

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GURNEE VILLAGE BOARD GURNEE VILLAGE HALL SEPTEMBER 28, 2026	
Call to Order	Mayor Hood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
Other Officials in Attendance	Patrick Muetz, Village Administrator; Stacy Michael, Management Analyst; Assistant to the Village Administrator; Bryan Winter, Village Attorney; David Ziegler, Community Development Director; Jake Litz, Assistant Community Development Director; Heather Galan, Public Works Director; Christine Palmieri, Director of Human Resources; Erica Wells, Assistant Finance / HR Director; Ellen Dean, Economic Development Director; Nick Leach, Village Engineer; Ryan Nelson, Information Systems Director; David Douglass, Deputy Fire Chief; Jeremy Gaughan, Police Chief; Jason Kalinowski, Deputy Police Chief.
Roll Call	PRESENT: 6- Ross, O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner ABSENT: 0-
Pledge of Allegiance	Mayor Hood led the Pledge of Allegiance.
A. PUBLIC COMMENT	
Tony Shepard 3410 Grandmore Ave Gurnee, IL	Mr. Shepard stated that he wanted to go on record regarding several commitments made by the petitioner. He noted the petitioner's commitment to construct an eight-foot berm with an eight-foot fence on top to provide additional screening and protection for neighboring properties. Mr. Shepard also noted that while the application lists a 6:00 a.m. opening time, the petitioner had committed to an 8:00 a.m. opening. Additionally, he expressed concern regarding construction hours and requested that construction activities not begin prior to 8:00 a.m.
Joseph Bragg 3457 Crescent Ave Gurnee, IL	Mr. Bragg stated that while he is not enthusiastic about the prospect of a car wash being located on his residential street, he recognizes the benefit of having the property and proposed business fall under the jurisdiction of the Village rather than another municipality. He expressed support for the annexation of the property, provided that the conditions and recommendations established by the Planning and Zoning Board are maintained. In particular, he emphasized the proposed access from Green Bay Road rather than Crescent Avenue, as well as the proposed improvements related to fencing and increased berm height.
B. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA	It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Roll call, AYE: 6- Ross, O'Brien, Thorstenson, Woodside, Ware, Garner NAY: 0- None ABSENT: 0- None Motion Carried.
C. CONSENT AGENDA / OMNIBUS VOTE	The Village Administrator read the consent agenda for an omnibus vote as follows. 1. Approval of minutes from the September 14, 2026, meeting. 2. Approval of Public Works Department request to set a bid date of November 10, 2026, for the Annual Public Works Fuel Purchase. 3. Approval of issuing a Raffle License and waiving the fee and bond requirement for the Gurnee School District #56 Band Boosters - 2026 and 2027 concerts. 4. Approval of Payroll for the period ending September 18, 2026, in the

amount of \$1,047,993.37.

5. Approval of Bills for the period ending September 28, 2026 in the amount of \$2,043,194.48.

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

Roll call,

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

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

D. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Approval of Proclamation designating September 15 - October 15, 2026 as Hispanic Heritage Month in the Village of Gurnee.

Mayor Hood summarized the Proclamation.

It was moved by Trustee Thorstenson, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of a Proclamation designating September 15 - October 15, 2026 as Hispanic Heritage Month in the Village of Gurnee.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

2. Approval of a Proclamation designating October 4 – 10, 2026 as “Fire Prevention Week” in the Village of Gurnee.

Mayor Hood summarized the Proclamation.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve of a Proclamation designating October 4 – 10, 2026 as “Fire Prevention Week” in the Village of Gurnee.

Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.

None.

E. REPORTS

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. Approval of Ord. 2026 - 69 amending Sections 2-143(6) and 2-368 of the Gurnee Municipal Code granting additional hiring authority to the Village Administrator.

Administrator Muetz said following discussion at the September 14th Village Board meeting, Attorney Winter drafted additional language to clarify: 1) the Village Administrator shall conduct the day-to-day hiring process in conformity with the rules set and controlled by the Civil Service Commission and 2) the Civil Service Commission retains rulemaking authority over the hiring procedures to be followed by the Village Administrator. It also clarifies the Civil Service Commission retains its statutory and rulemaking functions, including what types of examinations are to be conducted as part of the hiring process which will ensure that merit-system safeguards remain intact.

Administrator Muetz in addition stated staff will provide a snapshot of Village full-time workforce demographics on a biannual basis, beginning in September 2026. He stated the information provided includes community demographics compared to the current Village workforce, as well as historic Village workforce demographics for years 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025. Staff will also work on developing meaningful metrics to share annually that compare entry level hiring under the Civil Service Commission vs. Village staff.

