

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PRAYER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Rich Bingham.

Council Members Present: Louann Artiaga, Dave Riggenschach, Carrie Tuohy, Steve Fine, Steve Connelly and Larry Yunker

Council Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Municipal Administrator Jordan Daugherty, Deputy Administrator Joshua Hartbarger, Solicitor Kevin Heban, Director of Public Services Mike Hill, Police Chief Allan Baer, Fire Chief Jason Francis, Clerk of Council Nicole Hartbarger

Guests Present: Karen Gerhardinger, Jeff Heaney, Nan Myers, Tim Tuohy, James & Lisa Forwerck, Robert Casaletta, Craig Whitman, Phil Whaley

Council Prayer was given by Sister Cheryl Darr of Lial

Motion by Councilman Riggenschach, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve the minutes of the March 18th, 2025 Council meeting. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riggenschach to approve the bills totaling \$441,524.48 dated March 28th, 2025, and the Addendum bills totaling \$108,048.89 dated April 1st, 2025. 6 ayes

PERSONS TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL

Mayor Bingham asked if there were any people to appear before Council. There were none.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Bingham asked if there were any committee reports to share.

Report on the March 24th, 2025 Fallen Timbers Union Cemetery District Meeting

Artiaga shares the meeting began with reviewing the finances. \$165k in revenue, \$10k in expenses and current cash balance of \$394k. She shares they ordered fencing for Whitehouse cemetery to be installed in the next few weeks, including a gate. Talked about making Sexton Rory Hartbarger and contract worker Troy full employees starting in 2026. The group reviewed a proposed millage increase in May 2025 to .60 mills. Hartbarger asked for cost of plots and interments to be discussed and if they should increase or not. Next meeting is scheduled for April 11th, 2025.

Yunker asks what the current millage is; Artiaga confirms it is .5.

Artiaga comments that the meeting scheduled for the second Monday of May 2025 requires a quorum at the meeting for all districts; May 12th, 2025, at 5:30pm in Waterville Council Chambers. Asks all Council to attend as able.

Report on the March 20th, 2025 TMACOG Meeting

Fine shares that the group voted on leadership for the year. Next, he shares that they reviewed the transportation improvement plan; added 20 amendments related mostly to funding from federal sources. The group discussed the work program transportation, contract with ODOT, and approved the proposed work plan. Fine comments the group is looking to create a maintenance and sustainability plan for Wabash Cannonball trail.

Report on the March 13th, 2025 Charter Revision Commission Meeting

Yunker shares that Rob Casaletta, Phil Whaley, Jordan Daugherty, Josh Hartbarger and Kevin Heban were all in attendance. First, voting for officers occurred, chairman was voted

as Casaletta, Yunker vice chair, and Phil Whaley voted as secretary. The group also approved prior meeting minutes.

Under new business it was asked if any changes for the charter that were identified by the Law Director, there were none and none identified by Charter Review Commission. Request was put forth by Village Council to have Charter Review Commission review proposed language to go before voters regarding term limits for Council and Mayor – this was reviewed. Discussed that term limits were previously brought up in past years, Charter Commission believes it is not necessary to recommend provision for term limits. The group discussed the topic brought up by a community member of shortening terms to less than four years. They discussed the possible cost to put this topic on the ballot along with the fact that the entire charter will have to be replaced in five years when Whitehouse becomes a city and is there value in putting something on the ballot now versus waiting the five years. The decision was to go ahead and vote on whether to recommend to Council putting the topic of term limits on the ballot; vote was a 2-1 split with two votes to not recommend and one vote to recommend.

Fine asks about changes of current personnel practices, Yunker says was not reviewed but can be if something is written up to review for the next meeting.

