

**CHANNAHON VILLAGE BOARD
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
APRIL 6, 2026**

VP Moorman Schumacher called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with Trustees Greco, Host, McMillin, Perinar, Scaggs and Slocum present.

Also present were Village Administrator Thomas Durkin, Assistant Village Administrator Mike Petrick, Finance Director Heather Wagonblott, Director of Community Development Scott McMaster, Director of Public Works Ed Dolezal, Chief of Police Adam Bogart, Village Attorney David Silverman and Village Clerk Kristin Hall.

VP Moorman Schumacher informed everyone present that anyone who speaks at the meeting shall be deemed to have given his/her consent to the recording of their likeness and speech. This meeting is being recorded.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Discussion – A Resolution of the Village of Channahon in Support of Municipal Housing Authority

VP Moorman Schumacher stated the state has proposed legislation to eliminate local control over our zoning ordinances, density and a number of other housing regulations. This is a resolution for us to support local control.

Durkin stated that the IML put out a model resolution to their membership regarding retaining local control of land use decisions. Municipalities across the state are considering it. Many are approving them and forwarding a copy to IML who is presenting them to various state legislative members. IML has also asked each community to individually reach out to their individual representatives to voice their concerns about this. I see it as a first step in doing that and I intend to also write some letters to our local legislators asking them to not consider this proposal.

VP Moorman Schumacher stated she will be in Springfield on the 15th for the WCGL Lobby Day. This topic will certainly be up for discussion.

Discussion – Hiring of a Public Works Laborer

Durkin stated a vacancy occurred in the public works department in early 2026 with the resignation of laborer Dubberstein. Ads were placed in March 2026 to fill a position in-house, on our social media and on public salary with starting salary of \$55,980 as set by the Local 150 collective bargaining for 2025/2026 fiscal year. A total of 38 applications were received and reviewed by Dolezal, Fricke, Barrett and Denton. Initial interviews were conducted with seven candidates and one candidate stood out. Therefore, tonight the interview panel along with myself are recommending the board make a conditional offer of employment to Sidney Buffkin at the starting salary of \$55,980 for the entry level laborer position pending board approval and results of the background, physical and drug screen. Mr. Buffkin has worked in the public works department for the past four summers as a seasonal laborer while attending Olivet Nazarene University and he is here with us tonight.

VP Moorman Schumacher introduced Pat Clower who is here to give an Arts and Culture Commission update.

Durkin stated as a result of our budget workshop meeting that we had last week and regarding the line item in the budget for the Arts and Culture Commission, I asked Mrs. Clower to come tonight and address the board briefly on what the commission is working on for this upcoming year and to list expenses and income that we are expecting this year to be able to bring to the board. Everybody has been provided copies.

Mrs. Clower opened by thanking the Board for the opportunity to present the upcoming budget. The primary focus for the year remains the Gateway Project, a major art installation intended to serve as a landmark for the community. Early concepts for the installation include a metal sculpture of an oak tree or a similar nature-themed piece; however, the committee remains open to the Board's creative input before finalizing the vision at the next meeting. The estimated cost for the Gateway Project is between \$60,000 and \$70,000. Given the scale, this will be a multi-year endeavor. The current strategy involves identifying a final project concept to solicit formal Requests for Proposals and utilizing these professional proposals to apply for grants through the various avenues.

The committee is pursuing several initiatives to support the budget including Sips, Sights and Sounds, and the National Fitness Commission Mural. The commission will also be participating in various anniversary celebrations including the Route 66 Centennial and the America 250 Celebration. The village has already secured two grant-funded benches for the Route 66 project, requiring only foundation costs.

The proposed budget includes a \$30,000 allocation toward the gateway installation this year. Including the \$10,000 village budgeted amount and successful fundraising, the committee expects a total expenditure of approximately \$38,000. While this creates a projected year-end deficit of \$8,150, this will be fully covered by carryover funds from the previous fiscal year.

Durkin explained that including the donation line item at this stage is essentially a "worst-case scenario" preparation. When the commission first discussed the Gateway Project and the specific location designated for the art piece, they conducted extensive research to identify viable concepts, the commission discovered the "Giving Tree" sculpture located in Morton, Illinois. He and Village President Schumacher personally visited the Morton sculpture during a return trip from Peoria to assess its impact. Upon contacting the artist, they learned the piece cost \$90,000. This figure served as a "shock" to the commission, underscoring the significant fundraising effort required to secure a high-quality piece for the community.

Moving into the current year, the commission intends to balance this project alongside other major initiatives, such as the 100th Anniversary of Route 66 and Sights, Sips, and Sounds. The next steps include. The commission will draft a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) with specific parameters to find an artist capable of creating a unique, community-focused piece. This will involve a lengthy process of vetting, selecting, and interviewing potential artists. Due to the complexity of the selection process, the project may not be completed within the current calendar year.