Trustee Woodside expressed appreciation for the changes made to the proposal since it was presented at the previous meeting. He stated that the revisions address many of the concerns raised while keeping the Civil Service Commission involved in an appropriate capacity. He thanked staff for their efforts in developing the revised proposal.

Trustee Garner asked if this can be changed in the future. Mayor Hood said yes. Trustee Garner continued to state that he liked the new language that was added. He stated it makes quite a difference and gives us some oversight.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of Ord. 2026 – 69 amending Sections 2-143(6) and 2-368 of the Gurnee

Municipal Code granting additional hiring authority to the Village Administrator.

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

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Ord. 2026 – 70 annexing property located at 35400 Green Bay Road.

Administrator Muetz said Assistant Community Development Director Jake Litz will review the proposal with the Village Board as he handled it at the Planning & Zoning Board meetings.

Assistant Director Litz reviewed the three ordinances related to the proposed car wash development at 35400 North Green Bay Road. He stated the actions are as follows: annexation of the subject property into the Village of Gurnee; a zoning map amendment rezoning the subject property to C-2 Community Commercial; and a Special Use Permit for the car wash. He stated the annexation ordinance specifically provides that the annexation ordinance and plat will be recorded only if the associated zoning map amendment and Special Use Permit are approved by the Village Board.

The subject property is a vacant parcel located at the southwest corner of Green Bay Road and Crescent Avenue. It is currently in unincorporated Lake County and is zoned R-1, residential. Assistant Director Litz stated approval of the ordinances would bring the property under Village jurisdiction, establish C-2 zoning, and allow the proposed development of a car wash subject to the conditions in the special use permit ordinance.

Assistant Director Litz stated an important part of the discussion is that this site has three potential development paths. He stated it could be annexed to the Village of Gurnee, annexed to the City of Waukegan, or developed through unincorporated Lake County. Each path would require its own zoning approvals or relief. The petitioner has chosen to seek annexation into Gurnee. This path allows the Village to apply its zoning, engineering, and special use standards to the project.

The Planning and Zoning Board held the public hearing on July 15 and continued it to August 19 so the petitioner could address the primary issues raised by the public and by the PZB. Assistant Director Litz stated those issues included traffic and access, particularly potential access from Crescent Avenue, as well as landscaping, fencing, noise, lighting, and buffering from the adjacent residential properties. The revised plan provides a single access point on Green Bay Road, an eight-foot berm along the west lot line, and an eight-foot fence along the west and south lot lines. Following the revised presentation, the PZB recommended approval of the zoning map amendment by a 7-0 vote and recommended approval of the special use permit by a 6-1 vote.

The special use permit ordinance includes the following conditions:

- A single access point must be constructed on Green Bay Road.
- An eight-foot berm must be developed along the west lot line.
- An eight-foot fence must be constructed along the west and south lot lines.
- Operating hours are limited to 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. during the summer, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the winter, and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays.
- The other conditions noted in the petitioner's public testimony are incorporated into the Special Use Permit.

Assistant Director Litz stated it's worth noting that Green Bay Road is under IDOT jurisdiction, and a finalized access point is required before the Village can issue a building permit. If IDOT does not ultimately authorize the approved Green Bay Road access, the petitioner cannot simply substitute a different access arrangement onto Crescent Avenue. Any proposed change would require a Major Amendment to the Special Use Permit and another public hearing. The Village would also apply its

engineering standards, including the applicable requirements for stormwater and wastewater management.

Assistant Director Litz stated the Annexation Ordinance requires a super-majority of the Village Board to be approved. The Zoning Map Amendment and Special Use Permit Ordinances only require a simple-majority. If the Annexation Ordinance does not receive at least 5 of the 7 votes, the Zoning Map Amendment and Special Use Permit Ordinances are automatically denied as well.

Administrator Muetz added that the first public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Board was held on July 15, with approximately 18 members of the public in attendance who expressed various concerns regarding the proposal. The petitioner subsequently addressed several of those concerns. At the August 19 meeting, approximately eight residents spoke, with comments primarily focused on traffic concerns.

Administrator Muetz also noted that the Village Board received three additional emails from residents that afternoon. Kristen Marks expressed concerns regarding noise, light pollution, traffic and trash; Jessica Albers raised concerns regarding traffic; and Jorie Stuckwisch requested that certain conditions be placed on the development. He stated that staff reviewed the requested conditions and determined that the majority were addressed through the Special Use Permit or existing provisions of the Gurnee Municipal Code or Zoning Ordinance.

