

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GURNEE VILLAGE BOARD GURNEE VILLAGE HALL JUNE 16, 2025	
Call to Order	Mayor Hood called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
Other Officials in Attendance	Patrick Muetz, Village Administrator; Austin Pollack, Assistant to the Village Administrator; Bryan Winter, Village Attorney; Heather Galan, Public Works Director; Brian Gosnell, Finance Director; Christine Palmieri, Director of Human Resources; Ellen Dean, Economic Development Director; John Kavanagh, Fire Chief; David Douglass, Deputy Fire Chief; Brian Smith, Police Chief; Jeremy Gaughan, Deputy Police Chief.
Roll Call	PRESENT: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside ABSENT: 1- Garner
Pledge of Allegiance	Mayor Hood led the Pledge of Allegiance.
A. PUBLIC COMMENT	
Keith Owens 6464 Doral Dr. Gurnee, IL	Mr. Owens stated he assumes the proposed Sales Tax increase will be approved. He stated this is good news, as it will help keep the water rate low, fund needed water infrastructure and should be at least a net zero impact on residents. He stated shifting the tax burden to visitors is a good solution. Mr. Owens commended staff for its efforts. He asked if the Sales Tax increase will result in \$2 - \$2.5 million available for other projects. He stated if the answer is yes, he wonders what it will be used for and stated staff looks to the elected officials for guidance.
B. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA	It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Roll call, AYE: 5- Ross,, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside NAY: 0- None ABSENT: 1- Garner Motion Carried.
C. CONSENT AGENDA / OMNIBUS VOTE	The Village Administrator read the consent agenda for an omnibus vote as follows. 1. Approval of the minutes from the June 2, 2025 meeting. 2. Approval of Public Works Department request to waive bidding requirements and award the 2025 Street Light Program directional boring contract to PirTano Construction (2024 low proposer) in the amount of \$53,504.00. 3. Approval of request from Public Works Department to allow Administrative Services Coordinator Kristine Poisl to attend the Trimble Innovate (Cityworks) User Conference from October 14 – 17, 2025 in Salt Lake City, UT at the cost of \$2,265.00. 4. Approval of request from Community Development Department to allow Associate Planner Shannon Coleman to attend the Affordable Housing Essentials training program from October 9 – 10, 2025 in Cambridge, MA at a cost of \$3,350.00. 5. Approval of fireworks permit for Six Flags Great America – various shoot dates July and August – displays to be launched from southwest corner of the property.

6. Approval of Payroll for period ending May 30, 2025 in the amount of \$1,199,537.40.

7. Approval of Bills for the period ending June 16, 2025 in the amount of \$1,934,254.79.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve the Consent Agenda for an omnibus vote as read.

Roll call,
AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

D. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Approval of a Proclamation designating Thursday, June 19, 2025 as Juneteenth Day.

Mayor Hood summarized the Proclamation.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of a Proclamation designating Thursday, June 19, 2025 as Juneteenth Day.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

Administrator Muetz said that there were no discussion topics on the agenda for the June 23rd Committee of the Whole meeting and asked the Trustees if they would like to cancel the meeting.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to cancel the Committee of the Whole meeting for June 23, 2025.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

E. REPORTS

None.

F. OLD BUSINESS

None.

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Res. 2025 - 07 authorizing the extended term of the Municipal Insurance Cooperative Agency Insurance Pool and approving its Amended By-Laws.

Administrator Muetz said the Village of Gurnee obtains property, liability and workers compensation insurance coverage through its membership in the Municipal Insurance Cooperative Agency (MICA). MICA is an intergovernmental insurance pool with over 20-member communities / entities. Gurnee joined MICA in 2003 and Administrator Muetz has served as Chairman of the cooperative for the past 10 years. The current term of the Agency expires on April 30, 2026. Muetz stated to continue the agency, the term must be extended. In conjunction with this, the By-Laws have been reviewed and updated. He said the amendments to the By-Laws are largely clean up amendments. The most significant changes are that the By-Laws now incorporate the State Law requirement that a member can leave the pool upon 120 days' notice. Further, the By-Laws include an extended term for the MICA Pool, which is a new 12-year term from May 1, 2026 through April 30, 2038. Muetz stated that while the Board of Directors can approve the term extension by two-thirds vote, MICA found it prudent to take the term extension and By-Law amendment back to individual members for approval.

Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of Res. 2025 - 07 authorizing the extended term of the Municipal Insurance Cooperative Agency Insurance Pool and approving its Amended By-Laws, moved it.

Roll call,
AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

2. Approval of Ord. 2025 – 48 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 7005 Route 132.

Administrator Muetz said First American Bank, 7005 Route 132, is requesting a Special Use Permit for approval of an Electronic Message Board Sign on its property located at 7005 Route 132. The proposed message board is 32 square feet and will be located 50 feet from the edge of the roadway. Muetz stated that as a point of comparison, the ALEC message board is 28 square feet and 44 feet from the roadway. As with all electronic message board signs, it will need to comply with the ten standards the Village has established. First American is aware of this and stated it will be able to meet the requirements. The request was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board at its May 7th meeting and received a unanimous favorable recommendation

It was moved by Trustee Woodside, seconded by Trustee O’Brien to approve of Ord. 2025 – 48 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 7005 Route 132.

Roll call,

AYE: 5 - Ross, O’Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside

NAY: 0 - None

ABSENT: 1 - Garner

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of Ord. 2025 – 49 amending Chapter 74, Articles II and III of the Gurnee Municipal Code imposing an additional one-half percent (0.50%) Home Rule Retailers Occupation and Service Occupation Tax for the purposes of replacing Grocery Tax revenue and funding capital improvements.

Administrator Muetz said at the May 19th Village Board meeting, Finance Director Gosnell reviewed the elimination of the 1% Grocery Tax and options related to the State’s actions. He stated as a reminder the State of Illinois is eliminating the 1% Grocery Tax effective January 1, 2026. As part of the legislation to end the tax, the State gave municipalities that option of reinstituting the tax if it so chooses. The tax generates an estimated \$2 – \$2.5 million annually for Gurnee. Communities wishing to act must do so by October 1, 2025. At the meeting, staff provided justification for increasing the Home Rule Sales Tax by 0.50% rather than reinstating the Grocery Tax. Muetz stated points reviewed by staff included data from Placer.ai, indicating there are more visits from Gurnee zip codes to grocery stores (40% on average) than any other type of retailer and the majority of those visits (55%+) are from the 52 and over age group, the only local options with a large enough base to raise the lost revenue would be to continue the Grocery Tax or adjust the Village’s home rule Sales Tax rate. The Sales Tax increase replaces the lost Grocery Tax revenue and provides funding for needed water and sewer capital infrastructure. Muetz stated the Sales Tax increase also shifts the burden from residents to visitors to the community. He continued to state according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics the average Gurnee household should save approximately \$85 by increasing the Sales Tax compared to reinstituting the 1% Grocery Tax. In order to ensure no lapse in funding, the Village must submit any changes to the State of Illinois by October 1st. Staff’s recommendation is to increase the home rule Sales Tax by 0.50% and dedicate 50% of the additional revenue to capital infrastructure.

Trustee Woodside said he appreciates all the work Village staff has done on this. He said this is an exceptional opportunity for the Village. Trustee Woodside said the Village is positioned to shift the burden to visitors in a way that will not be felt and allow the Village to remain competitive with other communities and Simon malls. He said this allows Gurnee to give residents a break on the price of food, which is a necessity. Trustee Woodside said he is pleased with the research and presentation.

Trustee O’Brien added it lowers the overall tax burden for Gurnee residents by a half of a percent and that is a good thing.

Trustee Thorstenson said it is important to note the average resident will save \$85. She read the following from the staff memo, “Based on the same survey, the average household sales tax burden would be reduced

by approximately \$85 annually by forgoing the 1.0% grocery tax (-\$165), and implementing a 0.50% home rule sales tax (+\$80) if all shopping occurred in Gurnee.”

Trustee Ross said thank you to staff.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Balmes to approve of Ord. 2025 – 49 amending Chapter 74, Articles II and III of the Gurnee Municipal Code imposing an additional one-half percent (0.50%) Home Rule Retailers Occupation and Service Occupation Tax for the purposes of replacing Grocery Tax revenue and funding capital improvements.

Roll call,

AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

4. Approval of Ord. 2025 – 50 removing one Class 1 Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Products License by amending Section 7-8 of Chapter 7 of the Gurnee Municipal Code entitled “Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Retailers”.

