



Village of Downers Grove

Village Council – Minutes

Table 1 - Detailed information on this Village Council meeting.

Meeting Location	Civic Center – Betty Cheever Council Chambers
Meeting Address	850 Curtiss St., Downers Grove, IL 60515
Meeting Date	July 21, 2026 at 07:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

2. Roll Call

Council Attendance (Present)

Mayor Barnett, Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, Commissioner Gilmartin, Commissioner Tully, Commissioner Davenport, Commissioner Sarver, and Commissioner Roe.

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 2025-10940 A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes - July 14, 2026

Motion: To Adopt **the Village Council Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2026, as presented.**

Result: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Tully.

Seconded By: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt.

Ayes: Commissioners Tully, Sadowski-Fugitt, Roe, Sarver, Davenport, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. Consent Agenda

COR 2026-11125 A. Claims Ordinance: No. 6663 and 6665, Payroll - June 26 and July 10, 2026

BIL 2026-11094 B. Bills Payable: No. 6954 - July 21, 2026

MOT 2026-11280 C. Motion: Approving an Agreement with McGill Construction for the 2026 Parking Lot and Alley Improvements

RES 2026-11257 D. Resolution: Approving the Disposal of Personal Property Owned by the Village of Downers Grove

RESOLUTION 2026-56

A Resolution Authorizing the Disposal of Personal Property Owned by the Village of Downers Grove

Motion: To Approve **the Consent Agenda of the July 21, 2026, Village Council Meeting**, as presented.

Result: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Tully.

Seconded By: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt.

Ayes: Commissioners Tully, Sadowski-Fugitt, Roe, Sarver, Davenport, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

6. Active Agenda

ORD 2026-11260 A. Ordinance: Amending the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Downers Grove, Illinois, to Designate the Property at 1020 31st Street as Planned Unit Development #75 (Forest Trail Luxury Apartments)

Motion: To Adopt **An Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Downers Grove, Illinois to Designate the Property at 1020 31st Street as Planned Unit Development #75 (Forest Trail Luxury Apartments)**, as presented.

ORDINANCE 6200

Result: Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Tully.

Seconded By: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt.

Ayes: Commissioners Tully, Sadowski-Fugitt, Roe, Sarver, Davenport, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

Public Comments

Greg Donahue, an area resident, expressed his opposition to this proposal and concerns of density issues impacting the area. He requested the item be tabled and questioned the B-2 zoning for a building that is strictly residential, noting that if the item is approved, the petitioner should be required to break ground within 9 months or run the risk of the zoning reverting back to current zoning.

Judy Thompson, an area resident, spoke in opposition to this proposal because of a lack of a focus plan for the entire office park. She expressed concerns with this development affecting the value of homes in the area, and requested the Council vote against this petition.

Johanna McMahon, an area resident, agreed with previous speakers and expressed concerns that the developer had advertised the development as market-rate housing only, with no mention of subsidized housing or housing vouchers. She characterized their advertisement as illegal discrimination under the Illinois Human Rights Act and the Federal Fair Housing Act.

Michael O'Brien, an area resident, agreed with previous speakers opposed to the development and expressed concerns with this development causing overcrowding at the elementary schools.

Tom Thompson, an area resident, shared his agreement with previous speakers that expressed concerns with this proposal, requesting the Council vote against this or at least table this until the studies that are underway are complete. He expressed his disappointment that this development does not comply with B-2 zoning and suggested that the Village should focus more on office space as established in the Long Range Plan.

John Leonello said his family lives in the area and shared his opposition to this proposal because it is not in line with the Village Zoning Ordinance, and if approved, the development poses health and safety concerns to the community.

Bianca said she grew up in Downers Grove and plans on buying a home in the Village, but expressed concerns with this apartment development because of zoning questions and the uncertainty of who will be living in the apartments and for how long.

Diva Montato Labno, an area resident, agreed with previous speakers opposing the development. She stated that having a development housing a large population of individuals, whom she described as transient and having no stake in the area, would make her want to sell her home.

