



News & Current Events

January 2026

From the Desk of the Mayor

YOU MUST TURN OFF YOUR WATER SOFTENER!

Water softeners are no longer needed and can be harmful to your pipes within your home if you over soften the water. Vendors will try to convince you otherwise and that is their job. But will they give you a guarantee that you will not have leaks AND will cover your damages if it does happen? You do not want or need to be at 90%+ softened water. If they run tests and tell otherwise, please report to the Village Hall. We can also test your water without the bias of wanting to sell you something.

What do you need in your home? We highly recommend a whole house filter to “catch” any sediment coming into your home as the distribution pipes still have sediment. Personal choice in taste of the water varies for everyone. If you choose to have an RO system that will be based on that taste and personal concerns/needs.

We are actively working on a design and budget for a new Village Hall. We have outgrown our current building and have been overcrowded for many years. The new building will be located by the Police department and will be large enough for future expansion. It will adequately and properly provide workspace for our staff, Board, Clerk and Mayor. It will have a better way to drive up to drop off payments at the building. Once we have more details we will put them out to the public for feedback.

Mayor Monday is suspended until Spring.

Downs project updates:

- 1) Contractors are working on water plant punch list items. We will have an open house in the spring.
- 2) Downs Crossing Tower and watermain extension. Water main to Downs Crossing has been permitted by IEPA. Final punch list items are being worked on until weather allows us to do final testing to bring it online.

- 3) Streetscape project is complete except for punch list items. Lights look amazing and provide a nice welcome to Downs. Supplier issues have delayed the wall cap, but the west side has been completed. We will add trash cans, seating, picnic tables and potentially a pergola to create inviting outdoor spaces in the spring.
- 4) Due to weather S. Lincoln St Road improvements will be pushed to the spring or when weather allows.
- 5) Village Hall: Update above.
- 6) Solar: The board is also considering solar panels on the Les Fitzwater PW building to reduce the cost of electricity for the new water plant. The options being considered could offset costs by 20-40% depending on the option.

In your service,

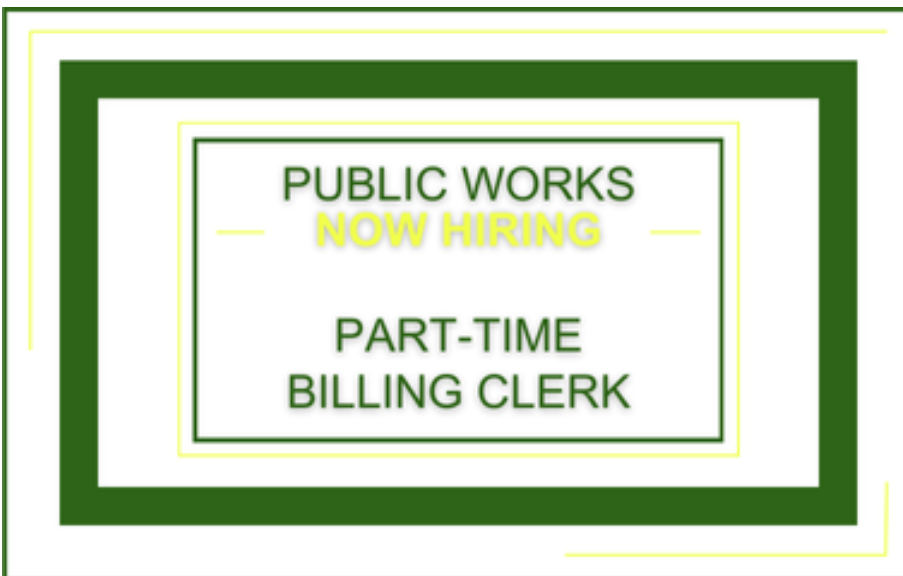
Mike James, Mayor

309-830-7374,

Mayor@VillageOfDowns.org

Hiring Part-Time Billing Clerk

We have a part-time Billing Clerk position open in the Village Hall. The job is 8-12 hours per week plus additional hours available when the demand increases. Check out our Employment page for a brief Job description and an employment application.



Visit our Employment Page located on our website under the Contact Us Tab.

<http://www.villageofdowns.org/village-of-downs-employment.htm>



Village of Downs Board of Trustees Meeting Overview January 8th, 2025, 7 pm @ Village Hall & via TEAMS

Executive order **2021-9** by the Governor of Illinois allowed this meeting to be held via TEAMS and at the Village Hall.

