

# Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

---

Council Chambers

April 20, 2021

7:00 PM

---

## 1. Call to Order

Mayor Barnett called to order the Village Council meeting at 7:00 p.m. and led those in the room in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He explained the protocol for the meeting and the guidelines to submit public comment.

## 2. Roll Call

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

**Non-Voting:** Village Manager Dave Fieldman, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca, Village Clerk Rosa Berardi.

## 3. Proclamation

**PROC 2021-8930** - A. Proclamation: Earth Day

Mayor Barnett read and proclaimed April 22, 2021 as Earth Day.

**PROC 2021-8931** - B. Proclamation: Arbor Day

Mayor Barnett read and proclaimed April 30, 2021 as Arbor Day,

## 4. Minutes of Council Meetings

**MIN 2021-8924** - A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2021

**Motion:** Commissioner José made a motion that Council adopt the minutes of the April 13, 2021 meeting, as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

**Votes: Yea:** Commissioner José, Commissioner Earl, Commissioner Gray, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Walus, Mayor Barnett

**Nay:** None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried.

## 5. Consent Agenda

**COR 2021-8926** - A. Claims Ordinance: No. 6405 – Payroll, March 26, 2021

**BIL 2021-8925** - B. Bills Payable: No. 6588 – April 20, 2021

**MOT 2021-8911** - C. Motion: Authorize the Execution of a Five-Year Contract in the Amount of \$667,857.00 for Fire Hydrant Maintenance and Flow Testing Services to M.E. Simpson Co., Inc. of Valparaiso, Indiana

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

April 20, 2021

**Summary:** This action authorizes the execution of a five-year contract in the amount of \$667,857.00 for fire hydrant maintenance and flow testing services to M.E. Simpson Co., Inc. of Valparaiso, Indiana.

**RES 2021-8916 - D. Resolution:** Approve an Agreement for a Two-Year Term with InfoSend of Downers Grove, Illinois for Utility Bill Printing and Mailing Services; Staff estimates that Annualized Costs under this Contract would be \$14,000.00

**Summary:** This action approves an agreement for a two-year term with InfoSend of Downers Grove, Illinois for utility bill printing and mailing services; staff estimates that Annualized Costs under this Contract would be \$14,000.00.

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AGREEMENT FOR A  
TWO-YEAR TERM WITH INFOSEND OF DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS  
FOR UTILITY BILL PRINTING AND MAILING SERVICES**

**RES 2021- 29**

**RES 2021-8932 - E. Resolution:** Authorize the Disposal of Certain Vehicles and Equipment Declared as Surplus Property Pursuant to Section 2.35 of the Municipal Code

**Summary:** This authorizes the disposal of certain vehicles and equipment declared as surplus property pursuant to Section 2.35 of the Municipal Code.

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSAL OF CERTAIN VEHICLES  
AND EQUIPMENT DECLARED AS SURPLUS PROPERTY PURSUANT TO  
SECTION 2.35 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE**

**RES 2021- 30**

**MOT 2021-8907 - F. Motion:** Award a Contract to Strand Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$116,160.00, including a 10% Contingency, for Funding Assistance and Project Planning for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's (IEPA) Public Water Supply Loan Program (PWSLP)

**Summary:** This awards a contract to Strand Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$116,160.00, including a 10% Contingency, for funding assistance and project planning for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's (IEPA) Public Water Supply Loan Program (PWSLP).

