



News & Current Events

April 2026

From the Desk of the Mayor

This month has me back, healthy, and able to write a report for April instead of having it “hijacked”. Very well written, if I say so myself.

The new Village Hall’s engineering and construction designs are progressing well. Nothing major or new to report on its design that warrants additional space in the flyer. See February’s flyer for the sneak peek.

The Village submitted another grant request for phase II of the streetscape project. We are awaiting word on two grants submissions: Safe Routes to School and Phase II. Hopefully we will know soon whether or not we will be moving forward with these much-needed projects.

FY2026 Budget Revisions were approved with typical transfers to cover shortages in Police and Street funds and budget adjustments needed for operation during FY2026.

FY2027 Budget: Budget was approved with caution given about fiscal responsibility on expenditures to those required. With Roanoke being delayed by two years due to residents’ lawsuit, the village is still recovering from the unrealized/lost revenues in property and sales tax. Revenue loss is estimated to be between \$150-200k, plus legal expenses. I expect our budgeted sales tax to be conservative, and we will realize more revenue than we did in FY2026, which was the basis of this year’s budgeted sales tax revenue. Our budget also doesn’t include any new sale tax revenue from the KCN/Prochnow annexation.

Development areas:

1. Kickapoo Creek Estates Subdivision had its developer’s agreement approved contingent on owner’s approval to the final agreement. Its construction designs are being reviewed by the village engineer. Both the agreement and plans must be completed before they can proceed.
2. Prochnow’s KCN Subdivision final plat and development agreement are complete.

Downs project updates:

1. Plant is operating as expected with glitches here and there but overall, everything has gone well. 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, filling the tower and final testing were complete before an electrical failure set us back. We hope to bring it back online before May.
3. The streetscape project is complete. We are getting a damaged wall cap replaced and the final items will be trash cans, seating, picnic tables and potentially pergola to create inviting outdoor space in the spring.
4. The S Lincoln St improvements have started. The eastbound lane should be completed by 4/17 and 7 days or so later the westbound lane will be completed.
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.

Please provide your feedback on any pertinent topic at any time. Please don't wait for Mayor Monday or one-off request. Mayor Monday will resume May 11, 2026 @ Viking Brew from 6-7 pm.

In your service,
Mike James, Mayor
309-830-7374, Mayor@VillageOfDowns.org

Video/Audio Information for Public Meetings Using TEAMS

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
- TextVillage Clerk-390-6709

Video/Audio conference call information:

Join TEAMS Meeting:
Meeting ID: 250 776 149 659 2
Passcode: F2UB9xG2



Village of Downs Board of Trustees Meeting Overview

April 9th, 2026, 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 April 9, 2026, Village of Downs Board of Trustees Regular Meeting to Order at 7:09 p.m.
2. Trustees present were Maureen Roach, Diana Reynolds, Stephanie Adkisson, Sarah Gassaway, and Brian Warfel. Trustee absent was 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. The TransWorld conference was reported as a success, and while the annual Easter breakfast will be discontinued due to low participation and volunteer demands, the Easter egg hunt will continue next year. Engineering updates highlighted steady progress across multiple projects, including near completion of the downtown streetscape and parking improvements, ongoing work at the water plant, and continued development activity throughout the village. Updates were also shared on several subdivision and development agreements, including Kickapoo Creek Estates and KCN Estates, as well as a duplex project on East Street that is moving forward again that was initially proposed in 2023.
5. Department reports reflected continued activity across village operations. The police department is working on a comprehensive ten-year review and implementing new training and technology initiatives, including a transition to electronic ticketing. Streets crews have resumed seasonal work, while parks and community efforts are underway with mulch installation, playground improvements, and planning for summer events.
6. Financial updates included adjustments to the current fiscal year budget and an overview of the proposed FY2027 budget. Additional updates included ongoing FOIA requests, building permit activity, and efforts to support staff and community services.
7. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm with no executive session this month.

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.

April 5, 2026

Community Letter

Who actually "Hijacked" and wrote the Mayor's page?

