



# Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

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**Council Chambers**

**February 7, 2023**

**07:00 PM**

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In order to give as many visitors as possible an opportunity to speak and in the interest of adjourning the meeting by 9:00 p.m., please limit your comments to 5 minutes in length, unless further time is granted by Council. Thank you.

## 1. Call to Order

Mayor Barnett called to order the Village Council meeting at 7:00 p.m. and let 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 Walus, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Kulovany, Commissioner Gilmartin, Commissioner Glover

**Council Attendance (Not Present):** None

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

## 3. Minutes of Council Meetings

**MIN 2022-9694** — A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes – January 10, 2023

***MOTION:** To adopt the meeting minutes of the January 10, 2023 meeting, as presented*

***RESULT:** Motion carried unanimously by roll call*

***MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner José*

***SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Walus*

***AYES:** Commissioners José, Walus, Glover, Gilmartin, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, and Mayor Barnett*

***NAYES:** None*

## 4. Mayor's Report

**REP 2023-9840** — 2022 Annual Report

The Mayor gave a presentation outlining the Village's achievements in 2022. He credited those achievements to the collaborative efforts of a significant team comprised of the residents, businesses, Village Council, Village staff and partner organizations.

Mayor Barnett spoke about the many steps forward in the design, funding and construction of the Civic Center Project. When the construction is completed, in the fall of 2024, the modern facility will be shared by the Police Department, Village Hall, and School District 58 administrative offices. He spoke of how the Isreal Blackburn Civil Rights Plaza would welcome visitors to the building and how elected and appointed members of the Village Council and Boards and Commissions would convene and deliberate in the Betty Cheever's Council Chambers (named after

former Mayor Betty Cheever). The building and site would have many environmentally sustainable features. The project showcased how governmental organizations in Downers Grove could work together and serve as stewards of community resources and the environment. (A brief video capturing the September groundbreaking event was shown.)

The Mayor noted that since 2008, the Village completed over 90 Stormwater Infrastructure Projects at a cost of over \$50 million. He said the current Stormwater Capital Projects Plan included the construction of 12 projects at an estimated cost of \$7.5 million. Additionally, annual recurring programs such as the Drainage Cost Share Program, the Green Street Sustainable Stormwater Program and the downtown water quality improvements, minor stream corridor maintenance, and storm sewer replacements accounted for an additional \$1 million per year.

Mayor Barnett explained that last year the Village began to implement the 2022-2024 Stormwater Capital Plan by issuing \$5.5 million in bonds and the Village constructed stormwater infrastructure improvements serving the areas of Lyman and 62<sup>nd</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup> and Sterling, and the area near Otis, Grant, and Florence. He also said that the Village completed a large-scale stormwater improvement project in the Burlington-Highlands neighborhood with a naturalized detention pond. He explained that the Village bundled the infrastructure work in an effort to minimize disruption to the neighborhoods. The Mayor spoke of the ongoing efforts made to preserve and restore the natural areas throughout Downers Grove. He stated that the Council and staff continued to focus on best practices and continued to prioritize improvements and environmental sustainability. (A short video was shown as a brief overview of the program.)

The Mayor expressed that environmental sustainability had been a top priority for the Village. This included the installment of 10 bioswales (bringing the total to 32) with an additional 40 more to be installed in the coming months. He spoke of continuing to incorporate native plants wherever possible. The Mayor commented on the success of the popular rain barrel and native tree and shrub sales through a partnership with the Conservation Foundation. He also expressed that as a result of the Village's monitoring and conservation efforts, which included the Innovative Water Smart System, Village-wide water system consumption was down over 20% since 2012.

Mayor Barnett said in 2022 the Village extended their contract for solid waste disposal, yard waste collection and refuse recycling with Republic Services through 2025. He said the Village scheduled a Cleanup Amnesty Day in 2022, and at least one more was to occur during this contract extension. The Mayor stated that prior to the Amnesty Day event, residents were encouraged to donate or repurpose as many household materials as possible. He also noted that with this contract residents had greater flexibility to choose their own refuse and recycling cart sizes in order to match their disposal needs. The Mayor thanked Republic Services for their dedicated service, especially during inclement weather.

The Mayor noted that the Village reduced paper consumption in 2022 by implementing a new paperless Permit and Service Request Portal, where residents could apply for permits, upload files and correspondence, pay for approved permits, request inspections, and submit service requests. He urged people to visit [downers.us](https://www.downers.us) and create an account. He explained the new services were part of the Village's new ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning System) that linked the financial and operational processing needs of all departments.

