



Village Hall
211 S. Seminary St,
PO Box 18
Downs, IL 61736

Village of Downs Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
July 10, 2025, 7 pm @ Village Hall & via ZOOM

1. Interim Mayor Maureen Roach called the July 10, 2025 Village of Downs Board of Trustees meeting to order at 7:08 pm.
2. Roll Call was taken. Trustees present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, Brian Warfel, and Toby Twyford. There was a quorum present. Also present were Clerk Rachel Eagles, Treasurer Julie Bakewell, and Village Attorney Dawn Wall.
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. A motion was made by Gassaway and seconded by Adkisson to move up the Public Comment section in the agenda. Approved 6-0
5. Public comment section –
 - There were numerous public comments and input from passionate constituents and attendees about the three mayoral candidates and things they are hoping for in the mayor position.
 - Many expressed a strong desire for change and a leader who can unite the community. Attendees called for a mayor who would bring fresh ideas, treat all individuals equally, and prioritize community cohesion over divisiveness.
 - Julie Huezo, a newer resident of Downs, acknowledged the positive infrastructure developments under Mayor James but suggested there was a lack of attention to interpersonal relations and community unity.
 - Another attendee stressed the importance of a mayor who listens to the people, interacts with the community directly, and focuses on meaningful change rather than temporary projects like streetscapes.
 - Julie Huezo also commented on the need to stop dividing the community by voting and non-voting residents, advocating for a unified approach.
 - Another attendee spoke out about hoping that a new mayor will go out into the community and connect with people one on one by asking questions. She vocalized wanting change and focus on continuing to build the family atmosphere of Downs.
 - Mariah, a resident of Downs for 17-years, praised Mayor James infrastructure vision but noted that confidence in leadership was shaken by the concrete plant vote. And also mentioned that if the vote goes how she thinks it will, that even more confidence will be lost.
 - Quincy, a newcomer to Downs, but with 37 years of experience in Charleston in Public Works, compared the complexities of municipal governance, emphasizing that public service is often thankless but essential. He recognized the mayor's efforts and

professionalism, noting that Mike James is well-suited to lead Downs due to his deep understanding of municipal processes.

- A younger attendee, mentioned that she was pretty sure she was the youngest person in the meeting who has grown up in the area, and attended Tri-Valley for Pre-K through high school, shared concerns that while infrastructure improvements are important, the real issue is retaining people and building trust. She questioned whether the town should focus more on its people instead of the physical infrastructure.
 - There was also a comment from an attendee offering a blessing from God for guidance and wisdom moving forward.
6. A motion to approve **Resolution 2025-R28** to Elect Diana Reynolds, Trustee, as President of the Village Effective July 10, 2025 was made by Adkisson and seconded by Warfel.
Vote: Yes – 0 | No – 5 | Abstain – Reynolds (1)
 - The resolution failed by a vote of 0–5, with Trustee Reynolds abstaining.
 7. A motion to approve **Resolution 2025-R29** to Elect a Qualified Constituent of the Village of Downs as President of the Village Effective July 10, 2025 was made by Warfel and seconded by Gassaway.
 - Brian Peterson for Mayor: Vote: Roach-No, Reynolds-Yes, Adkisson-No, Gassaway-No, Warfel-No, Twyford-No. Vote: Yes – 1 | No – 5 Vote failed 0-6
 - A motion to approve **Resolution 2025-R30** to Elect a Qualified Constituent (Michael James) of the Village of Downs as President of the Village Effective July 10, 2025 was made by Adkisson and seconded by Reynolds. Roll Call Vote: Roach-Yes, Reynolds-No, Adkisson-Yes, Gassaway-Yes, Warfel-Yes, Twyford-Yes. Vote: Yes—5 | No—1 Approved 5-1
 8. A Motion to Approve the Appointment of Michael James as Village President to Serve a Term to Expire 4/30/27 was made by Adkisson and seconded by Warfel. Roll Call Vote: Roach-Yes, Reynolds-No, Adkisson-Yes, Gassaway-Yes, Warfel-Yes, Twyford-Yes. Vote: Yes—5 | No—1 Approved 5-1
 9. Official Swearing in of the Village President Michael James – was conducted by Roach
 10. A Motion to Approve Agenda and Order was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 6-0
 - It was noted the board will enter executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss updates from Gassaway regarding development agreements.
 11. Zoning Board of Appeals
 - Chairperson Eric Thompson ZBA Recommendation – Letter received via email from Eric Thompson was provided to Trustees (and quoted here) that was read by Roach.

“On 7/8/25 the Village of Downs Zoning Board of Appeals held a public meeting to discuss Zoning Map Amendment 2025-03-Z. This was submitted by Chad and Denise Mayes to change the zoning classification from A – Agriculture District to R1 – Low Density Residential District on the following real estate identified as 29-05-100-009 A parcel of land located in section 5, in Township 22 East, and Range 3 East, specifically referring to the Southwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of that section, containing approximately 14.4 acres.

Facts and Findings:
This property is suitable for R1 due to the adjacent properties also being R1 or AG. Sewer is located just across the property line on the Soper property.

