

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
Report for the Village Council Meeting
7/15/2025

SUBJECT:	SUBMITTED BY:
Mayor Pro Tem	Dave Fieldman Village Manager

SYNOPSIS

At the request of Commissioner Gilmartin, the following proposal has been placed on the New Business Agenda.

I would like to discuss amending [Section 2.17](#), the portion of our code that establishes the process by which Mayor Pro Tem is appointed.

Pursuant to Village Council policy, this topic shall be a discussion item only to allow the Village Council to direct staff to prepare an action for consideration at a later date.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The Strategic Goals include *Exceptional Municipal Services*.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Action at the discretion of the Village Council.

BACKGROUND

Commissioner Gilmartin submitted the following request for consideration by the Village Council as New Business:

Fellow Council Members,

At our upcoming Council meeting, I plan to introduce a New Business item proposing an amendment to Section 2.17 of the Municipal Code to address a serious gap in the Mayor Pro Tem appointment process.

It has now been nearly two months since the Council rejected the Mayor’s initial nomination for Mayor Pro Tem. Since then, despite emphasizing the importance of having someone in that role, the Mayor has not submitted a new nominee. As written, our current code does not require the Mayor to offer a second appointment—effectively allowing the seat to remain vacant indefinitely.

That’s not just a procedural concern. The absence of a confirmed Mayor Pro Tem means we lack a clear line of executive continuity should the Mayor be unavailable. That is an unnecessary risk to the Village and, in my opinion, a structural weakness in our code that leaves our community exposed.

To address this, I'm proposing we create a clear and formalized line of executive continuity that does not rely on the Mayor's discretion or allow for arbitrary re-selection for each absence or unavailability. This is a principle already reflected in our emergency succession ordinance, which designates the most senior Council member to assume leadership in an emergency. My proposal applies that same logic to the Mayor Pro Tem appointment process:

- 1. After each general municipal election, the Mayor shall nominate a Mayor Pro Tem from among current Council members, subject to confirmation by the Council (no change to the current process here).*
- 2. If the Council does not confirm the initial nominee, the Mayor must nominate a different Council member within twenty-one (21) calendar days.*
- 3. If the second nominee is also not confirmed, the role of Mayor Pro Tem shall automatically go to the Council member with the longest continuous tenure.*
- 4. In the event of a tie in tenure:*
 - The role shall go to the Council member with the greatest number of consecutive years in current office, and if still tied,*
 - To the Council member who received the highest number of votes in the most recent election in which they were elected.*
 - This mirrors our existing emergency chain of command protocol and ensures consistency across governance.*

This amendment maintains the Mayor's authority to nominate but ensures that, if nominations fail, the Village has a predetermined and non-political fallback that guarantees continuity. It is a practical, principled safeguard that reflects how serious the role of Mayor Pro Tem truly is.

I welcome your feedback ahead of the meeting and am happy to discuss further if helpful.