Trustee O'Brien stated that he is pleased the property will be annexed into Gurnee, allowing the Village to maintain oversight of the concerns that have been raised. He also expressed appreciation that the petitioner listened to the concerns raised by residents and incorporated changes into the proposal to address those concerns.

Trustee Thorstenson expressed appreciation for the discussion between the petitioner and residents and the petitioner's efforts to address the concerns raised. She noted, however, that she remains concerned about the proposed 7:00 a.m. hours of operation during the winter months.

Petitioner and car wash owner Alex Blumenfeld addressed Trustee Thorstenson's concerns regarding the proposed hours of operation. He explained that, based on their experience, customers often prefer to visit the car wash early during the winter months to remove snow and road residue from their vehicles before traveling to work.

Trustee Thorstenson suggested that the hours of operation begin at 8:00 a.m. She also raised concerns regarding construction hours.

Mayor Hood and Attorney Winter clarified that Village ordinance permits construction to begin at 7:00 a.m. Trustee Thorstenson then asked the petitioner to provide additional information regarding the car wash's rewards program.

Mr. Blumenfeld described their rewards program.

Trustee Ross requested that the petitioner remain mindful of residents' concerns and be responsive to any issues that may arise as the business begins operation.

Mr. Blumenfeld provided additional information regarding the proposed facility, including the use of stealth blowers designed to reduce noise impacts. He also discussed the proposed eight-foot berm and eight-foot fence, which are intended to provide additional screening and help minimize impacts on neighboring residential properties.

Trustee Woodside encouraged the petitioner to remain responsive to the community, noting that residents have expressed strong expectations regarding the type of neighbor they hope the business will be. He encouraged the petitioner to view this as an opportunity to meet or exceed those expectations.

Trustee Woodside also requested clarification from Community Development Director Jake regarding whether an entrance or exit onto Crescent Avenue could be established without further Village Board consideration. Jake confirmed that access to Crescent would only become a possibility if IDOT denies the proposed access permit or if the

petitioner pursues access through the City of Waukegan. At that point the Village would have no say and the petitioner would start the process over.

Trustee Ware expressed appreciation for the conversations and feedback received from the community. She also asked for clarification regarding the material proposed for the fence atop the berm. Mr. Blumenfeld confirmed that it would be constructed of solid wood and explained that the primary source of noise would be from the exit of the car wash building.

Trustee Garner noted that the petitioner has done their homework and put the time in to make an aesthetically pleasing business.

Trustee O'Brien requested clarification from staff regarding the sequence and conditions of the annexation and Special Use Permit.

Staff explained that the annexation is contingent upon the petitioner obtaining the required access and approval of the Special Use Permit, which is subject to the petitioner satisfying all required conditions.

Attorney Winter further clarified that the annexation documents would not be recorded with the Recorder of Deeds until the conditions of the Special Use Permit have been satisfied.

Trustee Thorstenson requested clarification on the exit and where the blowers are placed.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to approve of Ord. 2026 – 70 annexing property located at 35400 Green Bay Road.

Roll call,

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

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

2. Approval of Ord. 2026 – 71 granting a Zoning Map Amendment pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 35400 Green Bay Road.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of Ord. 2026 – 71 granting a Zoning Map Amendment pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 35400 Green Bay Road.

Roll call,

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

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of Ord. 2026 - 72 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 35400 Green Bay Road.

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve Ord. 2026 – 72 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 35400 Green Bay Road.

Before the Roll Call vote was taken Administrator Muetz stated multiple Trustees had contacted him and requested the hours of operation be memorialized in the Special Use Permit Ordinance. He clarified that if that is the desire of the Board, a Trustee should make a motion to amend the current ordinance to add a fifth condition that stipulates the following hours:

- During the summer months: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- During the winter months: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- On Sundays throughout the year: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

It was moved by Trustee Woodside, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to amend and approve Ord. 2026 – 72 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 35400 Green Bay Road. The amendment adds the hours of operation to the Special Use Permit Ordinance.

Roll call,

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

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

4. Approval of Ord. 2026 - 73 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 1475 Dilleys Road Suite 8 – 10.

Assistant Director of Community Development Jake Litz reviewed the requested Special Use Permit for Trusted Tails Dog Training to operate a dog training facility at 1475 Dilleys Road, Suites 8 through 10, within the C-2 Community Commercial District.

Assistant Director Litz stated animal-related services are permitted in the C-2 District only with a Special Use Permit. The space is within an existing multi-tenant commercial building, directly adjacent to a veterinary clinic.