Waqas Akkawi, an area resident, shared his opposition to this development and expressed that with so many people returning to work since the pandemic, there is a need for commercial real estate in Downers Grove. He asked the Council to take their time on this decision.

Stew Mercado, an area resident, said he opposed this development and expressed concerns of possible discrimination against section eight housing, and overcrowding at the local schools. He requested the Council vote no, or at least table it, allowing them to take their time before making a decision.

Alexa, an area resident, spoke in opposition to this development and expressed concerns about the negative effect it will have on local schools.

Jeff Reamer, a real estate manager and resident, stated he is not opposed to the development and believes that it is a good design and use of the property. In light of all the concerns expressed by residents, he requested the Council develop a Comprehensive Plan for the area and expressed concerns that the imposed impact fees are not commensurate with a residential project of this scale.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Davenport noted that the Council has received a lot of comments from residents. He spoke about the current OR zoning, the zoning map amendment and PUD request to rezone the property to B-2. He expressed his opinion that the occupancy of the building would be reduced with the change to multifamily from office space. He spoke about conversations the Village has had with Village partners, noting that the superintendents of the school districts did not express concerns about capacity issues. He spoke to stormwater issues being lessened with this development and that the Fire Department and Police

Department do not foresee any issues. He referenced the results of the traffic engineering study that noted there will be no significant impacts to the existing road network and that there would be more parking stalls provided than required by zoning. The Commissioner expressed support for imposing appropriate terms and conditions to protect the interest of surrounding property owners and noted that a suggestion about a time constraint around when construction should start may be worth a discussion. He shared that the zoning portion of this request is the first step of the process for this development to move forward. He suggested a long term plan be created for this area, noting it should include the addition of multi-family residential as a special use within OR zoning, the walk-ability of the area, and the consideration of a transition district to bridge the gap between taller and lower buildings. Commissioner Davenport suggested a pause before any other requests of this nature come before the Council.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she plans to support this. She explained she takes the time to look at all projects that come before the Council on her own by digging into the research, listening to the Staff recommendations, studying all the available materials, and listening to the residents. She said in this case, her opinion is that this development is in the best interest of the community because there is a lack of housing in the area, also noting that an affordability study is underway because of this. She expressed that if School District 58 or 99 had any issues with this, it would be a hard stop for her. She said the reuse of this building is a plus per the Comprehensive Plan and this is good potential for reuse of this building. The Commissioner highlighted that the Village has used KLOA in the past and therefore doesn't think there is any reason why their traffic engineering study would not be valid. She noted she lives in front of a 240-unit apartment complex and she has never had an issue with the renters in the apartment complex and she takes issue with the negative comments made about apartment dwellers. She spoke about homeownership and said that only 50% of people that live in homes are actually homeowners. She stressed that she wants to focus on issues like density and not on degrading renters. She also said there are no traffic impacts or overcrowding issues at her daughter's school because of the apartment complex near her home. She spoke about all of the communication she has had with residents about this

and she said most of the communication she has received - outside of the Council Chambers - has been in favor of this complex. She said this is not the first-time rezoning office zoning to multifamily has been considered. The Council considered and approved it in the past, except after their rezoning approval, the developer decided that moving forward was not in their best interest. She noted that Metra ridership is still at half the rate it was prior to COVID. She agreed with Commissioner Davenport about making this a focus area, because the Village has received other petitions in this area and the Council wants to make sure they are thoughtful about the area. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt reiterated that the Council has to make a decision based on what is best for the Village and there is a housing need.

Mayor Barnett addressed the audience after disruptions and explained that he and the Commissioners are also residents of the community and this is a tough decision for the Council to make, for the Village staff to manage, and for the residents to comprehend. He asked for decorum in the Council Chambers.