**MIN 2021-8923 – G. Minutes:** Note Receipt of Boards \and Commissions Meeting Minutes

**Motion:** Commissioner José moved that the Council adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

**Votes: Yea:** Commissioner José, Commissioner Earl, Commissioner Gray, Commissioner Walus, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Mayor Barnett

**Nay:** None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried unanimously.

## **6. Active Agenda**

**ORD 2021-8894 – A. Ordinance:** Amendment to Ordinance No. 5831 and the Village of Downers Grove Budget for Fiscal Year 2020

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 5831 AND THE VILLAGE  
OF DOWNERS GROVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020  
ORDINANCE 5864**

**Motion:** Commissioner José moved to adopt an amendment to Ordinance No. 5831 and the Village of Downers Grove Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 as presented. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

**Votes: Yea:** Commissioner José, Commissioner Earl, Commissioner Gray, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Walus, Mayor Barnett

**Nay:** None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried unanimously.

**ORD 2021-8902 – B. Ordinance:** Approve a Sales Tax Rebate Agreement with Downers Grove Imports, Ltd. d/b/a Pugi of Chicagoland

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A SALES TAX REBATE AGREEMENT WITH  
DOWNERS GROVE IMPORTS, LTD. D/B/A PUGI OF CHICAGOLAND  
ORDINANCE 5865**

**Motion:** Commissioner José moved that the Council adopt a Sales Tax Rebate Agreement with Downers Grove Imports, Ltd. d/b/a Pugi of Chicagoland. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

**Votes: Yea:** Commissioner José, Commissioner Earl, Commissioner Gray, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Walus, Mayor Barnett

**Nay:** None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried unanimously.

Deputy Village Manager, Mike Baker, summarized a Public Comment submitted online by resident, David Rose, consisting of a set of questions regarding Sales Tax Rebate Agreements. The questions were related to the information made available to the public on the Village website and the decision-making process that goes into the agreements. Mr. Baker indicated that Mr. Rose's questions would be included in the record of the Village Council meeting.

Commissioner José thanked staff and Village Council for the discussion that went into last week's meeting. He apologized for missing last week's meeting due to a work conflict but stated that he is in support of the Sales Tax Rebate Agreement.

## **7. First Reading**

**ORD 2021-8928 – A. Ordinance:** Amendment to Ordinance No. 3996 to Modify the Compensation of the Mayor and the Village Council

**Summary:** Village Manager Dave Fieldman reminded this topic was touched upon briefly last week. The proposed ordinance increases the Mayor's salary to \$10,000/year effective upon the next swearing in of the Mayor for 2023 and increases the commissioners' salaries to \$5,000/year effective upon the next commissioners' elections and swearings-in in May 2023 and 2025. The ordinance annually adjusts the amounts in an amount equal to the typical raise for Village employees who are not subject to collective bargaining agreements.

Commissioner Earl said she brought this topic forward last week and believed it was necessary since there hasn't been an increase since the late 1990s. Commissioner Earl said to serve their community, the members of the Village Council can incur expenses such as hiring a babysitter. This increase would help pay for those types of expenses.

Mayor Barnett appreciated the topic being brought up and relayed that the salaries received are not because someone needs a job, it is structured in a way that does not appear that someone is giving themselves a raise unless residents re-elect them, and there is a cost to the service.

No questions were received from the audience.

## **8. Manager's Report**

## **9. Attorney's Report**

Pursuant to Section 2.5 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca, reported the following were presented for Village Council consideration:

1. An Ordinance Providing for an Amendment to Ordinance No. 3996 to Modify the Compensation of the Mayor and the Village Council.

## **10. Public Comments**

Mr. Mike Baker returned to the podium to read public comments of a general nature that were submitted online. There was a comment submitted by resident, David Rose. He inquired if the Village had ever done social scientific research investigating the perception of non-white individuals living in the Chicago area outside the Village of Downers Grove? Specifically, do they view Downers Grove as a desirable place to live, shop, dine, etc.? If not, why not?

Mayor Barnett responded that the answer will have to be researched and provided in the future. He stated that the public comment would be entered into the meeting record.

## **11. Mayor and Council Member Reports**

Commissioner Kulovany recalled a post about volcano mulching and its detriment to young trees. He explained the mulch should surround the tree trunk in a donut form, leaving mulch away from the trunk, so as not to suffocate it. Relating to that, some 900 trees will be planted in the Village and he wanted the residents to ensure that the trees are mulched correctly.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt announced the Grove Foundation will be sponsoring its "Country in the Park" on May 1, 2021 at the Downers Grove Museum. The event is free but registration is required for social distancing.