He stated the request is for a professional dog training facility, not a dog daycare or boarding operation. The petitioner has represented that the business will operate by scheduled appointments and will be structured with the following operational limitations:

- Drop-off training will be limited to no more than 15 dogs at one time.
- The facility will maintain a maximum ratio of one trainer for every four dogs, providing direct handler oversight throughout the day.
- Group classes will be limited to eight dogs, with the dogs remaining under their owners' supervision.
- No dog daycare and no overnight boarding are proposed.
- A grass area at the rear of the building will be used only for brief, supervised relief breaks.
- Dogs will remain leashed while outdoors, and staff will promptly remove waste to maintain sanitary conditions and avoid impacts on neighboring properties.

Assistant Director Litz stated these limitations are intended to keep the use low-intensity and to address the impacts typically associated with more intensive pet care uses, including noise, waste accumulation, and prolonged animal presence.

The Planning and Zoning Board held a public hearing on September 16. Following the hearing, the Board recommended approval by a 5-2 vote, finding that the Special Use standards were met.

Trustee Thorstenson requested clarification regarding the two dissenting votes from the Planning and Zoning Board. Assistant Director Litz explained that the primary concern was the proposed use proximity to the neighboring restaurant, noting that the veterinary clinic and dog training facility would also be located nearby.

Trustee Ware asked about the designated grass area and if they will ever walk dogs in the area. Assistant Director Litz stated no.

It was moved by Trustee Thorstenson, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to approve of Ord. 2026 – 73 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for 1475 Dilleys Road Suite 8 – 10.

Roll call,

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

NAY: 0- None

ABSENT: 0- None

Motion Carried.

5. Approval of Ord. 2025 – 74 authorizing the execution of a Professional Services Agreement with FGM Architects to complete the Public Works Interior Office Master Plan.

Administrator Muetz said the Public Works Department is requesting to enlist FGM Architects to assist with developing an Office Master Plan for the main building. Since its opening 25 years ago, operations at the facility have changed including staff roles and the use of technology in daily operations. He stated last month Public Works met with FGM

Architects to discuss solutions to space concerns in the main office areas, the Forestry Shop, the Street Shop, the Lights and Signs Shop and the Fleet Office space. As a result of that meeting, FGM provided a proposal to develop a Master Planning document to guide the office and workspace improvements at the PW Facility. Administrator Muetz stated the lump sum base fee is \$24,600 with a reimbursable budget of \$1,500 for a total cost of \$26,100. The FY 26/27 Approved Budget includes funding for the expense.

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee Ross to approve of Ord. 2025 – 74 authorizing the execution of a Professional Services Agreement with FGM Architects to complete the Public Works Interior Office Master Plan.

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

6. Approval of request from Fire Department to waive formal bidding requirements and purchase a Stryker Power-PRO 2 ambulance stretcher and a Power Load patient lift system six-year extended warranty from Stryker Medical at a cost of \$43,500.34.

Administrator Muetz said the Fire Department is requesting to replace an eleven-year-old Stryker ambulance stretcher with a new one in anticipation of receiving an ambulance ordered in September 2023 within the next few months. He reminded the Village Board that the Department switched to the Stryker patient power load system in 2010 after a rash of shoulder injuries related to patient transports. Since that time, the power load system has become an integral part of Department operations and resulted in a drastic reduction in injuries compared to before it was introduced. He stated the new ambulance will be equipped with the power load system but is in need of the stretcher that goes with it as the current stretcher is beyond its useful life. The Department is also recommending the Village purchase six years of extended warranty coverage for the power load system based on past experience. The total cost of the stretcher and extended warranty for the power load system is \$43,500.34. This was an expected replacement and as such funding was included in the FY 26/27 Approved Budget.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of request from Fire Department to waive formal bidding requirements and purchase a Stryker Power-PRO 2 ambulance stretcher and a Power Load patient lift system six-year extended warranty from Stryker Medical at a cost of \$43,500.34.

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

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

Joseph Bragg
3457 Crescent Ave
Gurnee, IL

Mr. Bragg asked if we have an Ordinance regarding construction times in the Village.

Community Development Director Ziegler replied yes and it states construction is permitted from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Mr. Bragg asked if the Village could do something about enforcing the speed limit on Cresent and Belle Plaine. He says the current speed monitoring signs aren't enough. He suggests speed bumps or speed enforcement cameras.

Mr. Bragg also wanted to thank Mr. Litz for listening to all the concerns from the Gurnee residents and answering their concerns as best he could.

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 7:54 p.m.

**Andrew Harris,
Village Clerk**