

**Village of Germantown Hills**  
**Village Board Meeting Minutes**

**August 21, 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. The meeting was held at the fire department at 313 Prairie Avenue.

<b>Village President/Trustees</b>	<b>Roll Call</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
Karl Figg – President	Present									
Elizabeth (Betsy) Cunningham	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Nathan Henricks	Present	Y	Y	P	Y	Y				
Tom Eckstein	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Ryan White	Present	N	N	N	N	Y				
Heather Armistead	Present	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y				
Sarah Diesel	Present	N	N	N	N	Y				

Also, in attendance:

Chuck Urban, Village Attorney

Taylor Cascia, Village Attorney

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. July 24, 2025, Village Board Meeting**

A motion was made by Heather Armistead to approve July 24, 2025, Village Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #1.

Elizabeth Cunningham stated the minutes reflect what was discussed at last month's meeting.

Sarah Diesel noted she likes the comments being in the appropriation ordinance hearing but noted they aren't in the public comment portion of the meeting.

Ann Doubet noted the requirements are different for a public hearing versus regular public meeting comments.

- 3. Public Comment**

Karl Figg stated the ordinance on the sidewalk obstructions was included with some parking elements and due to some confusion, the attorney is going to separate them back out. Karl

Figg indicated there won't be a vote on the ordinance but just discussion. The off-street parking is not being changed.

Attorney Urban stated the draft was sent to the board for discussion purposes and that based on additional comments he will look to redraft the ordinance to separate the sidewalk obstructions as a separate ordinance, as there is no intent to change parking requirements.

The following public comments were made:

Alex Jackson commented the ordinance should go to committee and questioned the wording of the agenda item and who made the complaints.

Melissa Ricketts made a public comment on having a discussion at a meeting and what initiated this change.

Randy Perau made comments that Whispering Oaks doesn't have wide streets, so their parking is limited, the desire for everyone to have a yard light on their property, the Fandel Road sidewalk shouldn't have a railing, as he doesn't think it is needed, the speed limit on Rt. 116 needs to be lowered, and questioned the type of grass seed that was put down along Somerset.

Bob Schertz commented he couldn't park in his whole driveway if there were parking limits.

Barbie Ferris questioned why the issue of the sidewalk ordinance was brought up.

Kitty Cullett made a public comment about the Somerset right of way being large and talking with your state representatives.

Kevin Carlson noted the need for a stop sign at Westminster and Somerset.

Kathy Schierer stated she is concerned with the traffic and speed of vehicles down Arbor Vitae as it has gotten worse.

Josh Kelch asked about the possibility of a golf cart ordinance.

Angie Agatucci made comments about golf carts in Whispering Oaks and Coventry Farm, concerns about speeding in the subdivision with MTCO Park, and the electrical aggregation agreement.

Paige Patel noted concerns about a Facebook page about Germantown Hills where she was posting positive events going on in the community and was removed and blocked.

Todd Rice commented that IDOT controls the speed limit on Rt. 116, not the Village. The Village has over the years complained about the speed limit to IDOT, but IDOT controls it. Two trustees were at the library to see a state representative and questioned if they asked the state representative about helping with the speed limit along Rt. 116. Todd commented he hopes the auditor clears up the misinformation people are still saying and hopes the Damien Cruse driveway can be resolved.

Damien Cruse stated concerns about his retaining wall and driveway and that people run the stop sign every day.

Angie Carlson noted concerns about a Facebook group's misinformation and the unreasonable posts.

Nicole Wilson made a comment about the Fandel Road sidewalk and questioned the auditor's findings and what the cost of training qualified staff is to address the findings.

Karl Figg stated the ordinance isn't changing the street parking. The ordinance is about sidewalk obstructions and could go to the street committee for review once we have a draft.

Heather Armistead stated this ordinance is to address not blocking the sidewalk.

Chuck Urban noted the draft ordinance isn't intended to prohibit parking; it is about sidewalk obstructions. Chuck Urban explained the process in the Village is complaint driven and this came about due to complaints to the Village.

Karl Figg explained at the last meeting there was a burning complaint that had to be addressed to more clearly explain the code requirements. Karl noted this is about obstructions to the sidewalk, as this is a safety issue. Illinois law states you can't block a sidewalk. Karl Figg noted he himself had a concern about an obstruction on the sidewalk but there were other complaints.

Karl Figg stated that the engineer and Zack Hecht can look at the stop sign concerns, and we can increase police control in areas of concern. We can also look to put up small stop signs on the sidewalk.