Administrator Muetz said a recent audit of number of Class 1 Tobacco licenses issued compared to the Municipal Code indicates that the number of Class 1s should be reduced by one due to Grand Convenience Store not renewing its license. He stated this amendment does leave one license available, which is the next item on the agenda. Gateway Newstands is under new ownership and is now S-A One Stop. It would like to continue tobacco sales. As such, rather than amending the Code twice (remove Grand Convenience and Gateway licenses, then add license back in for S-A One Stop), staff is proposing to just reduce the Municipal Code by one license, leaving the license previously held by Grand Convenience available to issue to S-A One Stop

It was moved by Trustee Thorstenson, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of Ord. 2025 – 50 removing one Class 1 Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Products License by amending Section 7-8 of Chapter 7 of the Gurnee Municipal Code entitled “Tobacco and Alternative Nicotine Retailers”.

Roll call,

AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

5. Approval of issuing a Class 1 Tobacco License to Shamsuddin Lakhani to operate S-A One Stop – 6170 Route 132, Unit 727 (formerly Gateway Newstands).

Administrator Muetz said Gateway Newstands at Gurnee Mills recently came under new ownership. In conjunction with that, the name has been changed to S-A One Stop. The store previously had a Class 1 Tobacco License (incidental sales). The new owner would like to continue to offer tobacco products consistent with past sales. The Police Department has conducted the necessary background check and found nothing to preclude issuing the license. Since the Class 1 Gateway Newstands held has not yet been removed from the Municipal Code, there is a license currently available without a Municipal Code amendment.

It was moved by Trustee Woodside, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to approve of issuing a Class 1 Tobacco License to Shamsuddin Lakhani to operate S-A One Stop – 6170 Route 132, Unit 727 (formerly Gateway Newstands).

Roll call,

AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

6. Approval of request from Police Department to purchase a 2025 Polaris Ranger Crew XP 1000 from Nielsen Enterprises at a cost of \$29,054.00 (Police Department Unit #183 - price lower than Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing contract).

Administrator Muetz said the Police Department currently operates a 2008 two-passenger Polaris Ranger, originally purchased from Nielsen Enterprises in Lake Villa. This utility vehicle is used to support operations at Six Flags Great America, Gurnee Mills Mall, Gurnee Days and various Village-wide special events. He stated it is also deployed several times per year for searches along the Des Plaines River Trail and to shuttle officers and equipment into areas where traditional police vehicles cannot easily access. The unit is now experiencing chronic mechanical issues requiring frequent maintenance. The Department worked with Nielsen Enterprises on a replacement unit. Muetz stated the proposed replacement can seat six passengers, has an enclosed cab, top speed of 60 mph and improved suspension for off-road driving. After a discount and rebate, the final price of the unit is \$29,054. As part of the replacement process, the Police Department also requested pricing from Kubota. Their available models were limited to two and four-passenger configurations, with the four-passenger unit only reaching a top speed of 25 mph. Despite offering fewer features and lower speed capabilities, Muetz stated the Kubota models were priced similarly to the Polaris. In addition, the Department reviewed the Sourcewell service cooperative contract for UTVs. It found the pricing from Nielsen less than Sourcewell offered.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to approve of request from Police Department to purchase a 2025 Polaris Ranger Crew XP 1000 from Nielsen Enterprises at a cost of \$29,054.00 (Police Department Unit #183 - price lower than Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing contract).

Roll call,

AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside

NAY: 0 - None

ABSENT: 1 - Garner

Motion Carried.

7. Approval of request from Police Department to waive bidding requirements and purchase 142 rifle plates and 62 ballistic helmets from Galls at a total price of \$130,521.46.

Administrator Muetz said the FY 25/26 Approved Budget includes funding to replace Police Department rifle plates and ballistic helmet. Historically, rifle plates were housed in external plate carriers that are put on over existing vests. He stated they are bulky, one size fits all and obstructed access to duty gear and body-worn cameras. After evaluating several options, the Department is recommending lightweight rifle plates that integrate into officers' existing vest carriers. These new plates, when combined with their standard soft body armor, provide a greater level of protection compared to the current rifle plates. He stated each plate fits into an internal compartment in the vest carrier, which allows officers to wear the plates full-time without compromising access to their duty gear or interfering with their body-worn cameras.

