



## Meeting Minutes

Village of Downers Grove - Council Meeting

Council Chambers

July 11, 2023

07:00 PM

### 1. Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem José 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):** Commissioner José, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Gilmartin, Commissioner Glover, Commissioner Davenport

**Council Attendance (Not Present):** Mayor Barnett, Commissioner Tully

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

### 3. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2023-9786 - A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes - June 20, 2023

**MOTION:** To adopt the meeting minutes of the June 20, 2023, Village Council Meeting, as presented.

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

**MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

**SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Gilmartin,

**AYES:** Commissioners Sadowski-Fugitt, Gilmartin, Davenport, Glover, Mayor Pro Tem José,

**NAYES:** None

### 4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

### 5. Consent Agenda

**BIL 2022-9788** — A. Bills Payable: No. 6740 - July 11, 2023

**COR 2022-9789** — B. Claims Ordinance: No. 6511, Payroll - June 16, 2023

**RES 2023-9980** — C. Resolution: Approve an Agreement between the Village of Downers Grove and the Illinois Department of Transportation at IL 56, from IL 59 to York Road, State Contract Number 62N32 **RES 2023-46**

**Summary:** This resolution approves an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the Village and the State of Illinois to provide funds for the Traffic Signal Modernization Improvements required as part of the Smart Corridor Project.

**RESOLUTION 2023-46****A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AT IL 56 FROM IL 59 TO YORK ROAD; STATE CONTRACT NUMBER 62N32**

**MOT 2023-9982** — D. Motion: Approve a Three-Year Contract with M.E. Simpson Co., Inc. for Water System Leak Detection Services

**Summary:** This motion approves a three-year contract for water system leak detection services with M.E. Simpson Co., Inc. of Valparaiso, Indiana in the amount of \$209,340.00.

**MOT 2023-9983** — E. Motion: Approve a Three-Year Contract with Midwest Power Industry, Inc. for Generator Maintenance and Repair Services

**Summary:** This motion approves a three-year contract for generator maintenance and repair services with Midwest Power Industry, Inc. of McHenry, Illinois in the amount of \$95,570.00

***MOTION:** To adopt the consent agenda, as presented.*

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

***MOTIONED TO APPROVE:** Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt*

***SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Gilmartin,*

***AYES:** Commissioners Sadowski-Fugitt, Gilmartin, Davenport, Glover, Mayor Pro Tem José,*

***NAYES:** None*

**6. Active Agenda**

There was no Active Agenda.

**7. First Reading**

**ORD 2023-9992** — A. Ordinance: Amending Chapter 14 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code Concerning Motor Vehicles and Traffic

**MOT 2023-9986** — B. Motion: Direct Staff to Employ Traffic Calming Measures on Fairmount Avenue

Assistant Public Works Director Scott Vasko used a PowerPoint to present Items A and B under this portion of the agenda.

Mr. Vasko noted that both Items A&B involved amendments to Chapter 14 of the Municipal Code, including codifying previous temporary Village Manager approvals and TaP Commission recommendations from the June 14, 2023 meeting.

The following are the two items that would codify the temporary Village Manager approvals:

- Middaugh, south of Ogden: Revise the limits of the existing no parking area to include the east side of the street.
- Franklin, from Main to Highland: Revise the time limit of the existing no parking area on the north side of the street to start at 10:00 AM.

Mr. Vasko then stated that two petitions were received. The first was for intersection control modifications at Fairmount and Summit. He then presented the Transportation and Parking (TaP) Commission recommendations from the June 14, 2023 meeting:

- Fairmount & Summit: Revise to All-Way Stop Control
- Fairmount & Park: Replace Yield Signs to convert to Two-Way Stop Control
- Fairmount & Benton: Replace Yield Signs to convert to Two-Way Stop Control

Next, Mr. Vasko stated that the second petition received was to close the intersection of Fairmount at 55<sup>th</sup> Street. He explained that Village staff studied the neighborhood by analyzing traffic crowds, data, and crash data. Staff found the following:

- Traffic counts were conducted on all streets intersecting 55<sup>th</sup> Street and the results showed that levels are down 34% since Neighborhood Traffic Study #1 (2011).
- Speeds were collected and compared to Traffic Study #1. The results showed that they are typical and within expected ranges based upon past traffic studies throughout the Village.
- Crash data was collected throughout the neighborhood over the last five years and the findings are that no locations are considered higher than usual for crashes.