Thank you for the opportunity to share thoughts and ideas for Downs. Now that you have extended the request to the residents-please post all responses in the flyer-not edited by the Mayor and/or Trustees. You asked-please share all responses from the residents.

This is probably not a popular suggestion. It is the "elephant in the room". After all the money and time spent updating the downtown area it is time to move the Haunted House to the area near the Police Dept. and build the new Village Hall in the space now occupied by the Haunted House. The Village Hall needs to be accessible and a new building would be a nice addition to the downtown area. The Haunted House area is an eyesore and looks like a homeless encampment. I realize this will be inconvenient for the Haunted House group to move but we have been told progress can be painful.

Please return to a past policy of using the executive sessions at the Board meetings to discuss only personnel and legal issues. Open the rest of the information to the residents for their input instead of decisions being made behind closed doors.

Please update (redo?) the Village website. Outdated information is not helpful. Some items are posted on the website. Some items are posted on GPS facebook. There is no consistency where residents can find information.

Work on cleaning up the Village. If there are ordinance violations ie junk yard at the south end of Lincoln Street-get the owner to clean it up or use legal means. Other villages/towns have "industrial parks" that do not give the appearance of a junk yard. Abandoned semi-trailers also on Lincoln Street-when will those be removed? The area around the Police Dept. needs clean up.

Businesses? Now that the Streetscape project is complete in hopes of making downtown Downs "a destination". There is still nothing to make it that. Unique businesses and restaurants would draw people from out of town-not updated streets, sidewalks, and fancy lights.

Submitted by
Cheryl and David Bach
109 West Seminary
Downs



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.

E-Billing Began March 1st

Email billing went very well for the March billing. Thank you to everyone for your patience with us as we use this new method. The Village is saving, postage, cost of forms and labor by using the email billing.

Be sure to check your emails each month for your bill. Should you wish to continue to receive a printed bill, please let the office know.

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 help.

Water Sewer Report for March 2026.

The average iron concentration for the finished water was **.05** ppm. Monthly bacteriological testing on the raw, finished, and distribution samples were all satisfactory; fluoride concentration was **.72**. The volume of water pumped for the month was **2.755** million gallons, averaging **88,870** gallons per day. The sewer lift station pumped **2.221** million gallons for the month, averaging **71,670** million gallons per day.

- 0 Water shut off
- 5 outdated water meters/transmitters replaced with updated units
- 2 Water leaks repaired
- 4 Curb Stop repair
- 28 JULIE tickets within Village
 - 5 Streets/Water Department
 - 23 outside companies (0 was extended ticket, need to remark)
- 39 JULIE tickets outside Village (0 were extended tickets, no need to remark)



Brush pick-up started on April 6th. We announced in 2025 that all leaves **MUST BE BAGGED**, or they will be left at the curb. **THANK YOU!**

The Water Department continues to show well-balanced testing results with an “A” grade quality. We’re continuing water analysis in the four quadrants of the Village with the same test results and grade. This is excellent news for the Village and residents.

Beecher Trails

Chlorine 1.57
PH 8.1
Hardness 23
Orthophosphate 1.76
Fluoride .71

Indian Hills

Chlorine 1.38
PH 8.1
Hardness 24
Orthophosphate 1.73
Fluoride .72

Mallard Point

Chlorine 2.88
PH 8.1
Hardness 26
Orthophosphate 1.73
Fluoride .71

Water Plant

Chlorine 3.90
PH 8.1
Hardness 25
Orthophosphate 1.54
Fluoride .71

Water meters/transmitters replacement changeout continues. This will be at no cost to the homeowner as it is Village Property.

Your awareness of the Streets/Water team is appreciated. As the weather betters, we’ll be out in full force mowing, street repairs, water leaks, etc. so please continue to be cautious of our Village workers.



