

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

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

Council Members Present: Louann Artiaga, Dave Riggenbach, 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: Nan Myers, Brenda & Larry Druschel, David & Sharon Prueter, Steve Bond, Jeff Heaney, James Forwerck, Wendy Gehring, Bob Keogh, Charles Grass, Phil Leppla, Karen Gerhardinger

Council Prayer was given by Pastor Steve Bond of Community of Christ Church

Mayor Bingham reserves the right to enter into an executive session before the reading of ordinances regarding ORC 121.22(G)(3), conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action.

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Connelly to approve the minutes of the May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Council meeting. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve the bills totaling \$367,553.60 dated May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and the Addendum bills totaling \$200,837.73 dated May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and the March 2025 Financial Statements. 6 ayes

**PERSONS TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL**

Council President Riggenbach 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 May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting**

Administrator Daugherty shares that the meeting was short, around five minutes. One main action for consideration, an appeal. A developer/builder looking at a property on Oak Brook – it did not meet the Village requirements for square footage for this lot but it has been platted for a while. Motion by Bublick, second by Gehring to pass the appeal. All were in favor.

**Report on the May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Joint Fallen Timbers Union Cemetery District Meeting**

Councilman Yunker shares that there were two vacancies to fill, one for Waterville Township to be filled by Julie Theroux and another for Whitehouse to be filled by himself. The next item on the agenda was the adoption of the 2026 appropriations, all approved. The group reviewed adjusting the millage for 2026, approval by all to increase from .5 to .6. Discussed raising the rates for cremation burial, currently have the lowest rates in the area. Next the group thanked Artiaga for all her time and service on the FTUCD board.

**Report on the May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting**

Councilman Riggenbach shares that the formal notes will be provided at next Council meeting but can give a summary today. Discussion was had with Kleinfelder Group to level set vision of economic development including pedestrian bridge, 64 corridor, walkability,

etc. The focus was on projects that can be controlled now and identify those that would have the highest ability for grant funding support. They will come back in August with specific projects and grant funding ideas.

The committee discussed additional topics and projects that can be done around the Village including park improvements, etc. Including those that can be done in-house.

There was a discussion on updating the Council rules, they did agree to review the pages of Council rules and will come back with recommendations. Cleaning up some of the rules and updating to current times – mostly clerical.

#### **Report on the May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Electric Aggregation Public Hearings**

Councilman Riggerbach shares that the same presentation from SOPEC was provided at both public hearings. They heard about the opportunities for consolidating buying power for better rates; ability for opting out and opting in. The final take away is legislation for Council to approve, two different pieces, one will be tonight, May 20<sup>th</sup>. Looking to have up and running during the August timeframe.

#### **REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

Mayor Bingham shares that he and staff met with Lisa Sobecki with Lucas County Commissioners regarding the Swan Creek Ditch project. She shared that they have asked for budget updates to include \$20MM for the support of this project.

Mayor shares there was an informative TMACOG meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>. He comments that Council does not wish to have meetings on July 8<sup>th</sup> or July 15<sup>th</sup>; Heban confirms this will need to be voted on.

Mayor Bingham shares that the Andy Eckert Memorial Bridge dedication went very well. He shares his thanks to those in administration for their help and planning. Great reviews from all who were in attendance, around 200 people. Bingham comments that Station Day at Village Hall went well – thanks Tuohy and Artiaga for their help. Kid Mayor and Council went well at the school; they picked green banners for Christmas time, will be put up around November.

Mayor Bingham shares that Founders Day event will be on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. He shares that the Cherry Fest begins Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup>; the parade is at 1:00pm on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. Parade trailer is reserved; kid mayor and council will be joining on the float.

Bingham reminds all that the Memorial Day service on May 26<sup>th</sup> at 10am at Veterans Memorial Park.

Bingham shares that the first summer concert series was last Thursday and was very well attended, next concert is June 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### **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 Authorizing the Village to Enter Into the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (“SOPEC”), the Execution and Delivery of the Agreement Establishing SOPEC, and Approving the Bylaws of SOPEC**

Daugherty shares that this is the first legislative piece for the electric aggregation plans. This will allow the Village to enter into an agreement with SOPEC. He comments that passing this as an emergency will speed the process up.

Motion by Councilman Riggerbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve request for authorization for Legislation Authorizing the Village to Enter Into the Sustainable Ohio

Public Energy Council (“SOPEC”), the Execution and Delivery of the Agreement Establishing SOPEC, and Approving the Bylaws of SOPEC. 5 ayes, 1 abstain

#### **Operations Report Summary**

Hartbarger shares one update; staff is near the end of the selection process for a new utility payment processing service. He comments he will keep all informed on this decision.

#### **REPORT OF THE LAW DIRECTOR**

Mayor Bingham asks Solicitor Heban for any items to report. There were none.

#### **REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT HEADS**

Fire Department Chief Francis shares he has provided the monthly statistics for April. He shares that they have selected the next full-time candidate, out of three who were interviewed. Internal candidate Mark Bucher has been selected.

Police Chief Allan Baer shares he has provided April stats. Baer informs all that the South Fork duathlon is tomorrow evening, and some roads will be shut down for a short time. He comments that Officer Christine Fouty had her baby, both are doing well. Bike Hike is on May 29<sup>th</sup>, and the police will be controlling traffic.

Public Works Director Mike Hill shares he has filled the open, full-time position by hiring Landon Smith; he was seasonal help all last year. Flowers are going up and working on road crack sealing as weather holds.

