

Village of Germantown Hills

Village Board Meeting Minutes

June 26, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance-** Village President Karl Figg called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

| Village President/Trustees | Roll Call | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Karl Figg – President | Present | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elizabeth (Betsy) Cunningham | Present | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Nathan Henricks | Present | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Tom Eckstein | Present | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Ryan White | Absent | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Heather Armistead | Present | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Sarah Diesel | Present | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |

Also, in attendance:

Chuck Urban, Village Attorney
 Taylor Cascia, Village Attorney
 Scott DeSplinter, Village Engineer
 Abbey Buehler, Village Engineer
 Emily Munday, Village Engineer
 Rich Brecklin, Project Manager
 Zack Hecht, Superintendent of Public Works

Everyone stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Preceding Meeting and their Amendments**
 - a. May 15, 2025, Village Board Meeting**
 A motion was made by Heather Armistead to approve May 15, 2025, Village Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #1.
 - b. June 4, 2025, Special Village Board Meeting**
 A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to approve June 4, 2025, Special Village Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Cunningham. Motion passed #2.

3. Public Comment

Randy Perau, Damien Cruse, and Nicole Wilson made public comments.

4. Current Agenda Items

a. Approval of the Planning Commission and ZBA Appointments

Karl Figg made the appointments of Alan Getz and Kyle Perry to the Planning Commission and Randy Nash to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

A motion was made by Elizabeth Cunningham to approve the appointments of Alan Getz and Kyle Perry to the Planning Commission and Randy Nash to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The motion was seconded by Heather Armistead. Motion passed #3.

b. Approval to Award the Whispering Oaks Sanitary Sewer CIPP Project to the Apparent Low Bidder

Abbey Buehler, from CMT stated bids were received on the Whispering Oaks Sanitary Sewer CIPP Project and the apparent low bidder was Hoerr Construction in the amount of \$413,688.00. CMT is recommending approval.

A motion was made by Elizabeth Cunningham to approve the award of the Whispering Oaks Sanitary Sewer CIPP Project to the Apparent Low Bidder, Hoerr Construction in the amount of \$413,688.00. The motion was seconded by Nathan Henricks. Motion passed #4.

c. Approval of the Engineering Agreement for the Whispering Oaks Sanitary Sewer CIPP Project

Abbey Buehler, from CMT explained the Whispering Oaks sewer lining project.

Karl Figg noted this is done to extend the lifetime of the sewers and help prevent infiltration that increases the costs to the sewer system.

A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to approve the Engineering Agreement for the Whispering Oaks Sanitary Sewer CIPP Project in the amount of \$13,700. The motion was seconded by Heather Armistead. Motion passed #5.

d. Approval of Pay Request #3 for the Somerset Multi-Use Path

A motion was made by Heather Armistead to approve Pay Request #3 for the Somerset Multi-Use Path in the amount of \$258,651.57. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #6.

e. Approval of the Attorney Bond

A motion was made by Nathan Henricks for the approval of the Attorney Bond. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Cunningham. Motion passed #7.

f. Approval of the Donation to the St. Mary's Event in July

Tom Eckstein noted this is an annual event for St. Mary's and normally the Village gives a donation.

A motion was made by Tom Eckstein to approve a \$100 donation to the St. Mary's Event in July. The motion was seconded by Heather Armistead. Motion passed #8.

g. Approval of the Purchase of an Automatic Machine for the Sewer Bills

Julia Miller explained that the postcards that go out for the sewer/garbage bills have had some printing and delivery issues lately. The printer the Village has used for years had issues with their template that was over time moving, thereby creating issues with the post office system along with delivery. The Village is looking at printing a full-page bill. Julia reached out to the Water Company to see what they were using. They shared their vendor where they had purchased an automatic machine that folds, stuffs, and seals the envelopes. Julia looked at the costs between the postcard and sending a full-size bill and the difference currently is approximately \$15.00 a month but this could be even less once we get familiar with the new process.

Heather Armistead questioned whether the service contract was required or if we could cancel it at some point. She noted we may just want to do it the first year.

Julia Miller stated she thinks it is not required, and you can cancel after the year.

Tom noted the automatic machine costs \$4,567.00. The cost would be split between the general and sewer funds.

