

**Village of Whitehouse
Village Council Meeting As A
Committee of the Whole
Village Hall, Whitehouse, OH
6:30 September 9th, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm by President of Council Dave Riggenbach.

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

Staff Present: Administrator Jordan Daugherty, Deputy Administrator Joshua Hartbarger, Public Works Director Mike Hill

Guests Present: Mayor Richard Bingham

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve the minutes of the August 12th, 2025 Committee of the Whole meetings. 6 ayes

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA ITEMS

Council President Riggenbach asked if there were any citizens present to comment on the Committee of the Whole agenda items. There were none.

COUNCIL

Discussion on Council Rules

Councilman Fine started by highlighting some of the items that were up for review. He mentioned that it may be better to have separate legislation to dictate the meeting times rather than including and would like the Committee to discuss. Councilman Yunker pointed out that these rules were there to govern Council and not the public so there may be other items that need to be separated as well.

The Committee decided to address each item as they come up rather than reviewing all and commenting at the end. The first item to be discussed was whether the meeting times should be a separate ordinance. There was a consensus that it was the best way to go.

Then next item is what happens when meetings fall on a holiday. It will be rare. Councilman Yunker proposes that the meeting be moved to the following Tuesday or a Wednesday. There were a couple issues that were brought up such as the availability of Legal and other staff on Wednesdays since it is not a regular meeting night. Other concerns were that Committee of the Whole meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month so that may cause a need to double up on meetings. Riggenbach stated that it may be better to use the 4th Tuesday of the month rather than doubling up meetings on another Tuesday. Councilman Connelly asked to consider whether the number of meetings should be lessened. This also could be included in the separate meeting times legislation. Riggenbach asked if they should entertain cancelling the meetings that fall on the holiday but if there is business needing discussed a “special meeting” could be scheduled. This was agreed upon by the consensus.

Councilman Fine continued to review portions of the rules and brought about few suggestions. Rule 6 was the next item reviewed. This concerns how much members can speak on a certain issue. A suggestion to rewrite was presented as follows: “Unless the meeting chair invites a member to give an extended presentation on a topic, no member shall speak for at time longer than five minutes without giving another member an opportunity to speak. As the chair deems

appropriate, he may insist that all members who want to speak on a topic take turns". This would give some flexibility without giving over control.

The next item of discussion was how the Council votes on legislation. Current rules state the Council must vote with "Yeas" or "Nays". Councilman Yunker proposes the addition to allow the ability to vote "present" as well. It shows that the member is there but does not feel it's appropriate to vote on the subject. It preserves the members' right to challenge. There is a difference between voting present and abstaining. Abstaining indicates a conflict of interest. Riggensbach indicated some hesitation on whether that leaves members off the hook for decision making. Council is elected to make decisions. Connelly found information showing that you cannot abstain to something you don't believe should come before Council. Should the definition of abstaining be added to the rules along with the procedure for abstaining. Administrator Daugherty reminded the Committee that the Robert's Rule of order provides multiple steps before the vote. Councilwoman Artiaga brought up a concern about voting as "all in favor" rather than by a "roll call vote" on some topics. It may be a good idea to come back to this topic at a later date. Councilman Fine summed up the discussion by reviewing the opinions brought forth in which we do a "roll call" vote on some of the items that only have one vote and that most think that it would be okay to stay with "yeas", "nays" or abstain with specific reason. Current rules state if you want to abstain it must be from request of the Solicitor or unanimous consent of the Council. More review of the voting section is needed. Councilman Fine will present some other options.

The next section is "effect of failure to follow these rules". No concerns with this section.

Next, there was a discussion on the Suspension of the Rules. Any rule can be suspended by a vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of Council unless a rule specifically says it can't be suspended. This should be meeting specific. No other concerns.

The discussion will be continued at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

FINANCE

Review and Discuss the Amended Appropriations

Administrator Daugherty explained the amended appropriation process. Ninety percent of the increases were due to Income Tax B, which is a non-cash transfer. There were other areas that were increased due to a revenue increase. There were just a few areas that needed to be increased.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Fine to recommend the amended appropriation to Council. 6 ayes.

Review and Discuss the Annual Amounts and Rates Resolution

Administrator Daugherty explained this annual resolution is to prepare for the next year. The rates have not changed since the co-op levy was passed. The amounts are estimated to increase due to the property revaluations. The numbers come from the Lucas County Auditor's office.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to recommend Amounts and Rates legislation to Council. 6 ayes.

GENERAL

Discussion on Tree Commission Planting Plan at Village Park

Councilman Connelly explained that the Tree Commission has had discussions on this topic and there is some confusion on the area of the park that they are making recommendations for. This

will be for the eastern border of the playground. Where we will be removing the trail all the way to the front of the park. Administrator Daugherty offered to attend a Tree Commission meeting to provide clarity.

Discussion on Sensory Garden

Toledo Botanical Garden has a section that is accessible for people who are sensitive to certain smells, sounds, and visuals. It is handicap accessible. Councilman Connelly proposed we consider adding an area like this by the quarry or by the future library. Connelly will provide a link to the Metroparks site that shows the area. Mainly container plantings. We could look into grant options to create one. Public Service Director Hill was asked for thoughts. He is willing to look into it. May want to design and put a concrete price together to help when looking into grants.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Council President Rigenbach asks if there are any citizen comments to be heard. There were none.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilman Fine thanked everyone for condolences and recognition of his mother's passing.

Administrator Daugherty stated the Councilman Fine went to a recent TMACOG meeting and heard news on the funding for the multi-use path on Weckerly. Councilman Fine reported that TMACOG voted to approve funding for the full amount requested. The year for the funding is yet to be determined but they are speculating possibly 2031. We cannot do work until the grant is available. It is possible for the funds to become available earlier if another project falls through. Council support has helped tremendously with obtaining the funding.

Councilwoman Tuohy asked about charges being added to the water bills. The fees are only added through the rate and fee schedule which is reviewed by Council annually. There have been no new rates since January.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm. 6 ayes

Respectfully submitted by Joshua Hartbarger, Acting Clerk of Council