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

Jill Combs
Supervisor of Public Works & Maintenance



Monthly Brush Pickup

April thru November

Our debris pickup starts in April on the first Monday of the month. If the designated Monday pickup is not favorable, we will pick up on the next nice day following that Monday. The following are the rules we will follow with no exceptions:

- Items to be picked up must be burnable and free from all nails, screws, and metal (ex: Leaves, sticks, brush, branches, etc.)
- **Leaves must be bagged.**
- All items must be within the Village right away on curb, driveway or as close to the road as possible without creating a hazard in the road. (Note: Since we use a backhoe, in most cases, to do this work, we DO NOT want to tear up or rut yards or ditches. If we can't reach the debris from the road or a driveway, we WILL NOT pick it up.
- If you know you will have a larger than normal pile, please contact the office so they can make the streets department aware.

Please note that there is NO BURNING in the ditches or on the road. Doing this causes clogging and backup in the ditches and culverts. It can also damage the road surface causing us to spend what little tax dollars we have, to fix these issues.

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.

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.

Consumer Confidence Report

The 2025 CCR report is available on the website

You can find last year's CCR on the Public Works Department page located on our website at www.villageofdowns.org/public-works.htm.

GOLF CART and UTILITY TERRAIN VEHICLE PERMIT RENEWAL TIME



It's almost that time again to renew permits as the year runs from May 1st through April 30th. The Board approved two permit changes for the upcoming year. The yearly permit fee will increase to \$60. In addition, drivers must be at least 16 and possess a valid Illinois driver's license. Please see all the policies in Chapter 8 on the Village website for the requirements to operate and obtain a permit and other safety guidelines. An application, copy of Drivers License and Insurance card, along with payment must be submitted to the Village Hall before an inspection can be done. Vehicle must be inspected by the police department to receive a permit.

The police department will be available for drive-through inspections on the following date at
Dooley Park:

Saturday, May 2	9am-1pm
Saturday, May 9	9am-1pm

No appointment needed

If you cannot make these dates, an alternate date can be arranged. Warm weather will be coming soon with more bikers and walkers. Drivers, please be careful and watch out for others.



Building Permits

Submit to the Village Hall

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.

Door-to-Door Sales

Solicitation 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.

Refuse & 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 and Trash 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.
- Place your cans with the lid opening towards the road.

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



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
April	10th	11th
May	8th	9th
June	5th	6th
July	10th	11th
August	7th	8th
September	18th	19th
October	9th	10th
November	6th	7th
December	11th	12th

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.

Contact the Food Pantry

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

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

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.

Parks

Parks Meeting Schedule

Dooley Park Pavilion @ 6 pm

Held the Tuesday after the Board Meeting. Coming up: May 19th

Downs Village Market

Vendor Packets Available

Market season is revving up for the summer. Vendor packets are available on the village website. The committee is always looking for volunteers to share the load and provide ideas. Check out the Village Market page on the website for more information.

Looking Ahead

Quick Glance at Upcoming Village Events, Activities and Meetings

April:

- 2nd – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 6th - First Yard Refuse Pickup: leaves must be bagged!
- 7th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 9th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; TEAMS
- 9th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 14th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 16th – Garbage Collection
- 23rd - Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 25th - Boy Scouts Breakfast Fundraiser, 7 am @ Downs United Methodist Church
- 30th - Garbage Collection

May:

- 2nd - Golf Cart Drive Thru Police Check, 9 am - 1 pm @Dooley Park
- 4th - Yard Refuse Pickup: leaves must be bagged!
- 5th - ZBA Public Hearing, 6pm @ Village Hall
- 7th – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 9th - Golf Cart Drive Thru Police Check, 9 am - 1 pm @Dooley Park
- 12th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 14th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; TEAMS
- 14th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 19th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 21st – Garbage collection
- 25th - Happy Memorial Day, Village Hall Closed
- 29th – Garbage and Recycle Collection

June:

- 1st - Yard Refuse Pickup: leaves must be bagged!
- 4th – Garbage Collection – GFL Monthly Bulk pickup
- 6th - Village of Downs Clean Up Day
- 9th – Events Committee Regular Meeting, 6 pm, @ Village Hall
- 11th – Village Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, 7 pm @ Village Hall; TEAMS
- 11th – Garbage and Recycle Collection
- 16th – Parks Committee Regular Meeting, 6:30 pm @ Pavilion
- 18th – Garbage Collection
- 25th – Garbage and Recycle Collection

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



McLean County
Health Department
Healthy People • Healthy Places



MOBILE HEALTH CLINIC



McLean County Health Department is taking Public Health on the road!