Commissioner Sarver said as the Council liaison to School District 58, she has spoken with the superintendent and has shared he has no concerns with overcrowding at the schools in the area. She responded to the comment about the intent to discriminate, explaining that landlords and developers are held to strict criteria when it comes to accepting vouchers and non-discrimination policies, but they can reject requests from criminals and also for other reasons during the screening processes. She shared her support for this development, stating that it has green space that will be preserved, and is a place that allows people to live in Downers Grove. The Commissioner also agreed with Commissioner Davenport's suggestion to look at the future of this area and consider this request as an isolated case.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said, with regard to housing, there are certain developments that are built just for subsidized housing so that the rent is below market rate - those landlords must accept the vouchers. She explained it is harder

for someone with a voucher to live in these types of (luxury) apartments, because they would have to pay a lot more to make up the difference in cost.

Commissioner Tully said there are two items being considered by the Council, the rezoning of this property and also to accept the PUD. He said there are a lot of things that are not in the Comprehensive (Comp) Plan and much of what is in the Comp Plan is based on input that has been received from the community - and community input is ever changing. As an example, he spoke about Laurie's Children's Hospital building on a property in the Esplanade area and the property it will be on was not zoned for it, nor was it listed in the Comp Plan or the Future Land Use Map, but the residents were all for it. He said he agrees with the comments made by his colleagues. He noted that he has reviewed the impact of this project and the apartments issue. He spoke of his own experience living near the Highland Landmark apartments. He also spoke about the domino effect of rezoning and agreed that the Council needs to make a decision on this petition and then they need to review this area for future use before considering other petitions. The Commissioner reiterated that the school districts have not expressed any concerns, nor are there any concerns from the Economic Development Commission. He spoke about all the apartments that are near his home and that he has never experienced negative impacts associated with them. He noted that he physically drove to the office park and watched people from the Innisbrook Subdivision walking into and through the office park with their dogs, however, he did not witness anyone from the office park walking into the Innisbrook Subdivision. Commissioner Tully spoke about the positive aspects of this petition including the increase in green space, reduction in impermeable space, and the feasibility study. He noted that if there were a condition that could be placed on this, similar to a special use, requiring construction to begin within a certain timeframe he would consider it. Village Attorney Enza Petrarca replied stating that a condition cannot be placed on this type of request. Commissioner Tully said he is good with looking into creating a sub-area plan for this office park and that the Council needs to be consistent with what they have approved in the past.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that his colleagues have said most of what he was going to say. He said the Council appreciates the public input but he does not agree with the negative predictions he heard about renters, adding that renters do pay taxes, it is bundled into their rent. Since this petition has come before the Council, he has spent much time traversing this area. He spoke about the permeable surface area that would be returned being twice as much as would typically be expected. He said he has trust in the Traffic Impact Study performed by KLOA, noting that there is no planned vehicle connection from this site to anywhere else. He said he has not heard about any school issues or planned rezoning of students. He highlighted the Comp Plan and that there have been a lot of calls for specificity in this location and he can get behind that if it is in the interest of the balance of the Council. He said the Comp Plan is the vision of the Village and it has the largest collection of community input that the Council has collected, mentioning a community visioning event with more than 1500 participants. He said when the Comp Plan is honored, the Council is honoring the community voice. He cited four passages from the Comprehensive Plan that support the project: the land use plan chapter, noting that multifamily development may occur in and around office areas to promote workforce housing; a key recommendation to facilitate the adaptive reuse of existing structures; an economic development chapter recommendation to promote rehabilitation of older buildings that are functionally obsolete; and the housing chapter's support for adaptive reuse, noting that within Downers Grove there may be potential to convert office buildings with vacancies into multifamily structures. He thinks having a vibrant apartment building over a vacant office building is the best choice. He said the apartment will be occupied by people that are professionals, just starting out, or that are ready to trade in their home with a yard. He said one of the 7 adopted strategic goals is to be a safe and welcoming community - this describes not only the current residents of Downers Grove but also future residents. He shared his support for this development.