1. Mayor Mike James called the January 8, 2026, meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Trustees present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, Brian Warfel and Toby Twyford. 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. Engineers provided updates on the ongoing infrastructure and development projects. They reported that the Downs Water Plant Improvements and the Downtown Streetscape are nearing completion, with final punch list items underway. The Downs Crossing water-main extension project is also progressing, with telemetry now functioning properly and plans to begin filling the new water tank once weather conditions allow, likely by late winter. The Board was also informed that the Village is awaiting word from IDOT regarding a Safe Routes to School sidewalk grant.
5. Mayor James shared updates on planning for a potential new Village Hall, including a draft layout and proposed location near the police department, followed by a discussion on site access and design considerations. Trustees provided department reports, noting early planning for Fourth of July festivities, upcoming parks discussions, and continued coordination on recycling and waste services. The Treasurer reported positive financial news with the payoff of two major equipment loans and encouraged early preparation for the upcoming budget planning season. Public comment was received via email, and the meeting concluded with no executive session held.

Please note: Detailed minutes from the Village Board of Trustees meetings are available after they are approved by the trustees at the following month's meeting. If you would like to be added to the email list to receive the approved minutes each month, please visit our website and use the form located at the bottom right corner of the home page. Or you can visit the Board Agenda and Minutes page to view all posted agendas and minutes.

Door-to-Door Sales

Permit Required

Door-to-door solicitation permits are needed PRIOR to doing solicitation door-to-door. No warnings will be granted. Please report anyone that does not have a permit to come to your door. Please try and get their name and car make/model/color. Solicitors without a permit will be fined.



Billing

Billing Questions, Issues, and Payments

All questions regarding billing issues including payment arrangements need to be directed to the Village Hall at 309-378-3221 during office hours. Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 12:30pm.

REMINDER: The billing due date is the **15th of the month**. Payments received after the 15th are subject to the late fees. If not paid by the 25th of the month, and the office has to call you regarding payment, there will be an additional fee of \$20. If not paid on the 26th, shut off of water can occur. To reconnect, there is a additional fee of \$30.

The Village is using an **ACH** (automatic withdrawal) program. This program has NO FEE to you! If you sign up for this program, you will continue to receive your monthly bill. On the 15th of the month, the Village will withdraw the entire amount due from the checking or savings account you provided on the authorization form. Authorization forms are on the website and will need to be submitted to the Billing Office by the 1st of the month you wish your first payment withdrawal to be made.

Reminder: If an ACH comes back as NSF it is treated like a check, and cash or money order is needed to cover the \$25 NSF fee + the amount of the bill. A 2nd NSF will result in no longer being eligible for ACH and all payments will need to be in cash or a money order. Please put your service id on your payment.

Billing Rates Increase Reminder

January Bill 2026

Several changes have happened to the water billing rates for the January bill. At the end of 2024 we raised the debt service rate to help pay for the new plant loan to the minimum the IEPA would accept at that time. We have now raised it to include the new water tower. The water (OMR) and Capital Improvement rates have not been increased since 2009. Now that the new plant is completed and producing better quality water, we have raised the water rates to cover the actual cost of producing/treating/delivering the water. We have raised the Capital Improvement rates to better cover the actual costs due to inflation. See the chart below to compare the previous rates with the new rates.

VOD Monthly Water Rates			OMR	Cap Imp	Debt Ser
First 3000 Gallons	11/30/2024	40.60	13.80	1.50	25.30
Each additional 1000	11/2/2009	4.60	4.60	0.00	0.00

VOD Monthly Water Rates			OMR	Cap Imp	Debt Ser
First 2000 Gallons	1/1/2026	51.00	18.00	3.00	30.00
Each additional 1000	1/1/2026	6.00	6.00	0.00	0.00

Water Sewer report for December 2025.

The average iron concentration for the finished water was **.03** ppm. Monthly bacteriological testing on the raw, finished, and distribution samples were all satisfactory; fluoride concentration was **.5**. The volume of water pumped for the month was **2.433** million gallons, averaging **78,483** gallons per day. The sewer lift station pumped **1.885** million gallons for the month, averaging **60,832** million gallons per day.

