



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

Village of Downs Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

October 9, 2025, 7 p.m. @ Village Hall & via ZOOM

1. Mayor Mike James called the October 9, 2025, meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. Roll call was taken. Trustees present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, and Brian Warfel. Trustee Toby Twyford was absent. There was a quorum present. Also present were Mayor Mike James, Clerk Rachel Eagles, Treasurer Julie Bakewell, and Village Attorney Dawn Wall.
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. A Motion to Approve Agenda and Order was made by Adkisson and seconded by Roach. Approved 5-0
5. Presentations
 1. Sumeet with Solar on Earth presented via Zoom. She gave an update on the solar agreement. She is still seeking a 20% reduction with dual billing, but the consolidated plan is still an option at the 10% reduction. Sumeet will seek a 20% agreement to present next month.
6. Events – presented by Mayor James
 1. The Downs Haunted house is open for five weekends this year. He reported that the first weekend went really well.
7. Engineer & Development Report
 1. Downs Water Plant Improvements – presented by Greg Crowe
 - a. Check in meeting last Friday working through punch list items
 - b. Close to being finalized and done. Not a lot to update with the water plant.
 - c. Operations are going well
 - d. Roach asked if Water Street has any more road improvements from the patches? Mayor responded that he thinks the repairs are complete.
 - e. Reynolds had a question about verbiage for insurance coverage application regarding what is part of the building and what is contents of the water plant. Mayor recommended having the insurance come out to do a review of the new plant to make sure it is listed correctly on our insurance plan.
 2. Downtown Streetscape and Parking Lots Project – presented by Greg Crowe
 - a. Streetlights, railings and pavement markings remain to be completed
 - b. Back and forth with Ameren—meeting on site tomorrow at 11 to coordinate finalized plan for streetlights
 - c. Knapp will be on site tomorrow for permanent markings and striping. Signs will go up on Friday and Monday.
 - d. Another HUD voucher being submitted for voucher #5
 - e. Payment #5 will be going out to Knapp and MSA after approved tonight.
 - f. \$486,157.85 remains of grant funds.
 - g. Working with landscaper with plantings for the two landscaping beds.
 - h. Adkisson had a question about a manhole and drop off that still needs fixed. Greg reported that Knapp still plans to complete those items.
 3. Downs Crossing Water-main Extension—presented by Matt Tosh

- a. No bills this month. Water main contractor completed pressure testing. He found a leak in one section that he repaired (west of Kickapoo creek to Huff Road). He will re-test the section that was repaired.
- b. The electrical there was not a large enough “bucket” for the power for the new pumping station. They had to order that, and it is expected next week. If it arrives on time, then they can finish up the electrical and then have the start-up schedule for the week of October 20th for the Booster Pump Station.
- c. If the flow is strong enough, then they can work on testing samples and at the end of the month they can start putting water in the new tank and getting samples of that as well.
- d. Water tank is waiting for the water to fill it. Working on site reclamation for putting up a fence and putting in rock. Project is almost complete.

4. S. Lincoln and Colleen Lane Road Project
 - a. Mayor reported he thought it was starting last week but didn't see any action. Work is supposed to be starting soon after their preliminary planning.
5. Other Engineering or Development Updates
 - a. West main street sidewalk. Village staff have cleared the site and are in the process of installing a storm sewer inlet structure and pipe on the north side of the proposed sidewalk to capture water from main street. After that work is complete, Knapp will begin the sidewalk construction.
 - b. Safe Routes to School grant application will be submitted next week by MSA