Commissioner Roe said he agrees with his colleagues, mentioning that this petition complies with the Municipal Code and the Comp Plan. He said he is struggling with the rationale of some of the comments - especially the concerns about the change in density because there will be fewer people in the multi-family building than there

were when it was an office building. He commented on the estimated number of children in this development that may go to area schools because of this project and said he doesn't see an issue. He said the Village is in the process of completing an Attainable Housing Study and he is looking forward to seeing the results, noting the Village's high vacancy rate. He said he plans on supporting this development.

Mayor Barnett said he lives near Commissioner Tully, and since moving into Downers Grove in 1988, there have been many apartment buildings built near his home. He said he has not seen any issues with this, also adding that four homes near his house are rented. He said he doesn't understand the concerns people have with the types of people that rent because most of the people in the room started out renting apartments. He said once the Attainable Housing Study is released, he thinks people will be surprised to find out there are more people renting near them than they know of. He said though he is in support of this development, he doesn't see all of this office park turning into multi-family housing. He thinks this area, as a whole, needs more thought. He agreed with the comments made by Commissioner Gilmartin that this development does comply with the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked the petitioner about their timeline. The petitioner shared they think the Municipal Code requires them to submit final PUD plans within a year and then the building permit process happens after that.

Commissioner Davenport suggested that anyone that has concerns about overcrowding at the schools should reach out to the school boards.

ORD 2026-11261 B. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 1020 31st Street (Forest Trail Luxury Apartments)

Motion: To Adopt **An Ordinance Rezoning Certain Property Located at 1020 31st Street (Forest Trail Luxury Apartments)**, as presented. **ORDINANCE 6201**

Result: Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Tully.

Seconded By: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt.

Ayes: Commissioners Tully, Sadowski-Fugitt, Roe, Sarver, Davenport, Gilmartin, and Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

7. First Reading

ORD 2026-11281 A. Ordinance: Rezoning Certain Property Located at 4908 Cross Street

Village Manager Dave Fieldman introduced the item, noting that the property at 4908 Cross Street is currently zoned R1 and the proposal is to consolidate four lots two, and then rezone to R4 to allow the construction of a couple of conforming houses. He noted that this is similar to a rezoning done just a few months before on the same block.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt noted that the Village appreciates lot consolidations and this is an easy one.

Commissioner Rowe noted that when this lot was brought in in 2012 it automatically got rezoned as R1 and the Council already set the precedent by approving the same thing down the street. He said he looks forward to supporting this.

Commissioner Davenport said this will allow for two new homes to be built.

8. 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 rezoning certain property located at 4908 Cross Street.

Mayor Barnett called for a recess at 8:58 p.m. before proceeding to the Manager's Report. The meeting reconvened at 9:05 p.m.

9. Manager's Report

INF 2026-11290 A. Information: Zoning Ordinance Update

Community Development Director Stan Popovich presented using a PowerPoint presentation. He noted that this a priority action item and provided context, explaining that the zoning ordinance is based on the Village's Guiding DG plans. He said the evenings discussion would include activities already completed, digital signs, accessory dwelling units, missing middle housing, home daycare regulations and next steps. After noting that the Planning and Zoning Commission had met to review environmental sustainability topics and parking, Mr. Popovich started the discussion about Digital Signs.

1. Digital Signs

Mr. Popovich reviewed the digital sign priority action item project description, the current zoning regulations, and the key concepts of the digital sign update.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Tully said he supports the proposal and provided a history on how the Comprehensive Sign Ordinance went into place, further explaining that the intention was to revisit the ordinance after it had been in place for 12 years and that was 15 years ago. He was content that this was on the agenda, and noted that his only concern was to allow special sign code variations for marquees at any theatre (Tivoli) or performing arts venues - this is what other communities in DuPage County have done. He said he doesn't want to change the underlying zoning of the businesses, but he would like to have a way that they can have the signage.