Mr. Vasko said based on the above mentioned data, TaP denied the request for closure of Fairmount Ave, on the north leg of the 55<sup>th</sup>, for the following reasons:

- Standards for the Village's Street Closure Policy and Traffic Calming Policy were not met.
- Construction of a cul-de-sac on a designated collector street would impede traffic flow, altering the intended use of streets, and impact Village services.
- The proposed change would result in the diversion of traffic to surrounding local streets and change access of the neighborhood.
- Multiple responses were received from residents opposed to the street closure.

Mr. Vasko further explained that TaP recommended the following traffic calming measures:

- Installation of pavement striping to visually narrow the roadway.
- Installation of additional enhanced speed limit signs.
- Use of speed feedback signs on a rotating basis.
- Increased enforcement efforts to deter violations of the posted limits.
- Review snow and ice control procedures related to the south leg of the 55<sup>th</sup> Street at the Fairmount Avenue intersection.
- Review the recommendations from Neighborhood Traffic Study #9, once complete, which includes Fairmount Avenue from 55<sup>th</sup> Street to 59<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Consider potential signage or other countermeasures to address the occurrence of crashes on the downslope during winter conditions.

### **Village Council Comments/Questions**

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt asked if there is data to indicate if striping reduces speed and if there are examples in the Village.

Manager Fieldman answered yes and that some studies show that they are effective in some areas and not in others. He noted that a combination of all the recommendations has worked and achieved some of the goals. Manager Fieldman stressed that to his knowledge, the Village has not done a project involving only center lane striping, but as a package deal it appeared to be working well in recent locations.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt asked if there were a few examples of the recent locations.

Mr. Vasko gave examples of Fairmount, between Summit and Randall, on Carpenter, from Maple to Gilbert, on Washington, from Summit to Maple, and he stated that resurfacing is currently taking place on 71<sup>st</sup>, from Dunham to the Village limits.

Commissioner Glover asked what the added benefit of striping would be, given the all of the data collected and since speeds have been within the typical and expected range.

Manager Fieldman said there would probably not be a lot of incremental change, since the speeds are already within the expected range. He said that staff was looking for direction from the Council regarding whether or not the striping should be installed.

### **Public Comment**

Karen Crowe, 5408 Fairmount Ave, said she witnessed a fatal accident that occurred in her neighbor's front yard. She expressed concern with the installation of double yellow lines and the possibility of homes depreciating in value if they are installed; instead she proposed the installation of speed bumps. Ms. Crowe mentioned that a high level of accidents had occurred on the corner of Fairmount and 55<sup>th</sup> and asked if the Village had a comprehensive plan for all streets.

