

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE GURNEE VILLAGE BOARD**

**GURNEE VILLAGE HALL  
SEPTEMBER 28, 2020**

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**Call to Order**

Mayor Kovarik called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

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**Other Officials in Attendance**

Patrick Muetz, Village Administrator; David Ziegler, Assistant Village Administrator / Community Development Director; Heather Galan, Village Engineer; Bryan Winter, Village Attorney; Brian Gosnell, Finance Director; John Kavanagh, Fire Chief; Brian Smith, Police Chief; Jesse Gonzalez, Deputy Police Chief; Tracy Velkover, Planning Manager; Ellen Dean, Economic Development Director

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**Roll Call**

**PRESENT: 6- Balmes, Hood, Thorstenson, Ross, Garner, O'Brien**  
**ABSENT: 0- None**

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**Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Kovarik led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**A. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

It was moved by Trustee Garner, seconded by Trustee O'Brien to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

**Roll call,**

**AYE: 6- Balmes, Hood, Thorstenson, Ross, Garner, O'Brien**  
**NAY: 0- None**  
**ABSENT: 0- None**  
**Motion Carried.**

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**B. 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, 2020 Village Board meeting.
2. Approval of Ord. 2020-53 authorizing the approval of a contract with Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. for professional engineering services.
3. Approval of Information System Division's recommendation to renew a one-year Microsoft Software Assurance maintenance agreement with Dell Marketing L.P. at an estimated price of \$26,219.47 (State of Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology contract).
4. Approval of Public Works Department recommendation to waive the formal bidding process and award replacement of three heating units and repair of one heating system to McDonough Mechanical at a cost of \$23,764.00.
5. Approval of request to dispose of certain Police Department documents as authorized by the State of Illinois Local Records Commission.
6. Approval of Payroll for period ending September 11, 2020 in the amount of \$851,652.59.
7. Approval of Bills for the period ending September 28, 2020 in the amount of \$340,381.69.

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

**Roll call,**

**AYE: 6- Balmes, Hood, Thorstenson, Ross, Garner, O'Brien**  
**NAY: 0- None**  
**ABSENT: 0- None**  
**Motion Carried.**

**C. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Approval of a Proclamation designating October 2020 as “Crime Prevention Month” in the Village of Gurnee.

It was moved by Trustee O'Brien, seconded by Trustee Garner to approve of Proclamation designating October 2020 as “Crime Prevention Month” in the Village of Gurnee.

**Voice Vote: ALL AYE: Motion Carried.**

2. Presentation of Police Department Medal of Valor, Meritorious Service Award and Unit Citation related to action taken on July 3, 2020.

As a result of the heroic action by several officers individuals in the Gurnee Police Department as it related to a July 3, 2020 shooting on Derby Drive, the following awards were presented by Chief Brian Smith and Deputy Chief Jesse Gonzalez:

**Medal of Valor**  
Officer Dan Ruth

**Meritorious Service**  
Officers Tom Branick & Tom Yencich

**Unit Citation**  
Commanders Jon Ward & Jeremy Gaughan  
Sergeants Jason Kalinowski & Mark O'Brien  
Officers Matt Bendler, Brandon Gullifor, Travis Hitzelburger, Brian Funke, Shawn Gaylor, Tom Branick, Austin Demski, Marcos Gomez, Rich Herdus, Phil Mazur, Dan Moorehouse, JR Nauseda, Dan Ruth, Stan St. Clair and Tom Yencich  
Community Service Officer Armando Martinez  
Communication Leader Molly Jones  
Communications Operators Meghan Hafeman, Jordan Jones and Ashley Teasdale

**D. REPORTS**

1. Presentation by Arista Strungys – Camiros, Ltd. – Updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan – Compass 2040.

Administrator Muetz gave a review stating that the Village's existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan was adopted in 1997 and is overdue for an update as much has changed since then. Arista Strungys of Camiros, Ltd. who served as the lead on the Comp Plan gave a presentation and walked the Village Board through the process and highlighted the following substantial changes to the Plan:

Ms. Strungys stated that the Village's draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan, COMPASS 2040, is a vision for Gurnee's future, looking at a typical 20 year planning horizon. She noted that the plan is organized into 5 main sections that talk about Land Use, Community Character Areas, Economic Development, Environment and Open Space, and Mobility. She noted that the cornerstone of the plan rests in the Vision, which is established in the early portion of the document. It talks about the future that is envisioned for Gurnee moving forward. She didn't read through the whole thing, but instead highlighted a number of key points. Gurnee is envisioned to be a place where you can work, live, and play, and be more specifically:

- A fun destination location
- A place to raise your family
- A place that has a balance of land uses
- A place that has a diverse amount of housing stock
- A place that can accommodate people with a range of incomes and ages
- A place with good public services and public transport

Ms. Strungys noted that in the beginning of the plan, there is a community profile that summarizes existing conditions based on available data. She went through the categories of the community profile:

- History
- Regional context

- Population profile
- Existing housing
- Economy (commercial, tourism, industry)
- Employment
- Transportation (roads, truck routes, transit)
- Parks and open space
- Village government
- Education

Ms. Strungys then walked the Village Board through each of the five main sections of the Plan.

