

Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers

August 11, 2020

7:00 PM

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Public comment will be taken electronically and in person. To submit a comment electronically, 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 Meeting to Order

Mayor Robert Barnett called the regular meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Downers Grove at 6:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Downers Grove Village Hall.

2. Roll Call

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

3. Executive Session

Convene into Executive Session

Commissioner José moved to go into Executive Session, pursuant to Section 2c)(2) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act to consider litigation and collective negotiating matters. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried by voice vote and the Council convened into Executive Session at 6:03 p.m.

Reconvene into Open Session

4. Call to Order

Mayor Robert Barnett called the regular meeting of the Village Council of the Village of Downers Grove to order at 7:19 p.m. and apologized for the delay due to a closed session meeting.

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

5. Roll Call

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

Absent: None

Non-Voting: Village Manager David Fieldman, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca, Village Clerk Megan Miles

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6. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2020-8642 – A. Minutes: Council Minutes – August 4, 2020

Motion: Commissioner José moved to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion. Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried by voice vote.

7. Public Comments

There were none.

8. Consent Agenda

BIL 2020-8641 — A. Bills Payable: No. 6542 – August 11, 2020

MIN 2020-8640 — B. Minutes: Note Receipt of Minutes of Boards and Commissions

Summary: Plan Commission - June 22, 2020

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

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried by voice vote.

9. Active Agenda

10. First Reading

11. Manager's Report

INF 2020-8588 — A. Information: 2019-2021 Long Range Plan Update

Village Manager Dave Fieldman briefly provided some information regarding yesterday's thunderstorm which included 94 service calls for parkway tree damage primarily located in the central and northern portions of the Village. Details of the Village's response followed. Village staff and elected officials are aware of the power outages that exist and will continue to contact ComEd to restore power to the Village's residents.

Manager Fieldman then provided an update as it relates to the Village's COVID-19 Financial Response Plan. Graphics followed on the overhead. Per Mr. Fieldman, Tiers 1, 2, and 3 will be implemented. Mr. Fieldman believes that funding will carry the Village through any revenue shortfalls for 2020. Graphs depicting various shortfalls in the Village's revenue sources for the current year followed.

Mayor Barnett reminded the public watching that the above information was on-line.

Turning to the 2020-2021 Long Range Plan update, Mr. Fieldman recalled his presentation from last month and noted that Council's input from last month was provided in the new update with two small revisions: 1) the wording in the Objectives section was revised as it relates to Service Levels and how the Village is looking for ways to be flexible in providing services in order to respond to the community; and 2) Revenue Enhancements were narrowed down to two enhancements: 1) an increase in the Food and Beverage Tax; and 2) the potential to

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make changes to Ambulance billing. Raising property taxes was not a desirable way to address a shortfall but staff kept it on the list as a last resort. Mr. Fieldman asked for confirmation regarding the changes.

Some commissioners agreed that staff captured the Council's prior input very well and appreciated staff's work. While they also agreed raising property taxes was not ideal, many of the commissioners agreed that the item needed to remain on the list for future discussion, if any. However, Commissioner Kulovany felt there was a significant increase (from \$1.16M to \$1.95M) being passed on to the residents, many of whom were elderly, on fixed-income, or unemployed. He suggested asking the Village's 300.9 full-time employees take a 3.8% salary cut to get the Village through the gap and then pay the employees later, before going to the residents for an increase.

Commissioner Gray reminded the public to read the plan a few times. He supported the increase for food and beverage, discussed his wavering on the gas tax, and shared what it feels like being on the other side financially. He encouraged everyone to continue to look for ways to close the budget gap.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt appreciated the revisions made by staff and was comfortable with a pay freeze as well as the plan overall.

Commissioner Earl shared her own experience with the pay cut and relayed that adding to the problem by reducing staff or service levels was pushing the problem off on a larger scale. She did not want to see service cuts. She supported the two taxes proposed by staff.

Mayor Barnett shared the fact that the Village was already very lean and communicating that to the public has been difficult. However, he believed that the Village could not avoid property taxes forever and it had to stay on the list, recalling that taxes have been raised only twice in 10 years for operational purposes. He believed more revenue opportunities existed, reminded the public that the Village's operations were smaller ten years ago, services were still being provided, and if a pandemic took 22% or more of the revenue stream for a year and a half in an unforeseeable fashion, then the Village may have to raise property taxes.

Further dialog followed that Village employees were already stretched, especially first responders who stepped up and faced much risk. To take a pay cut, as voiced by Commissioner Hosé, was not the right choice at this time.

Commissioner Kulovany agreed that the service levels should remain as they were with life/safety staff, but he also asked to consider reaching out to other units of government to consolidate services.

Manager Fieldman also asked to include the Public Works department employees for their fine work. Continuing, Mr. Fieldman explained how he uses this plan to launch the Village's budgeting process, noting the budget will come out in October. Another part of the plan for consideration, he relayed, was the Village's work plan which included the tasks the Village would like to achieve. Next week, priority action items will be discussed.

12. Mayor and Council Member Reports

Commissioner Kulovany noted that in his travels the State of Colorado requires the public to wear masks while other states did not.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt asked the public to continue to listen to the guidance of experts, have those difficult conversations with neighbors, and always assume the best of one another.

Commissioner Walus reminded everyone they can still sign up for the BBQ Bolt which is a 5K race on August 29, 2020. Visit www.DGParks.org/BBQbolt for more information. Also, the Downers Grove Women's Club has extended their collection for Hopes Front Door School Supplies. Backpacks and Sharpie pens are needed. She reminded everyone to wear their masks if medically able.

Commissioner Gray recalled that last week, the Village held listening conversations regarding policing. He extended his thanks to the Village staff for reaching out to the residents and discussing different topics, one of

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which was weaponizing police against people of color. Recalling he had asked the Village for specific numbers, Commissioner Gray proceeded to read them off as it related to calls on suspicious people. He asked that residents consider those 575 calls on suspicious persons and take a closer look as to how they spend the Village's money.

Commissioner Earl announced that the DuPage Department of Homeland Security has extended COVID-19 testing at the County through September and is looking for volunteers to direct traffic. More info was available on the county's website.

13. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn.

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

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Miles

Village Clerk