace the Enterprise Resource Planning System. This shift allows us to pursue this required system replacement at a value to our taxpayers. Also, Public Works staff members are performing street maintenance activities originally planned to be completed by contractors.

Mr. Fieldman summarized next steps which include continuing to monitor all Village revenues, continuing to seek assistance from State and federal governments if funds are made available; continuing to reduce General Fund expenses; continuing with the suspension of capital projects; preparing for the use of Tier 4 and reporting to the Village Council and the public frequently. He said the Village will continue to take these steps as the financial crisis continues.

Commissioner Hosé thanked staff for their continued vigilance. These are very difficult times for everybody and there are a lot of moving parts.

Commissioner Earl thanked staff for their ability to quickly readjust and refocus and keep people working and working in the same direction. Plans ground to a halt and we have had to go in a different direction. Staff has done a great job of reallocating people and resources to figure out which way we are going next. We are moving forward.

Commissioner Gray asked as to the unexpected costs going forward related to the pandemic.

Mr. Fieldman said he has information he will be provide information in the coming days. We are tracking all expenses related to COVID-19 as part of our application for stimulus package funds.

Commissioner Kulovany asked how the numbers provided by Mr. Fieldman tonight line up with staff's original projections of reductions in revenue.

Mr. Fieldman said the numbers presented are March numbers. The March declines were a little steeper and more severe than we had originally thought. He thinks that suggests that some of the more conservative projections on the revenue side with sharp declines are probably in the realm of possibility. To balance that, the first part of the year, January and February, were strong. We will continue to monitor as we go.

Commissioner Kulovany asked when April results are expected.

Mr. Fieldman said it should be around June 1. The best indicator of our financial performance will not be available until the middle of July when we get April sales tax numbers. At that time we should have first installment of property tax payments as well.

Commissioner Kulovany said this reinforces the need that whenever a resident can shop in Downers Grove, please try to do so. Our businesses desperately need that. He said restaurant revenues are down significantly. He urged people to shop and eat in Downers Grove.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she appreciates all the work staff has done to keep things on target and up to date. She said it is impressive that we have had this very detailed plan so long. It's unfortunate to hear that the numbers are worse than we anticipated, although within the possible range.

Commissioner Walus thanked staff for their work. They are doing an excellent job.

Mayor Barnett extended his appreciation to staff for their efforts and their flexibility. We do not know what the next several months will entail, so while the flexibility can be disruptive and upsetting and challenging, the Village Council appreciates the effort as do the residents.

Mr. Fieldman said the Village is open for business in a sense that you can call and email us. We are finding creative ways to get services provided to our community and we appreciate everyone's patience as we learn new techniques.

9. Attorney's Report

Pursuant to Section 2.5 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code, the following are presented for Village Council consideration:

1. An ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 5785 and amending the rates charged for water
2. An ordinance providing for emergency orders regarding liquor and massage licensing and temporary use permits

10. Mayor and Council Member Reports

Commissioner Hosé thanked everyone listening, thanked staff for their efforts and encouraged everyone to continue to socially distance and to stay at home in order to beat the pandemic.

Commissioner Earl also thanked staff. She thanked Fire Chief Pindelski and the Fire Department, Police Chief Gillette and Police Department, Public Works Director Andy Sikich and the Public Works Department, Stan Popovich and the Community Development Department, Judy Buttny and the Finance Department, Doug Kozlowski and the Communications Department, Megan Miles and the Clerk's Office, Dennis Burke and the HR

Department, Enza Petrarca and the Legal Department, Jenny Rizzo, the Emergency Management Coordinator, Manager Dave Fieldman, Mike Baker, Dan Carlsen and the Manager's Office, and the custodial staff who are still working. This being Police Week we typically honor Office Richard J. Barth who is the only Downers Grove police officer to die in the line of duty. He and his family are always in our thoughts and prayers.

Commissioner Gray said May is Mental Health Awareness Month. One of the headlines that has often gotten lost is the number of individuals that are not just uncomfortable or uneasy, but in pain. He spoke of a physician in New York who took her life because it was just too much. Since 1949 efforts have been made to reach millions of people through affiliate networks, media, local events and screening to promote better mental health. He said if anyone knows someone struggling please take a moment to reach out to them.

Commissioner Kulovany said he wants to reach out to residents. We know this is a very tough time. He expressed a lot of empathy for parents who are now homeschooling, sometimes in addition to their full-time jobs, and how difficult it is to juggle all their responsibilities. He said his heart goes out to those who have lost work. To those who have been ill or have had family illness, he said our thoughts and prayers go out to them. He said DuPage County is doing a good job. Social distancing and staying at home is working in DuPage County. We are a good partner with the City of Chicago and we have to be sensitive to that as a number of people live in Downers Grove and work in the city and a number of people live in the city and work in Downers Grove.

In recognition of Historic Preservation Month, Commissioner Kulovany said John Mochel, proprietor of Mochel's Hardware, a business founded in Downers Grove in 1884, celebrated his 94th birthday yesterday.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt echoed everything that has been said. She thanked staff for their hard work. She reminded everyone that it is important to respect the orders and to stay home and to stay safe along with social distancing. Medical professionals are making progress on treatments and increasing testing every day. There are good evidence-based reasons why we are proceeding the way we are. She thanked Commissioner Gray for mentioning Mental Health Awareness Month, especially now when many people are struggling inside their homes. This is something she thinks we need to talk about more. She encouraged people to reach out to the Council members who will try to make the property connections. She said she has been trying to keep her social media accounts updated for any Village-related news on a public post. We are in it for the long haul.

Commissioner Walus said it is getting more difficult to stay at home as the weather gets nicer; however, she encouraged people to continue our Governor's directive. Please keep helping in whatever way you are able. Every little bit helps. Everyone is feeling the sting of what is going on. Remember to be kind, debate respectfully and continue to stay safe and stay home.

Mayor Barnett said May 4-8 is Teacher Appreciation Week. He said his grandfather was a teacher as is his mother and brother. Teachers change lives daily. This year as we recognize our teachers many of us do so through a different lens. In many instances teachers have risen to the COVID challenge and taken on roles way beyond what they were trained to do. In a time of crisis we are all called on to accept different roles and do what is needed. To our teachers and our partners in District 58 and District 99, and Commissioner Walus, he said thank you for all you do for our community and wished them the best.

11. Public Comments

Deputy Village Manager Mike Baker said there were no public comments.

12. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Commissioner Hosé moved to adjourn. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

Votes: Yea: Commissioners Hosé, Earl, Gray, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, Walus; Mayor Barnett

Nay: None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Miles

Village Clerk