Tuohy comments that Council had discussed another way to change term limits versus changing the charter, Yunker confirms yes it can go through legislation. Connelly says yes, Council did say they want to propose term limits but should discuss the how – whether it is through ballot or legislation. Connelly appreciates the feedback – but really wanted the language reviewed to put on the ballot not whether the topic itself should go on the ballot. Tuohy comments enough people have supported the idea of term limits that it is important to put out there. Heban comments if Council wishes to authorize an ordinance to mimic other local municipalities that can be done. Connelly asks for next meeting to revisit if Council wants to put forward term limits on ballot and review possible cost, Tuohy agrees. Heban shares that if this is on the agenda and would like to go three meetings without emergency, we are getting close to that ability to get ready by August. Daugherty comments he will have to review cost, less than \$17k from historical knowledge, possibly around \$5k but will hopefully have more information for next meeting. Riggensbach suggests starting process now and can always say no if cost is found out and feels to expensive. Riggensbach comments he did some research and found many municipalities where there is a two or three year term limit. Fine comments if this is going to the ballot, he would like to see the Mayoral HR responsibility be updated as well. Heban says he can review this.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Fine to Authorize legislation for term limits language based on City of Waterville. 6 ayes

Casaletta asks if Council can legislate term limits without going to the voters, he says you can do this without spending the ballot money and see how it goes. Mayor comments that was discussed previously but it was decided it is not the best approach as a new group of Council comes in and can reverse it immediately if they want. Casaletta asks when the language for the legislation on voting is created should the Charter Review Commission review it. Heban confirms it would go straight from Council to the ballot, but he can share with Commission for their review.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Bingham shares that the Lucas County Library and Metroparks joint meeting at Village Hall on March 19th went well. There were a lot of ideas and thoughts left by residents. There are additional meetings planned regarding the Whitehouse library building design possibly including a senior center.

Regarding the Swan Creek Ditch project, the Mayor is waiting on some additional meetings to continue discussions with state leaders. Meeting with state representatives soon.

Mayor asks about ice cream with Mayor and Council, when should this be held. Comments last year it was held the Saturday before school starts; this year that will be August 16th. All agree this sounds like a good time.

Sgt. Andy Eckert memorial bridge dedication is planned for May 8th. Estimating very large crowd – sent invites to Marcy Kaptur and others. Will work on parking ideas. Fine asks about the plans for it, Hartbarger confirms there are around five people with speaking parts, plan to keep it around 20-30 minutes total. Hartbarger says there are some concerns on size, possibly closing Cemetery Road for parking and safety – will try to fit around 100 chairs around the bridge. Mayor comments some people are flying in from around the country who served with Eckert. Artiaga asks about school helping to park elsewhere and have a bus shuttle people over – Hartbarger says this will be investigated.

Mayor Bingham shares that the first week of May is Arbor Day, the same week Council is supposed to have station day at Village Hall, but that may change. Hartbarger spoke with third grade teachers, they will be reviewing dates and getting back, currently planned dates may change.

Bingham shares that the Easter Egg hunt this past weekend went well and was well attended. He thanked Tuohy for all her help with ballons; the person scheduled to do ballons was unable to make it and Tuohy stepped in to help. There was a large crowd even though it was the week of spring break.

Mayor Bingham shares that the Cherry Fest parade trailer is reserved, asks if everyone is ok with kid Mayor and Council riding with Council in the parade. Tuohy suggests a release from parents. Memorial Day event is May 26th at 10am at Veterans Memorial Park. Rain or shine.

REPORT OF THE CLERK OF COUNCIL

Mayor Bingham asked for any items to report from Clerk of Council Hartbarger. There were none.

REPORT OF THE MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATOR

Mayor Bingham asks Administrator Daugherty for any items to report.

Request Authorization for Legislation to Transfer Certain Funds for Accounting Purposes

Daugherty shares that it is time again for a standard fund transfer. Looking for this to be authorized for action tonight as an emergency.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Connelly to request authorization for Legislation to Transfer certain funds for accounting purposes. 6 ayes

Daugherty shares that the upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda will include workflow through end of the year. Councilman Fine and Daugherty are working on electric aggregation options and will present a new summary during that meeting. There will also be the review of the engineers estimate for Rue Du Lac subdivision.

Administrator Daugherty comments on the topic of health insurance, and similar to last year, this is a very fast process. Proposals can only open 60 days or so in advance, staff is trying to get information in front of Council so it can be fully reviewed. Daugherty is asking for a short Committee of the Whole meeting before the next Council meeting to do a review. He says that, preliminarily, there is a decent option.

Daugherty shares that quarterly reports were in packet along with typical monthly reports.

Administrator Daugherty shares that Councilman Connelly has called for a Finance Committee meeting before the next Committee of the Whole meeting. Connelly comments that it could be after the next Council meeting to give time to discuss topics at Committee.

