



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	August 11, 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 Roe, Commissioner Sarver.

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 2025-10942 A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes - August 4, 2026

Motion: To Adopt **the Village Council Meeting Minutes of August 04, 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, Davenport, Sarver, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

4. Public Comments

Steven Kiewart, a resident of Venard Rd., reported that his property has had flooding issues due to stormwater that runs off of Interstate 88. He noted that the issue has been brought to the attention of the Illinois Tollway and also to Village Storm Water Administrator Julie Lomax's attention with no resolution to date, so he was looking to the Council for a plan of action.

Mayor Barnett told Mr. Kiewart that Stormwater Administrator Julie Lomax was a good starting point. He asked that Mr. Kiewart provided his name and phone number to a Village Staff that was at the meeting.

Jenny, a resident of Downers Grove, expressed concerns with the Flock camera system and requested the Village pause usage of it until there are further discussions with the community.

5. Consent Agenda

BIL 2026-11096 A. Bills Payable: No. 6958 - August 11, 2026

MOT 2026-11309 B. Motion: Approving a Contract with Schroeder Asphalt Services for the 2026 Roadway Patching Project (ST-004D)

MOT 2026-11307 C. Motion: Approving an Increase to the Contract Amount with B&F Construction Code Services, Inc. for Additional Building Inspection Services

Motion: To Approve **the Consent Agenda of the August 11, 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

RES 2026-11289 A. Resolution: Approving the Annexation Agreement for the Property Located at 5881 Woodward Avenue

MOTION: To adopt **A Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Annexation Agreement for the Property Located at 5881 Woodward Avenue**, as presented.

RESOLUTION 2026-58

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, Gilmartin, Mayor Barnett.

Abstained: Commissioner Davenport.

Nays: None.

RES 2026-11288 B. Resolution: Approving the Annexation Agreement for the Property Located at 6207 Woodward Avenue

MOTION: To adopt **A Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Annexation Agreement for the Property Located at 6207 Woodward Avenue** as presented.

RESOLUTION 2026-59

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.

7. Manager's Report

Village Manager Dave Fieldman spoke about the storms that passed through Downers Grove earlier in the day and the exceptional clean-up efforts of the Village Public Works Department. He noted that there were more than 80 calls for service worked through that day and cleanup efforts would continue for the next few days including removing hanging limbs and debris from parkway trees and working with ComEd to clear remaining branches and trees from blocked streets - especially those with downed wires intermixed with trees. Manager Fieldman noted that ComEd's last report showed 4,400 customers in the Village were without power and the Village would continue to advocate on behalf of residents who are also ComEd customers. He said that residents should call Public Works to report parkway tree damage or fallen limbs, with power outages being reported to ComEd directly.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Gilmartin inquired as to whether the power outage that day affected the same residents as the last storm, noting that there may be something to glean from repeated outages in the same areas. Manager Fieldman confirmed that he would follow up with ComEd.

MOT 2026-11297 A. Motion: Accepting the Boards and Commissions Project Report

Village Manager Fieldman presented Item A using a PowerPoint. He provided the project description and a list of the proposed actions developed by the Council to be implemented in the years 2026-2027, in addition to the proposed actions for 2028 and beyond. Lastly, he reviewed the expected results of the proposed actions.

Village Council Comments

Mayor Barnett explained the process at this meeting would include the Council accepting the report, noting that there would need to be a prioritization of actions.

Commissioner Tully moved to accept the Boards and Commissions Project Report.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt seconded the motion.

A vote was never taken.

Commissioner Sarver asked whether the report had been shared with the boards and commissions prior to the meeting. Manager Fieldman replied by stating that the first stop was with the Council as they are in charge of the project, also noting that Staff would be happy to share it with the commissions at the Council's discretion.

Commissioner Tully noted that accepting the report is simply that and the question of what to do with the items discussed would be addressed separately. He noted that the report is available publicly for anyone that wants to review it.

Commissioner Davenport shared his reservations about the language in the expected results and impacts section, specifically the phrase "formally participate in the Long Range Plan (LRP)," stating that the objective was for boards and commissions to provide information to the Council rather than formally participate in the Long Range Plan. He opined that rather than participating, boards and commissions should provide information to the Council. Manager Fieldman said this was fine tuned by Staff per the last Village Council discussion. He provided a

list of boards and commissions discussed that were to provide input on trends and issues for Council consideration. Commissioner Davenport reiterated that he did not like the language on page 4 referring to the boards and commissions participating in the LRP.

Mayor Barnett said the objective is to create intentional structured participation.

Commissioner Tully noted that the specific details on page 14 of the report indicate that "formally participating" is defined by more specific language requiring boards to prepare reports on trends. He noted that the report has no force of law and does not bind the next Council.