The adjacent land is farmland and some wooded property with a stream flowing through.

The Zoning Board of Appeals recommends the approval of Zoning Map Amendment 2025-03-Z.

Please consider the Downs Zoning Board of Appeals recommendation when you discuss this matter. - Eric Thompson, Downs ZBA Chair”

- A motion was made regarding **Ordinance 2025-21** Approving Zoning Map Amendment on Parcel #29-05-100-009 from A, Agriculture, to R-1, Low Density Residential by Gassaway and was seconded by Warfel. Approved 6-0

12. Engineer & Development Report:

- Downs Water Plant Improvements – Greg Crowe shared that he doesn’t have a lot of good news unfortunately, still contacting multiple people at IEPA and cannot get any responses from them regarding the permit needed for water plant operation. Need to reach out to legislators to see if they can assist. Hoping for 7/28 startup with Village staff and training that week. All of this is hinging on IEPA approval and contractors coming back in to start the plant up. Gassaway asked if they are giving a reason why, and Greg responded that the IEPA is not giving any reason, just no response from them. At the IEPA it shows it is being “reviewed”, but no new updates.
- Downtown Streetscape and Parking Lots design – Greg Crowe gave an update that Franklin Street is complete. Road is done and sidewalks are done. ADA ramps are not in yet. Seminary street is now in progress. They are now doing Stage II of the project. Tank was found in front of the village hall when excavating, in contact with IEPA and state fire marshal’s office since it is not in any records of being in that location, so probably built before 1974. It is considered an “orphan” tank because of that, and it has been removed and the contaminated soil around it has also been removed and stored properly. Knapp is still able to continue work despite the “orphan” tank being found and removed. A facility ID number will be created for the tank, and the soil will have to be tested around where the tank was discovered. Roach asked Crowe about the cost incurred by the soil testing—the Village will have to cover that cost—not the streetscape project budget. So far, the “orphan” tank has only caused a 1-2 day delay in the project. Funding breakdown for Voucher #4 was provided to the Trustees that will be submitted to the Village. West Main Street sidewalk has been designed and submitted for contractors. MFT documents are being prepared by Quincy.
- Downs Crossing Watermain Extension – Report made by Matt Tosh – by end of June contractor had installed approximately 90% of watermain footage. The contractor as of today is down to 300 feet of water main total left to install. IEPA request of funds #7 has been submitted. Construction and engineering bill #6 has also been submitted. Not anticipating any new delays. Setting boosting and pump stations in August, Sampling in September. Hoping to bring online end of September.
- Roach thanked Matt and Greg for being so patient with working with her during her interim mayor months.
- S. Lincoln, Colleen Lane, and Hillard Court Road Projects – We received a letter from a business owner about that area. Streets is hoping to work on that cut next week and to get that smoothed out as much as possible next week.
 - a. Roanoke road update: Roanoke is paying for the cost of the entire concrete road and the development of that road. The only portion of the Roanoke road that the village has paid for was less than two thousand dollars for center line

engineering, which has already been paid. Time frame of the Roanoke road is targeted to start in September. James will work with Roanoke to get solid dates.

- Other Engineering or Development Updates – none this meeting

13. Mayoral Report was made by: Michael James

- Animal Control – Mayoral Assoc. Meeting – Mclean County Animal Control presentation was made. They proposed contracting with the Village for animal control when needed. They did not have concrete pricing or terms. They have to respond to certain situations, including foaming dogs, dog bites, wild animals, etc. Unless we get more details, there will be no action at this point. Any resident of Downs can take an animal to the shelter without it costing the Village money.
- Mobil Update—on the google SharePoint for the Trustees to review. Shows timeline for them to pay the fine to the village. We have received the first installment (\$3,500/month) from them, which is in line with their agreement which will be paid off by the end of the year.

14. Trustee Reports

- Building Report—made by Reynolds. Reported that we received 3 FOIA's in the month of June.
- Water and Sewer Report – Twyford—shared that he would like to thank all of the people who were running for mayor. Some may not be happy with the results, but thanks to the candidates who ran.
- Police Report—made by Roach and Chief Dingler. Roach thanked everyone who helped her get through the last few months as interim Mayor. She updated how the car charging stations that were discussed earlier from the Department of Transportation, are on hold, but still on the plan for the future. Roach commended the Events Committee and Adkisson and Chief for such an incredible and fun 4th of July celebration for our community. Chief Dingler gave a thanks to all the people from the community who showed up for the meeting today. Grateful that this board is professional and he is proud of our board and grateful that he gets to serve our community in his role. He reported that for the police department they had: 185 hours of work, half of those hours were on patrol. Traffic patrol was 93 hours of last month. 9.5 hours of investigation work was completed. Administrative time was 43 hours. Training time was 18.5 hours. The police implemented a new reporting and dispatch system to implement, which took significant time. 10.5 hours of maintenance on buildings and vehicles. 9.5 hours of meetings. 1.5 hours at the school. Needs more full-time officers to handle the amount of complaints that the police department receives. Chief Dingler shared a moving talk about the commitment it takes to serve the Village as our chief and how he is fully committed to continuing to serve the Village. Adkisson mentioned how she appreciated this morning that when she called chief about a traffic issue and how he immediately responded with a truck out with the lights on.
- Streets Report—reported by Warfel. Reported that we received our new zero turn mower. We had one seasonal employee quit, so we now have 2 seasonal, 2 fulltime employees, and Quincy as a consultant. The streets crew did great with the 4th of July event. A lot of mowing and various projects are underway.
- Parks, Community Center and Food Pantry Report – Reported by Adkisson. Echoes what Mike said, the streets crew did amazing, and the park looked better than it ever has. She appreciates all the crew did to help her set up for the event. 4th of July