Mayor Barnett discussed the 2022 investment of nearly \$6 million in local roads, including the resurfacing of over 30 street segments. The Fairview Avenue Project included resurfacing, spot repair of curbs, ADA sidewalk compliance, asphalt repair and pavement striping. He explained the installation of decorative crosswalks continued in the downtown - constructed with colored concrete, topped with a highly visible durable material and a decorative red brick and white striped pattern. The project also included localized curb, sidewalk and ADA related work to be completed in 2023.

The Mayor stated that making Downers Grove a safe community was a strategic goal for the Village. He outlined the significant improvements made in 2022 as part of the efforts to improve vehicular, bike and pedestrian safety. This included the resurfacing, striping, installation of stop signs, bump-outs, and pedestrian crossings at 7

intersections on Prairie Avenue, from Belmont to Main Street. He noted that bicycle sharrow striping was added from Belmont to Lee and the speed limit was reduced to 25 miles per hour for the entire stretch. The Mayor stressed that lower speeds made for safer bike and vehicle interactions and for safer pedestrian crossings – all part of the Village's goals.

Mayor Barnett said in 2022 the Village partnered with Andy Frain Services and enhanced school crossing guard services, ensuring that all school crossing were staffed on a daily basis.

The Mayor stated that portions of the water system were extended in 2022. This included Williams Street, from 41<sup>st</sup> Street to the Village limits just north of Ogden Avenue. Through neighborhood meetings and direct communications from the Village, residents learned how to reduce their costs by coordinating with the Village and taking advantage of a DuPage County program, which covered up to \$3k of connecting to the Village's water system.

Mayor Barnett discussed the Governor's Safety Act, requiring all law enforcement agencies to use body-worn cameras. He said although not required until 2025, at the direction of the Village Council, the Village Police Department began operating body worn cameras in July of 2022. In-car cameras were also installed and designed to work in conjunction with the body worn cameras. He said this highlighted the Village and Police Department's commitment to uphold legislation that improves transparency and accountability. He praised the highly ranked, nationally accredited Police Department and Fire Department. Mayor Barnett spoke of the Fire Department's Mission Lifeline Gold Plus status recognition by the American Heart Association, as well as the Class 1 ISO Rating.

The Mayor reviewed the success of the Social Services Referral Program, launched in February of 2022. He said since its inception, over 500 referrals were made with an 85% acceptance rate. Through the program, individuals have the ability to contact the Village's Licensed Social Worker in-person, by phone, and online in order to receive personal referrals to specific social service providers. The Mayor thanked the members of the Human Service Commission for helping guide this Referral Program.

Mayor Barnett spoke of the Village's advancement in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in 2022. He said through its efforts, the Village had increased the diversity of its staff. Mayor Barnett also mentioned that all staff members received training on diversity, equity and inclusion. He expressed the Village's commitment to ensuring a welcoming workplace for all and a government that reflected its residents.

The Mayor then spoke of the success of outdoor dining, which was one of the positive outcomes of COVID-19. He said in 2022, the Village adopted ordinance changes to permanently establish the enhanced Outdoor Dining Program.

Mayor Barnett explained that the amendment to the Downtown Design Guidelines in 2021 helped to maintain a commitment to quality architecture. The guidelines served as a guide for the exterior appearance of downtown developments that required entitlement approvals. Mayor Barnett further explained that the guidelines were not intended to dictate architecture or building style, but rather to influence the design of the buildings, assuring they adhered to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. This created pedestrian oriented developments and maintained a commitment to quality architecture. The Mayor spoke of a Village hosted walking tour, hosted to the Municipal Design Review Network in the summer of 2022. It showcased the the enhancements and design features of the downtown, including new downtown residential developments, innovative development guidelines, and zoning strategies to create buffer zones between the downtown district and residential homes. The Mayor expressed pride in the appearance of the downtown area.

The Mayor expressed his gratitude for the positive impact in the Village's partnerships with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and Downtown Management Corporation (DMC). Both ultimately help the Village keep costs down to residents and businesses. He thanked the Village Council, Village staff and partner

organizations for their good work. He said that the work of the EDC and DMC was vital to the long-term success of the Village of Downers Grove.