Commissioner Davenport said there may be other uses that the exceptions may apply to, such as the entertainment district suggested for the Fairview area. He asked whether the schools in D58 and D99 would be eligible for digital signs under the zoning district-based approach. Manager Fieldman confirmed that both the high schools are INP, however D58 schools are split. Commissioner Davenport asked if the Village can initiate the zoning change from Residential to INP. Manager Fieldman said it would be preferred if D58 officials initiated the request.

Mayor Barnett added that there are quite a few other organizations that may want to request this change, as it covers more than just schools.

Commissioner Davenport asked who else is eligible. Mr. Popovich replied, sharing that schools and churches are the big ones. Manager Fieldman said that Staff would provide the Council with a list of the eligible properties.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt shared that she wouldn't have a problem with having digital signs in the Fairview area and downtown. She asked what the Council thinks would happen if they were allowed to have digital signs. Manager Fieldman said the concept is a freestanding only sign type and he asked if Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt is considering wall signs and she said yes.

Commissioner Tully explained there is a difference because of static versus dynamic - explaining that theater signage changes all the time. Commissioner Davenport said that gas station signs do as well. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks there would be few businesses that would apply, so why have the restriction.

Mayor Barnett asked her to imagine all the businesses changing their wall signs to neon signs - even if they are all static. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt responded that operational standards and the practical reality that most businesses would not want such signs would address the concern.

Commissioner Tully asked about the number of downtown businesses that have requested digital signage. Mr. Popovich confirmed that he has not fielded any recent calls for digital signs, but the calls he has received has been from gas stations typically asking about swapping the changeable number pricing signs to digital.

Commissioner Sarver asked where Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt pictures the wall signs. She gave Peets as the example, confirming it should go where their logo is on the window.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if the businesses clarification about free standing digital signs. Mr. Popovich replied stating that if the business is on Ogden Avenue, they can have one free standing sign, but if they are located on a corner lot - they could have a sign on each corner, but only one could be digital.

Commissioner Davenport said this is mostly Staff that has responded to the requests received over the years. He said he really only wants to discuss the exception for theaters/performing arts venues and added he didn't agree with gas stations only being allowed one digital sign if they are on a corner lot. Commissioners Sarver and Tully agreed.

Commissioner Gilmartin shared he wants to get a better handle on what the current ordinance allows before looking at the changes. He requested mock-ups to better understand what the current ordinance allows and how the proposed changes would apply to different buildings in town. Mayor Barnett agreed mock-ups would be a reasonable next step.

Manager Fieldman said free standing, monument, wall, and window signs are all different things. He said if considering window signage, that is different than wall signage. He noted that code enforcement works to facilitate compliance of window signs in the commercial districts.

Commissioner Tully noted this was narrowed on purpose when the Council added this as a Priority Action Item.

Commissioner Davenport asked if there are other communities that can be used as a model. Manager Fieldman said there are other communities that base sign codes on zoning districts and/or land use.

Commissioner Tully clarified that he didn't think there should be special zoning for theaters/performing arts venues, but there should be some special process within their zoning that would allow the signage.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he is concerned with the grammar schools having digital signage, as they are zoned residential - he lives across the street from one and the signage would be bright at night. Commissioner Tully said they could be forced to turn them off at a certain hour.

Mayor Barnett noted that there are many INP eligible parcels tucked all over in residential areas of town.

Manager Fieldman said there is a deep dive coming if the Council chooses to move forward.

Commissioner Roe said he agreed with Commissioner Tully. He would like it to be zoning based. He does not want to see wall signs at this time and he doesn't want the downtown and Fairview to get speckled with signs. He likes the exclusion as it is now.

Mayor Barnett said the exceptions of theaters and performing arts are what is making this palatable.

Commissioner Roe shared that if a good number of businesses are making a case of this, then the Council can revisit it.

Commissioner Sarver liked Commissioner Roe's suggestion to ease into this and see it as a work in progress.

Commissioner Davenport said this is about aesthetics and things have evolved. He thinks the Council should consider it, take a first step, and see how it goes. It should then be revisited by future councils.

Mayor Barnett said the aesthetic thing is something that the Council can regulate. He said he thinks there is enough of a change to technology to be able to consider this.