### **Land Use**

Ms. Strungys stated that the first category that they looked at was land use and how to balance the land uses within the Village to accommodate residents, as well as unique things, such as the entertainment components. She stated that the plan looks to create a diverse economy, a diverse list of land uses, and a diverse housing stock. The first analysis was completed looking at existing land uses in the Village, based on the Village's existing land use categories, which is reflected on the existing Land Use Map. Next they updated the map, looking at low density residential and medium density residential and what those density numbers are, combining high density residential and multi-family into one category, being a little more specific on commercial and business (entertainment), splitting industrial into industrial and industrial mixed-use, and dividing public/quasi-public into public/semi-public, parks and open space, and utility and railroad. These refined categories shows the direction for the future land use map. She noted that the changes are not radical changes, and a number just acknowledge existing development. Residential is really addressing the character of these areas and a few higher density areas, commercial acknowledges key areas by giving them their own category (East Grand Corridor and Village Center) and adjusts the types of commercial (singling out entertainment), and creating a new industrial mixed-use category. She noted that, in addition to the Future Land Use Map they have provided a map that reflects only the "Areas of Change" so that the Board can quickly see those proposed changes. Ms. Strungys stated that the goals, objectives and policies within each of these land use categories promotes a balanced yet diverse community. Policies in the plan support such things as diverse housing stock, supporting the existing commercial base, bringing in more office and industrial in order to be less reliant on retail, entertainment uses, studies for senior housing, and growing the community responsibly (looking at where existing and planned services and facilities would be located). To ensure a positive image for Gurnee, a few of the highlights are gateway features at Village entrances and promoting and building the relationship between east and west Gurnee (streetscape, increasing the modality along those streetscapes, promoting the urban tree canopy, and even encouraging the burying of overhead power lines).

### **Community Character**

In terms of the Community Character areas, this is a little more refined than the land use portion of the plan. This is looking at a couple of areas within the Village in more depth/detail. The first area is the Village Center area. She noted that she appeared before the Village Board to determine what direction they wanted to go with this area. The consensus of the Board was to maintain and reinforce the existing character of the area. For the East Grand Corridor area, she noted that the Village had an Urban Land Institute study conducted of the area and essentially what they've done is summarize that study in the Comp Plan, including revitalization strategies that can be used for the area. Finally, they created two new Sub-Area Plans. Both are very conceptual. They are not a zoning district, but a way to imagine what these areas, which mostly are vacant, can develop to in the future, including what things the Village would like to see on these properties. The first Sub-Area Plan is for the property at the northeast corner of the Tollway and Rt. 120. They went through a couple of iterations with the Planning and Zoning Board. The end result is a concept plan which reflects commercial along the roadway coming in and as you move further

into the site there is a mix of different uses that transitions to some multi-family and some single-family attached. The concept plan tries to create a balance between uses to create a sort of “town center” feel, while still providing a buffer between the residential uses with the townhomes. The next Sub-Area Plan is at the intersection of Washington and Milwaukee. This is a large area and there are really 3 different things going on within this Sub-Area, so there are really sub Sub-Area plans. The first is the triangle area bordered by Washington Street, the Tollway and Milwaukee Avenue. The plan for this area envisions an entertainment type commercial use. Again, the plan is conceptual for the proposed entertainment/commercial use that can contain some hotels and mixed-use. The other sub Sub-Area is on the west side of the Tollway, and envisions an industrial mixed-use, while the final sub Sub-Area is for the remaining vacant property south of Woodlake Apartments on the west side of Milwaukee (south of Washington Street), which reflects a continuation of the Woodlake multi-family development.