Mayor Barnett discussed the Village's goal to be a steward of financial stability. He expressed that the 2022 Village Budget was managed wisely, as expenses in the General Fund were kept at budgeted amounts, while revenues exceeded the budget. He said this allowed for the transfer of \$3.8 million to other funds, as the Village sought to address both short and long financial needs, while minimizing burden on taxpayers. The Mayor said Downers Grove received a AAA rating by S&P Global for its bond issuance for the Civic Center Project and for Stormwater Capital Projects. He said the 2023 budget, approved in December, reflected the strategies and recommendations in the Long Range Plan and contained a sustainable General Fund budget with revenues greater than expenses – allowing Village property taxes to remain the same in 2023 as they were in 2022. The Mayor explained that the property taxes paid to the Village by a typical home in Downers Grove equaled approximately \$775 a year, or less than \$2.50 a day. He stressed that it was a real value for the services the residents of Downers Grove expected and deserved.

The Mayor noted in 2022 the Village received the Distinguished Budget Award and Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, for excellence in financial reporting for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The Mayor also mentioned the Communications Department received another award this year. In 2022 it was for Excellence in Government Communications and Marketing for a promotional video featuring Watersmart, the Village's digital portal where residents have the ability to access detailed information about household water use.

Mayor Barnett concluded the report by sharing ways to stay connected with the Village, including many social media platforms available online on the Village website at [downers.us](https://www.downers.us).

## 5. Presentations

### **REP 2023-9841** — A. Report: Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Annual Report

Bryan Gay, President and CEO of the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (EDC), detailed via a Power Point Presentation three reports: the Quarterly Economic Development Report, the Monthly Economic Development KPI Report and the Annual Report. He said the same information was located on the [DGEDC's website](https://www.dgedc.com).

Mr. Gay stated that he was excited to announce that the EDC was expected to issue its first quarterly newsletter by the beginning of March. He also announced that the EDC was selected into the Illinois Navigator Program, making the EDC one of the lead organizations in DuPage County to encourage businesses to apply for and assist with the application of State funding programs, such as the Back to Business Round 2 Program, expected to be launched in March. He also mentioned that the annual EDC luncheon was scheduled to take place on May 11<sup>th</sup> at the Double Tree in Downers Grove.

Mr. Gay presented the following Monthly Key Performance Indicators and Yearly Performance Indicators (2019-2022):

- Municipal Sales Tax – There was an increase of almost 5% in October 2021 versus October 2022. In comparison to neighboring communities, Downers Grove did quite well given the Village does not house a Super Regional Mall. Revenue in this area did better year over year.
- Home Rule/None-Home Rule Sales Tax – There was an increase of almost 5% in October 2022 versus October 2021. This was aligned with neighboring communities. Revenue in this area was where it should have been over the years and continued to trend up.
- Local Use Tax – There was an increase of approximately 18% in October 2022 versus October 2021. Revenue in this area increased year over year.

- Food and Beverage Tax – There was an increase of 5% from November 2022 versus November 2021. Revenue in this area increased in general from 2021 to 2022. Mr. Gay mentioned that with the use of the Pacer AI program, the EDC was able to track the amount of Downers Grove downtown visitors there were between November 18 and January 15, at 560,000. He said the visitors were spending, on average, just over two hours getting a meal and walking around.
- Hotel Tax Revenue was just over \$62,000 in November 2022, the same as November 2021. Revenue in this area met, and for a short period, exceeded the hotel tax dollars received by the Village for the best year on record (2019).
- Unemployment rates from November and October of 2022 were at 3.1%. The percentage was in line when compared to neighboring communities within DuPage County.

Mr Gay further reported the following Q4 Key Performance Indicators:

- Commercial Occupancy Rates – These were at 90.47%. This was in line with DuPage County.
- Industrial Vacancy Rates – These were at 3.12%. When compared to the I-88 corridor, Downers Grove was between 1 to 1.4 points better than other communities.
- Office Vacancy Rates – These were at 14.69%. This was almost 7 points better than the DuPage County Average.

Mr. Gay lastly reviewed the 2022 Annual Key Performance Indicators:

- 53 Permitting Projects and \$20.7 million in construction improvements. These were permits pulled and completed for either commercial or industrial use within the community.
- 11 projects and \$51.7 million in Capital Investments. This accounted for projects that met 2 of the following 3 criteria: 25,000 SF of space occupied; created at least 25 new jobs; \$1,000,000 in private investment. Mr. Gay stated that a total of 700 to 800 new jobs were created.
- Based on State reporting, in 2022 about 47,043 people worked within the community - a 5.3% increase over 2021.

