

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GURNEE VILLAGE BOARD GURNEE VILLAGE HALL JULY 20, 2026	
Call to Order	Mayor Hood called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.
Other Officials in Attendance	Patrick Muetz, Village Administrator; Bryan Winter, Village Attorney; David Ziegler, Community Development Director; Jake Litz, Assistant Community Development Director; Brian Gosnell, Finance Director; Christine Palmieri, Director of Human Resources; Nick Leach, Village Engineer; Ryan Nelson, Information Systems Director; David Douglass, Deputy Fire Chief; Jeremy Gaughan, Police Chief; Jason Kalinowski, Deputy Police Chief; Matt Trujilo, Community Engagement Coordinator.
Roll Call	PRESENT: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross ABSENT: 0-
Pledge of Allegiance	Mayor Hood led the Pledge of Allegiance.
A. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA	It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Roll call, AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross NAY: 0- None ABSENT: 0- None Motion Carried.
B. CONSENT AGENDA / OMNIBUS VOTE	The Village Administrator read the consent agenda for an omnibus vote as follows. 1. Approval of minutes from the July 6, 2026 meeting. 2. Approval of Res. 2026 – 03 establishing certain property of the Village of Gurnee to be surplus (miscellaneous Police Department found, abandoned or surplus property). 3. Approval of Information System Divisions request to purchase one-year of Cisco SMARTnet maintenance services from Presidio Networked Solutions Group, LLC at an estimated cost of \$66,000.00 (annual maintenance agreement - State of Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology contract). 4. Approval of Engineering Division's request to set the following bid dates: a. August 10, 2026, for the Grove Avenue Drainage Ditch Improvement Project b. August 31, 2026, for the Gowe Beach Demolition Project 5. Approval of issuing a Raffle License and waiving the fee and bond requirement for The Exchange Club of Gurnee's Gurnee Days event. 6. Approval of Payroll for the period ending July 10, 2026, in the amount of \$1,152,257.08. 7. Approval of Bills for the period ending July 20, 2026, in the amount of \$2,266,677.05.

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

Roll call,
AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

C. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Approval of Proclamation honoring Gale Graves for being selected the 2026 Gurnee Days Honoree.

Mayor Hood summarized the Proclamation, explaining that the purpose is to officially recognize Gale Graves as the 2026 Gurnee Days Honoree Recipient for her exceptional community leadership, dedication to public service, and volunteerism within the Village of Gurnee and Lake County. He said that Gale Graves has a collaborative leadership style and deep commitment to community equity. Throughout her career, she has consistently focused on community empowerment, such as during COVID-19, Graves co-chaired the African American Community Partnership Group of Lake County, managing over \$1 million in cares act funding. Mayor Hood explained that she also earned recognition as the Dr. Martin Luther King Drum Major for Justice Honoree. She also currently serves as the Vice President of Community Impact for the United Way of Lake County. Mayor Hood briefly explained that the Village of Gurnee celebrates Gurnee Days annually to highlight the community spirit and history. He mentioned that each year, a person who exemplifies Gurnee's qualities is selected as the Gurnee Days Honoree. Finally, Mayor Hood proclaimed August 6, 2026 as Gale Graves Day.

It was moved by Trustee Woodside, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of Proclamation honoring Gale Graves for being selected the 2026 Gurnee Days Honoree.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

2. Administration of Oath of Office for the promotion of Police Officer Mike Lambert to Police Sergeant.

Mayor Hood said that he is always proud to see promotions of police officers. He explained that the Village is dedicated to promoting from within.

Chief Gaughan briefly explained the promotional process.

Chief Gaughan spoke about Officer Lambert's career with the Gurnee Police Department stating he joined the Gurnee Police Department in 2015, and during his career with the Village, he has served as a Patrol Officer as well as in several instructional roles. He explained that Lambert has consistently maintained a visible and approachable presence in the community, providing professional and compassionate service to those throughout the Village. Chief Gaughan explained Lambert's previous positions and how those have contributed to today's expertise. He mentioned that upon his promotion, Officer Lambert will serve as a Patrol Team Sergeant.