8. Mayoral Report –presented by Mayor James
 1. Next month we are switching from Zoom to Microsoft Teams for our monthly trustee board meetings.
9. Trustee Reports
 1. Building Report – presented by Diana Reynolds
 - a. 3 FOIA's, 1 building permit, and estimate for damage to village hall that she is conferring with Treasurer on how to submit it. Working on insurance renewal as well for the village.
 2. Water and Sewer Report—no report this meeting.
 3. Police Report—presented by Maureen Roach and Chief Dingler
 - a. Roach reported about petition that was submitted to MSA for the Safe Routes to School Grant. She said thanks to everyone who contributed by attending the meeting or signing a petition.
 - b. Roach also talked about Young Leader Service award proposal for discussion at this point. This would be a way to recognize young people who contribute to the Village of Downs. A way to honor the nominees and also encourage other youth to get involved as well. We could possibly honor the nominee at the 4th of July event. Roach handed out a flyer describing her proposal. It could be tied to a scholarship award as well.
 - c. Chief Dingler reported updates regarding citations and traffic patrol for the month. They helped with a significant vehicle crash. There were also 43 police traffic stops between the two villages which resulted in 31 citations in Downs and 12 citations in Bellflower. Increased traffic patrol and citations with Officer Thornton back. Patrol time was at 210 hours this month. Training time has decreased with the increase in patrol time.
 4. Streets Reports—presented by Brian Warfel
 - a. Streets crew has been busy. Have hired 2 new employees that are on the consent agenda below that are working out really well.
 - b. Mayor James mentioned update on agreement with Bellflower for us to provide Village manpower to help them install street signs, so Quincy is going to meet with the

Bellflower Mayor to evaluate what they want done and put a plan in place for the street sign install.

5. Parks, Community Center, and Food Pantry Report—presented by Stephanie Adkisson
 - a. Clarified bid from Oak Bros for removal of the trees. \$4,750 to remove both trees, with grinding stumps, and backfill as well. Hoping to have the park trees removed by November 1st
 - b. Toddler slide crack has increased, so she asked Caleb if they can just remove the slide for now until a new one can be procured and installed.
 - c. The park was very clean after the haunted house this weekend. So glad that people are taking pride in the park and keeping it clean. People have been using the photo op which is great to see.
 - d. Food Pantry—she is putting a list on Facebook for thanksgiving donations.
6. Finance and Services Report—presented by Sarah Gassaway and Treasurer Julie Bakewell
 - a. Gassaway reported that bills to pay is business as usual.
 - b. Bakewell reported that the audit has gone 90% better than last year. We have a new lead auditor. New auditor is very intelligent and easy to work with. Audit is in its own file in the board file for October. The audit will be reported at the trustee's continuation meeting on October 23, 2025.
 - c. Single audit is also ready to go. That will be submitted as soon as the board approves it in two weeks.
 - d. Bills to pay was presented by Bakewell. October has been a busy month for finance. Bakewell explained unique items on the bills to pay report and also added two small bills to the report that were received today.
 - e. Bakewell explained the cash balances on the balance sheet.
 - f. Tax Income—video gaming tax is coming in higher than expected if the trend continues. Sales Taxes is going to come in at about \$125,000 over budget if the trend continues. Numbers are looking good four months into the fiscal year.
 - g. Specific financial reports to your department are on the SharePoint drive. Please direct any questions to Bakewell as she is available to answer any questions.
 - h. Bakewell reported she is working on TIF reports with Mayor.
 - i. Also working on Annual Treasurers report that is due soon.
10. Discussion (none this meeting)
 1. Other
11. Public Comment
 1. Read email from Cheryl Bach: *"When will the final striping be done on West Franklin Street? Who is responsible for doing that? Thank you, Cheryl Bach"*
 - a. Mayor responded that striping will be completed Friday and is included in the Streetscape project.
12. A Motion to Approve Items Contained within the Consent Agenda was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 5-0
13. A Motion to Approve Consent Agenda was made by Roach and seconded by Gassaway. Approved 5-0
 1. Motions
 - a. Motion to Approve the September 11, 2025, Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. Motion to Approve the September 11, 2025, Village Board of Trustees Executive Meeting Minutes
 - c. Motion to Hire Jon Bettisch as a Part-Time Public Works Maintenance Worker for the Village of Downs at \$18 per Hour Starting September 17, 2025, Subject to Background Checks and 3 Month Evaluation Period