- 2 outdated water meters/transmitters replaced with updated units
- 7 JULIE tickets within Village
 - 0 Streets/Water Department
 - 7 outside companies
- 1 JULIE tickets outside Village

December gave us 2 back-to-back snowstorms on the weekends which made for a long couple of weeks of snow removal, chilling temperatures and wind. Thank you to the PW team for all your hard work and long hours in the plow and tractor.

Weather permitting, water meters/transmitters replacement changeout will continue. This will be at no cost to the homeowner as it is Village Property.

Please continue to be cautious of our Village workers. We want to make sure the Village is safe for the residents, visitors and ourselves.



As always, your support means a lot. If you have any questions/comments, please contact me.

Jill Combs

Supervisor of Public Works & Maintenance

Village Snow & Ice Removal

Please Help us Make Plowing Easier, Safer, and more Efficient

The Village doesn't have a snow parking ban law, and we prefer not to create one because we know we can rely on YOUR assistance and cooperation to help make our job easier. The following outlines our procedures and will be adjusted as needed:

We will usually precede each storm with salting intersections, hills, curves, and trouble areas. Snow removal will start at ~2" and will focus on getting one pass through all streets and keeping them open, until snow stops. Cars parked along the side of the roads will slow this process down and you may end up with a lot of snow around it. Please help us by parking your car(s) preferably in your own driveway, during storms where we are expecting 4"+ of snow and/or high winds. Once removal is completed and the snow has stopped, we will come back through to widen, cleanup and spread salt.

Dumpster Use

Please remember, Dumpsters at residences, businesses, and parks are private and not for public use. If you have a need for a dumpster you can call GFL customer service at 309-688-0760 to order one.

Refuse and Recycling

GFL Environmental

Bulk Pickup—First Garbage Day Pickup of the Month

Do not forget that the first garbage pickup of each month is our contracted bulk waste pickup for the Village. If you have a large item or a lot, please call GFL customer service prior to the scheduled pickup. Sample of items not taken - electronics, appliance with a compressor, batteries, landscaping material, bricks, block, construction material. If you have questions call GFL customer service at 309-688-0760.

Recycling Guidelines

Passed down from our Local Pickup Crew:

- Label recycling with the word Recycle or the Recycle Symbol.
- Place recycling well separated from trash. For example: Place your containers on separate sides at the end of your driveway.

Following the above guidelines will help our Recycle and Trash crews pickup the correct items and not leave some behind.



YOUR 2026 TRASH AND RECYCLE COLLECTION SCHEDULE

Thank you for being a GFL Environmental customer! We wanted to provide you with an annual collection schedule for the 2026 year. The calendar below is marked with your area's collection dates. You'll notice that if your collection falls on a holiday, pickup will occur on the following day. **Trash pickup will take place every Thursday, and recycling every second and fourth Thursday. Please have your trash and recyclables at the curb the night before pickup.**

We would also like to reassure you that the safety of our customers, their families, and our employees remains our number one priority. In the event of inclement weather, your schedule may be altered. Please visit us online to track inclement weather alerts.

The Following Holidays Could Affect Your Service Date:

- January 1 - New Year's Day
- May 25 - Memorial Day
- July 4 - Independence Day
- September 7 - Labor Day
- November 26 - Thanksgiving Day
- December 25 - Christmas Day

Collection services will be delayed by ONE day during the holiday week, beginning the date of the holiday.

= Trash = Recycling = Holiday For pickup on or following a holiday, your collection will be delayed by one day.

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WE RECYCLE:

All recycling materials must be INSIDE your container - cardboard must be broken down.

- Milk Jugs
- Soda and Water Bottles
- Laundry Soap Jugs
- Tin and Steel Cans
- Cardboard Boxes
- Newspaper • Glass
- Magazines
- Phone Books
- Office Paper
- Aluminum Cans
- Junk Mail
- Food Boxes

All plastic and metal containers should be rinsed with water. Food and cardboard boxes should be free of liners, styrofoam, or any other packing materials.

All Building Permits

All Building and Demolition Permit Applications must be processed, approved, and issued a permit number, BEFORE WORK CAN BEGIN. This includes small projects, renovations, and new builds which could take up to 2 weeks to process. Please leave enough time before working on your project.