### **Economic Development**

Ms. Strungys stated that they also looked at Economic Development to ensure that the Village has an economy that supports its residents, provides jobs, and funds public services. The plan looks to continue to support the existing businesses, attract new businesses, and how to ensure that it is balanced/diverse economy. The first is the growth and redevelopment of office and industrial. Protecting existing industrial/office from encroachment and marketing vacant building/lands (working with property owners and national real estate publications). The Village has this tremendous advantage of I-94 and US Route 41 and the plan reflects the Village taking advantage of these key assets; including maintaining and enhancing truck routes. This takes coordination with LCDOT and IDOT for maintenance, identification of gaps and designation of new routes, as needed, identifying substandard roadways or intersections that impede truck traffic, and working with other jurisdictions to identify regional investment. One of the objectives in the Economic Development section is to rely less on retail and potentially increase professional employment and looking at the policies that would help to meet these objectives. The plan summarizes some of the tools to spur industrial and office development. The plan also discusses increasing public transit, although a longer term goal, it should still be a goal of the Village especially to promote and grow professional employment opportunities. Finally, the Village has the key assets of Gurnee Mills Mall, Six Flags, and Great Wolf Lodge, and the plan promotes supporting these businesses and allowing them to change and adapt as needed.

### **Environment and Open Space**

The Plan's policies promote and protect Gurnee's invaluable network of open spaces and natural resources. The goal is to maintain and enhance the parks and recreational areas, protect them from encroachment, provide standards for developments that protect natural resources, preserve open space around Des Plaines River, require open space in new development, work with the Park District to create a greenway (connect parks, pathways, & floodplain), and promote pedestrian paths, bike paths, connections to parks, and other pedestrian paths. The plan also deals with the mitigation of flooding impacts, which is a key issue for communities such as Gurnee that experience flooding. The plan looks at strategies for addressing flooding moving forward including things such as refining delineation of wetlands and floodplains, require designation within development plans, and acquiring land subject to repetitive loss for greenways.

### **Mobility**

The plan recognizes that the Village should move forward with transportation objectives and policies designed to improve local multi-modal transportation networks in order to move people and goods safely, efficiently, and comfortably while reducing negative impacts on livability and the environment. Some of the strategies that the Comp Plan puts forward include:

Complete Streets (a way for people to move safely along the same

pathway whether it's in a car, on a bike, or walking)

- Adopt Complete Streets policy for new development and redevelopment or anytime a street is reconstructed (a way to start connecting east and west Gurnee)

Pedestrian/Bike Plan (acknowledged within the plan)

- Look at ways to install pedestrian/bike improvements in existing developments and roadway crossings
- Look at ways to make pedestrian connections both internal to the Village and external to the Village (i.e., leaving the Village)
- Focusing work on some key streets that will help move people around the community (Grand, Washington, Almond, Hunt Club Road, Gages Lake Road, Milwaukee, Dilley's Road)

Public Transit

- Work with PACE to identify service area needs/gaps and ways to address
- Continue to explore Metra/Amtrak options in the future (links back to how to increase professional jobs in the Village and getting people in from other areas)

Questions/Comments

Trustee Ross asked Ms. Strungys if she could provide further clarification on why the strategy of bringing in office and industrial mixed use is recommended. Trustee Ross stated these categories do not help the Village's tax base since it doesn't levy a property tax, rather Gurnee is more reliant on retail/commercial. She concluded the question by stating the recommendation is concerning especially in light of how the world has changed the need for office space with people working from home. Ms. Strungys stated it is too early to tell the long-term impact of the pandemic on office uses. She clarified that the intent of the plan is to diversify and highlight the office and industrial mixed use component, not to deemphasize retail. She stated the intent was to provide flexibility for the Village. Ms. Strungys further stated the Plan emphasizes the entertainment category for the Village and that additional commercial was added.

Trustee Ross asked about encouraging the burying of overhead power lines. Community Development Director Ziegler clarified stating that if there's a large scale project and opportunities to bury the lines occur, they will do those.

Trustee O'Brien stated that the two parcels of land designated as a mixed use community area is something that will be welcomed by the residents.

Trustee Garner stated he is glad the Village has the comprehensive plan as it serves as roadmap to the future and can be used as a powerful tool in the years to come with its flexibility.

The Board gave a consensus that an ordinance adopting an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Gurnee be presented for a vote at an upcoming Village Board meeting.

