

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 Riggenschach, Carrie Touhy, 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, Police Chief Allan Baer, Fire Chief Jason Francis, Public Works Director Mike Hill and Clerk of Council Nicole Hartbarger

Guests Present: Reverend Warren Clifton, Greg Talecky, Karen Gerhardinger, Leslie Harper

Council Prayer was given by Reverend Warren Clifton of Hope United Methodist Church.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve the minutes of the November 4th, 2025, Council meeting. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riggenschach to approve the bills totaling \$123,072.24 dated November 14th, 2025, the Addendum bills totaling \$197,565.54 dated November 18th, 2025 and the September 2025 Financial Statements. 6 ayes

PERSONS TO APPEAR BEFORE COUNCIL

Mayor Bingham asked if there were any people to appear before Council.

Kleinfelder Economic Development Updates

Greg Talecky from Kleinfelder Group here to discuss some updates. Quick summary on the four targeted areas that Council previously selected.

Talecky comments that with downtown development the plan to schedule meetings with downtown businesses and building owners. Looking to establish historic district, and other funding mechanisms that can enhance downtown. Best place to start is with the businesses and building owners. Kleinfelder will be sending out information and announcements to them soon. Some of this might get pushed out to the first of the new year with the busy holiday season coming up.

Talecky shares that for the SR-64 Corridor Development they are having conversations with industrial developers that are interested in that area. Have had some indirect, third-party discussions with these parties – plan to have direct discussions soon. Looking at going forward with a concept study with the SR-64 pedestrian bridge – have identified some partners to help with funding of this project. Talecky comments there will be some review of the JEDD with Waterville Township; dialogue with them to revisit JEDD and what the expectations for this area are.

Talecky shares that on the community connectivity topic they have had a meeting with the schools regarding safe routes to schools program. This spring plan to submit for funding for a planning study for safe routes to school program. Looking to do a connectivity master plan to see where any gaps in connectivity might be. Talecky shares that the Weckerly Trail projects is being funded by TMACOG, looking into some preliminary engineering planning for right of ways, etc.

The last target that Talecky updates on is community branding – wherever an opportunity comes up to have community branding such as signage, landscaping, etc. it will be applied as possible.

Tuohy comments she would like to attend any Waterville Twp JEDD meetings that are set up as she is the Whitehouse liaison. Talecky says he will be sure to invite.

Riggenbach asks about the conversations with business owners downtown – a few situations where the business is not the owner; Talecky comments the conversations will be with both building owners and the business owners. Looking to inform all involved of the programs that may be available.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Report on the November 13th, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting

Riggenbach shares that the main topic was to review the CPI for the upcoming budget planning, some employee feedback was presented by Mayor Bingham. An increase of the COLA was requested by Mayor, along with several other topics identified by the mayor through the employees. Council discussed turnover, competitiveness, and ongoing employee satisfaction. Decision was the 2.8% COLA then a 2% bonus to be paid out in January.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Bingham shares that Coffee with Mayor and Council on November 8th was very successful; he thanks Daugherty and Hartbarger for attending. Main discussion was a local newspaper – what can we do to bring this back. Karen Gerhardginger made post on Facebook earlier today Mayor says, Karen suggests visiting the Toledo Free Press website, more details coming in January. Several attendees brought up the topic of data centers, and some concerns were voiced. Another topic brought up was the widening of SR-64, if that's possible to bring additional businesses in.

Mayor reminds all that Christmas in the Village is coming up on December 6th. The race begins at 4:30pm, Hartbarger will send out exact time of when anyone participating should be up to the park. Mayor mentions that TMACOG is asking for funding request ideas by November 20th – Daugherty will be providing. The Christmas contest for Toys for Tots with Waterville is ongoing, promos have been recorded and will be put on social media so. Mayor and Riggenbach met with the Delta Institute to review ideas for grant funding for ditch clean up – grants that Whitehouse may be eligible for the County will have to apply for not Whitehouse.

Mayor shares that he has received one complaint; that people were not notified of a tier three sex offender who moved into Whitehouse. Mayor reviews what the actual law states – the Village has nothing to do with this notification; it is county sheriff who is responsible for notifying adjacent property owners only. Email was sent to Mayor by a resident with his concerns – advises Council to refer people to the County Sheriff's office.

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

Request Authorization for Legislation Establishing Pay Classifications, and Benefit Steps for Employees of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio; Repealing Ordinance No. 19-2024

Daugherty shares that this legislation request is the result of the last Committee of the Whole meeting, looking for action on this tonight for January 1st implementation.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve Authorization for Legislation Establishing Pay Classifications, and Benefit Steps for Employees of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio; Repealing Ordinance No. 19-2024. 6 ayes

Daugherty shares that the electric aggregation topic came up at Coffee with Mayor and Council. Daugherty and Fine have been meeting with SOPEC every one and a half to two weeks; the market is being watched closely. Rates are not yet competitive with the standard operating rates – do not want right away to have a higher aggregation rate than the standard option. Daugherty shares Whitehouse may be looking at the January window to lock, can be executed earlier than that, but so far advice leans toward January. Tuohy asks for confirmation on residents opting in or opting out. Fine confirms details. Dayton is currently in the same situation as Whitehouse, trying to lock the best rate.