Mayor Hood administered the Oath of Office.

Sergeant Lambert thanked his wife, parents, kids, godparents and fellow officers for coming out to support him. He said he is looking forward to getting started in his new role.

3. Administration of Oath of Office for the promotion of Police Officer Shawn Gaylor to Police Sergeant.

Chief Gaughan spoke about Officer Gaylor's career with the Gurnee Police Department, which she joined in 2014. He explained that during her law enforcement career Gaylor has served as a Patrol Officer, Visitor-Oriented Police Officer, Crime Prevention Detective and Public Information Officer. He stated she has also played a significant role in

community engagement, public information, crime prevention, emergency communication, recruitment and department-wide public safety initiatives. Chief Gaughan stated under her leadership, the Department's social media following grew significantly. Gaylor has also supported the Command Staff with operational planning, grant development, recruitment, emergency communications and strategic initiatives. Chief Gaughan stated upon her promotion, Detective Gaylor will serve as the Administrative Sergeant.

Mayor Hood administered the Oath of Office.

Sergeant Gaylor said it is great to see so many come out to the meeting tonight in support. She thanked Mayor Hood, Administrator Muetz, the Village Board, Chief Gaughan and Deputy Chief Kalinowski for their confidence in her and all the opportunities they have provided. She also thanked her family and team members, including the Fire Department and Public Works, stating she has learned much from them. She concluded by stating she is very excited and grateful for the opportunity.

4. Administration of Oath of Office for the promotion of Police Officer Tom Woodruff to Police Sergeant.

Chief Gaughan spoke about Officer Woodruff's career with the Gurnee Police Department which began in 2006. He stated Woodruff has served in numerous roles including patrol officer, Field Training Officer, Evidence Technician, Bike Officer, ATV Officer, Child Safety Seat Technician, Crisis Intervention Officer, Firearms Instructor, Active Threat and Rapid Deployment Instructor, Use of Force Instructor, High Risk Operations Patrol Officer, Less Lethal Instructor, Rescue Task Force Instructor and member of the Gurnee Police Department Honor Guard. Chief Gaughan stated Woodruff also served on the Northern Illinois Police Alarm System Emergency Services Team, where he advanced through several leadership and operational roles. Chief Gaughan explained that throughout Woodruff's career, he has been committed to both his own professional development as well as the professional development of his fellow officers. Upon his promotion, Officer Woodruff will serve as a Patrol Sergeant.

Mayor Hood administered the Oath of Office.

Sergeant Woodruff thanked his wife, son and other family members. He said a lot of stress comes with being a Police Officer and it is important to have a strong support system. He thanked the command staff for giving him this opportunity, as well as the Civil Service Commission for their trust in him. He also thanked his friend Vince in the audience, who reintroduced Woodruff to law enforcement, encouraging him to go on ride-alongs. Woodruff explained that his dad got Vince into law enforcement, and he is grateful that Vince was able to repay that to him.

5. Administration of Oath of Office for the promotion of Police Sergeant Stan St. Clair to Police Commander.

Chief Gaughan spoke about Sergeant St. Clair's career with the Gurnee Police Department which started in 2017 after previously serving with the Spring Grove Police Department. He stated during his law enforcement career, St. Clair has served as patrol officer, patrol sergeant, investigations sergeant, School Resource Officer, Accident Investigator, Defensive Tactics Instructor, Crisis Intervention Officer, Taser Instructor, Juvenile Officer, K9 Officer, and more. Upon his promotion, Sergeant St. Clair will serve as the Patrol Commander for the night shift.

Mayor Hood administered the Oath of Office.

Commander St. Clair thanked the Police Chief, Deputy Chief, Mayor, Village Board and the Civil Service Commission. He thanked his fellow officers, stating that they make him look good and gave him confidence. He also thanked his mom and sister. He said the Department is a family and he looks forward to going back on the nightshift and hopes to make the Village and its Administration proud.

