

**Village of Whitehouse
Village Council Meeting As A
Committee of the Whole
Village Hall, Whitehouse, OH
6:30 November 13th, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

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

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

Council Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Administrator Jordan Daugherty, Deputy Administrator Joshua Hartbarger, Public Works Director Mike Hill, Clerk of Council Nicole Hartbarger

Guests Present: Jill Gundy, Mark Schriefer, and James Forrest

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve the minutes of the October 14th, 2025, Committee of the Whole meetings. 6 ayes

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA ITEMS

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

GENERAL

Review and Discuss the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the Effect of Personnel Wages

Riggenschach asks for Administrator Daugherty to speak on the information that has been provided. Daugherty comments that a memo has been provided along with information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics regarding CPI. In this region, the current 12-month CPI rate is 2.8%. This is the same index that has been used since 2017 for wage adjustments.

Mayor Bingham requests the opportunity to speak regarding the cost-of-living index. After the survey results with employees came out Mayor met with all department heads to review – then department heads chose two employees from each department to meet with the Mayor specifically. An issue that was brought up was the cost-of-living increase. Mayor is asking for the increase to go up an additional 2% above the suggested 2.8%. Police comments included the pay and comp time. Other issues brought up was the current structure of vacation time, feels it is too long to wait for a jump in vacation time – currently 8 years to get to three weeks. Police concerned with lack of in-car radios, portables are being used, in car not being used because of cost. All departments brought up the topic of personal days, Mayor asking to go from current of eight hours of personal days to 24. Fire department members like working for Chief Francis and the Village – asking for service boards to be put in the building especially for volunteers. They would also like to see things on the Village Facebook page regarding years of service. Fire department brought up the living area; they would like to have a separate area for living space from the kitchen that it currently is. Fire department mentioned looking for an increase in part-time pay. Street department brought up issue with the Sidecar insurance topic; would like to see more education and tutorials by the end of the year for the decision to be made in May. Mayor is asking to make sure that all employees here will know and understand Sidecar very well before a decision is made. Concern brought up was that the Village pays \$.25/hr. more for certifications, while other local areas pay up to \$1/hr.

more. Office staff brought up concern with vacation time and personal time as well. Office staff brought up concern on schedule as well, looking at working four 10-hour shifts with Friday's off or four 9-hour shifts with the office being closed on Friday afternoons, asking for some flexibility. Mayor did review the concerns brought up with the department heads after meeting with the individuals in the different departments. Asking for some minor things to be done that employees are asking for to make sure better environments are being created to keep long-term employees.

Riggenbach asks for a list – Mayor will be glad to create list. Riggenbach asks what the specific request regarding CPI is that is being discussed tonight. Mayor comments for today, regarding CPI, is the request for additional 2% on top of the standard CPI that is being suggested. Riggenbach comments a lot of good thoughts were brought up. Tuohy comments on it being a hit to the budget with extra increase in salary amounts, while increase to Village charges like water were just passed on. Connelly asks if we can consider the extra 2% in a future Committee of the Whole meeting instead of it all being done tonight. Riggenbach comments this topic needs a lot of clarity on this tonight because it sets the budget for the rest of the planning – Daugherty confirms this is correct. Riggenbach asks if Daugherty has numbers to share on the additional 2% increase if that is given.

Daugherty starts with proposed COLA, 2.8%; effect on 2026 appropriations is around \$95k. With the additional 2%, it would be another \$68k. Riggenbach asks if the 2% is for all employees – Mayor confirms request is for all. Daugherty comments that in Waterville most employees got a 5% raise last year, not yet known for this year. Swanton had a 3% raise for last year and this year. Maumee is between 2-4% this year. Mayor comments that Whitehouse is the lowest paid for police in Lucas County. Fine asks Hartbarger about fire comparison to other municipalities – Whitehouse feels competitive, but Hartbarger says he does need to do some research. Daugherty comments the 2021 salary study was an independent study done that showed that Whitehouse was competitive at that time. Tuohy confirms two contract employees, Daugherty and Hartbarger; they confirm yes. Yunker comments on structure for most employees, it is a tiered salary range; currently an automatic bump based on number of years of service, after maxing out it is just the COLA increase. Yunker comments part of the question he has, should the 6-year service tier be corrected to allow for more increases. Connelly asks are we losing people at a higher rate than others, Daugherty comments there is not a high turnover rate – some turn over with police. Fine comments he is inclined to be in favor of the additional increase; the staff is what makes Whitehouse a quality place; if 2% helps make a little more competitive then there is some benefit from it. Mayor comments on turnover, if a 2-year experienced police officer leaves, there is a \$35-\$50k cost of replacement of that officer. Artiaga comments with these increases there will be a \$150k budget amount added going on indefinitely; not opposed to the 2% - there have been recent years where the full COLA index amount was not given and feels we could catch up. Fine shares graph from website; shows general fund balance trending down – feels this is not as bad as what this basic graph shows – income underestimated and expenses overestimated.

Connelly suggests using new wage to give the 2% bonus increase to, after the COLA, then perform a wage study well in advance of November next year. Riggenbach asks about cost of wage study – Daugherty confirms the last study cost around \$25-\$30k.

Motion by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman Connelly to approve the suggested COLA increase of 2.8% based on the Consumer Price Index for all employees. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve a supplementary 2% bonus payable on January 1st, 2026 for all eligible employees. 6 ayes

Review of the Whitehouse Merit Service Payment Information

Riggenbach explains this is a bonus paid for years of service. Packet provided by staff includes all details. This is a one-time payment, not part of a base salary. The same schedule for merit service pay has been approved every year.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve the merit service payment as presented. 6 ayes

CITIZEN COMMENTS

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Council President Riggenbach asks if there is any other business to discuss from Council members. There were none.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to enter into executive session regarding Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G)(2) for the Purpose of Considering the Sale of Property Where Disclosure of Information Would Give an Unfair Competitive Advantage to a Person Whose Personal Interest is Adverse to the General Public Interest at 7:06pm. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to reconvene the committee of the whole meeting at 8:10pm. 6 ayes

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Connelly to adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm. 6 ayes

Respectfully submitted by Nicole Hartbarger, Clerk of Council