

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 Riggengbach, Carrie Touhy, Steve Fine, Joseph Bublick 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: Jennifer Bingham, Tim Tuohy, Sister Rose Moser, Nan Myers, Toby Miller, Brett Warner, Paul Miller, Paula Mowry, Ryann Miller, Karen Gerhardinger

Council Prayer was given by Sister Rose Moser of Lial.

Mayor is requesting to reserve the right to enter an executive session prior to the legislation on the agenda and a second executive session after citizen comments prior to adjournment.

Motion by Councilman Riggengbach, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to add an executive session to the agenda prior to reading of legislation. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Riggengbach to add an executive session to the agenda prior to adjournment. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggengbach, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve the minutes of the January 20th, 2026, council meeting. 6 ayes

Yunker asks about American In Bloom line item in the listed bills – Daugherty comments this is for a 2-3 day conference that staff has attended in the past and plans to attend again this year in Rochester, MI.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilwoman Tuohy to approve the bills totaling \$246,888.00 dated January 30th, 2026, the Addendum bills totaling \$209,777.29 dated February 3rd, 2026. 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. There were none.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

State of the Village Address

Mayor Bingham shares his thoughts on 2025 and moving into 2026 for the Village of Whitehouse. He begins by thanking all for their continued support of the Village and quotes Henry Ford. Bingham comments on the collaboration and thoughtful action that occurred to move the Village forward. He shares that in 2025 we chose action to strengthen operations and enhance community. Managed day to day operations focusing on efficiency – converted utility payment system saving staff hours, zoning responsibilities moved to access Whitehouse app, and all computers were updated for security compliance. He comments that Police and Fire continued to demonstrate professionalism. Fiscal condition tells a story of Village progress. Visible improvements were made across the Village. National recognition from America in Bloom. He shares that the Village continued to attract new businesses and development opportunities. He mentions community engagements, police academy,

collaborating with Hope church for senior connection, fire department community outreach including fire academy all a big part of 2025; he shares that he looks ahead with optimism. Bingham recognizes leadership, and commends Village Council, Village Staff, Department Heads and all employees – exceptional work of the Village employees.

Bingham shares that Coffee with Mayor and Council is scheduled for Saturday March 14th at the Buzz Diner. March 21st is the planned easter egg hunt at the legion. FTUCD board joint meeting is scheduled for February 9th at 6pm.

Mayor shares that the Village will be advertising for a new tree commission member, one spot is available – asking staff to get that out to the public.

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 Authorizing the Village Administrator to Prepare and Submit an Application to Participate in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program and Designating the Administrator as the Signatory Representative for the Village of Whitehouse on Any and All Contracts with Full Power and Authority to Execute Same

Daugherty shares that this does not mean an immediate obligation on Village side. This allows Daugherty to submit applications for a grant. Hill gives a quick summary, the goal is to connect Wabash trail near the cell tower to the trail in the park; Wabash to Blue Creek would have a better connection.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve Authorization for Legislation Authorizing the Village Administrator to Prepare and Submit an Application to Participate in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program and Designating the Administrator as the Signatory Representative for the Village of Whitehouse on Any and All Contracts with Full Power and Authority to Execute Same. 6 ayes

Request Authorization to Advertise for Bids for the Cemetery Road Repaving Project

Daugherty shares this project is funded and approved, ready to go out to bid – this is to advertise for bids. Tuohy asks where advertising is done. Daugherty comments in the Toledo Free Press, then construction manager sends out to local companies. Wabash trail to Weckerly road on Cemetery Road.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to approve Authorization to Advertise for Bids for the Cemetery Road Repaving Project. 6 ayes

Operations Report Summary

Hartbarger shares that IT policy suggestions were reviewed and sent out to leaders. Now it is in hands of legal for review and approval.

REPORT OF THE LAW DIRECTOR

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

REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT HEADS

Public Works Director Hill commends his guys on the department for how they handled the roads with the large snow storm this last week. Called in very early and cleared in record time. Suggests all stop by the shelter house to see the updated ceiling, will be ready for spring. Furnace and air conditioner are in. Tuohy comments a lot of positive comments on how well the roads were handled.

Fire Chief Francis shares that Firefighter Nick Rupp achieved his EMT certification. Currently out of 7 volunteers on the department, 5 have EMT or up to Paramedic. Francis shares that from Friday 7pm to Monday 10am – during the large snow storm - only responded to 8 incidents, all medical calls, nothing weather related.

Police Chief Baer shares he was informed Monday that full time officer Devon Lafferty is resigning, leaving the police service, will be replacing that full time position soon. Wishing him well in his new role.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Bingham asks for Citizen Comments pertaining to Agenda items.

Brett Warner – former Waterville township trustee: Warner shares that he lives in Waterville Township, is on the executive board of the American legion, always happy to work with Whitehouse. He wants to share comments about the annexation request on the agenda. He was involved with many years ago when Waterville Twp and the Village were having some disagreements; he is proud of annexation agreement that was previously made – took several meetings to get an agreement that befitted both Village and Township; it was seen as a future between the two entities. He comments that he has learned there is a possibility that the previously set agreement is going to be ignored. Concerned that the agreement is not going to be held to, he is here as a Township resident asking it to be upheld.