Commissioner Davenport noted he also has concerns with the expected results and impacts language regarding additional staff time for attending meetings, drafting reports, preparing annual reports, and undertaking additional recruiting activities. He expressed concerns about the cost of that additional staff time.

Commissioner Sadowksi-Fugitt clarified that only select boards and commissions are expected to prepare annual reports.

Mayor Barnett said he did not redline anything for the night's meeting and he asked Commissioner Davenport to share his red-lined copy with the Council.

Commissioner Gilmartin also shared his concern about the word "formally" and expressed he was uncertain that the report had enough of what he wanted to see with the enhancements of boards and commissions, noting that there are good things on the report, but he does not feel as though they will change the nature of Village boards and commissions as he had hoped. He said that during past Council meeting discussions, he suggested charters or instructional binders that walk members through the board member experience and that did not make this report. He noted that he understands this is just saying yes to the report but reiterated that he does not feel like there is enough in this report.

Mayor Barnett said this is about a report capturing a starting point for implementation.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he interpreted this motion as accepting the report and understands the next step would be implementation of the actions in the rebirth.

Mayor Barnett noted that after acceptance, the next step would be for the Council to provide direction in the LRP, noting that accepting this report does not compel things to go in a particular direction. The Mayor said if the Council collectively has too much anxiety about accepting this report, he would like to table it and not discuss changes at this time.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked Staff for clarification. Manager Fieldman said at the next meeting, the LRP discussion would be helpful, as the Council would see the shift from report writing to implementation and could discuss how the report fits in and what priorities the Council has moving forward.

Commissioner Tully then moved to table the acceptance of the report to a date uncertain. He noted that the item would be brought back when it makes sense in the context of the LRP update discussion.

MOTION: To Table the Acceptance of the Boards and Commissions Project Report to a future date uncertain.

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

REP 2026-11299 B. Report: Private Tree Ordinance Discussion

Village of Downers Grove Environmental Sustainability Coordinator Jason Michnick presented using a PowerPoint. He explained this was a Village Council Priority Action Item and provided its background. He shared key takeaways from Staff's research on how other municipalities in the region regulate tree removal on private property. Staff reviewed ordinances and municipal codes and spoke with the staff in those communities. He noted that Village staff also attended webinars and workshops on tree preservation through other organizations.

Mr. Mitchnick noted that as a result of Staff's research, Glen Ellyn's ordinance was found to be the closest existing ordinance to the language of the Priority Action Item. He requested the Council's feedback on three things: whether the preferred approach to tree preservation is reflected in the language of the Priority Action Item; whether there are specific ordinance elements the Council would prefer or not support; and whether the Council would support additional resources such as more staff to support implementation.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt thanked Mr. Michnick and said this is great work for the Council to consider. She agreed that the Glen Ellyn example is what she is leaning towards. She would defer to Staff to decide on a size trigger. She shared her interest in the look back feature and wants more info on that, in addition to what other communities have done. She noted the primary objective is to prioritize mature native trees and to protect the Village tree canopy, noting that she would like language added about invasive trees being exempt and should always be removed. She shared the adjacent neighbor tree protection provision as something she strongly supports, noting that boundary tree issues have come up frequently. She said that the Glen Ellyn ordinance fits her vision with the inclusion of invasive trees being removed.

Commissioner Sarver asked Mr. Michnick what the overall feeling was from the Morton Arboretum and the Chicago Regional Tree Initiative (CRTI) webinars about tree ordinances. He said that the Morton Arboretum and CRTI created a model ordinance that the Village can look at. He said they regulate all tree removals - not

only development related. She asked if the model ordinance is available to review. Mr. Michick said it is available online.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked for a definition of Heritage Trees. Mr. Michnick explained that heritage trees are a specific class defined in an ordinance by size, species, or a combination of both, and generally represent an elevated level of protection designated for exceptionally large, mature trees.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked whether a canopy audit had been done for the Village. Mr. Michnick said the CRTI conducts periodic canopy profiles for every community, and that the existing conditions memo for the Sustainability Plan included data points from that profile. He noted that CRTI does not get down to species level but does provide genus-level information.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked whether the Glen Ellyn style ordinance would apply to a resident who simply wants to remove a tree without any development activity. Mr. Michnick confirmed that under the Glen Ellyn approach, the ordinance would not apply in that scenario and would only be triggered by a permit request.

Commissioner Gilmartin said he wants to make sure that no matter what is put into place, the outcome is what the Council is seeking. He also expressed interest in fee-in-lieu provisions and incentivizing tree preservation, also noting that he does not know well enough what a mature tree can do for a dry well. He said if the ordinance has many nuances, it will require more staff time and he is on board with that to preserve the desired canopy. He noted that safety exceptions should be included for trees that are too close to structures or pose a hazard. He expressed interest in directing fee-in-lieu funds to areas of the community that need more canopy.