## **5. Current Agenda Items**

### **a. Presentation of the Annual Audit and Financial Reports for FY 24-25**

Sandy Cook from CliftonLarsonAllen was in attendance to present the annual audit and financial reports for FY 24-25. She reviewed a summary of the audit and required communication on internal controls over financial reporting in accordance with Government Auditing Standards. Sandy noted there were two findings on the reporting. The lack of segregation of duties and the financial statement preparation and audit adjustments. Those are nothing new and are not a reflection on anyone doing anything wrong. It's due to smaller entities that have limited staff and resources that are available to the entity. For small municipalities in order to achieve full segregation, it is very challenging. There are things that can be put into place to mitigate the risk such as review of bank reconciliations, which is being done. Village has mitigated some of the issues with dual signatures, cross reviews with staff and other signoffs. Sandy noted those will help to mitigate that risk, but this won't satisfy full segregation, as you would need a minimum of 4 different employees on staff. Each person could only do one function, so there are no crossovers of duties. Sandy reviewed the financial analysis of the funds including capital assets, revenues, total debt, net position, expenses, tax and total revenue. She also noted some industry insights, challenges that government agencies are facing and trends they are seeing.

Ryan White noted when Sandy was talking about the segregation of duties it would be tough for small communities to do that. Ryan asked if Sandy is finding other small communities with this finding and what are they doing to combat it.

Sandy stated other communities are doing as much as they can with board reviews as it lessens the risk, but it will never eliminate the finding because they will still have limited staff.

Ryan White asked if other communities have ever brought the 4 people in.

Sandy Cook stated she has yet to see other entities that she works with bring on additional staff in order to resolve the findings, due to the cost vs benefit.

Tom Eckstein clarified the Village would need to employ 4 people to mitigate that finding.

Sandy Cook stated 4 people would be the minimum and noted this isn't ideal as you would still have some crossover. Each person would have their own job to do and only that job. If you would have people gone at different times, then you would have employees crossing over to do the other duties or you would need to bring in temporary employees.

Betsy Cunningham asked about employing 4 people and questioned the additional cost as you would have to also look at the person's education and experience.

Sandy Cook stated she is not sure of the cost, but you would have to look at the labor costs based on what the Village would want.

Ann Doubet noted the office staff are doing more signoffs with checks and balances. Tom Eckstein and Karl Figg are signing off on different financial processes. Ann is working on an internal control policy identifying those measures we have put in place and having Sandy look at the processes to give the Village some guidance.

Sandy Cook noted these measures will lessen the risk but not eliminate it.

Tom Eckstein questioned with a municipality our size, you wouldn't see many that will go and hire 4-6 people to eliminate this finding.

Sandy Cook stated that it is correct. This finding is common with small entities. As she has stated in the past, the wording is pretty harsh with material weaknesses and significant deficiencies. This language is driven by the auditing standards that govern governmental entities. It changed years ago, and they must abide by it.

Betsy Cunningham questioned if the standards were changed to where they forced entities to comply, who would regulate that requirement.

Sandy noted it would come from the auditing standards. In theory it's great but practicality it wouldn't work.

Heather Armistead asked about the dual signature requirement.

The Village already requires two signatures on all checks. Karl Figg noted three of us have the capability to sign checks, which includes, the President, Clerk and Treasurer.

Heather Armistead asked about the general ledger adjustment and any concerns.

Sandy Cook stated there were not any concerns, as the bank balance was higher than the general ledger. It was the thought that some of the receipts didn't make it into the ledger, but all of the cash was there, and nothing was missing.

Sarah Diesel asked if the Village has looked at the cost to hire four people or options to get rid of the findings.

Karl Figg stated the Village hasn't looked at the costs to hire more personnel.

Nathan Henricks noted there would be costs for the added salaries and benefits and the additional costs will be to the taxpayers. This will be a big expense and questioned would it be worth it.

Sarah Diesel asked about the possibility of a CPA looking at the reports quarterly and having monthly finance meetings to make it look like the Village is doing something.

Ann Doubet noted we are taking additional measures. The finance chairperson is reviewing and signing off on the reconciliations along with Clerk and Treasurer. Additional checks and balances are being made which we are going to include in the internal control policy, and we can add to it as we look through the processes. The Village President already signs off on different processes.

Sandy Cook stated this does help to mitigate the risk, but the Village will still have the segregation issue. It potentially could reduce it from a material weakness to a significant deficiency.

Sarah Diesel asked about having a finance meeting before the board meeting to look over things.

Tom Eckstein noted if there are any questions board members can always reach out to Ann Doubet or Julia Miller for answers about the bills or finances and we can look at the more meetings if needed.

Nicole Wilson asked Ryan White to ask the question about material weakness vs significant deficiencies.

Sandy Cook stated you have to look at the issue based on the different criteria as it is driven by the auditing standards. The material weakness is the higher of the two so if the board takes on more it could reduce that risk to a significant deficiency.

Tom Eckstein asked how many communities would do that (hire the additional staff), as it sounds like a huge undertaking compared to the benefit.

Sandy noted she has yet to know any communities that have done that.

Tom Eckstein noted the best the Village can do is have more reviews that would potentially reduce the material weakness to a significant deficiency.

The board thanked Sandy Cook for her work.

**b. Approval of Contractor's Pay Request #4 for the Somerset Multi-Use Path**

A motion was made by Nathan Henricks to pay contractor's pay request #4 for the Somerset Multi-Use path in the amount of \$133,093.93. The motion was seconded by Betsy Cunningham. Motion passed #2.