Muetz continued to state that the Department's ballistic helmets are 15 years old. Since then, operations have changed and technology has advanced. The proposed helmets are significantly lighter than previous models and are designed for rapid deployment from squad vehicles.

The Department is requesting to waive the formal bidding process and purchase the equipment from Galls. Muetz stated the Department has a longstanding relationship with Galls. To avoid bulk replacements such as this, going forward the Department will work to stagger replacements to avoid large, one-time expenditures.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve of request from Police Department to waive bidding requirements and purchase 142 rifle plates and 62 ballistic helmets from Galls at a total price of \$130,521.46.

Roll call,
AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

8. Approval of request from Fire Department to utilize Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Contract No. E-One #11320212-RVG-4 to purchase a 2025 E-One Typhoon Rescue Pumper from Fire Service Inc. at a cost of \$1,180,719.00 (Fire Department Unit #1312).

Administrator Muetz said included in the FY 25/26 Approved Budget is the purchase of a new fire engine to replace Unit #1312. He stated the Department plans for fire engines to last 16 years, which means an engine is replaced approximately every four years. The lead time on a receiving a new engine is currently 36 months therefore when the replacement shows up current until #1312 will be 16 years old. Muetz stated the Department is recommending the Village once again take advantage of the Sourcewell Rescue Pumper contract to purchase the engine from Fire Service Inc. Fire Service, Inc. is the current preferred manufacturer of the Village's fire equipment. The Village has partnered with it on successfully building and placing in service its last five engines and seven ambulances, as well as the ladder truck and heavy rescue. Muetz stated the Sourcewell contract for the engine provides a 17% discount off the manufacturer's suggested retail price.

It was moved by Trustee Ross, seconded by Trustee Balmes to approve of request from Fire Department to utilize Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Contract No. E-One #11320212-RVG-4 to purchase a 2025 E-One Typhoon Rescue Pumper from Fire Service Inc. at a cost of \$1,180,719.00 (Fire Department Unit #1312).

Roll call,
AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

9. Approval of request from Fire Department to award the Fire Station #1 Maintenance Shop Modification Project to the low proposer, Camosy Construction, at a cost of \$23,300.00.

Administrator Muetz said the FY 25/26 Approved Budget includes a new Public Safety Mechanic position in the Gurnee Fire Department (GFD), as well as funding to create an office space for the position. He stated the Public Safety Mechanic will be a full-time, Monday–Friday role dedicated to the maintenance and repair of the Department's apparatus and equipment. Currently the Department has an open workspace off the bay floor and would like to convert a portion of it to an office for the position. The Department has worked with JJ Henderson (JJH) and Camosy Construction in the past and reached out to both to discuss the project and solicit pricing. Camosy submitted a proposal of \$23,300, which was approximately \$3,000 less than JJH. Based on past performance and proposal price, staff is recommending the Village partner with Camosy for the project.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve of request from Fire Department to award the Fire Station #1 Maintenance Shop Modification Project to the low proposer, Camosy Construction, at a cost of \$23,300.00.

Roll call,
AYE: 5 - Ross, O'Brien, Balmes, Thorstenson, Woodside
NAY: 0 - None
ABSENT: 1 - Garner
Motion Carried.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kevin Moss
2086 Windsong Ct.
Gurnee, IL

Mr. Moss expressed concerns about property maintenance violations and asked that the Village address them. He then listed four violations that need to be resolved.

Keith Owens 6464 Doral Dr. Gurnee, IL	Mr. Owens defined affordable housing and stated a housing burden can start a process that leads to homelessness. He stated the lack of affordable housing is a serious issue. He stated the Village cannot solve it alone, but it can take a leadership position. Mr. Owens shared information he obtained from a Connections for the Homeless session he attended. He next reviewed new apartments being built in Gurnee, their costs and how it compares to annual income and housing burdens. He stated the Village should consider incentives for developers to build affordable housing as a part of future developments. Mr. Owens stated the problem needs to be reviewed and hopes it becomes a priority.
Closing Comments	None.
Adjournment	It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to adjourn the meeting. <u>Voice Vote:</u> ALL AYE: Motion Carried. Mayor Hood adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.
Andrew Harris, Village Clerk	