rEmarks Data for September 2, 2025 Village Council Meeting

Agenda Section & Item: Manager's Report - INF 2025-10892 A. Information: Boards and Commissions Discussion
Commenter: David Rose
Comment: On use of the word "Village"

I again implore VC and staff to STOP using the word "village" in a way that confuses.

Example, one of many, from the elaboration of topics to be discussed:

"Current System of Board & Commission Engagement

The Village has 14 Boards & Commissions. Each board has its own powers and duties enumerated in the Village Code.

I contend here and elsewhere when the word Village is used by itself, the reader is left to figure out what it refers to.

Either "village council" or "village government" would clarify the intended meaning in this and related instances.

Related problem(s):

1. Many on VC think of and/or say " 'VC' is a service organization." And think of and talk about residents in that regard as 'customers'.

Government is NOT a service organization. Thought of in that way, is it any wonder people don't participate?

People are CITIZENS who in a democracy are supposedly responsible for governing themselves.

Yes, part of that responsibility involves providing certain services; but to think of government as simply another service organization undermines appreciation of what it means to be a CITIZEN!

2. In that regard, it is also worth noting that Republicans have taught people to think of taxes as some sort of misuse of a portion of the social product.

Have we not heard Republicans on VC say something to the effect

"nobody likes to pay taxes" and/or

"let's find some way to collect taxes from non-residents in order to fund village operations because we don't want to have to put the burden.on residents"?

Pray tell how the latter constitutes a sustainable understanding of 'fiscal responsibility'?

We have more than ample evidence that the rich don't like to pay taxes and have become quite good at NOT paying taxes.

And putting the burden of paying for government operations on the rest of us.

And on generations to come.

But let me remind again: what is NOT ecologically sustainable is NOT fiscally sustainable.

No one on VC has yet demonstrated a way to circumvent that truism.

Is that reality ever taken into account in VC's relentless pursuit of ever more 'economic development' and population growth?

Agenda Section & Item: Manager's Report - REP 2025-10896 B. Report: Long Range Planning - 2025-2027 Priority Action Items
Commenter: Irene Hogstrom
Comment: Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to state my support for considering a Private Tree Protection Ordinance as a priority action item. The Chicago Region Trees Initiative offers guidance and templates for municipal tree ordinances:

https://mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/chicago-region-trees-initiative/how-to-build-policies-to-protect-trees/

As a landscape architect, I have witnessed so many trees be damaged needlessly during the redevelopment process, even though some homeowners and contractors attempt to preserve them. A Tree Protection Ordinance will help guide them into proper tree preservation practices. A community with mature trees retains higher property values and is better for the health of residents and of the environment.

Please consider this as a priority action item.

Sincerely,
Irene Hogstrom

Agenda Section & Item: Active - ORD 2025-10888 B. Ordinance: Amending the Provisions of Mayor Pro Tem
Commenter: Lisa Forst
Comment: Concerns Regarding Recent Village Council Actions and Decisions

I am writing to express significant concerns about the actions of Commissioners Gilmartin and Sadowski-Fugitt, which appear to prioritize personal agendas over the interests of our community.

Several months ago, during discussions about the library referendum, which would have allowed residents to decide whether the library board should be elected, Commissioners Gilmartin and Sadowski-Fugitt strongly opposed the measure. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt emphasized the need for further discussion and collaboration, urging the council to “slow down” and “do this the right way together.” Similarly, Commissioner Gilmartin raised concerns about insufficient public engagement and dismissed the referendum discussion as "a waste of time". These statements suggested a reluctance to allow the public a direct voice in the decision-making process, contrary to the council’s stated commitment to transparency and thorough discussion.

More recently, the council’s handling of the Mayor Pro Tem nomination has raised further concerns. When the Mayor nominated CommissionerTully for the position in accordance with village bylaws, Commissioners Gilmartin and Sadowski-Fugitt rejected the nomination without providing clear justification for deeming Tully unfit to serve. Instead of engaging in constructive dialogue, they moved swiftly to propose rewriting the village constitution. This decision, which appears to have been expedited with the

support of two newer council members, raises questions about whether the process reflects the will of the community or serves the interests of a select few.

These actions suggest a pattern of dismissing public input and rushing decisions that impact our village's governance. I urge the council to reconsider its approach, prioritize transparency, and ensure that decisions reflect the needs and voices of our residents. Specifically, I request the following:

1. A clear explanation for the rejection of Tully's nomination as Mayor Pro Tem.
2. A transparent and inclusive process for any proposed changes to the village constitution, including public hearings and opportunities for resident input.
3. A renewed commitment to engaging the community in decisions, such as the library referendum, that directly affect our village's future.

Many of us in the community agree with these sentiments:

Mayor Barnett said, "We are here, not because of some dereliction of duty by the mayor or because there is some cleanup needed in our code. We are here because some people have decided that they would prefer to have someone else in a position that's been appointed by the mayor."
"It is not because there's a code problem," Barnett said. "That's bulls**t; that's just not the case."
"Advice and consent is a shared power," he added. "It's an attempt to control power. It's not a directive. This is now a directive."

"This is being used as a partisan tool, just like what's going on elsewhere in the country," Barnett said.
"There has been no valid reason that's been given for the lack of approving the previous one," Barnett said. "I don't like what's going on so I'm going to change the rules"

The residents of our village deserve leadership that listens to and represents their interests. I respectfully ask that the council postpone this vote and address these concerns at the meeting and take steps to restore trust in our local government.

Sincerely,
Lisa Forst

Agenda Section & Item: First Reading - ORD 2025-10871 B. Ordinance: Vacating a Portion of an Unimproved Public Right-of-Way Adjacent to and between 5317 Washington Street and 5310 Lyman Avenue

Commenter: David Dipple
Comment: Subject: Objection to ROW Vacation Request – 5317 Washington St, 60515

Dear Village Council Members,

I am writing to formally object to the builder's request for a right-of-way (ROW) vacation for the easement located at 5317 Washington St, Downers Grove, 60515. I believe granting this request would not be in the best interest of the neighborhood, and I respectfully urge the council to deny the vacation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Dave Dipple

Agenda Section & Item: First Reading - ORD 2025-10871 B. Ordinance: Vacating a Portion of an Unimproved Public Right-of-Way Adjacent to and between 5317 Washington Street and 5310 Lyman Avenue
Commenter: Kathleen Bormes
Comment: Subject: Objection to ROW Vacation Request – 5317 Washington St, 60515

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Agenda Section & Item: Manager's Report - INF 2025-10892 A. Information: Boards and Commissions Discussion
Commenter: Karen Schmidt
Comment: Regarding Board and Commission appointments it would be ideal for the village to post a list of the board and commission terms ending in current year annually. Also, if that post could include the link to apply for those appointments and the deadline to complete the application in order to be considered for the current year. With social media available this would be a good way to ensure all residents are aware of these opportunities.