Commissioner Davenport said there is a benefit to organizations, economic and otherwise, to allowing digital signs.

Commissioner Gilmartin said, thinking of the high schools, DGN has a large digital scoreboard - he wants to make sure there is a clear distinction on what a digital sign is.

Village Manager Fieldman summarized the direction as: the proposal aligns well with the description of the project and is worth going forward for discussion to the Planning and Zoning Commission, with the addition of the idea of theaters and performing arts as a use-based procedural carve-out within the zoning, and the concept of allowing corner lots to potentially have two digital signs.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked about the Downtown Design Guidelines and if they would need to be addressed. Mr. Popovich said that signs are not designed based, so they are not in the Downtown Design Guidelines.

Commissioner Davenport said he would like to allow businesses to have two digital signs - one on each corner. The Council agreed.

2. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and Missing Middle Housing

Mr. Popovich reviewed the definition, the current zoning regulations for R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, Fairview Transition, and the discussion topics. He opened the topic up for discussion.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Sarver asked what the difference is between an ADU that is attached to the back of a house and a tiny house. Mr. Popovich clarified that they are both ADUs. She said the reason ADUs are not being built is because of the occupant requirement -- specifically the related by blood, marriage, adoption, or civil union requirement -- and questioned who the Village is trying to exclude.

Manager Fieldman said a tiny house has different regulations in the building code than an attached ADU. Mr. Popovich explained the regulation requirements.

Mayor Barnett said he would like to see how Fairview plays out.

Commissioner Davenport asked who is trying to be excluded from having an ADU. He said the potential density of the homes on his block is, possibly 25% - he thinks this is not something that will really affect density. He noted it is expensive to do.

Commissioner Tully said the need was to allow this only if occupants are related by blood, marriage or adoption, with one occupant being at least 62 years or older or disabled.

Mayor Barnett said if the purpose would be to use it as a rental tool - the price of adding a tiny house may be attractive to people that want to rent it out. He said the reason the restrictions were placed on it was to prevent them from being rented out.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the percentage of people that have the space and money to build one is relatively small.

Mayor Barnett said he does not like the aesthetics of people having tiny houses in their yard to rent out.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt and Davenport said to take the tiny house out. Commissioner Davenport said he has had clients requesting this and waiting for the Council to approve the concept.

Mayor Barnett shared that he wants to remove the requirements of blood relatives, age and disability and also review the tiny house requirements.

Commissioner Sarver asked about the environmental effects. Mr. Popovich spoke about setbacks for accessory structures and a limit to 1000 sq feet for the footprint. Commissioner Sarver noted that an expansion of the driveway and cutting of trees to build the ADU would be involved.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she is fine getting rid of the restrictions because there are already regulations of a household. Mr. Popovich said that it would depend on the definition of household. Manager Fieldman said the ADU would be considered its own household and there is only a limitation to the number of unrelated residents in a household, not to related residents. Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said there is a housing issue in Downers Grove and she thinks this will help with it. She is ok with getting rid of the tiny house but wants to keep the attached ADU.

The Council agreed with the ADU concept, not including tiny houses, and removing the restrictions.

Commissioner Davenport then spoke about stormwater control and the Village requirements for attached structures being costly - he wants to look at this in the future. He said that getting rid of the restrictions that were listed could make this more financially viable.

Manager Fieldman confirmed that the Council wishes to move away from an extended family dwelling unit to an accessory unit and move toward a typical accessory dwelling unit - removing the blood, marriage, adoption requirement and the age/disability requirement. Additionally, the tiny house option would be removed.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked if there is any way to incentivize this by using an existing structure other than building a new one. Mayor Barnett said the current code already does.

3. Day Care Home Regulations

Mr. Popovich reviewed the current home daycare regulations, noting that the maximum number of children allowed is eight - excluding natural, adopted and foster children who are residents of the dwelling unit. There is also an outdoor play area requirement requiring the area to be fenced and screened from view of adjoining properties. He provided a comparison of the Village's regulations and those of neighboring communities.