Our permits are revised and posted on the website throughout the year. Make sure to print out the latest forms. Permit Forms can be found on our [Forms and Applications page](#) on the Village Website listed under Quick Links.

Let Us Know How We Can Use Your Expertise Volunteer Registration

Often someone wants to help but doesn't know how. Often, I hear, "Let me know if I can help.", but I don't know how. See the dilemma? Our website contains a "[Volunteer Registration Form](#)". This registration will allow you to tell us where you can help and how we can utilize your talents and skills. I hope you will take the time to consider how you can you help.

Keep up to Date with Facebook and Village Website Village of Downs Social Media Sites of Interest

- Events Committee: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DownsEvents/>.
- You know you are from Downs: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/downsil/>
- Downs Citizens In Action (CIA): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/115323465475046/>
- Downs Haunted House:
 - ◇ <https://www.facebook.com/downs.hauntedhouse>
 - ◇ <http://www.downshauntedhouse.org>
- Dooley Park: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/108924229128032/>
- Downs Freedom Run: <https://www.facebook.com/downsfreedomrun/>
- Downs GPS (Grow, Play, Stay): <https://www.facebook.com/DownsGPS>
- Downs Village Market:
 - ◇ <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090958995532>
 - ◇ <https://www.instagram.com/downsvillagemarket/?igshid=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ%3D%3D>

Zoning Board of Appeals

January 29, 2026, 6 pm @ Village Hall

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Village of Downs that on January 29, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Downs Village Hall, 211 S. Seminary St., Downs, IL a public hearing will be held on a petition for zoning map amendment submitted by Tri-Valley Community Unit School Dist. No. 3 Bd. of Education to change the zoning classification from R -2-Medium Density Residential District to P-Public Use District on the following described real estate:

That part of Outlot 20 in the Village of Downs as per Plat recorded in Book 10 of Plats, page 14 of the records in the Recorder's Office of McLean County, Illinois, described as follows: commencing at an existing iron pin marking the Northeast corner of Section 4, Township 22 North, Range 3 East of the Third Principal Meridian, McLean County, Illinois; thence N.89° 16'45"W.-1246.05 feet along the North line of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 4 to a point marking the Northwest corner of said Outlot 29; thence S.0°08'52"E.-303.73 feet along the West line of said Outlot 29 to an existing iron pin on the Southwesterly right of way line of US Route 150; thence S.0°12'42"E.-224.80 feet along the West line of said Outlot 29 to an existing iron pin; thence S.0°06'37"E.-483.68 feet along the West line of said Outlot 29 to an iron pin set marking the point of beginning; thence S.89°14'25"E.157.00 feet to an iron pin set; thence S.0°06'02"E.-251.98 feet to a point on the approximate centerline of Washington Street; thence N.88°31'00"W.-157.00 feet along said centerline to a point marking the Southwest corner of said Outlot 29; thence N.0°06'37"11W.-250.00 feet along the West line of said Outlot 29 to the point of beginning, containing 0.90 acre, more or less, of which approximately 0.09 acre lies within the right of way of Washington Street. Property address: 504 E. Washington St., Downs, Illinois 61736.

PIN: 29-04-227-011

The application and other documents pertinent to the petition for zoning map amendment are on file with the Village Clerk and can be inspected by the public at the Village Hall at 211 S. Seminary St., Downs, IL between the hours of 8:30 am – 12:30 pm Monday – Friday.

All interested persons may appear at said hearing and will be given an opportunity to be heard under the public hearing rules and posted agenda.



Village Of Downs Food Pantry



Our Mission

To serve the people of Tri-Valley School District who need food assistance by providing monthly food boxes and to be on call to assist in any emergency that involves a need for food and emotional support.

"Serving the residents of the Tri-Valley School District."

2026 Schedule

Month	Friday	Saturday
January	9th	10th
February	6th	7th
March	6th	7th

Distribution hours

10:00 am until Noon

Location

The Food Pantry is in the Youth Center located at the Washington St. entrance to Dooley Park.

2026 Food Pantry Distribution Schedule

Food boxes are distributed during the first Friday and Saturday after the first Monday of each month barring holidays when the distribution is usually the following week.