6. Administration of Oath of Office for the promotion of Police Commander Matt Bendler to Deputy Police Chief.

Chief Gaughan spoke about Commander Bendler's career with the

Gurnee Police Department, which began in 2001. He explained that during his 24 years in law enforcement, Bendler has served in numerous roles including Patrol Officer, Bicycle Officer, Crime Prevention Officer, Defensive Tactics Instructor, Drone Pilot, Emergency Vehicle Operations Instructor, Emergency Medical Instructor, Evidence Technician, Field Training Officer, Gang Officer, Juvenile Officer, Rapid Deployment Instructor, and more. He also served on the Northern Illinois Police Alarm System Emergency Services team for nine years. Upon his promotion, Commander Bendler will serve as the Deputy Chief of Support Services.

Mayor Hood administered the Oath of Office.

Deputy Chief Bendler thanked the Village Board, Administrator and Mayor for their support. He said that the Command Staff have always been good to him, and he appreciates everything that they have done. He thanked his family for coming out and appreciates this new opportunity, hoping he can fulfill the needs and expectations of the position.

D. REPORTS

1. Presentation by Community Engagement Coordinator Matt Trujillo – Small Business Capital Grant Program Update and Proposed Transformational Grant recipients.

Community Engagement Coordinator Matt Trujillo reviewed a PowerPoint presentation related to the Small Business Capital Grant Program. Additionally, the presentation proposed two transformational grants and a rule change to the Impact grant.

Small Business Capital Grant Breakdown:

- Businesses Awarded: 61
- Business type breakdown
 - Restaurants: 22
 - Retail: 15
 - Building Owners: 11
 - Entertainment: 3
 - Hotels: 5
 - Manufacturing: 5
- Total Impact Grants paid out: \$750K
- Total Impact Grants awarded: \$796K
- Total Transformational Grants paid out: \$250K
- Total Transformational Grants awarded: \$400K (Does not include the proposed transformational grants)
- Approximate project investment back to the Community: \$6 million (Does not include the proposed transformational grants)

Next, Coordinator Trujillo reviewed Impact Grant projects and awards since Fiscal Year 2022:

- FY 2022: 16 projects totaling \$132,902.84.
- FY 2023: 17 projects totaling \$148,132.31.
- FY 2024: 18 projects totaling \$161,832.23.
- FY 2025: 18 projects totaling \$186,616.55.
- FY 2026: 11 projects totaling \$93,124.46
- FY 2027 (Current): 5 projects totaling \$73,527.93
- Total amount awarded to date is \$796,136.32

It was noted that Fiscal Year 2026 grant awards were less than the usual \$150,000 and that the proposed change is meant to help with that.

Coordinator Trujillo then reviewed Transformational Grant projects and awards since April 2023:

- April 2023: Two grants awarded. One withdrew.
- April 2024: Two grants awarded. One withdrew.
- October 2024: Two grants awarded. Both completed
- April 2025: Three grants awarded. One project is completed, and the other two have until December of this year to complete their projects.
- February 2026: One Grant. The project has not yet begun.
- Total amount awarded to date is \$400,000. Not including the awards being proposed.

Next, Trujillo highlighted two projects that participated in the grant program. This included:

- Sapore Café transformed a former nail salon into a modern café in Gurnee. In addition to extensive plumbing and electrical improvements, the owners created a welcoming atmosphere to enjoy a variety of coffee, pastries, and lunch options.
- The Super 8 in Gurnee completed their Transformational Grant project, awarded in June 2025. As part of this project, they installed a new, ADA-compliant front entrance with sliding doors and replaced the PTAC heaters and coolers in the guest rooms.

Coordinator Trujillo next reviewed the proposed change to the Impact Grant:

The Small Business Capital Grant committee has proposed a "refresh" policy to address a decline in program utilization. So far, 18 active local businesses have reached the maximum \$20,000 lifetime funding cap. Under this new initiative, a two-year waiting period begins once a business uses its initial grant allotment, after which the funding balance resets to zero. This structural adjustment allows established enterprises to reapply for funding, thereby re-engaging proven participants to stimulate ongoing investment within commercial districts.