Friday, May 8th, 2026 9:00am – 1:00pm



Downs Dooley Park Pavilion (parking lot)

The mobile unit will be offering the following FREE services:



A1C Tests



Blood Pressure Checks



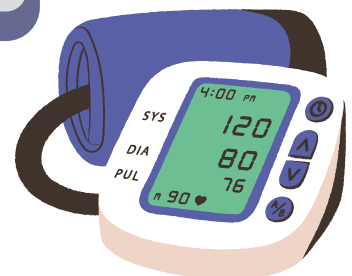
Height, Weight & Body Mass Index



Heart Health Education



Car Seat Checks (time permitting)



(309) 888-5446



health.promotion@mcleancountyl.gov



Up and Coming Events

- Sunday morning Adult Sunday School 8:30am in Youth Room
- *YOUTH WORSHIP during the regular worship service at 9:30am. It is a service geared for the 4th through 8th grade students and they meet in the Youth Room.*
- Sunday evenings at 6pm 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 The program will conclude for the summer on April 29th.
- Watch for Vacation Bible School information on the website.



Worship Service

Sundays 9:30am In Person

Online at www.downsumc.org



SERMON SERIES

"Practical"

Studying the book of James



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Downs, IL
Behind the Church
Building

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10:45am - Noon

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- 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



Tri-Valley HUGE Sale for Charity
Saturday, July 18th 8:00-1:00

The annual Tri-Valley Sale for Charity will be held from 8 am-1 pm on Saturday, July 18th at the high school and a bag sale on Sunday, July 19th from 12:00-1:00. For the sale to succeed, **we need YOUR donations!**

We accept clean, usable clothing, books, household items, toys, holiday decorations and small furniture. Please no old TVs! Due to space issues, we ask that you wait to bring your donations until July 11th. **We will only accept donations from July 11 through July 16 in the high school commons.**

Drop off will be at the front entrance of the school.

7/11 Saturday 9:00-11:00
7/12 Sunday 12:00-3:00
7/13 Monday 2:00-4:00
7/15 Tuesday 2:00-4:00
7/16 Thursday 12:00-3:00

If you have questions, please contact Shari Riley at sriley@tri-valley3.org.

Last year we raised \$12,000 dollars! The money raised is used to help families within our district. Some examples of how the money has helped others are gift cards to help with school supplies and clothing, rent for a family in need, new shoes for a student, and propane for heating a family's home. We also help This sale is only successful with lots of good quality donations and people to buy them!

In addition, if you would like to help with the setup (**July 16 and July 17 from 12 pm-3 pm**) or tear down of the sale (**Sunday, July 19th from 1:00-3:00**), please contact Shari Riley at sriley@tri-valley3.org. This crew actually has quite a bit of fun as we work!

Thank you in advance for your support! **Go Vikings!**
Shari Riley



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

Troop 953 Scouts are: Serving you and other guests at our annual pancake breakfast!

Location: Downs United Methodist Church, 205 S Hwy Ave, Downs Illinois 61736



Date: Saturday April 25 at 7 AM-12 PM,
Price: \$10-Adults / \$5-10 years & under
Buy your tickets online at <https://troop953.simpletix.com>

(Created by Troop 953's Quartermaster)

NEED MORE STORAGE?

**BRAND NEW BUILDING
JUST ADDED IN DOWNS!**

Non-Temperature Controlled Units
5x10, 10x10, 10x15, 10x20, 10x25, 10x30

STARTING AT \$60



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DOWNS, IL

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PO Box 18
Downs, IL 61736

Cynthia Sutton
18832 Pioneer St
Bloomington, IL 61705



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 Dinger	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	zbachair@villageofdowns.org
EMA Director	Travis Misch	309.378.3221	