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	November 10, 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, Commissioner Roe.

Council Attendance (Not Present)

None.

Non-Voting

Village Manager Dave Fieldman, Village Attorney Enza Petrarca, and Village Clerk Rosa Berardi.

3. Proclamations

A. Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week
B. Veteran and Military Families Month

Mayor Barnett read the two proclamations.

4. Public Hearing

A. Public Hearing: Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

Mayor Barnett called the hearing to order at 7:09 pm and outlined the procedures for the public hearing. He advised that notice of the public hearing was published in the Daily Herald on October 29, 2026, and he introduced Village Manager Dave Fieldman.

Manager Fieldman used a PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of the budget process and schedule for FY27, noting that the budget process will continue through mid-December. He reported that all Council members were individually briefed earlier in the month and provided their budget books several weeks prior. He advised that for the FY26 Budget closeout, revenues were estimated to end the year approximately 7% better than budgeted, with a budget amendment forthcoming in the spring. He reported that the 2027 General Fund was again budgeted to be sustainable, with revenues of approximately $75.9 million and expenses of approximately $75.1 million. He reported that the Village represents about 9% of a Downers Grove resident's total Property Tax bill. Manager Fieldman advised that all Long Range Plan strategies are reflected in the FY27 Budget. He thanked Village staff members for their contributions during the budget process.

Erin Venezia, the Executive Director of Downtown Downers Grove Management Corporation (DMC), then addressed the Council. Ms. Venezia advised that the DMC supported the proposed FY27 budget and provided a summary of DMC's accomplishments over the past year. She noted that the downtown area proudly

maintained a first-floor occupancy rate of approximately 98%. She discussed several annual programs to encourage growth and economic activity in the downtown area, as well as the new developments and businesses coming to the area. She thanked the Council and staff for their continued support and looked forward to another successful year of bolstering the success of downtown Downers Grove.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt noted that this was an excellent budget and thanked staff for planning ahead for the rising health costs. She was pleased to see the investment in staff, the Health Fund and the Guiding DG plans. She appreciated the diverse economic portfolio and the investments beyond the downtown area.

Commission Davenport echoed Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt's sentiment. He advised that most of his questions or comments about the budget were addressed in his personal meeting with staff. Commissioner Davenport added that he couldn't be happier, adding that residents can rest assured that the Village is doing the best it can in light of the current challenges. He felt that the budget reflected a commitment to the plans of Guiding DG.

Commissioner Tully advised that it was worth acknowledging that by the time the budget was presented to the Council, there was a lot of hard work that went into it throughout the year. He pointed out that Village staff plan carefully and are mindful of the expenses that can be controlled, especially with regard to the number of Village staff members. He felt that the Village's reserves were exactly where he would like to see them. He was thankful that the Village maintained the coveted AAA bond rating.

Mayor Barnett highlighted the fact that taxes collected, as the result of economic activity, are paying for slightly more than 50% of the Village's operational costs. He stated that without that level of economic activity, a resident's Property Tax bill would be much higher. He advised that this was a great budget that he fully

supported, adding that the Village needs to always respond to the expectations of the residents. He noted that payroll is known to be expensive and this budget will add some staff, which will add to future costs.

Commissioner Gilmartin thanked staff for their hard work on the budget, especially for their attention to the Health Fund. He clarified with Manager Fieldman that the budget was forecasting a growth in Home Rule Sales Tax of $160,000 within the General Fund. Lastly, he spoke in regard to the Guiding DG investments. He stated that this was exactly what the Council was working to accomplish over the past two years. This budget stood out to him as great work.

Commissioner Roe noted that the budget was impressive and indicative of years of work. He advised that the Village was being fiscally responsible with a balanced budget and planning ahead on the Health Fund.

Manager Fieldman recognized Village staff members that contributed to this budget, including but not limited to Finance Director Robin Lahey and her team.

Public Comments

Kevin Larke, a resident and founder of Local Legends Downers Grove, addressed the Council and noted the budget for the Northside Main Street Train Station. He spoke about his organization's work to bring a permanent monument to the train station, honoring Randy Poffo - known worldwide as "Macho Man Randy Savage", and reported that the Poffo family and ConAgra Brands have pledged full support and offered unconditional partnership to the Village.

Mayor Barnett adjourned the Public Hearing at 8:02 pm.

5. Minutes of Council Meetings

MIN 2025-10950 A. Minutes: Village Council Meeting Minutes - October 20, 2026

Motion: To **Adopt the Village Council Meeting Minutes of October 20, 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 and Mayor Barnett.
Nays: None.

6. Public Comments

Randy Messina, a resident of Highland Ave, said that he had been working with Village staff to address his traffic safety concerns on Highland Avenue between Grant Street and Sherman Street and provided the Council with a map of the area. He reported that the Village recently conducted a traffic study near his home and asserted that even if the data ultimately shows 85% of traffic traveling at a reasonable speed, additional safety measures are still appropriate for the area.