Contact the Food Pantry:

Linda Bowman:
309-261-3809
llbowman3@gmail.com

Bill Clark:
309-531-7884
downstwpclerk@aol.com

Parks

Parks Meeting Schedule

Dooley Park Pavilion @ 6 pm

Held the Tuesday after the Board Meeting. Coming up: February 17th

Looking Ahead

Quick Glance at Upcoming Village Events, Activities and Meetings

January:

- 22nd – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 29th – Garbage Collection
- 29th - ZBA meeting, 6pm @ Village Hall
- 31st - Final day for BNWRD Notary Signed Documents

February:

- 5th – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 10th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 12th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; TEAMS
- 12th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 16th - Presidents' Day - Village Hall is Closed
- 17th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 19th – Garbage Collection
- 26th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 29th - ZBA meeting, 6pm @ Village Hall

March:

- 5th – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 10th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 12th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; Video/TEAMS
- 12th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 17th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 19th – Garbage Collection
- 26th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 28th - Easter Family Breakfast - 7 - 10am @ TBD
- 28th - Easter Egg Hunt Registration 10am @ Pavilion
- 28th - Easter Egg Hunt 10:30am @ Dooley Park

**** More information and registration forms are available on the Village website or at the Village Hall**

FY2026 (May 2025 – April 2026) Village of Downs Event Plan

Current Plan—Subject to Change

The following describes each planned event at a high level. Further details and changes will occur during final planning by the committee or sub-committee in charge of the event. Budgets have been estimated based on last year's expenditures and revenue. Some events have been eliminated due to lack of participation or they were merged with something else.

Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt – This event will be hosted in Dooley Park on Saturday, March 28, 2026, and will involve the area Churches for the egg hunt. The host for the family breakfast before the egg hunt in the park is TBD and we are open for any business to volunteer to host.

BNWRD Annexation Letters

Notary Signed Letters Due January 31st

Letters have been mailed to property owners within the Village of Downs along with a petition of annexation and a signature page. All property owners will need to submit the signed signature page that has to be notarized. You can have the paperwork notarized by a notary of your choice or call the Village Hall at 309-378-3221 to arrange a time.

Trash and Recycle Carts Free Offer

For those that ordered the Trash and Recycle Carts, delivery continues. There are >300 to be delivered so it may take a bit.

Illegal Dumping

Please do not dump yard waste and ANY other items at the entrances to Kickapoo Park, Village storage yard, and/or along Huff Rd South of Main St. Violators will be caught and fined accordingly!

If you have questions or concerns, please call Brian Warfel at 309-261-0183.

**** More information and registration forms are available on the Village website or at the Village Hall**

Video/Audio Information for Public Meetings which use TEAMS

Broadcast for Village Board of Trustee Meetings Will Continue

Persons who wish to attend in person are allowed at the meeting location shown on the agenda without special consideration. Both audio and video are available using a computer or smartphone using the information below. Please remain muted until called upon for your question or you need to make a follow-up comment during your 5-minute time (See rules for public comment).

You may submit comments or questions via the following methods:

- Online chat during the meeting
- During the "Public Comment" item on the agenda using conference call audio/video
- e-mail the clerk@villageofdowns.org
- Text the Village Clerk 541-390-6709

Video/Audio conference call information:

Join TEAMS Meeting:

Meeting ID: 250 776 149 659 2

Passcode: F2UB9xG2

Looking for Houses to Clean

Also do private
care in seniors
homes



Immediate
openings

call Trisha 309-273-8610

**** More information and registration forms are available on the Village website or at the Village Hall**



Strong Families • Thriving Children

Fathers & Babies Workshop

For Dads Expecting or Raising a Baby (Prenatal–12 months)

FREE 6–Week Series | Limited to 10 Dads|

\$50 Gift Card for Completing the Series

Being a dad is powerful—but it's not always easy. Pregnancy and the first year of your baby's life can bring stress, anxiety, and a lot of change. This workshop is built just for dads—to help you handle it all with confidence.

What You'll Get:

- More tools to manage stress and anxiety
- Support from other dads going through the same journey
- A safe space to talk, learn, and grow
- \$50 gift card for completing all six weeks—because every little bit helps when you've got a new baby!

To register for the workshop, click [here](#) or scan the QR code:



Who Can Join?

- First-time dads
- Any dads-to-be and dads with babies in their first year
- Join us for the full six session journey!
- Space is limited to 10 dads—register now!