Manager Fieldman asked if the Council was good with Staff's recommendation to require solid fencing as a screening requirement. The Council agreed.

Commissioner Davenport suggested changing the maximum number of children to 14, including natural born, adopted and foster children.

Commissioners Sadowski-Fugitt, Gilmartin, Tully, Sarver and Roe suggested the number of children be changed to 12, including natural born, adopted, and foster children,

Mayor Barnett asked why the Village is monitoring them if the State has regulations in place already. Manager Fieldman explained that the planning and zoning concept is that these types of uses could have impacts that are unique to their operation and location, so they align well with the concept of special use. This

allows the Council to review it and put operational conditions on it. The Mayor shared that he does not think the Village should regulate this.

Mr. Popovich explained the next steps included taking the discussion back to the Planning and Zoning Commission later in the fall and early winter. Then, after all the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are prepared, the matter will be brought back before the Village Council.

Public Comments

Scott Richards, a resident, shared that does not like the Day Care Home Regulations and he does not think home daycares should be allowed in residential areas.

Robin Tryloff, a resident, shared that she thinks that the option for the use of an ADU by non-blood relatives, or the elderly, would make it easier to sell homes.

Mr. Richards expressed concerns with ADUs, because he thinks they will be too hard to control and people will abuse it.

REP 2026-11292 B. Report: Long Range Plan Update Report #1

Village Manager Fieldman presented using a PowerPoint presentation. He noted that the Council prepares the Long Range Plan when a new Council is seated, every other year, and then does an update in the off year. He noted that the Long Range Plan is unique in that it combines strategic planning with financial realities and financial plans.

Village Manager Fieldman noted that the evening's discussion would focus on the General Fund, Property Tax Levy, Health Fund, and a deeper dive into other post-employment benefits (OPEB). There would be a subsequent August meeting to cover facility planning, capital projects, and the water fund.

1. General Fund Sustainability

Manager Fieldman reported that revenue has exceeded expenses in the past several years, allowing significant transfers to other funds. He said that current year revenues are projected to come in just over \$71 million, with expenses at between \$67 and \$68 million. Looking ahead to 2027 and 2028, the positive gap is expected to close slightly as revenues are projected to grow at a slightly slower rate than expenses. He noted that if recent trends hold, there should be sufficient revenue in the General Fund through FY29, without making major changes to current strategies and solutions.

2. Property Tax Levy and Public Safety Pensions

Manager Fieldman reported that the total Tax Levy, including all components, has increased by a million dollars from just under \$17 million in 2024 to about \$18 million in the current year - those increases were driven entirely by required contributions to Public Safety Pension funds. Public Safety Pension contributions are expected to go from their current levels of about \$11.4 million to over \$20 million in 2040, noting that the Village is on the right track. He explained this is due to a Illinois state law compliance requirement to achieve 100% funding. He noted that in 2027, the required Public Safety Pension contribution to fire and police is projected to increase, resulting in approximately a 2.9% bottom line increase in the total levy.

Village Manager Fieldman proposed two changes. The first proposal is to make a one-time prorated contribution to the two Public Safety Pension Funds in 2027 by using the entire pension stabilization balance of \$470,000. He noted that the 2040 deadline is close enough, and the contribution would have measurable impacts on lowering annual impacts. The second proposal is to consider making additional contributions if the General Fund financial conditions allow.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she thinks that whoever is on Council in 2027 should review these numbers.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he will make a decision on this after reviewing the sustainability of the Health Fund.

3. Health Fund Sustainability & OPEB Trust

Village Manager Fieldman reported that the Village pays for all expenses including medical, dental, vision, and life insurance claims from the Health Fund, noting the Village is self-funded. The Village provides health benefits to active and retired employees of the Village, the library, the Downers Grove Park District, and the Economic Development Corporation. He reported that the Health Fund has been managed in a financially sustainable manner for the past 20 years, with a positive cash balance established in 2005 and maintained every year since, growing from 18% of annual expenses in 2006 to about 50% of annual expenses currently.