### **Village Council Comments/Questions**

Mayor Pro Tem José stated that he is in support of the recommended approval of the items that Village Manager Dave Fieldman already put into place. He said with regard to Fairmount, he is in support of the recommendations from the TaP Commission, as he also agrees with the Commission in that Fairmount and 55<sup>th</sup> does not meet the warrants for closing the street. He expressed how terrible it was for the residents to witness the horrific crash that took place. Mayor Pro Tem José said that the Council received requests to close streets recently and because of those requests, he felt the impacts that street closures could have on entire neighborhoods needed to be considered. He spoke of a street closing at Webster and 55<sup>th</sup>, years ago, due to sight line concerns - which is not the current situation. Mayor Pro Tem José said he believes the changing of yield signs to stop signs and the installation of four-way stops will resolve this situation. He noted he is opposed to speed bumps due to their negative effect on snow plows and emergency vehicles. He also said he believed traffic would be diverted to other streets because of them (one of the problems closing the street would also cause). Mayor Pro Tem José said overall he agrees with the TaP recommendations and stated if there are additional or increased problems on this street, the Council can revisit the issue. He further noted that if the neighborhood does not want the striping because they believe it could cause speeding, he would be fine with removing them from the plan. Mayor Pro Tem José wanted to hear what his colleagues had to say.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt expressed her empathy for the residents that witnessed the fatal crash. She said she is in favor of installing stop signs. She noted she uses Fairmount regularly to take her daughter to school and the issues in this area are different than those of Webster or Washington, which affects the decisions that need to be made. She said she does not believe Fairmount is a cut-through street, but that it is more of a collector street. Further stating, that the speeds and volumes reflect as such. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt stated she has talked to real estate experts and it is hard to tease out if striped lines will decrease values of houses. She said she wants to be sure correlation is not causation. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt noted she imagines that multiple city planners could each have differing opinions and she would support the neighborhood, if they requested not to have the painted lines. She asked staff if having other sight lines, such as lines for parking, could help visually narrow the street. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt concluded with thanking the staff for their work on this issue and the residents that have attended Village meetings.

Commissioner Glover said he agrees with his colleagues and supports Item A. Regarding Item B, he said that given the speeds and data showing normal ranges and the feedback received from residents that are not in favor of the striping, he thinks adding it could be controversial. However, he also added that he would rather live on a street with

center stripped lines then deal with crashes and fatalities. Commissioner Glover asked the staff if the Council could get more information on the streets that had center yellow line striping, mentioned by Mr. Vasko. He concluded by stating he did not think the striping fit this street, in this neighborhood.

Village Manager Fieldman said there is a centerline stripe on Fairmount, where the hill is.

Commissioner Glover said that in general, he's in favor of all the TaP recommendations, but also would be interested in removing the striped lines.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he echoed the comments of Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt. He said this was a tragic event and his thoughts on this did not reflect how sorry he was that the accident with the fatality happened. He stated he thinks the double yellow lines will do what they need to and he also noted that speeds are relatively within range, even lower than other streets. Commissioner Gilmartin said he believes this is a cut-through street and that even though the striping would not be a physical barrier, he thinks the lines would slow people down. He explained that he does not subscribe to the fact that double yellow lines affect home values, but he welcomes reviewing research that shows that. The Commissioner also stated that there are already double yellow stripes in town and that he is in favor of them combined with the stop signs. He said he will go with whatever the balance of the Council decides and noted that he too believes things can be added in later. He concluded by stating that he appreciates the input of the residents and also supports Item A.

Commissioner Davenport congratulated the TaP Commission and the residents for giving this so much thought. He said that after student Beth Dunlap was hit tragically at North High School, pedestrian safety became a focus throughout the Village. He said the residents in this neighborhood also witnessed a tragedy and he credits the residents and the Commission for taking the time to look at this carefully, making thoughtful recommendations to make the area safer, not just Fairmount Street. The Commissioner said that there may be a correlation between double yellow lines on very, very busy streets having an impact on home values, but he does not believe having the presence of striping on this particular street would affect home values in the same way. He said it would be hard to isolate any one element of an overall approach when it is known that keeping a combination of all the elements together has had a positive impact in other areas. Commissioner Davenport said he thinks if the center yellow lines are removed, there is a risk of the solution being less effective; further stating that he believed that was argument enough to keep the yellow lines. He also stated that he was struck by the 34% reduction in traffic levels, which is taking into account that Washington Street has had some changes. Commissioner Davenport said he hoped that traffic from Washington was directed back onto Main Street, where it belongs. He said because of the tragedy on Fairmount, these areas are being talked about; though not everyone will be happy, these are good solutions. Commissioner Davenport concluded by stating that the area can continue to be monitored and the stripes can be removed, if necessary, and the Council can revisit other solutions.

Mayor Pro Tem José also thanked the residents, members of the TaP Commission and staff for studying several streets in the neighborhood on and around Fairmount.