- d. Motion to Hire Ryan Lee as a Full-Time Public Works Maintenance Worker for the Village of Downs at \$18 per Hour Starting September 29, 2025, Subject to Background Checks and 3-month Evaluation Period
- e. Motion to Approve Road Closures: Franklin St. from Seminary to Lincoln, Water St. from Franklin to Main, Dooley Park Road every Friday and Saturday in October 2025 and November 1, 2025, from 5pm - 12 am
- f. Motion to Approve Road Closures: Franklin St. from Seminary to Lincoln, Water St from Franklin to Main on November 2, 2025, from 12 pm - 4 pm
- g. Motion to Approve the Extension of Dooley Park Hours on every Friday and Saturday in October 2025 and November 1, 2025, until 12 am
- h. Motion to Approve Renewal of Membership in Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network
- i. Motion to Approve Renewal of Membership in the Illinois Rural Water Association (IRWA)
- j. Motion to Approve the Assistant Treasurer and Treasurer Attend the IMTA Treasurer's Institute
- k. Motion to Renew Membership with the McLean County Chamber of Commerce

2. Ordinances
3. Resolutions
 - a. Resolution 2025-R41 Approving and Authorizing Financial Commitment in the Safe Routes to Schools Grant Program
 - b. Resolution 2025-R42 Authorizing and Approving the Renewal Agreement Between Cummins Sales and Service and the Village of Downs for Generator Maintenance and Service

14. New Business

1. Motions (These 3 motions moved to the continuance meeting on October 23, 2025)
 - a. Motion to Approve FY 2024-2025 Audit
 - b. Motion to Approve FY 2024-2025 Annual Treasurer's Report
 - c. Motion to Approve FY 2024-2025 Annual TIF Reports
2. Ordinances (23)
 - a. Ordinance 2025-23 Amending Article V, Section 12 of Chapter 8 – Streets, Alleys, and Sidewalks of the Village of Downs Municipal Code (Moved to continuance meeting on October 23, 2025)
3. Resolutions (41)
 - a. A motion to approve Resolution 2025-R43 Authorizing the Village Clerk to Release Specific Executive Session Audio Recordings of the Village of Downs was made by Adkisson and seconded by Gassaway. **The motion was tabled 5-0**
 1. Reynolds made a statement regarding this resolution.
 2. Attorney Wall also gave some input into this matter.
 3. There was discussion between the trustees whether to release the recording or not. After discussion decided to table the matter for now.
 - b. A motion to approve Resolution 2025-R44 Authorizing and Approving Agreement with Vertical Vision Concrete and the Village of Downs for Concrete Driveway not to Exceed \$10,380 was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 5-0

15. Old Business

1. Resolution 2025-R34 Authorizing and Approving Community Solar Agreement Between Solar on Earth and the Village of Downs (Maureen / Sarah Tabled Maureen/Sarah 6-0) (No action this meeting)
2. Resolution 2025-R__ Authorizing and Approving Utility Easement with Ameren and the Village of Downs. (No action this meeting)

3. A motion to approve Resolution 2025-R45 Authorizing and Approving Independent Contractor Agreement Cleaning Buildings for the Village of Downs was made by Reynolds and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 5-0
16. A Motion to Approve Payment of Bills was made by Roach and seconded by Reynolds. Approved 5-0
17. A Motion to Enter **Executive Session Part One** at 9:22 p.m. for TIF Agreements and Potential Litigation was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. Approved 5-0
18. The board returned to regular session at 9:55 p.m. Roll call was taken. Trustees still present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, and Brian Warfel. Toby Twyford was still absent. A quorum remained. Also still present were Mayor Mike James, Clerk Rachel Eagles, Treasurer Julie Bakewell, and Village Attorney Dawn Wall
19. Motion to Enter **Executive Session Part Two** at 10:00 p.m. for Potential Litigation was made by Roach and seconded by Warfel. Approved 5-0
20. Action on Executive Session Items (no action)
21. Other Business
22. Mayor Mike James called the October 9, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting back to order at 10:24 p.m. A final roll call was taken. Trustees still present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, and Brian Warfel. Toby Twyford was still absent. A quorum remained. Also still present were Mayor Mike James, Clerk Rachel Eagles, Treasurer Julie Bakewell, and Village Attorney Dawn Wall
23. A Motion to Adjourn at 10:25 p.m. was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. A motion to Rescind adjournment vote – was made by Roach and seconded by Adkisson. The motion to rescind adjournment was approved 5-0
24. A Motion to Continue the Village of Downs Regular Board of Trustees Meeting on October 23, 2025, 7:00 pm at the Village Hall was made by Roach and seconded by Warfel. Approved 5-0

Respectfully submitted,



Rachel Eagles, Village of Downs Clerk