Workshop Dates:

Saturdays | 11:00 a.m. – Noon

- January 10
- January 24
- February 7
- February 21
- March 7
- March 21

Where? Bloomington Public Library,
(Conference Room)
205 E Olive St, Bloomington, IL 61701

For more information contact Ramone Pippins, (309) 322-6893 extension 4374 or rpippins@brightpoint.org



Downsumc.org

309-378-2651

Up and Coming Events

- Sunday morning Adult Sunday School 8:30am in Youth Room
- *YOUTH WORSHIP during the regular worship service. It is a service geared for the 4th through 8th grade students and they meet in the Youth Room.*
- Sunday evenings at 4pm is in person Bible Study in the Chapel
- Tuesday morning Bible Study 10am in Youth Room and on Zoom.
- Wednesdays 5:30pm Next Gen Ministries (student ministries) K-8th
- Wednesdays 6:00pm Choir practice in Chapel.

February 22, 2026

5-7pm Game Night—Bingo

March 1, 2026

Good Sam

Chili Potato Soup Supper

4:30-7pm

Worship Service

Sundays 9:30am In Person

Online at www.downsumc.org



SERMON SERIES

***"Letters from
Jesus"***

***Studying the book of
Revelation***



**205 S Highway Ave
Downs, IL
Behind the Church
Building**

Come Shop With Us

Open Every Sunday
10:45am - Noon

**ALL ITEMS ARE PICK YOUR
OWN PRICE.
100% OF PROCEEDS SUPPORT
DOWNS UMC**

- BOOKS
- HOUSEHOLD GOODS
- TOYS & GAMES
- SPORTS EQUIPMENT
- DVDs/CDs
- JEWELRY
- DECOR
- SMALL APPLIANCES
- HOLIDAY DECOR
- & much more!



EMAIL QUESTIONS TO
SWAPROOM@DOWNSUMC.ORG



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR
SNEAK PEEKS & NEW INFO!
[FACEBOOK.COM/DOWNSUMC](https://www.facebook.com/downsumc)



LIVING HOPE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

FAITH IN GOD | LOVE FOR EACH OTHER | HOPE FOR THE WORLD

**Worship Sundays at 10:00 AM or Live Stream on
Facebook or YouTube**

facebook.com/DownsLivingHope

youtube.com/@livinghopechristianchurchd8107



**No matter where you
are in your own faith
journey, you'll receive
a warm welcome at
Living Hope.**

608 North Huff Road, PO Box 345, Downs, IL 61736

LivingHopeDowns.com

NEED MORE STORAGE?

BRAND NEW BUILDING JUST ADDED IN DOWNS!

Non-Temperature Controlled Units

5x10, 10x10, 10x15, 10x20, 10x25, 10x30

STARTING AT \$60



COME CHECK US OUT

603 S. LINCOLN ST.
DOWNS, IL

217.306.6271

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Village Of Downs

Officials & Contacts

Mayor	Mike James	309-830-7374	mayor@Villageofdowns.org
Clerk	Rachel Eagles	541-390-6709	clerk@villageofdowns.org
Public Safety Trustee - Pro Tem	Maureen Roach	309-830-4297	publicsafety@villageofdowns.org
Streets Trustee	Brian Warfel	309-261-0183	streets@villageofdowns.org
Finance Trustee	Sarah Gassaway	309-261-2540	finance@villageofdowns.org
Public Works Trustee	Toby Twyford	309-830-3448	publicworks@villageofdowns.org
Parks Trustee	Stephanie Adkisson	309-212-8345	parks@villageofdowns.org
Building Trustee	Diana Reynolds	309-498-8361	building@villageofdowns.org
Treasurer	Julie Bakewell	309-378-3221	treasurer@villageofdowns.org
Public Works Supervisor	Jill Combs	309-319-1010	pwsuper@villageofdowns.org
Police Chief	Joshua Dingler	309-622-2207	downs.Village.pd@gmail.com
Non-Emergency	MetCom	309-888-5030	
Emergency		911	
GFL Disposal	Customer Service	309-688-0760	
Village Hall		309-378-3221	info@villageofdowns.org
Zoning Enforcement Officer	Lyndall Cuba	309-378-3221	info@villageofdowns.org
Zoning Board of Appeals Chair	Eric Thompson	309-378-3221	info@villageofdowns.org
EMA Director	Travis Misch	309-378-3221	