Next, Coordinator Trujillo presented the recommended two transformational grants selected by the committee, which includes Trustee Karen Thorstenson, Planning & Zoning Chairman Jim Sula, and Amber Aparcedo, Chairperson of the Gurnee Chamber of Commerce. Each grant is for \$50,000, as allocated in the FY2027 budget. No additional funding was requested beyond what was already appropriated for this purpose.

Country Inn & Suites and Riverside Plaza were chosen as recipients. Country Inn & Suites will utilize the grant for property enhancements such as pool renovations, shower upgrades in at least 20 bathrooms, and parking lot repairs. Riverside Plaza, now owned by GenCap Gurnee Owner LLC, will use its funds for extensive exterior improvements, including facade repairs and new tenant signage, to support the independent businesses located there. The projects are intended to improve infrastructure, safety, and the overall experience for guests and the community.

Coordinator Trujillo concluded the presentation by thanking the Village Board and offering to answer any questions. Trustee Garner asked whether businesses that have not yet received grant funding will have priority. Trujillo responded that it will still be a first-come, first-served process, but he will work with the new applicants to submit their paperwork and help them receive their grant funds. However, there will not be priority for new applicants.

Trustee Garner asked if a new application would have priority over someone that has applied and received a grant in the past.

Community Engagement Coordinator Trujillo said that would be a factor that would be taken into consideration by the Committee.

E. OLD BUSINESS

None.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of eligibility amendment for the Small Business Capital Grant Program.

Mayor Hood mentioned that Community Engagement Coordinator Trujillo explained the Small Business Capital Grant Program under

Reports.

It was moved by Trustee Thorstenson, seconded by Trustee Woodside to approve of eligibility amendment for the Small Business Capital Grant Program.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

2. Approval of Ord. 2026 - 56 authorizing the execution of a Small Business Capital Investment Grant Agreement with Gencap Gurnee Owner LLC for property located at 401 N. Riverside Drive, Gurnee.

Administrator Muetz mentioned that Community Engagement Coordinator Trujillo covered this during his presentation. He stated the owners of Riverside Plaza have applied for a \$50,000 Transformational Grant to allow façade and monument sign improvements at the shopping center, as well as repairs to the outside such as prime, paint, and a three-sided monument sign with new tenant panel name plates. The total project budget is \$171,210. The application was reviewed by the SBCG Committee and is recommended for a \$50,000 Transformational Grant Award.

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee Woodside to approve of Ord. 2026 - 56 authorizing the execution of a Small Business Capital Investment Grant Agreement with Gencap Gurnee Owner LLC for property located at 401 N. Riverside Drive, Gurnee.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of Ord. 2026 - 57 authorizing the execution of a Small Business Capital Investment Grant Agreement with Shivshakti Hotels LLC dba County Inn & Suites for property located at 5420 Grand Avenue, Gurnee.

Administrator Muetz said Country Inn & Suites has applied for a \$50,000 Transformation Grant to allow improvements to pool deck area, parking lot and guestroom bathrooms. More specifically it proposes to install wall and floor tiles in pool deck area and paint the pool room, install new tub/shower pan, and wall surround and water efficient fixtures in a minimum of 20 guest bathrooms, and repair sections of the parking lot. The total project is estimated at \$115,000. The application was reviewed by the SBCG Committee and is recommended for a \$50,000 Transformational Grant Award.

It was moved by Trustee Ross, seconded by Trustee Woodside to approve of Ord. 2026 - 57 authorizing the execution of a Small Business Capital Investment Grant Agreement with Shivshakti Hotels LLC dba County Inn & Suites for property located at 5420 Grand Avenue, Gurnee.