## 2. Presentation by Finance Director Brian Gosnell – COVID-19 Financial Update #8.

Finance Director Gosnell provided the following update on Village finances and the impact COVID-19 has had on them through August 31, 2020:

Expected Duration

- Restore Illinois - Phased Re-Opening
  - Currently Phase 4
  - Phase 5 (Fully Open) requires "vaccine or highly effective treatment widely available or the elimination of any new cases over a sustained period"
  - Updated Regions – Lake & McHenry Counties
- Big Three Status
  - Six Flags
    - Limited Opening with Safety Protocols? Gosnell noted efforts by Six Flags to open for potential

- Halloween and Holiday events.
    - Gurnee Mills
      - Limited Opening with Safety Protocols
    - Great Wolf Lodge
      - Limited Opening with Safety Protocols
  - General Fund
    - Total Revenues
      - FY2019/2020 – \$14,890,087
      - FY2020/2021 – \$10,407,861
      - Net Year over Year – (\$4,482,226 or 30.1%)
    - Big Four Revenues – Sales Tax, Amusement Tax, Hotel Tax, Food & Beverage Tax
      - FY2019/2020 – \$8,330,646
      - FY2020/2021 – \$4,779,380
      - Net Year over Year – (\$3,551,265 or 42.6%)
      - Gosnell noted if Six Flags does not open at all this season, that may be a bigger impact financially than sales tax.
    - Sales Tax
      - FY2019/2020 – \$6,986,112
      - FY2020/2021 – \$5,296,570
      - Net Year over Year – (\$1,689,542 or 24.2%)
      - Gosnell noted the trend is positive and the expectation is that sales tax will level out at 15% down year over year.
    - Other COVID Impacted Revenues
      - FY2019/2020 - \$2,565,542
      - FY2020/2021 - \$2,380,885
      - Net Year over Year – (\$184,657 or 7.2%)
      - Gosnell noted income tax is expected to be down 5%, security contracts with the Navy had a positive impact and ambulance calls are returning to normal levels.
    - General Fund Expenditures
      - FY2019/2020 - \$13,127,463
      - FY2020/2021 - \$11,467,557
      - Net Year over Year – (\$1,659,905 or 12.6%)
      - Gosnell noted most of the savings are from personnel expenses and a timing discrepancy.
    - General Fund Balance
      - FY2019/2020 – \$1,762,624
      - FY2020/2021 – (\$1,059,696)
      - Net Year over Year – (\$2,822,321)
    - General Fund Outlook
      - Use \$5-7m or 20%-25% of Fund Balance
      - FY21 Beginning Fund Balance \$27m or 62%
      - Revenue Impact - \$10m or 25%
      - Expenditure Reductions - \$3-5m or 10%
      - FY21 Ending Fund Balance - \$20-22m (46% - 50%)
        - FY2008/2009 Levels
  - Other Funds
    - Water & Sewer Fund
      - Water Sales Down 15% - \$1m
      - Delayed Capital
      - IEPA Loan, Additional Principal
  - Capital Improvement Fund
    - HMR Sales Tax – 25% or \$1.2m
    - Delayed Capital
  - General Fund Threats & Opportunities – Gosnell noted staff was starting to discuss the potential fallout of the crisis and the impact on revenue sources and the need for possible operating adjustments.
    - Threats
      - Increased Restrictions
      - Extended Lockdown
      - School Closures
      - Big Three
      - Public Response
        - Halo Impact
      - Permanent Closures
    - Opportunities
      - Force Retail Re-Think
      - Emerging Industries

- Re-Assess Revenue Vulnerabilities
- Re-Think Operating Models
- Lessons Learned

Mayor Kovarik noted the Threats & Opportunities are a prelude to the upcoming budget discussions.

Trustee O'Brien asked about Great Wolf Lodge and how consumers are embracing the re-opening.

Economic Development Director Ellen Dean noted they have been heavily promoting the re-opening and feedback has been positive. Mayor Kovarik noted staff has been working on a strategy to get Six Flags re-open in conjunction with the Governor's Office. She noted the lack of permanent closures to date and the strong position Gurnee is in moving forward.

Gosnell noted the upcoming strategic plan update and items that may feed into that from the COVID-19 crisis. Gosnell also noted the status of CARES grant funds from Lake County and the Village submission was approved and proceeds of roughly \$1.445 million should be received in the near future.

3. Presentation by Fire Chief John Kavanagh – Fire Station #3 Update.

Chief Kavanagh gave the following update on the fire station three project

- The Finance Department has secured the financing for the project.
- The Engineering Department continues to work on the plans to reconstruct Manchester east of Route 21.
- The Engineering Department is working on securing the permits to build a stop light at Route 21 and Manchester.
- Camosy has installed the construction trailer on the site.
- Silt fencing has been installed at the site.
- Excavation on the site has begun.
- The Village's team has its' first on site construction meeting setup for 9/29 and has regularly scheduled construction meetings set for every two weeks going forward.

**E. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Approval of Ord. 2020-54 granting a Special Use Permit pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance for a second wall sign on property located at 6300 Route 132, Suite C.