The primary goal is to minimize the financial burden on the village.

VP Moorman Schumacher stated well, you have to have a goal to work toward.

Mrs. Clower stated the benches you should be seeing along Route 66. Durkin has been working on that.

Durkin and Mrs. Clower provided an update on the village's participation in the 100th anniversary of Route 66 celebration, which is being funded through a regional grant. The village has been awarded two commemorative benches as part of a collective grant involving several communities along the canal and the historic Route 66 corridor. The grant is managed by Steve Streit of OH! Design in Lockport. The grant allocates \$2,000 per bench, which is paid directly to the artists, and the benches are currently being designed and constructed.

The village has identified two primary locations for these art pieces; one at the Manor Motel and one at the Gateway Project. Public Works will construct a concrete pad for the display at an estimated cost of approximately \$1,000. The village may also wish to install under-mount floodlighting to highlight both the bench and the Route 66 sign at night.

The second bench will be placed at the Gateway from May through September, utilizing an existing concrete pad. After the regional display period concludes in September, the village will select a permanent home for this second bench elsewhere in the community.

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Petrick stated he had no formal items for discussion.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

McMaster stated he had no formal items for discussion.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Discussion – An Ordinance Adopting the Village of Channahon Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 - 2027 (May 1, 2026 - April 30, 2027) – 1st Read

Wagonblott stated we had our budget meeting a few weeks back, went through the budget extensively. There are no changes to that document. The budget included in the packet is before you for first read. The board agenda for tonight's meeting includes holding a public hearing for the upcoming draft budget as that's required by State Statute 65 ILCS 5/88-2-6. She will hold the rest of her comments and information for the board meeting for the public hearing.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Discussion – An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Certain Personal Property Owned by the Village of Channahon, Will and Grundy County, Illinois – 1st Read

Bogart stated we'd be looking to surplus one 2017 Ford Explorer with total mileage of 153,279. We've tried to do what we can with the vehicle but it has reached its useful life. They are looking to either sell or dispose of.

VP Moorman Schumacher stated she assumes that it's not in any shape to repurpose. Bogart stated it is not.

Discussion – Hiring of Two Police Officers

Bogart stated tonight before the board is Alex Kutscher and Carolina Arzuaga. Alex is a resident of Plainfield. He's a graduate of Bradley University as well as Georgia Southern University in Applied Economics. He's well-traveled, has lived in Nebraska, Minnesota, Colorado, and moved back to Illinois recently to start family and be closer to home. This would be his first law

enforcement position. We'd be asking the board to hire Mr. Kutscher at step one for the MAP collective bargaining agreement at \$70,813.

Also, tonight with us is Carolina Arzuaga. She's also here with her family. She's a resident of Channahon. She has a bachelor of science in liberal arts from the University of Illinois in Chicago, where she currently serves as a Telecommunicator on the police side for that department. Those TC skills will be extremely valuable as she enters her first law enforcement career. We'd also be asking the same that she'd be brought in at step one of the MAP collective bargaining agreement at \$70,813. If the board so approves, we would ask the Mayor to swear both within this evening at the board meeting.

VP Moorman Schumacher stated she had the pleasure of meeting both before the meeting. We're excited to swear them in this evening.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Discussion – Authorize a QA Materials Testing Services Master Agreement with Rubino Engineering

Dolezal stated we haven't got all the details worked out in the agreement yet so we can move that for next board meeting.

Discussion – Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement with Meade Inc.

Dolezal stated as in the past for many years with Meade Electric, we utilize them to maintain the traffic signals from Bell Road west, and it also includes the signals that are ours on Bluff Road and the interchange. This is just a renewal of that contract. There's a slight increase in cost as there is every renewal. Meade still has the contract with IDOT District 1.

Discussion – A Resolution Appointing the American with Disabilities Act Coordinator

Dolezal stated we are in the process of working through the development of a transition plan with CMAP and their consultants through a grant. Part of that process is we need to have a compliance officer specifically named not only by title but by name. Since the transition plan is basically just focused on transportation at this point, we'll probably need to include facilities later. The first thing we need to do is take care of the transportation-related transition plan. It seemed logical since Kevin Fricke has been heading that out that we would appoint him the ADA coordinator for the Village.

COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Appointment, Employment, Dismissal, Compensation, Discipline and Performance of an Employee of the Village of Channahon

VP Moorman Schumacher stated we will hold executive session at the end of the board meeting. There's no action coming out of executive session.

The Committee of the Whole was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Submitted by Kristin Hall, Village Clerk