Manager Fieldman thanked Transportation Manager Mike Tuman for his hard work and efforts on this project. He said this will be on the July 18<sup>th</sup> Village Council agenda for a vote.

**ORD 2023-9984** — C. Ordinance: Authorizing the Second Extension of Special Use Ordinance 5817 To Permit an Accessory Parking Lot Use Before the Principal Use is Established at 3131 Finley Road to July 19, 2024

Village Community Development Director Stan Popovich presented Item C via a PowerPoint. He presented maps of the property and said this was a second extension for a special use. He further stated that the owner of the office building at 1400 Opus Place purchased the Finley Road property, demolished the building that was there, and constructed a parking lot to provide additional parking for the tenants in the Opus Place Building. He said the special use was approved just before the pandemic. Mr. Popovich stated that with office occupancy being down, the petitioner is proposing to make changes to the Opus Place building, in an effort to attract tenants that would then use the parking

spaces. He concluded by stating that the petitioner is requesting a second extension to the approved special use, Ordinance #5817.

### **Public Comment**

Bill Elwood, Executive Vice President with CBRE, said he leases 2 million square feet within the Village and discussed the challenges of filling office buildings in the suburbs, especially with so many partial remote work positions. He noted that the suburban market is now more favorable than the urban market, but there are still going to be challenges with filling parking lots – they may be full some days and empty on others because of hybrid work schedules. He said he does not believe that some office buildings will survive the changes. Mr. Elwood explained that the owner of this property increased its parking space and is about to invest several million dollars in the property to enhance its appeal and attract more tenants. He said T Mobile is the anchor tenant in this building and they are very happy with the location. He encouraged the Village to support office building owners during these challenging times and give them the arsenal to compete against other communities.

Mayor Pro Tem José noted the change in the office environment since pre-COVID times and the ripple effect it has had in the city and suburbs. He stated that the Village has been fortunate over the years to have had a high occupancy rate in Class A office space. Mayor Pro Tem José said he hopes Mr. Elwood can get the tenants they are hoping for. He added that though a vacant parking lot doesn't scream the best use, he said he hopes in the long run it gets used.

Commissioner Davenport said he thinks the parking lot will be beneficial once it is filled and that he hopes good things happen over the next year. He said that though an empty parking lot is not good, he is supportive of this extension for another year.

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

There was no Manager's Report.

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

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

1. An ordinance amending Chapter 14 of the Downers Grove Municipal Code concerning motor vehicles and traffic.
2. An ordinance authorizing the second extension of Special Use Ordinance 5817 to permit an accessory parking lot use before the principal use is established at 3131 Finley Road to July 19, 2024.

### **10. Mayor's Report**

There was no Mayor's Report.

### **11. Council Member Reports**

Commissioner Davenport thanked the community for a great Rotary Grove Fest.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said that in light of the discussion of the Fairmount crash, she wanted to ensure everyone that Council will do everything they can to maximize safety. She added that keeping the Village safe is a collective responsibility that includes everyone to refrain from rushing and speeding. She noted that saving a few seconds by speeding is not worth risking their safety and that of others. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt then said the Grove Foundation's annual golf outing is going to be held on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and encourage all to visit the website [govefoundation.org](http://govefoundation.org) for more information.

Council Minutes

Village of Downers Grove

July 11, 2023

Mayor Pro Tem Hosé thanked all for going out to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and noted that for the first time that he can recall, the Council had enough candy to share with the attendees through the whole parade route.

## 12. Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Hosé asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

***MOTION:*** To adjourn the July 11, 2023 Village Council Meeting.

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

***MOTIONED TO APPROVE:*** Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt

***SECONDED BY:*** Commissioner Gilmartin,

***AYES:*** Commissioners Sadowski-Fugitt, Gilmartin, Davenport, Glover, Mayor Pro Tem Hosé,

***NAYES:*** None

Mayor Pro Tem Hosé declared the motion carried by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosa Berardi  
Village Clerk