#### **REP 2023-9842 — B. Report: Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) Annual Report**

Erin Venezia, Executive Director of the Downers Grove Downtown Management Corporation (DMC), presented the Annual Report. She said there were approximately 280 businesses in the downtown area and the DMC continued to maintain a first floor occupancy rate of approximately 98%. She spoke of the 19 new businesses that were welcomed into the downtown area over the past year.

Ms. Venezia stated that over the past year 31 planters (along the sidewalks) were maintained and 80 benches were replaced. She gave details about 19 events and large promotions that the DMC hosted throughout the past year. These included the biggest-ever Ice Festival, with 58 sponsored sculptures, and a record sell-out of 350 Wine Walk participants. She noted that the Fall Coupon Book went to 23,000 households in Downers Grove and the surrounding areas. Ms. Venezia said the DMC worked with partner organizations to decorate the train station and downtown with lights and to place 8 oversized decorations around the downtown for the holidays. Ms. Venezia said the modernization of the downtown gift certificates had been well-received and the DMC sold more than \$32,000 in 2022.

#### **VILLAGE COUNCIL COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

Mayor Barnett expressed the importance of the teamwork between the Village, the DMC and the EDC. He also thanked the community for all it did to make Downers Grove the community it was.

**6. Consent Agenda**

**BIL 2022-9761** — A. Bills Payable: Bills Payable: No. 6710 and No. 6712 - February 7, 2023

**COR 2022-9762** — **B. Claims Ordinance: Claims Ordinance: No. 6489 and No. 6491, Payroll - December 30, 2022, January 13, 2023 and January 20, 2023**

**MIN 2023-9825** — C. Minutes: Note Receipt of Boards and Commissions Meeting Minutes

**Summary:** Note Receipt of Boards and Commissions Meeting Minutes: Liquor Commission, 11-3-22; Foreign Fire Tax Board, 12-19-22; Library Board of Trustees 10-26-22, 11-16-22

**RES 2023-9826** — D. Resolution: Authorize a Joint Funding Agreement for State-Let Construction Work with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for the 71st Street Resurfacing (DOWNERS GROVE PROJECT ST-060) **RES 2023-07**

**Summary:** This resolution authorizes the execution of a joint funding agreement for State-let construction work between the Village of Downers Grove and the Illinois Department of Transportation for 71st Street resurfacing (Downers Grove Project ST-060), IDOT Section No. 21-00116-00-RS; Project NO. SGI (319); Job No. C-91-030-22

**RESOLUTION 2023-07**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A JOINT FUNDING AGREEMENT FOR STATE-LET CONSTRUCTION WORK BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR 71<sup>ST</sup> STREET RESURFACING (DOWNERS GROVE PROJECT ST-060) IDOT SECTION NO. 21-00116-00-RS; PROJECT NO. SGI (319); JOB NO. C-91-030-2**

**RES 2023-9830** — E. Resolution: Authorize a Joint Funding Agreement for State-Let Construction Work with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) for the Woodward Avenue Resurfacing (Downers Grove Project ST-061) **RES 2023-08**

**Summary:** This resolution authorizes the execution of a Joint Funding Agreement for State-Let Construction Work with Illinois Department of Transportation for Woodward Avenue Resurfacing (Downers Grove Project ST-061) IDOT Section No. 21-00115-00-RS; Project No. PW1X (274); Job No. C-91-028-22

**RESOLUTION 2023-08**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A JOINT FUNDING AGREEMENT FOR STATE-LET CONSTRUCTION WORK BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR WOODWARD AVENUE RESURFACING (DOWNERS GROVE PROJECT ST-061) IDOT SECTION NO. 21-00115-00-RS; PROJECT NO. PW1X (274); JOB NO. C-91-028-22**

**RES 2023-9827** — F. Resolution: Approve a Two-Year Contract for Native Landscaping and Natural Areas Maintenance with Hampton, Lenzini and Renwick, Inc. (HLR), of Elgin, Illinois

**Summary:** This resolution approves a two-year contract for Native Landscaping and Natural Areas Maintenance to Hampton, Lenzini and Renwick, Inc. (HLR), of Elgin, Illinois in an amount of \$633,000.

**RESOLUTION 2023-09**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND HAMPTON, LENZINI & RENWICK, INC.**

**RES 2023-9828** — G. Resolution: Express Intent to Continue Participation in the Suburban Tree Consortium and Authorize Certain Purchases for FY 2023 **RES 2023-10**

**Summary:** This resolution expresses intent to continue to participate in the Suburban Tree Consortium and to authorize certain purchases for FY 2023.