7. Consent Agenda

BIL 2026-11104 A. Bills Payable: No. 6974 - November 10, 2026

RES 2026-11440 B. Resolution: Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Northern Illinois Transit Authority for Access to Transit Grant Funding

RESOLUTION 2026-75
A Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with Northern Illinois Transit Authority for Access to Transit Grant Funding

Motion: To **Adopt the Consent Agenda of the November 10, 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 and Mayor Barnett.
Nays: None.

8. Active Agenda

ORD 2026-11423 A. Ordinance: Amending Chapter 14 Making Certain Traffic Control, Parking and Speed Provisions and Pedestrian/Bike Safety Improvements

Motion: To Adopt **An Ordinance Amending Chapter 14 Making Certain Traffic Control, Parking and Speed Provisions and Pedestrian/Bike Safety Improvements,** as presented**. ORDINANCE 6216**
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.

Public Comments

Megan Bacarella, a resident near El Sierra School, expressed her concerns about pedestrian safety on 68th Street and advocated for the addition of a 3-way stop at the intersection of 68th Street and Grand Ave. She felt that the proposed high visibility crosswalk at that intersection was not enough to enhance safety.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Tully advised that even if the motion presented was approved, additional traffic controls could be added at a later time, if necessary. Commissioner Tully said that in his experience, past improvements have been

initiated by the Village, as a result of working closely with the staff at the grammar and high schools. He noted that some have also been driven by resident petitions. He noted that it is a constant process, especially with changes in traffic patterns.

Commissioner Davenport said that residents on the southside of the Village are happy these improvements are forthcoming. As a past school board member, he confirmed that the school districts have worked with the Village on initiating some of the studies related to past improvements around schools.

Commissioner Gilmartin asked what the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) recommendations were for that intersection. Manager Fieldman noted that the traffic study and Active Transportation Plan recommended crosswalk upgrade opportunities for the intersections in that area. Commissioner Gilmartin advised that he recalled some traffic control changes made around schools that were resident driven. He said maybe this was something to think about, to have policies in place when it comes to the proximity of schools.

Mayor Barnett agreed that there should be a focus around schools. He felt that on average, attitudes toward traffic around schools change about every 8 years. He felt this ordinance aligned with the Guiding DG Active Transportation Plan and noted that a lot of work went into the ATP. He said recommendations that have come out of the previous 11 traffic studies have been completed. Mayor Barnett said this was a good process, and he was glad the Village was conducting the studies and making the recommended improvements.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt requested that staff use the numbers from the studies near El Sierra School and compare those with the vehicle count around Fairmount School.

ORD 2026-11430 B. Ordinance: Approving the Execution of a First Amendment to the Redevelopment Agreement with 1250 Ogden, LLC

Motion: To Adopt **An Ordinance Approving the Execution of a First Amendment to the Redevelopment Agreement with 1250 Ogden, LLC,** as presented**. ORDINANCE 6217**
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.

Public Comments
There were no public comments.

Village Council Comments
There were no Council comments.

9. First Reading

ORD 2026-11319 A. Ordinance: Adopting the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget in Lieu of Passage of an Appropriation Ordinance

MOT 2026-11323 B. Motion: Motion to Estimate the 2026 Aggregate Tax Levy for the Village of Downers Grove

Village Manager Fieldman noted that the discussion on First Reading Item A and Item B happened during the Public Hearing held earlier in the meeting.

10. 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 adopting the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget in lieu of passage of an

Appropriation Ordinance.

11. Manager's Report

There was no Manager's Report.

12. Council Member Report

A. New Business

REP 2026-11439 1. Report: Discussion of an Ordinance Banning the Sale of Kratom and Similar Products

Commissioner Gilmartin asked the Council to direct staff to create an ordinance to prohibit the sale of Kratom and similar products. He explained that Kratom contains active compounds that act the same way on the brain receptors as opioids. He reported that the products are currently sold at gas stations and smoke shops, and they lack any regularity of strength, purity or labeling. He reported that nearly 6 in 10 retailers place these products near toys, candies, and snacks. He reported that in the past year, the market had moved to concentrated and synthetic products called 7-OH; available in various flavored tablets with packaging that mimics that of candy. He reported that FDA studies have shown 7-OH to be several times more potent than morphine. He highlighted some recently publicized overdoses related to these products and how other nearby municipalities have taken steps to ban the retail sale of these products.

Commissioner Gilmartin clarified that the ordinance should not make it a crime to possess the products for adults, but should prohibit the retail sale and distribution. He asserted that the ordinance should include meaningful fines, counting each day of a sale as a separate violation, and giving businesses a reasonable 30 days to clear their shelves. He specified that the three products to be named are Kratom, 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), and Tianeptine, noting that naming those three specifically is important, so retailers cannot simply switch one dangerous product

out for another. He also added that this proposal has nothing to do with the new state law regarding hemp-derived THC products.