#### **CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

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

Motion at 6:51pm by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to enter into an executive session pursuant to ORC 121.22(G)(3), conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action. 6 ayes

Motion at 7:09pm by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Yunker to reconvene the Council meeting. 6 ayes

#### **ORDINANCES**

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

- A. **Ordinance 05-2025:** Authorizing a Zoning Change For Certain Property Located Within the Village of Whitehouse

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve **Ordinance 05-2025** to be read by title only, third reading. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Yunker, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to adopt **Ordinance 05-2025: Authorizing a Zoning Change for Certain Property Located Within the Village of Whitehouse.** Third reading vote by name. 4 Ayes, 2 Nays

Heban confirms this is a 4-2 vote with the Ayes winning, there will be no zoning change at this time.

- B. **Ordinance 06-2025:** To Place On The Ballot at the Next General Election A Charter Amendment to Add Article III, The Council, Section 3.13, Term Limits for the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve **Ordinance 06-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency, third reading. 6 ayes

Yunker asks for discussion. He comments he is all in favor of this kind of measure being put on the ballot. His concern is spending money on this that could be spent elsewhere, \$1,700

for each of the three issues going on the ballot. Daugherty confirms that is still the understanding of the cost. Yunker comments that if we are going to redo the charter in five years, we need to consider the cost now. Support going before voters not sure if it is the right time. Artiaga asks about five years then going to ballot will we have to pay the \$1,700 to present these issues. Heban confirms once we become a city it is a whole new charter, and it will all go before voters at once. Fine comments that one of the benefits now is it allows the detail of these issues to be reviewed individually and not mixed in with all the other options and updates when there is 20 pages or more of info to review. He feels it is worth the \$5,100. Connelly agrees it is money well spent. Connelly says he would expect Council to continue to do these details in upcoming years allowing voters to have their opinion. Tuohy agrees it is one way of making sure residents get their voice heard on individual topics.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to adopt **Ordinance 06-2025: To Place On The Ballot at the Next General Election A Charter Amendment to Add Article III, The Council, Section 3.13, Term Limits for the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes, 1 Nay

C. **Ordinance 07-2025:** To Place on the Ballot at the Next General Election A Charter Amendment to Add Article IV, Mayor, Section 4.11, Term Limits, for the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve **Ordinance 07-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency, third reading. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to adopt **Ordinance 07-2025: To Place on the Ballot at the Next General Election A Charter Amendment to Add Article IV, Mayor, Section 4.11, Term Limits, for the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes, 1 Nay

D. **Ordinance 09-2025:** To Place On the Ballot at the Next General Election A Charter Amendment to Change Article IV, Mayor, Section 4.08(C), Executive Powers, For the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio

Motion by Councilman Yunker, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to approve **Ordinance 09-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

Artiaga asks a question, she received a call from a resident who asks if Council can consider the very last line in the executive power, concerned with potential for someone to lose their job; asking if it could be a super majority to vote, not just majority. Fine explains there is another charter section that explains the specific positions, for Administrative, police and fire, it states there needs to be five votes which would be the super majority.

E. **Ordinance 10-2025:** Authorizing the Village to Enter Into the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council ("SOPEC"), the Execution and Delivery of the Agreement Establishing SOPEC, and Approving the Bylaws of SOPEC

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to approve **Ordinance 10-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency. 5 ayes, 1 abstain

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve to suspend the rules and have the second and third reading of **Ordinance 10-2025** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve **Ordinance 10-2025** by title only, declaring an emergency. 5 Ayes, 1 abstain

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to adopt **Ordinance 10-2025: Authorizing the Village to Enter Into the Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council ("SOPEC"), the Execution and Delivery of the Agreement Establishing**

**SOPEC, and Approving the Bylaws of SOPEC.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes, 1 abstain

### **RESOLUTIONS**

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

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Riggenbach comments on the Swan Creek Ditch project and meeting with Commissioner Sobecki – was a positive conversation and any ability to get any funding for this whole project is 100% due to Mayor Bingham and all his advocating that is being done. If any money gets approved and saves all these other Lucas County areas any amount, it is all because of Mayor Bingham.

Riggenbach comments asking for a vote to cancel the currently scheduled July 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting and the second July Council meeting.

Motion by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to cancel the July 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to cancel the second Council meeting in July, scheduled for July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. 6 ayes

Riggenbach comments the bridge dedication was phenomenal. The speeches were amazing, walking across at the end was great. Kudos to all who were involved. Fine comments that it turned out so well because of so many different peoples efforts down to the details.

Yunker comments on Cherry Fest request for waiving the fees. Riggenbach said email received from all funds that could help is a little over \$6,500. Riggenbach shares he would be willing to go up to \$6k for fees being waived, as long as it's not more than what is in the budget. He suggests putting a line item in the budget going forward so it is decided ahead of time. Tuohy asks about sponsors that Cherry Fest gets, asks if some of these sponsors could directly offset this fee. Yunker asks Fire and Police Chief, is extra staff brought in or people working overtime for this event – Baer comments that every officer walking at the Cherry Fest is overtime. Daugherty comments there is minimal in-kind donations, Council has asked to track these costs – but the majority is actual hard dollars for Cherry Fest is due to salary, overtime, etc. but it is built into Police and Fire budget because it is spent every year. Connelly suggests waiving full fee as it is understood most costs are already in the approved budget. Can review again with budget discussion for next year.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Connelly to waive the Cherry Fest fee for the AW Chamber of Commerce. 6 ayes

Wendy Gehring comments that the chamber also in turn donates money back, last year was electrical, year before was shelter house help, it is being discussed this year on where they can help.

Fine thanks Phil Leppla for coming up and sharing his expertise on the SOPEC topic. He thanks him for his help and patience through the whole process. Tuohy thanks Councilman Fine as well for his dedication to getting this pushed through.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilman Yunker, seconded by Councilman Fine to adjourn the meeting at 7:37pm. 6 ayes

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Regular

May 20, 25

Duly Appointed Clerk of Council Mayor