It is decided to hold the meeting before Committee; Finance Committee at 6pm, Committee of the Whole at 6:30pm.

Operations Report Summary

Deputy Administrator Harbarger shares an early heads up that staff is evaluating payment process options for utility billing – if chosen to make any changes it will be well after summer.

REPORT OF THE LAW DIRECTOR

Mayor Bingham asks Solicitor Heban for any items to report.

Request Authorization for Consideration of Planning Commission Recommendation on Request for Zoning Change

Heban is asking Council to authorize legislation dealing with the current rezoning topic. Procedure will be for Council to authorize legislation today, then that legislation will be on next meeting agenda and it will then go three readings. At any of the next three meetings citizens can comment on which will be at least four times starting today.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilman Riggensbach to request authorization for Consideration of Planning Commission recommendation on request for zoning change. 6 ayes

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Bingham asks for Citizen Comments pertaining to Agenda items. There were none.

ORDINANCES

Mayor Bingham asked Solicitor Kevin Heban for any ordinances to be reviewed or voted on. There were none.

RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Bingham asked Solicitor Kevin Heban for any resolutions to be reviewed or voted on.

- A. **Resolution 02-2025:** Authorizing the Finance Director of the Village of Whitehouse to Transfer Certain Funds for Village Accounting Purposes; Formal Verification of Said Transfer, as an emergency.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve **Resolution 02-2025** to be read by title only. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilman Yunker to approve to suspend the rules and have the second and third reading of **Resolution 02-2025** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve **Resolution 02-2025** by title only, declaring an emergency. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Fine to adopt **Resolution 02-2025: Authorizing the Finance Director of the Village of Whitehouse to Transfer Certain Funds for Village Accounting Purposes; Formal Verification of Said Transfer.** Third reading vote by name. 6 Ayes

OTHER ITEMS DISCUSSED

Department Heads

Public Works Director Hill shares thanks to Cub Scout Pack 384 in their help with a resident who had tree work done – Cub Scout pack came and helped the following weekend with some clean up. Hill shares that the Storybook Walk is completed, starts by the playground and goes counterclockwise around the small quarry, currently has four stories and will change out periodically. Lucas County Soil and Water will be working on Loan Oak ditch starting next month. Bulk drop off totals, 206 loads over two days, 183 residents participated.

Mayor Bingham asks Hartbarger if staff can get Cub Scout group in here for recognition. Resident in attendance asks about de-brushing of Loan Oak ditch, if it includes established trees, Hill confirms it will be wiped clean as possible; he also confirms they are a conservation group and will leave it as it needs to be. Artiaga comments she is thrilled about the story walk going in, saw questions on social media about how well they are sealed; Hill says James went through and corrected the issue today, added in a spacer that should fix the water leakage.

Police Chief Baer thanks Grand Temple of Pythian sisters, who donated \$175 to Safety Town and thanks to Ridi’s for their donation as well. Preliminarily found out possible award of grant for tasers and other items will be received. Mayor Bingham asks about attendance at Greater Islamic Center; Baer confirms yes himself and several officers shared in Ramadan festival, everyone incredibly friendly and welcoming.

Fire Chief Francis updates on hazmat spill, now down to one contractor as opposed to two. They are in process of clearing out ditches by walking trail – assumes this will be closed another week. The clean-up crew is down to working five days a week instead of seven. Francis continues to have daily updates, and will go over tomorrow to see about provisions that need to happen with incoming rain storms. Ditches between Cemetery Road and FlyBar have been cleaned out and looking good. Artiaga asks of any residual effects when this is all over, Francis says Department of Forestry and Department of Wildlife are aware and review has been on toads and other spring animals, not too much issue since it was mitigated quickly. Natures Nursery has also been present.

Council Comments

Connelly thanks Public Works Director Hill on installation of Storybook Trail – looks great. He asks about potentially memorializing Sheri Luedtke and naming this trail after her, is there possibility to get a plaque. Mayor Bingham asks Daugherty to look into. Connelly comments that he loves the heartwarming story about the cub scouts.

Yunker comments that he has heard comments about residents liking the Storybook Trail, but some concern with water. He is glad for the resolution.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mayor Bingham asks if there are any citizen comments to share. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm. 6 ayes

Duly Appointed Clerk of Council	Mayor