Motion: To **Direct Staff to Prepare an Ordinance Prohibiting the Retail Sale and Distribution of Kratom, 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) and tianeptine products in the Village of Downers Grove**
Result: Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.
Motion to Approve: Commissioner Gilmartin.
Seconded By: Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt.
Ayes: Commissioners Gilmartin, Sadowski-Fugitt, Roe, Sarver, Davenport, Tully and Mayor Barnett.
Nays: None.

Village Council Comments

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt advised that she was fully supportive of this proposal, adding that it is well known what kind of damage opioids and similar products can cause.

Commissioner Roe fully supported this measure, as it was consistent with the recommendation from the DuPage County Health Department and similar to the actions of our neighboring municipalities.

Commissioner Sarver supported this measure and thanked Commissioner Gilmartin. She was pleased to hear that other communities were also taking a similar approach.

Commissioner Tully also thanked Commissioner Gilmartin for his detailed research on this matter. He expressed his support and explained that this step allows staff to explore this proposal and look further into enforcement, monitoring and the overall scope of a proposed ordinance. He said there will be a First Reading process and the community will be afforded an opportunity to be involved.

Commissioner Davenport said that he supported moving this forward for discussion but he had a few concerns. He expressed concern about the amount of staff time this would take and did not want to unduly add to their workload, as there were many other things that should be worked on as well. He expressed dismay that the Illinois state government had yet to impose a ban, and he encouraged everyone to reach out to their state representatives. He also had concerns about the Village being open to lawsuits with this potential ordinance, and he wants to hear what the residents have to say.

Commissioner Tully inquired if the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference (DMMC) had made any recommendations on this issue. Manager Fieldman reported that the topic had only been discussed at various committees, but there had not been any actual action from the DMMC.

Commissioner Gilmartin remarked that he too wants the state government to take action, but felt that as a Home Rule community, the Village should take whatever steps it could.

Mayor Barnett expressed his support and agreed with Commissioner Tully's description of the process.

Additional Council Member Reports:

Commissioner Gilmartin, as the liaison to the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation (EDC), reported that the annual luncheon on October 14th celebrated the 20th anniversary of Downers Grove EDC. During the event, Andy's Frozen Custard, Xsite Real Estate, Downers Grove Grade School District 58, Genesis of Downers Grove and PGA Superstore were recognized. He added that Mayor Barnett was also recognized at the luncheon, with it being his last EDC Luncheon as the sitting mayor of the Village. Commissioner Gilmartin also mentioned that the EDC also conducted an apprenticeship round table discussion with workNet Dupage, with more than 20 new car dealerships. That discussion sought to address the staffing challenges within their industry and their future

workforce needs. Finally, Commissioner Gilmartin announced two business grand openings: Redhot Ranch at 60 Ogden Avenue and the Hangry Cluck at 4246 Main Street.

Commissioner Tully, as the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC) liaison, highlighted that DMC adopted their Strategic Plan for 2026 through 2031, and it aligned with the Village's Strategic Plan. He reported that the annual Holiday Tree ceremony will take place on the day after Thanksgiving and Small Business Saturday will be held on the following day. In response to some questions he heard throughout the community, Commissioner Tully advised that the new flexible amenity spaces will be leased out to the nearby business, as this was the practice during outdoor dining periods, prior to the recent construction on the spaces. He reminded the public that Hope's Front Door is having its annual fundraiser at Bobak's Signature Events in Woodridge, IL on November 13th at 6:30 pm. He announced that Muriel Anderson was holding a concert on Saturday, November 28th at 7pm at First Congregational Church at 1047 Curtiss St.

Commissioner Davenport thanked the Mayor for his two proclamations. He reminded the public that day was the 251st birthday of the Marine Corp. He expressed his deep appreciation for the nation's veterans. He announced that the 7th annual History on Tap Trivia Pub Crawl, hosted by the Downers Grove Historical Society, would be held on November 12th at 5 pm. Finally, he announced that sign-up for the Grove Express 5K was still open.

Commissioner Roe, as the Downers Grove Library liaison, reported that much had happened since the last Village Council meeting. Commissioner Roe read the official statement, dated October 28, 2026, that was made by the Downers Grove Library Board of Trustees regarding the separation of Library Director Montilla, the appointment of an interim director, and the departure of two of the members of the board. After reading the statement, Commissioner Roe advised that the Council would need to appoint two new members to the Library Board of Trustees.

Commissioner Sadowski-Fugitt, as liaison to the Downers Grove Park District, reported that the Concord Square Park playground renovation was completed at the end of October. She reported that the park district's budget was balanced, and it was available for review on dgparks.org.

13. Mayor's Report

There was no Mayor's report.

14. Adjournment

Mayor Barnett asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: To **Adjourn the November 10, 2026, Village Council Meeting.**
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 and Mayor Barnett.

Nays: None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosa Berardi
Village Clerk