celebration was very successful, but the committee is looking at ways to improve in upcoming years, including drawing a well-known band for future events. Huge thanks to Downs CIA for all that they donated for the 4th of July celebration (Approx valued at \$2,400). The Downs CIA also raised \$2,500 for the fireworks, which we are incredibly grateful for. Football guys raised around \$4,800. Parking was around \$1,300 raised. So grateful for all of that which brought down the cost of the event. Brought in good revenue from the inflatables, dunk tank, beer garden, etc. Beer garden was not super busy, due to the heat on the basketball court. Looking at tents for shade for next year in the beer garden area. The fireworks were fantastic, and they are looking for a new vendor to do the fireworks next year as current vendor this was their last year of being able to do them for us. The volleyball tournament was at full capacity and was very successful.

- Finance and Services Report-reported by Julie Bakewell. Bills to pay report was provided to the trustees and Julie gave explanation about unique bills. Including a question about where to expense some signs to (MFT was the designation). Bakewell also updated the board that the Annual Auditor was here for a couple of days starting the audit in June. She shared how the board needs to determine what amount the water rates will go up. If the water rates don't go up, the current water rates will not sustain the current water plant expenses. Bakewell is requesting that the financial committee meet with her next week to discuss some things to prepare for August and also discuss Treasurers' hours that are needed to complete the financial tasks. Roach posed the question of "are we at the point where we need a full-time treasurer?" And Roach (and others) also discussed some ideas of what that would look like for the Village. The finance committee will discuss it further and this will be on the agenda next month.
- 15. Discussion – Attorney Dawn Wall mentioned that we recently received a FOIA request that was asked to be included in the public records. This has been noted to the village clerk for them to record the FOIA request into the village public records. Attorney Dawn Wall also brought some clarification to Trustees and how to interact as Trustees of the Village on social media, specifically in relation to private pages or social media sites.
- 16. Public Comment—Anna Milliken asked via zoom: can it also be an open meeting violation where the Special meeting on 7-10-2025 public comments could not be heard via zoom? Attorney Dawn Wall responded that we are not required to Zoom special meetings. The Village Zooms only for the regular trustee meetings as a courtesy.
- 17. A Motion to Approve Items Contained within the Consent Agenda was made by and seconded by . Approved 6-0
- 18. A Motion to Approve Consent Agenda was made by Gassaway and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 5-1 – Twyford Voted No
 - Motions
 - a. A Motion to Approve the May 8, 2025, Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Roach and seconded by Gassaway. Approved 6-0
 - b. A Motion to Approve the Village Board of Trustees Executive Meeting Minutes was made by Roach and seconded by Warfel. Approved 6-0
 - c. A Motion to approve **Second Amendment to the Ken Myszka Subdivision Preliminary Plan Within 1.5 Miles of the Village of Downs** was made by Roach and seconded by Gassaway Vote Passed 5-1; Twyford Voted No
 - Ordinance (none at this meeting)

- Resolutions
 - a. ~~Resolution 2025 Authorizing and Approving Independent Contractor Agreement Cleaning Buildings for the Village of Downs~~ (No action was taken)
 - b. A motion to approve Resolution 2025-R31 Authorizing and Approving Professional Services Agreement Between MSA and Village of Downs for Main Street Sidewalk Design Engineering was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson Approved 6-0
- 19. New Business (none this meeting)
 - Motions
 - Ordinances
 - Resolutions
- 20. Old Business (no action was taken in old business)
 - Motion to Continue the Village of Downs Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on _____, @ 7 pm at the Village Hall
 - Ordinance 2025-R__ Authorizing and Approving Amendments to the Intergovernmental Agreement Between Town of Lexington and the Village of Downs for Resources and Equipment
- 21. A Motion to Approve Payment of Bills was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 6-0
- 22. A Motion to Enter Executive Session for Development Agreements was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson Approved 6-0
 - The Trustees moved to Executive session at 10:05 pm
 - Mayor Mike James called the July 10, 2025 Board of Trustees meeting to order at 10:28 pm.
 - A final roll call was taken. Trustees still present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, Brian Warfel, and Toby Twyford. A quorum remained. Also present were Clerk Rachel Eagles, Treasurer Julie Bakewell, and Village Attorney Dawn Wall
- 23. Action on Executive Session Items – no action was taken
- 24. Other Business (none this meeting)
- 25. A Motion to Adjourn was made by Adkisson and seconded by Gassaway. Approved 6-0



Rachel Eagles, Village of Downs Clerk