Commissioner Walus asked everyone to continue to keep the Busy Bee bakery family (Chuck Kalousek) in their thoughts and prayers. For those who do not have internet access and cannot contribute to the Go Fund Me, they can donate by cash or check at Bank Financial on Main Street.

Commissioner Gray extended appreciation to Mike, Enza and Dave (and their staff) for their assistance in running the Village properly. He also thanked his fellow Commissioners for coming together at the right time to handle the issues that they did over the past year; comparing every member of Village Council to puzzle pieces and stating that those puzzle pieces came together at the right time to handle the situations they had brought before them over the past year. He said he hoped something he said in his two years on the Village Council resonated

with everyone. He plans to continue to be involved in the Village's diversity, equity and inclusion matters and in Community Development matters. He stated he would continue to assist the school district with entrepreneurship programming. He thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve the Village and "loved every minute of it."

Commissioner Earl announced the Village's Native Tree and Shrub Sale is online at [www.downers.us](http://www.downers.us). Orders can be picked up on June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm at Public Works Department.

Commissioner José stated that as someone that has worked within the legal system for a large number of years, he was relieved that it functioned properly today (referring to national events).

## **12. Recognition of Commissioner Earl and Commissioner Gray**

Mayor Barnett discussed tonight's meeting is the last meeting for Commissioners Marge Earl and Cavanaugh Gray. He proceeded to recognize the work done by the two Commissioners and to thank them. He stated that because of COVID the proper sendoff couldn't happen with cake, refreshments and a public gathering. Mayor Barnett thanked the Gray and Earl families for sharing their family members with the Village. Mayor Barnett stated that words to explain Commissioner Gray are "insight" and "thoughtful".

Mayor Barnett extended his appreciation to Commissioner Gray for his entrepreneurial leadership and social perspectives. Stating that Commissioner Gray explained things in thoughtful and insightful ways for the betterment of the Villag.. He appreciated his professional and educational background and for bringing that experience to the Village. Mayor Barnett stated he agreed with Commissioner Gray's comparison of Council members to puzzle pieces; the Village Council consisted of 7 unique puzzle pieces. The Mayor stated that Cavanaugh has a way of leading rather than pushing and helping others to see around their blind spots. From the COVID pandemic to racial injustice, 2020 was not what any of us expected would happen back in 2019. Commissioner Gray's willing heart and ability to help others see things differently was a blessing to all. Mayor Barnett thanked Commissioner Gray for his service and wished him nothing but the best moving forward.

Commissioner José thanked Commissioner Gray for his service and for always making him think. He said Commissioner Gray's perspective on matters was unique and always made Commissioner José reexamine what his stance was. The Council and Village are better because of Commissioner Gray's services.

Commissioner Earl said that Commissioner Gray brought fresh eyes to the Council. He brought a new way of looking at things that will make the whole community better. She said for her what resonated was a comment Commissioner Gray made. He said losing the peace and quiet in his home would not serving him or anyone else well. Commissioner Earl said that hit home for her, as things at her house and with those around her were changing. That is a part of the reason that she too is ending her service on the Village Council. She said she is confident someone else can learn the job and do the job as Commissioner just as well as she can. She thanked Commissioner Gray for always putting things into perspective.

Commissioner Walus stated that the Village Council is like a club that only brave people can join; no one understands it except those that have served. She said that Commissioner Gray is a "worldly type of intelligent" because of his knowledge and life experiences. She stated Commissioner Gray has challenged her personally to look at things from different angles/perspectives and have discussions that were not always in her comfort zone. She said she will continue to learn about things that Commissioner Gray is passionate about. Commissioner Walus said it was an honor to serve with Commissioner Gray.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt stated it was an honor to get to know Commissioner Gray. She said with him

stating things that make people uncomfortable is what makes everyone challenge themselves. She hopes their friendship continues. She said he has held himself with more grace than anyone else can ever muster. She hopes he enjoys his family and does things that he loves with his time. She hopes the group can continue to work together again in a different way.