A motion was made by Heather Armistead to approve the Purchase of an Automatic Machine Quadient DS 40i for \$4,567.00 for the Sewer Bills. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Cunningham. Motion passed #9.

h. Discussion and Approval of the Resolution of a Pending Woodford County Case No.: 2025CH4

Approval of closed session pursuant to Section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act, to discuss pending or probable or imminent litigation

A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to go into an executive session at 6:38 p.m. pursuant to Section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act, to discuss pending or probable or imminent litigation. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #10.

Executive session adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Chuck Urban gave the following statement:

Plaintiffs, Coalition Opposing Governmental Secrecy and Metric Media claim a FOIA request seeking documentation from the Village of various categories of information related to interactions with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement was emailed to the Village on January 22, 2025, with a follow up email request on February 7, 2025.

The Village has no record or recollection of the receipt of said emails.

The Plaintiffs claim they called the Village on March 7, 2025, and left a message with Village personnel. The Village acknowledges receiving the call. The only information provided during the call was that the caller's name was Owen and they were with an unnamed media company in Peoria following up on a prior FOIA request. The Village FOIA officer returned the call on March 10, 2025, which was answered by voice mail. A message was left requesting a return call. No such return call was ever received.

At that juncture, the Village had no information as to the alleged FOIA request, including the information sought or information that would have allowed the Village to respond in any manner.

On March 30, 2025, the Village received a copy of the complaint filed in the Woodford County circuit court mailed informally by Plaintiff's counsel. The complaint contained the FOIA request which is the first actual knowledge the Village had of the information being requested. The Village provided a response to the request on April 4, 2025, within the time required based on the date the Village acquired actual knowledge of the request.

The letter sent by Plaintiff's counsel with the complaint contained a proposal to resolve the matter demanding production of the information sought per the FOIA and payment of attorney fees per FOIA in the amount of \$2,850. Also included was a settlement agreement and release and dismissal order. Both of which appear to be fill in the blank form documents.

The Village does not have the means to disprove the allegation of the complaint that a FOIA request was received by the Village.

The Village's cost of defending the litigation will exceed the demanded sum. As the Village does not have the means to disprove the allegations of the complaint that a FOIA request was received by the Village, there is a risk of an adverse finding by the court. An adverse finding would expose the Village to payment of the Plaintiff's legal costs, as well as the Village's cost of defense.

In light of all the facts, approval of the settlement terms was recommended, without any admission of fault which is denied and Plaintiffs acknowledgement the FOIA request was fully satisfied, as a nuisance settlement to minimize the cost to the Village and its taxpayers. The settlement requires the dismissal with prejudice of the pending complaint, upon receipt of the payment of the demanded attorney fee sum of \$2,850.

A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to approve the Resolution of a Pending Woodford County Case No.: 2025CH4 in the amount of \$2,850.00. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Cunningham. Motion passed #11.

i. Approval to Award the 2025 Street Maintenance Program to the Apparent Low Bidder

Emily Munday reported a reasonable bid was received for the 2025 Street Maintenance Program. Steffens 3D Construction was the apparent low bidder with a bid of \$99,945.38 for the street maintenance program.

Tom Eckstein noted the cost would be paid out of general funds.

A motion was made by Tom Eckstein to approve the award of the 2025 Street Maintenance Program to the apparent low bidder, Steffens 3D Construction in the amount of \$99,945.38. The motion was seconded by Nathan Henricks. Motion passed #12.

j. Approval to Create a Business District Fund at The Illinois Funds

Tom Eckstein explained that we are looking at creating a business district fund at the Illinois Funds, similar to how we have the MFT funds set up. This would allow us to

move the CEFCU Business District Funds to the Illinois Funds Business District Account. Tom noted there are two reasons this is beneficial. One is that CEFCU is currently at a \$0.7% interest rate with the Illinois Funds interest rate at \$4.6%. The second is that CEFCU funds are only insured up to \$250,000 so the Village needs the funds to be moved to lower the overall balances at CEFCU.

A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to approve the Creation of a Business District Fund at the Illinois Funds. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #13.

k. Approval of the Hiring of a Public Works Maintenance Employee

Elizabeth Cunningham noted three applicants were interviewed for the Public Works Maintenance position. After consideration Caleb Gillan was chosen.