**RESOLUTION 2023-10**

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING INTENT TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATION IN THE SUBURBAN TREE CONSORTIUM AND TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN PURCHASES FOR FY 2023.**

**RES 2023-9839** — H. Resolution: Approve an Intergovernmental Agreement for Participation in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS MASTER AGREEMENT 2022) **RES 2023-11**

**Summary:** This resolution approves an intergovernmental agreement for participation in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS MASTER AGREEMENT 2022)

**RESOLUTION 2023-11**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM (MABAS MASTER AGREEMENT 2022)**

**7. Active Agenda**

**ORD 2022-9740** — A. Ordinance: Amending Certain Traffic Control, Parking and Speed Provisions and Pedestrian/Bike Safety Improvements

**Summary:** This ordinance amends traffic controls, parking, speed limits and pedestrian/bicycle safety improvements.

**ORDINANCE 5976**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CERTAIN TRAFFIC CONTROL, PARKING AND SPEED PROVISIONS AND PEDESTRIAN/BIKE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Rich Bennema, resident, spoke against this item. He showed photos and gave examples of reasons why he disagreed with the changes. He stated he wanted the item sent back to the Transportation and Parking Commission to design a better fit.

**VILLAGE COUNCIL COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

Commissioner Kulovany stated that he planned to vote no on this item, even before Mr. Bennema spoke. He also said that he agreed with many of the comments made by the resident. Commissioner Kulovany said he believed the current plan was a one-size-fits-all approach.

Commissioner José stated he was in favor of the ordinance change, as he believed uncontrolled intersections were less safe than controlled ones.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she was in favor of this ordinance change. She stated that she had the similar mindset of someone that lived in a neighborhood with uncontrolled intersections. She said she didn't believe that yield signs did enough at intersections. The Commissioner stated at intersections where there were no stop signs, she wanted to see more bump-outs, especially near schools.

Mayor Barnett stated he was in favor of this ordinance change. He discussed the longstanding policies to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety in the community. He said even in cul-de-sacs, where there were less houses, there was still a crosswalk and an opportunity for pedestrian and vehicle interaction. The Mayor expressed that he would almost always be in favor of creating a safer environment where pedestrians were more likely to traverse their community – curvilinear or otherwise in nature. He noted that the Village's Comprehensive Plan stated that this type of work, which increased the likelihood of the community becoming more traversable in a non-vehicular way, was a

priority. He concluded by stating that the process of making the Village safer and more traversable by pedestrians goes back nearly a decade.

***MOTION:** To Amend Certain Traffic Control, Parking, Speed Provisions & Pedestrian/Bike Safety Improvements*

***RESULT:** Motion carried by roll call, 6-1*

***MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner José*

***SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Walus*

***AYES:** Commissioners José, Walus, Glover, Gilmartin, Sadowski-Fugitt, and Mayor Barnett*

***NAYES:** Commissioner Kulovany*

## **8. First Reading**

No First Reading.

## **9. Manager's Report**

Village Manager Dave Fieldman extended an invitation for all to attend Coffee with the Council this Saturday at 9:00 a.m, located at the Downers Grove Public Library.

## **10. Public Comments**

Marshall Schmidt, resident, commented on the good news of the economic activity in town and downtown. He expressed that everyone should continue to ask how Downers Grove could be better. He spoke of the provisions of the municipal ordinance that governed the conduct of the Village Council meetings. He encouraged the current Village Council to engage in more discussion with the community.

Paul Scott, rental property owner, spoke of remembering contributors to our Nation such as Hazel Dorothy Scott (Musician), Bayard Rustin (Civil Rights Activist) and Annie Malone (Businesswoman/Philanthropist). He also shared that Dr. William Barber, Professor and Civil Rights Activist, was to speak at Benedictine University on Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. Lastly, Mr. Scott recognized civil rights heroes Andrew Goodman, Michael Henry Schwerner, James Earl Chaney and Viola Liuzzo.

## **11. Council Member Reports**

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt noted that it was Black History Month. She also mentioned that she was excited to see the Isreal Blackburn Civil Rights Plaza come to fruition at the future Civic Center.

## **12. Adjournment**

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

***MOTION:** To adjourn the February 7, 2023 Village Council meeting*

***RESULT:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.*

***MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner José*

***SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Walus*

***AYES:** Commissioners José, Walus, Glover, Gilmartin, Kulovany, Sadowski-Fugitt, and Mayor Barnett*

***NAYES:** None*



Mayor Barnett declared the motion carried by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 8.13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosa Berardi  
Village Clerk