Commissioner Kulovany stated that he met Commissioner Gray when he came to the Village Council two years ago. He is very thoughtful and has brought and shared his world of knowledge about entrepreneurship to the Village. He cares about his family and the Village deeply. Commissioner Kulovany said he's enjoyed their time serving together and Commissioner Gray served his community in an honorable way with distinction. He wished him luck with his endeavors moving forward.

Village Communications Director, Doug Koslowski, presented Commissioners Gray with an award and personalized street sign to commemorate his service with the Village.

Commissioner Gray extended his appreciation for serving on the Council and looked forward to serving in the Community again.

Mayor Barnett expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Earl for her stewardship and for being selfless. He shared the number of roles Commissioner Earl served before becoming a member of Village Council in 2016: as a member and Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals; member of the Comprehensive Planning Ad Hoc Committee and Ad hoc Housing Committee. He highlighted her achievements: her involvement in the historic landmarking of 23 buildings; creating the Belmont Pollinator Garden at the Belmont underpass; she served on the Comprehensive Plan Committee and Ad hoc Committee; she was a member of the Downtown Planning & Rezoning group; she assisted with crafting new regulations to minimize stormwater run-off; she supported the reinstatement of the High School Peer Jury Restore Justice Program; she was involved in preserving/protecting trees near construction. Mayor Barnett personally thanked Commissioner Earl for serving the Community first and for being selfless.

Commissioner José stated that he has known Commissioner Earl since he arrived at the Village. He spoke of her dedication to the Village and her service and volunteering. He doesn't know anyone that is as dedicated to the Village; consistently being at boards and commission meetings, whether she was a member or not, always making sure the Village is thoughtful. She loves the work and the joy she feels has shown itself; he will miss it. He thanked her for all she's done and all she will do for the Village, because he knows she won't go anywhere.

Commissioner Gray stated that Commissioner Earl took him under her wing when he became a Commissioner. He said her approach to policy issues and commitment to the Community is what stands out to him. He commented about how he and Commissioner Earl spent time together after Village Council meetings; he will miss that.

Commissioner Walus said that in 2016 she interviewed for a Village Council seat and lost to Commissioner Earl. She learned about how Commissioner Earl was involved in so many boards and commissioners over the years and understood why she had lost to Commissioner Earl. Commissioner Walus said that a few weeks later another seat became available and Commissioner Earl interviewed her. Commissioner Walus was appointed; this is when she got to know Commissioner Earl. She said that even with their different personalities, they have challenged each other to think about things differently. Commissioner Walus stated that Commissioner Earl is very intelligent, kind and selfless. She said that she will miss Commissioner Earl's knowledge, candor and friendship. She knows this is not a goodbye, but rather, I'll see you later.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that Commissioner Earl took her under her wing and gave her comfort during her campaign for Village Council and after. Having a similar personality, she understands how hard it has been

for Commissioner Earl to put herself out there. She said she will miss Commissioner Earl because she is one of the kindest and most thoughtful people she has ever met. She will miss their deep conversations. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she hopes this is not goodbye.

Commissioner Kulovany met Commissioner Earl in 2015 when they were both in the audience at a Village Council meeting. It was then that he also found out that not only would she attend every Village Council meeting moving forward, but also that she had attended every meeting for the 9 years before that. He spoke of the many boards and commissions she volunteered on. He spoke of her expertise and passion for Village matters. He said he served the Village and volunteered his time with Commissioner Earl before their time on the Village Council together and she has the biggest heart. He told her that her service and institutional knowledge will be missed. He said it's been an honor serving with her and having her as a friend.