Commissioner Gilmartin said the Glen Ellyn ordinance does not have a lot of teeth because it is only at the petitioner's discretion, expressing particular concern about property line trees and asking for clarification about Glen Ellyn's neighbor tree protection provision. Mr. Michnick provided clarification that protecting a tree

would include fencing around the tree, some element of root pruning before a foundation dig, and chemical treatment to a tree to help its chances of surviving construction. Commissioner Gilmartin clarified that the petitioner would have to take certain steps to prevent the tree from being damaged. Mr. Michnick responded that in cases where too much of the tree would be damaged, the Forester may decide that the tree would be required to be removed or replaced.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt said she would like to implement a species or size trigger, or even find a way to incentivize.

Commissioner Davenport said he was interested in hearing his colleagues' comments before he spoke. He said the lack of consensus across communities should tell the Council something about the inherent difficulty of this issue. He wants to accomplish the Village's goals in the simplest way possible, noting he wants to save trees but all of this adds additional regulatory costs that cannot be thought of in a compartmentalized way, in a day and age when the Council should be thinking about affordable housing. He wants to identify the Council's goals and do this the Downers Grove way. He is concerned about personal property rights when it comes to trees, sharing he thinks making measures voluntary are ineffective and he is not interested in putting things in place that encourage, but do not require, action. The Commissioner said that despite having no regulations on private trees, Downers Grove has an incredible tree canopy, suggesting that people have generally valued trees without being required to. He said the Naperville approach, with properties of 1 ½ acre and larger appears to be targeting larger developments rather than individual property owners.

Commissioner Davenport opined that the Council's focus should be stormwater management and current Village requirements for underground water detention and to retain water are actually at odds with the goal of preserving trees. He suggested the Village consider reducing the additional stormwater management requirements as an incentive. He spoke to lot coverage bonuses and the protection of border trees during the pre-build construction process. He noted he likes the variations in ordinance components in the presentation and thinks that rather than

focusing only on penalties, the Village should incentivize people to preserve and grow more trees.

Commissioner Davenport expressed interest in the permit trigger, noting it should not only include building permits, but should also include driveway, patio and paving permits. He reiterated that the process should be as simple as possible to encourage compliance. He wants a fee-in-lieu as a removal requirement and noted he likes the look-back provision, but has concerns about how far back it would go and the difficulty involved with proving intent. The Commissioner noted that if the ordinance is structured correctly with the right incentives, people will not be incentivized to do the wrong thing. He agreed with the findings and takeaways, but suggested that some things could possibly be built into the existing regulatory structure rather than creating a whole new standalone ordinance.

Commissioner Roe concurred with much of what had been said. He shared that he likes the Glen Ellyn ordinance, but thinks it should have a little more tooth. He agreed to keep the Village's ordinance simple and the easiest trigger should be the permit process. He does not have a handle on how many trees are being lost, so he thinks a canopy audit might be helpful. He opined that fee-in-lieu can be used as a fund to plant trees in parkways. He expressed interest in understanding what has worked in other communities to incentivize tree preservation and planting, and whether there is data showing where incentives have been effective. He would like to incorporate the Village forester to save costs and provide education on what the Village wants to see with the labeling of heritage trees and with eliminating trees that are not adding to the canopy. He thinks the Environmental Concerns Commission and the Stormwater Oversight Committee should be engaged to help with things like stormwater mitigation and he thinks these efforts are worth additional staff time. Commissioner Roe shared that he wants to incentivize tree planning and preservation, reiterating that he thinks permitting is the easiest trigger. He likes the idea of 1:1 - for each tree removed, one tree is being planted. He summarized that he wants to keep this simple, identify the heritage trees, keep the requirements of removing trees simple, and use the Forster as a guide.

Commissioner Tully said all of the ordinance examples are trying to promote preservation, but none are perfect. He thinks the Glen Ellyn ordinance aligns best and he said he wants to know more before committing to additional staffing costs. He does not want to overregulate things because it may provide the Village with the opposite result, noting that he doesn't want to invite litigation. The Commissioner shared that he wants to positively promote tree preservation and encourage stormwater mitigation. He reiterated he wants the ordinance to be simple.

Mayor Barnett shared that he has a lot of issues with boundary trees. He wants to encourage people to plant trees. He highlighted that over 400 Village permits are pulled a year and he thinks only a small number of those permits are causing any issues with trees. He said it's anecdotal and over the past 5 years he has removed some very large trees on his property but that is not clear cutting his property. He said by and large people try to preserve trees. When it comes to stormwater, the Mayor shared that trees play a role but they do not play the same role (different absorption rates) as a basin.