Roll call,

AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

4. Approval of Ord. 2026 - 58 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 1207 N. Route 41.

Administrator Muetz said QuikTrip Corporation is requesting a Special Use Permit for relief from a 25' Landscape Buffer requirement along Delany Road on property located at 1207 N. US Route 41 (former Asian Gourmet restaurant which closed in 2024). QuikTrip proposes to demolish the existing building and construct a full-service fuel station. The Village requires a 25-foot landscape buffer along both Delany Road, and Route 41. Lake County Department of Transportation (LCDOT) proposes to acquire approximately 12.23 feet of the required 25-foot

landscape buffer along the property's Delany Road frontage for sidewalk, curb and gutter, and a dedicated right-turn lane. As a result, QuikTrip is asking for relief from the required buffer. Administrator Muetz stated the request was before the Planning & Zoning Board (PZB) on July 1st. The PZB is forwarding a unanimous favorable recommendation on the relief from the required 25-foot landscape buffer along Delany Road.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Woodside to approve of Ord. 2026 - 58 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 1207 N. Route 41.

Roll call,
AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

5. Approval of Ord. 2026 – 59 authorizing the execution of a School Resource Officer Service Agreement and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement with Woodland School District #50.

Administrator Muetz said through contractual agreements the Village provides School Resource Officers (SROs) to each of the three school districts. The agreement outlines the relationship between the Village and the schools as far as roles of the SROs and financial responsibilities related to the positions. He stated there is also a Reciprocal Reporting Agreement that covers the sharing of information between the Village and school districts. The schools and Police Department have been very happy with the partnership. Woodland will be provided with two SROs.

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee Ware to approve of Ord. 2026 – 59 authorizing the execution of a School Resource Officer Service Agreement and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement with Woodland School District #50.

Roll call,
AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

6. Approval of Ord. 2026 – 60 authorizing the execution of a School Resource Officer Service Agreement and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement with Gurnee Grade School District #56.

Administrator Muetz stated this is District 56's SRO and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement. It is similar to the other two districts. Gurnee Grade will be provided with one SRO.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of Ord. 2026 - 60 authorizing the execution of a School Resource Officer Service Agreement and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement with Gurnee Grade School District #56.

Roll call,
AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

7. Approval of Ord. 2026 – 61 authorizing the execution of a School Resource Officer Service Agreement and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement with Warren Township High School District #121.

Administrator Muetz stated this is Warren District 121's SRO and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement. It is similar to the other two districts. Warren will be provided with two SROs.

It was moved by Trustee Ross, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve of Ord. 2026 – 61 authorizing the execution of a School Resource Officer Service Agreement and Reciprocal Reporting Agreement with Warren Township High School District #121

Roll call,

AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

8. Approval of Engineering Division's recommendation to award the Route 21 & Gages Lake Road Pedestrian Improvement project to the low bidder, Acura, Inc., at a cost of \$182,443.00.

Administrator Muetz said this project is a result of the Village's 2015 Strategic Planning Process and the subsequent Blue-Ribbon Commission that was formed to focus on improving pedestrian mobility in the Village. This sidewalk was one of the identified improvements needed. The project consists of constructing a new 5-foot-wide sidewalk along the west side of Route 21 to the intersection of Gages Lake Road. The project also includes installing crosswalk striping across the southern leg of the intersection and pedestrian signals at the existing traffic signal. These improvements will close a gap in pedestrian connectivity by completing the sidewalk segment adjacent to the Cobble Creek subdivision and will provide a safe pedestrian crossing to the existing sidewalk on the east side of Route 21. The Engineering Division opened bids on July 13th. Three bids were received ranging from approximately \$182,000 to \$246,000. Acura was the low bidder. Administrator Muetz stated the Village has previously worked with Acura, Inc. on similar construction projects, and the contractor has performed the work in a timely and satisfactory manner.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of Engineering Division's recommendation to award the Route 21 & Gages Lake Road Pedestrian Improvement project to the low bidder, Acura, Inc. at a cost of \$182,443.00.

Roll call,
AYE: 6- O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner, Ross
NAY: 0- None
ABSENT: 0- None
Motion Carried.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Closing Comments

None.

Adjournment

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to adjourn the meeting.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

Mayor Hood adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

**Andrew Harris,
Village Clerk**