He noted that FY24 and FY25 actuals showed annual expenses exceeding revenues, a situation repeating in FY26 with expenses budgeted to be \$1.9 million more than budgeted revenues. The key recommendation going forward is to be more proactive and budget for transfers upfront rather than relying on opportunistic transfers, and to consider increasing all revenue sources.

Regarding OPEB (Post Employment Benefits), Village Manager Fieldman explained that the Village provides healthcare benefits to retirees as required by State law, and that the OPEB liability will be present as long as the Village charges the same premiums to all employees regardless of age. The current OPEB liability is \$10.7 million total, with \$3.4 million funded and \$7.3 million unfunded. In 2019, the Village established a trust fund to invest annual contributions of \$300,000 per year. The industry standard is not to start taking money out of the trust until it hits 80% funded, which is expected to occur around 2035, with full funding expected around 2050.

Village Manager Fieldman explained that as a strategy and solution, Staff recommends a continued contribution of \$300,000 annually to the OPEB Trust. Then once 80% funded, estimated to be in 2035, transition to making annual

contributions based directly on an actuarial calculation. Most importantly, funds from this trust can be used to lower the overall cost of addressing the funding liability.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Gilmartin asked, with regard to OPEB, whether increasing the annual contribution from \$300,000 to \$500,000 would accelerate the timeline, also asking for clarification on the 2034, 2035, and 2050 deadline dates listed on the LRP document. Manager Fieldman clarified that the Village anticipates being fully funded by 2035 and in 2050 it is anticipated that the Village will reach fully funded trust status. He further explained that increasing the Village's contribution amount to \$500,000 would shift the funding dates forward by about 2 years.

Commissioner Gilmartin then noted the increase in expenses in the Health Care Fund over the last few years. He asked for clarification that the recommendation is to be more deliberative with fund transfers, as continued increases are to be expected. Manager Fieldman said yes. Commissioner Gilmartin said he thinks this requires more than a conversation at this meeting. He then asked if there are options for the Village outside of being self-funded, such as joint plans with other municipalities. Manager Fieldman said the team has looked into other options, but their recommendation is to remain self-funded. He said the increase in expenses is expected to continue and the recommendation is to keep adjusting the transfers.

Commissioner Gilmartin then asked for confirmation that the idea is to allocate funds in the budget to accommodate for the potential growth as opposed to waiting until the end. Manager Fieldman said yes, the funds will be allocated on the front end.

Mayor Barnett suggested that the team model an acceleration of OPEB contributions, noting that there may be facility requirements in the near future that will likely require debt instruments, and using these strategies now could change the Village's financial position in terms of liabilities.

Village Manager Fieldman noted that the next LRP discussion with the Council will address Fire Station #3. The next discussion will include how all of these financial considerations relate, the question of where to put available dollars among Public Safety Pension contributions, Health Fund contributions, and saving for the replacement of Fire Station #3.

Manager Fieldman asked the Council to let him know if they had any additional questions.

REP 2026-11293 C. Report: Priority Action Item Update

Village Manager Fieldman reported that the Village is making great progress on all active Priority Action Items, with all items remaining green in status except the Ogden Avenue TIF, which is in the yellow but due to schedule. He noted that progress was made on the Ogden Avenue TIF with the recent approval of the new redevelopment agreement with Fields. He noted that the Attainable Housing Study will be presented at the August 18th meeting.

10. Council Member Reports

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt reminded everyone about the Grove Foundation Golf Outing coming up on September 12th.

11. Mayor's Report

Mayor Barnett did not have a report.

12. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: To **Adjourn the July 21, 2026, Village Council Meeting.**

Result: Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Gilmartin.

Seconded By: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt.

Ayes: Commissioners Gilmartin, Sadowski-Fugitt, Roe, Sarver, Davenport, Tully, Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosa Berardi

Village Clerk