Mayor Barnett shared that he thinks this is reflective of the Council's collective direction, however, he is more interested in boundary trees and incentivizing people to plant trees. He spoke to people moving to Downers Grove because of the tree canopy that was created with both public and private dollars. Mayor Barnett noted that he does not want to stack the costs involved with construction by adding additional fees involved with this. He thinks the next step should be to use the Glen Ellyn ordinance for guidance, but he still needs to be convinced.

Commissioner Davenport clarified that in his previous comment he was not implying that basins and trees are equal. He said he wanted to point out that the accumulation of stormwater can damage tree roots. He reiterated that the trigger should be in permitting that could have to do with a deck, patio, driveway, remodel or new home. He agreed with some of what the Mayor said.

Commissioner Gilmartin said that after hearing the conversation, he feels this has merit. Other than border trees, he needs to understand what the problem is that

the Village is trying to solve. He said he wants clarity on what “keeping this simple” means. He wants Staff to speak to other communities to understand what has worked for them when it comes to incentives. He said he is in favor of the look-back, sharing that if someone cuts a tree down and then applies for a permit, fines should be implemented.

Commissioner Davenport said he wants to dig into how many years back the look-back should be. He said he doesn’t want anyone to have to prove why they took trees down. He said people will do things to get around this, like causing damage to their own trees, to be able to remove them. For him, the main topics should be stormwater management, border tree issues, and incentives for people to preserve and grow more trees. He isn’t convinced that a whole ordinance needs to be in place for this.

Mayor Barnett asked whether the Village has any existing incentives or partnership programs that work with existing property owners on adding trees. Manager Fieldman confirmed that none came to mind nor did any come to light in the research, as the Village is currently silent on private trees in its ordinances.

Mayor Barnett stated that he would feel good if the Village had something that incentivized tree planting, noting that people have the opportunity to add trees more often than they are forced to remove them, and that cost, knowledge of what tree to pick, and where to put it are all barriers.

Commissioner Tully said that he has planted 55-60 trees on his property and it is a lot of work to maintain them. He noted that if there is an incentive to plant trees, then there should also be a program in place which positively promotes the maintenance of trees.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fuggit pointed out that in the Chicagoland region the ecosystem has had a decline and the Village forester has been working on this issue. She spoke about the recent loss of an Oak grove in the Village and shared

that Village staff worked hard to save what they could, noting that having something like this in place would help prevent those types of situations.

Commissioner Tully said that people should plant slow growing trees and people often do not do that.

Mayor Barnett wrapped up the conversation and turned it back to Manager Fieldman.

Manager Fieldman confirmed that the Village tree team would review the feedback received and report back, noting that there is no specific timeline yet for when the Council might see this again.

8. Council Member Reports

Commissioner Sarver reported that as liaison to District 58, she has been in contact with Superintendent Dr. Russell, who has been working with Village Manager Fieldman and his team. She noted that Dr. Russell has expressed his willingness to work on mitigating traffic associated with the new Dutch Brothers location.

Commissioner Tully reported as the Council liaison to the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC). He said the DMC held its semi-quarterly meeting on August 6, 2026, and shared that many DMC members are interested in the parking impacts, handicap space locations, and confusion among patrons due to the Flexible Amenity and Linda Kunze Plaza construction. He thanked Deputy Village Manager Mike Baker for his communication with downtown management and businesses as stakeholders. Commissioner Tully shared that downtown businesses questioned whether tables could return to areas not immediately impacted by construction, but public safety concerns during active construction made it unlikely even, if technically outside the construction scope. He also noted that the DMC is embarking on its own strategic plan later in the year and that the DMC 2027 Budget includes an annual levy of approximately \$523,000, which would keep the tax rate

below the .75 threshold the DMC has been trying to maintain. Lastly, the Commissioner noted there are 317 days until Rotary Grove Fest.

Commissioner Davenport shared that as the Council liaison to District 99, he hopes to attend the next board meeting. He reported that the former District 99 CFO, Mark Staehlin, passed away. He said that Mark was beloved and did a lot to benefit the students and taxpayers. The Commissioner said he is a friend that he will miss. Commissioner Davenport also spoke about the Grove Express 5k, taking place on Thanksgiving morning, and encouraged all to sign up.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt spoke about the Grove Foundation Golf Outing on Saturday, September 12, 2026, and encouraged all to register and attend.

9. Mayor's Report

There was no Mayor's Report.

10. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: To adjourn the August 11, 2026, Village Council Meeting.

Result: Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Motion to Approve: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt .

Seconded By: Commissioner Gilmartin.

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

Nays: None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosa Berardi
Village Clerk