Operations Report Summary

Deputy Administrator Hartbarger shares that utility billing processing conversion started on November 1st and all is going well so far.

REPORT OF THE LAW DIRECTOR

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

REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT HEADS

Fire Chief Francis shares that monthly statistics have been shared. He comments that the department hit run number 975 today, beats the previous high from 2018 of 951 runs; 90% EMS, 10% Fire.

Police Chief Baer shares that he was able to speak this past Saturday at the senior connection center. Spoke to the group on scams and frauds. Was able to use local victims as examples, to make them aware they are being targeted. Around 25 people were in attendance.

Public Works Director Hill shares that with the little bit of snow last week there was some storm damage to pear trees in the Village Meadows area; trees are getting unsafe in that area. Leaf collection going well and Christmas decorations going up next week.

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.

- A. **Ordinance 17-2025:** Amending and Updating the Village of Whitehouse Schedule of Rates and Fees Pursuant to Various Building, Zoning, Registration, and Ancillary Other Matters.

Motion by Councilman Connelly, seconded by Councilman Yunker to approve **Ordinance 17-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

- B. **Ordinance 18-2025:** Establishing Rules Governing the Conduct of the Council of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio

Motion by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman Riggensbach to approve **Ordinance 18-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

- C. **Ordinance 19-2025:** Adopting a Discretionary Time/Compensation Time/Rounds Credit Policy for the Village of Whitehouse

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve **Ordinance 19-2025** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

D. Ordinance 20-2025: Establishing Pay Classifications, and Benefit Steps for Employees of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio; Repealing Ordinance No. 19-2024

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve **Ordinance 20-2025** to be read by title only. 6 ayes

RESOLUTIONS

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

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Artiaga thanks all police and fire for their help at Veterans Memorial park with the third grade and second grade classes. She shares that kids were enthusiastic and seemed to enjoy it.

Riggenbach has a request from an AW high school senior who is taking part in a community engagement class aimed at improving local neighborhoods and civic engagement. Their group is hoping to install a Little Free Library in a well trafficked area, maybe in the park – can this be discussed at the next Committee of the Whole meeting. Riggenbach comments his second item is regarding electric aggregation, not locking rates in summer because rates/usage is higher; have there been conversations on the chance that rates won't be coming back down. Daugherty comments it is like a commodities market, very sensitive to federal involvement; federal shutdown contributed to making rates unstable along with possible additional usage/load. Fine adds it is like the stock market, uncertainties can affect the rates. Fine comments Whitehouse is off cycle, there is a large bid in April each year, we hopefully will be part of that large bid going forward. Once we lock rates there is the two-month mandated process of notifying residents, allowing opt out/in, etc.; for example if there is a January 1st lock, rates won't start until March 1st.

Mayor asks Hill a question, is there an area for the Little Free Library that he feels might be better. Hill will review areas, need to look at future planning as well so it won't have to be moved. Reverend Clifton comments he has an opportunity to speak to this community engagement class once a quarter, suggests inviting this teacher and some students to come speak to Council on their ideas. Hill comments he has some ideas on what the students might be able to help with.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mayor Bingham asks if there are any citizen comments to share.

Leslie Harper – 6115 Forest Edge Drive – Harper shares she is stopping by to introduce herself; moved to Whitehouse a little over a year ago. Previously she lived in Bowling Green and Grand Rapids, OH. She comments she is now in a season in life where she can get involved in community again; previously on the Planning Commission in Grand Rapids and other community experience. Harper shares she did attend the Coffee with the Mayor and Council at Copper Press. Harper shares with Council that she has sent in a public records request for some information; hoping that by her doing this, other residents will not have to.

Harper shares that her concern revolves around data centers. Feels like Whitehouse stuck in the middle. She comments that Waterville is discussing a moratorium on the topic at their next meeting. She is looking to educate herself; that is the reason for requesting the information. Hoping to be able to contribute in a way that is worthwhile; thankful for all that takes place in Whitehouse behind the scenes. Mayor asks for details on her concern with Whitehouse and the data center topic. Harper comments she has heard a water line would possibly come through Whitehouse to feed a possible data center; she says this has been reported through design concepts. Harper says she wants to know if she should be concerned or not – is this waterline subject a Toledo determination or is Whitehouse included in these

conversations. Harper is concerned this could affect the water pressure for residents, possible impacts to Lake Erie supply, concern with toxic waste return from the data center. Mayor comments there is a waterline that goes down Noward Road and has been there for 20 or so years.

Mayor comments he has been involved in zero data center conversations from the County or any other municipalities – we have not attended or been invited to any meetings. Mayor comments on any information being requested will certainly be provided. Tuohy asks for Harper to send name and email to Council, would like to get her involved if she wants to. Mayor shares that Whitehouse does not have the property or zoning for a data center, like the previous marijuana dispensary topic, he would hope this topic would go to a ballot if it ever got to that point. Tuohy thanks Harper for her time. Heban comments that Daugherty forwarded the public records request email to him – he asks about all related building permit applications – is this for anything dealing with only data center; Harper confirms yes, just for data center.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to adjourn the meeting at 7:23pm. 6 ayes

Duly Appointed Clerk of Council

Mayor