Administrator Muetz gave a review stating that Sherwin Williams, located at 6300 Route 132, Suite C (same building as Aspen Dental), has requested a Special Use Permit to allow the installation of a second wall sign. The property is zoned C-2, Community Commercial. The sign code allows one wall sign for this store. This sign is currently located on the south side (front) of the building facing Grand Avenue. Sherwin Williams would like to install a second sign, identical to the sign currently in place, on the north wall (facing the Gurnee Mills ring road i.e.: back of the building). The petitioner has stated that the second sign facing the ring road will provide more clarification as to where the store is located as patrons try to find it. This request was before the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) on September 2nd. The PZB discussed that the petitioner knew when the building was proposed that a second sign would not be allowed without certain architectural changes (i.e. add windows or a public entrance on the north wall) and Sherwin Williams decided against incorporating those items, therefore it limited itself to one sign. The PZB also noted Sherwin Williams has a presence on the ground sign located along the ring road. Following additional discussion, the PZB is forwarding an unfavorable recommendation with 5 votes against and 1 vote for the SUP request.

Questions/Comments

Trustee Thorstenson stated that she is supportive of the requested signage.

Trustee Hood stated that while he agrees with Trustee Thorstenson he is supportive of the PZB's recommendation.

Trustee Garner made comments regarding the setting of a precedent.

Village Attorney Bryan Winter stated the Village should act consistently when requests of this nature received.

Trustee Ross stated that the Village should follow the established rules.

After much discussion, it was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to grant a Special Use Permit, pursuant to the Gurnee Zoning Ordinance, for a second wall sign on property located at 6300 Route 132, Suite C.

**Roll call,**

**AYE: 1- Thorstenson**

**NAY: 5- Balmes, Hood, Ross, Garner, O'Brien**

**ABSENT: 0- None**

**Motion Failed.**

2. Approval of Ord. 2020-55 adding one Class 4 Liquor License and one Class 13 Liquor License by amending Section 6-56 of Article II of Chapter 6 of the Gurnee Municipal Code Entitled "Alcoholic Beverages." (Binny's Beverage Depot – 6911 Grand Avenue, Suite G1).

Administrator Muetz gave a review stating Binny's Beverage Depot has taken the former Art Van Furniture suite on Grand Avenue. Binny's was founded in 1948 and currently has over 40 locations in Illinois. Binny's is requesting a Class 4 (sale of alcoholic liquor only for consumption off the premises where sold) and a Class 13 liquor license (allows Class 2 and Class 4 licensees to conduct beer and wine tasting events subject to certain provisions contained in the Gurnee Municipal Code). The Police Department has conducted all the necessary background checks and finds nothing to preclude issuing the license. Binny's is currently working on the space and hopes to be open in late-October/early-November.

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Ross to add one Class 4 Liquor License and one Class 13 Liquor License by amending Section 6-56 of Article II of Chapter 6 of the Gurnee Municipal Code Entitled "Alcoholic Beverages." (Binny's Beverage Depot – 6911 Grand Avenue, Suite G1).

**Roll call,**

**AYE: 6- Balmes, Hood, Thorstenson, Ross, Garner, O'Brien**

**NAY: 0- None**

**ABSENT: 0- None**

**Motion Carried.**

3. Discussion of 2020 Trick or Treating.

Mayor Kovarik gave a review stating that staff has requested guidance from the State and County related to the annual event. The Village, along with all other communities, continue to await that direction. While the State and County have not issued guidelines, the CDC has. While highly discouraged in light of COVID-19, staff is fearful residents will Trick or Treat regardless. As a result, the Board may want to consider recommending against Trick or Treating but providing some guidelines for those who may do it regardless. To assist with this staff has developed signage that can be included in the next edition of the Keeping Posted that residents can place in their doors indicating whether they are participating or not. This signage can also be posted to the Village website for downloading. Again, while staff does not encourage Trick or Treating, if it is to take place a date and time should be established.

**Questions/Comments**

Trustee Balmes stated that she is all for Trick-or-Treating, it's good for the community and that safety guidelines will be made available.

Trustee Thorstenson is in favor especially since it will be an outside activity.

Trustee O'Brien suggested that porch lights being left on or off can indicate a resident's desire to participate

After much discussion, the consensus was to set Trick-or-Treat on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 2 to 5 p.m.

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**G. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

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**Closing Comments**

None.

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**Adjournment**

It was moved by Trustee Balmes, seconded by Trustee Thorstenson to adjourn the meeting.

**Voice Vote:    ALL AYE:    Motion Carried.**

Mayor Kovarik adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

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**Donna Dallas  
Deputy Village Clerk**