A motion was made by Elizabeth Cunningham to approve the hiring of Caleb Gillan as the Public Works Maintenance employee. The motion was seconded by Nathan Henricks. Motion passed #14.

5. Ongoing Agenda Items

a. Village Board review of the Journal Entry Report-The journal entries are the revenues and transfers entered each month. The monthly journal report (treasurer's report) was presented for review.

6. Presentation of Bills

a. General/Sewer/Audit/Business District/MFT Bills

A motion was made by Heather Armistead to approve the general and sewer bills. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #15.

7. Reports of Standing Committees

a. Finance-Tom Eckstein reminded the board to review the journal entry report (treasurer's report). He noted he will be scheduling a finance committee meeting to discuss the budget before the next board meeting.

b. Streets/Equipment-Nathan Henricks had nothing new to report.

c. Personnel- Betsy Cunningham reported the part time summer employee is doing well.

d. Police-Ryan White was not in attendance. Karl Figg stated at the Chamber meeting that someone had noticed the flock cameras that have been installed in the Village and had asked about them.

e. Parks-Heather Armistead had nothing new to report.

f. Sewer-Betsy Cunningham stated she had taken a tour of all of the sewer plants this past month.

g. Storm Water-Sarah Diesel had nothing new to report. We will need to schedule a date for a stormwater meeting.

h. Economic Development Council- Ann Doubet noted there was a Chamber meeting today. They have Coffee with a cop in July and August scheduled. The fall garage sale will be in September, so we have scheduled the Community Cleanup Day for the week of September 22nd. Trunk or Treat will be held on October 25th 1-3 at Little Oaks Day Care and the Community Prayer Breakfast is in the fall. The Farmer's market is going well. A new coffee shop opened up this week in the Kaufman Center.

8. Reports of Special Committees-Nothing new to report.

9. Reports of Officers

a. Zoning Officer/Village Clerk/Village Administrator-Ann Doubet stated the Village received notice that the grant request for the Active Transportation Plan should be approved for funding at the July 2nd Tri-County Planning Commission meeting.

The Village submitted three grant requests for 100% funding on the Pedestrian Bridge, Germantown Hills to Metamora Trail, and the Woodland Knolls Sidewalk through an IDOT funding opportunity.

The Comprehensive plan update is that we are going to have some topical experts attend our committee meetings and Tri-County Planning Commission is working on scheduling this.

The grant updates are the following: Germantown Hills to Metamora Trail-working on engineering, Pedestrian Bridge-ongoing engineering-Oak Grove Park Phase 1-the Village has received final payment, and it has been closed out. We will need to have a committee meeting to discuss the Oak Grove Park signage.

b. Public Works-Zack Hecht stated they have done the manhole inspections. They have started the yearly maintenance on the grinder pumps. They are running out of room at the drying beds so they will be scheduling the removal of the sludge. Treyton Parker completed the wastewater school. They are renting the machine to do the patching. The employees have been repairing the shoulders. They are going to replace a culvert on Jerry Avenue that is not draining.

Rich Brecklin reported on the Somerset project that it is almost complete. They poured the raised crosswalk and should be operational by next week. Rich noted there is a section of sidewalk to complete. They are backfilling and will hydro seed. The rest is clean up and then the road will get overlayed.

Rich stated they will leave the dirt on the 5-acre property by the State Police for now as the new park starts to develop there will be a need for dirt. Everything is going fairly well so the sidewalk should be completed in a couple of weeks.

Tom Eckstein noted it will look nice to have the road all done with an overlay.

Rich Brecklin stated by the entrance Arbor Vitae had an extra 10 inches of concrete under the asphalt, but they did not charge us to remove it.

c. Village Attorney-Chuck Urban had nothing more to report.

d. Village President-Karl Figg had nothing new to report.

10. Communications to the Board-None

11. Approval of closed session pursuant to Section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act, to discuss pending or probable or imminent litigation-Already completed.

12. Adjournment-Next regular meeting: July 17, 2025-A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Cunningham. Motion passed #16.

Ann Doubet, Village Clerk