This is for the full amount less the 10% retainage.

**c. Approval of an Ordinance Amending the Germantown Hills Village Code, Village of Germantown Hills, Illinois, Regarding Obstructions on Streets and Public Ways**

This was deferred.

**d. Approval of the Pro-Tem Village President upon his Absence**

Village President appointed Nathan Henricks as pro-tem if needed upon his absence.

A motion was made by Betsy Cunningham to approve Nathan Henricks as Pro-Tem Village President upon his absence. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #3.

**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**

Karl Figg noted the bills are for products and services the Village has purchased or have been provided.

Sarah Diesel asked if specific dates could be added. Ann Doubet will check on adding the dates.

A motion was made by Heather Armistead to approve the general and sewer bills. The motion was seconded by Tom Eckstein. Motion passed #4.

**7. Reports of Standing Committees**

**a. Finance-**Tom Eckstein reminded the board to review the journal entry report (treasurer's report).

**b. Streets/Equipment-**Nathan Henricks stated they would look at the grass on Somerset and the stop signs. He noted we have looked at the other fencing on Fandel Road and there are a couple of options to consider.

**c. Personnel-** Betsy Cunningham reported Ann Doubet attended an Economic Development training course last week.

**d. Police**-Ryan White stated he is checking with IDOT on the radar signs requirement and the golf cart ordinance.

Ann Doubet noted there is a golf cart ordinance draft from years ago that someone is looking at for potential updates.

**e. Parks**-Heather Armistead noted there are some topics to discuss for a park meeting.

**f. Sewer**-Betsy Cunningham stated an air valve needed to be replaced and in looking at the age it was determined to replace both of them at the same time.

**g. Storm Water**-Sarah Diesel stated there was a storm water committee meeting last month. She rode with Zack Hecht to look at the area, and Zack will reach out to CMT for their recommended options.

**h. Economic Development Council**-. Ann Doubet stated in regard to the Discover Peoria agreement they had extended the start date last year. The Village has not yet been billed. One of the BCIP Grants that was previously approved has had some inconsistencies in receiving proof of payments. Ann Doubet and Chuck Urban explained to the board what had transpired. The board discussed and agreed to reimburse the amount that was approved. Moving forward we would need to modify the program policies to include specific language for proof of payment.

Ann noted the garbage rate increased in November 2023, and the board agreed at that time that the rate wouldn't be increased for 3 years, even though the cost the Village would be billed from GFL will go up each October. The agreement expires in November 2027. In November 2025 the amount the Village will be charged from GFL will go to \$20.79.

There is no update on the IDOT Grants that were submitted. The Tri-County Planning Commission is working on getting dates for the tactical experts, so we will be having a comprehensive plan meeting in September.

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

## **9. Reports of Officers**

**a. Zoning Officer/Village Clerk/Village Administrator**-Ann Doubet noted a complaint was made against the Kaufman Center questioning whether they meet the parking requirements. Dr. Kaufman is requesting a zoning variance and the ZBA public hearing is on Tuesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.

**b. Public Works**-Zack Hecht stated the new employee is doing well. The patch work on the streets will start next week and then they will do the chip and seal. The work should take half a day to complete weather permitting. The Village residents will be notified. Hoerr is cleaning out some culverts. The air relief valves will be replaced, and they are starting to have the sludge removed at plant 1.

**c. Village Attorney**-Chuck Urban updated the board on some issues. A temporary restraining order was served on Damien Cruse prior to the last meeting on an emergency basis due to the status of the sidewalk construction schedule. The contractor was unable to complete the

project because of the constant water flow of water into the ditch from Mr. Cruse's property. Approximately 30,000 gallons of water in the ditch rendered it impossible for the contractor to finish the work. The Village took multiple steps, but they were ignored. This was undertaken as an emergency matter with the filing of a petition for an emergency restraining order without notice. The Village Attorney asked the court, and the court granted it due to the emergency nature, as the facts were well presented. The contractor was leaving the site and if we couldn't get them back soon it would be a more difficult process and additional cost to the Village. This supported the emergency nature, and Court agreed and issued the emergency restraining order.

On the matter of the subpoena, the Woodford County States Attorney received a private complaint about the general ledger adjustment which has been discussed repeatedly at board meetings and was discussed again tonight by the auditor. All records have been provided to the States Attorney, and Attorney Urban is confident that they will reach the same conclusion that the auditor has provided.

**d. Village President-**Karl Figg stated he attends a mayor's meeting each month and all, but three municipalities are a part of the Illinois Municipal League. In discussions there are other communities that have received FOIA's by the same person the Village received one from.

#### **10. Communications to the Board-None**

**11. Adjournment-Next regular meeting: September 18, 2025-**A motion was made by Tom Eckstein to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m. The motion was seconded by Nathan Henricks Motion passed #5.

Ann Doubet, Village Clerk