Mr. Koslowski presented Commissioner Earl with an award and personalized street sign to commemorate her service with the Village.

Commissioner Earl stated that COVID has taken a toll on her because of all that has been happening around her. She stated that when her fellow Commissioner became ill, she decided not to campaign. She said she put it in god's hands and is at peace with not continuing on the Village Council. She has confidence in the newly elected Commissioners and will go back to sitting in the audience at Village Council meetings. She said it's been difficult as an introvert to be front and center; she wants to keep giving back to the Village, just from a different seat. She enjoyed her time serving the Village and will still be around in other capacities.

Mayor Barnett invited the public to speak. None came forward.

Mayor Barnett hoped that what the public saw tonight was encouraging to them. He closed the meeting by stating that this is how the Village of Downers Grove operates; it is people doing their best for the Village. Two Village servants gave themselves to the Village and two more are coming in. Everyone should have a lot of confidence in the Village of Downers Grove.

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion:** Commissioner Hosé made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Earl seconded the motion.

**Votes:** **Aye:** Commissioner Hosé, Commissioner Earl, Commissioner Gray, Commissioner Walus, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Mayor Barnett

**Nay:** None

Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosa Berardi

Village Clerk

2 remarks submitted by David Rose

1. "In the village's annual budget report, do the numbers reported for sales tax revenue include or exclude amounts rebated to business(es)? For example, if a business generates 100k in sales tax revenue but the village rebates 40k to the business, is the amount reported in the budget 100k or 60k?

Relative to the total amount of sales tax revenue accruing (after rebates) to the village, what percentage of the total is generated by each of the top four categories of retail businesses generating sales tax?

For each new car dealership within the village, please indicate if the village has/does not have a sales tax revenue rebate (STRR) agreement with it. Please include the duration of the agreement, the date at which the current agreement ends, and whether the current agreement continues a prior such agreement.

Has the village ever turned down or been unable to agree to terms with a new car dealership wanting to revise/renew an STRR agreement, given the company's desire to have the village help defray its capital investment (or other) costs? If the answer is 'yes,' please elaborate.

Inferring from a prior instance when the village renewed an STRR agreement with Luxury Motors, what clause(s) does the village include in an agreement to ensure 'good civic behavior' on the part of the enterprise? Under what circumstances are such clauses included/not included in an agreement? In which instances have they worked to the desired end? In which have they not?

Please list the names of all other companies with whom DG has an STRR agreement at the present time. Please include the duration of the agreement, the date at which the current agreement ends, and whether the current agreement continues a prior such agreement.

What percentage of sales tax revenue accruing to the village is related to an STRR agreement? What is the trend in this percentage over the last 20 years?

---

Please list the names of entities with whom DG has a property tax abatement agreement of any kind, including those affected by a TIF. Please include the duration of the agreement and the date at which the current agreement ends.

Please indicate the amount of tax paid by each entity above in the last reporting year, and the projected annual amounts to be paid each year through to the first year after the agreement ends.



What percentage of commercial property tax collected by the village in the last reporting year is revenue associated with a tax abatement agreement? What is the trend in this percentage over the last 20 years?

Given the village's consistent reliance on abatement in recent decades, when and under what circumstances in the future may the village NOT need to engage in such agreements?

Under what circumstances does the negotiation of a property tax abatement involve taxing bodies other than the village -- e.g., school district, park district, etc.? Is the financial effect of the abatement solely on the village (and parties to the agreement), so that the revenue collected by a taxing body not in the agreement is unaffected by the abatement?

+++++

I encourage the council to make this type of information available to residents in a more systematic way, either by posting it on its website and/or including it in its annual budget report.

2. "Has the village ever done social scientific research investigating the perception non-white individuals living in the Chicago area but outside the village have of Downers Grove?

Specifically, do they view DG as a desirable place to live, shop, dine, etc.? If not, why not?