Ryan Miller – 7242 Finzel: shares his brother is here as well as some additional neighbors. Here representing Waterville Township; comments that they live in this area for a reason, do not want to go back to living in Village ordinance areas where they would pay for water and sewer that they currently handle themselves. Solicitor Heban shares that the property owners on the agenda came to Whitehouse themselves to annex the two properties – all adjacent properties to those two properties have been notified. Miller asks who has petitioned – this is confirmed with names listed on the agenda. Riegenbach comments that Whitehouse is not out looking for properties to annex into the Village – these owners came to the Village for that petition. Miller comments they heard water and sewer were going down the road and they would be forced into tapping in even though they handle themselves currently. Heban shares that this is not something that has been discussed.

Toby Miller – Waterville Township Trustee: Miller comments that according to annexation agreement already in place he feels Whitehouse has a duty and obligation to deny the annexation request based on the agreement. Whitehouse and the Township agree to take all steps necessary to deny the annexation; he shares this is how the agreement is worded. Owners can re-apply and go to the County if needed. Miller is quoting paragraph 3a from the annexation agreement. Paragraph 3b reviewed as well. He states that the annexation agreement requires that the Village deny any request for annexation. Miller comments they do want to work together with Whitehouse. He shares that the agreement does allow for both municipalities to work together on a decision; he would have preferred to get together to make a joint decision.

Motion by Councilwoman Tuohy, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga at 7:07pm to enter into an executive session pertaining to ORC121.22(G)(3) conference with attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are subject of pending or imminent court action. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riegenbach at 7:38pm to reconvene the Council meeting.

Heban asks Council to consider the mediation request issued by the Township. The letter was received from their attorney along with email.

Motion by Councilman Bublick, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve the mediation request from Waterville Township. 6 ayes

Heban comments he will communicate with the township attorney and propose some dates.

Heban shares his legal opinion as the law director. The process is that the owners petitioned the County to join the Village. Village was notified; adjacent property owners were notified. First step with petitions according to ORC is that if petitioners meet statutory requirements, the Village shall approve it and send it back to County. Heban shares this is where we are now. All requests meet statutory requirements then the Village shall approve. If the Village chooses not to approve, we are subject to lawsuits and liabilities by property owners. Once approved, the petition goes back to County for them to review – if approved at this point by the County then the petition comes back to Council for final approval with ‘may’ language – there could be reasons at that point why you do not want to approve the actual annexation. Heban shares there is currently no option but to approve at this step

ORDINANCES

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

- A. **Ordinance 01-2026:** Specifying the Approval of the Council of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, of the Pending Annexation Petition No. 2026-1 of RF Asset, LLC, an Ohio Limited Liability Company to Annex Property to the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio (2nd Reading)

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to pull **Ordinance 01-2026** from the table. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve **Ordinance 01-2026** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve to suspend the rules and have the third reading of **Ordinance 01-2026** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve **Ordinance 01-2026** by title only, declaring an emergency. 6 Ayes

Riggenbach comments that the approval or not approval of this ordinance does not approve actual annexation, goes back to County first then back to Village if the County agrees. Confirming process. Heban confirms this is the process.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Yunker to adopt **Ordinance 01-2026: Specifying the Approval of the Council of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, of the Pending Annexation Petition No. 2026-1 of RF Asset, LLC, an Ohio Limited Liability Company to Annex Property to the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes; 1 Nay, Tuohy

- B. **Ordinance 02-2026:** Specifying the Approval of the Council of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, of the Pending Annexation Petition No. 2026-2 of Travis and Amanda Ratcliff to Annex Property to the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio (2nd Reading)

Motion by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to pull **Ordinance 02-2026** from the table. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Yunker, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve **Ordinance 02-2026** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve to suspend the rules and have the third reading of **Ordinance 02-2026** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve **Ordinance 02-2026** by title only, declaring an emergency. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Fine to adopt **Ordinance 02-2026: Specifying the Approval of the Council of the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, of the Pending Annexation Petition No. 2026-2 of Travis and Amanda Ratcliff to Annex Property to the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes; 1 Nay, Tuohy

RESOLUTIONS

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

- A. **Resolution 02-2026:** Indicating the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, Will Provide Utilities, Fire and Police Protection Services to Certain Property Title to RF Asset, LLC, an Ohio Limited Liability Company, which Holders are Seeking Annexation of Said Property Pursuant to Lucas County Annexation Petition 2026-1 to the Village of Whitehouse (2nd Reading)

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Fine to pull **Resolution 02-2026** from the table.

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve **Resolution 02-2026** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Bublick to approve to suspend the rules and have the third reading of **Resolution 02-2026** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve **Resolution 02-2026** by title only, declaring an emergency. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Bublick, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to adopt **Resolution 02-2026: Indicating the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, Will Provide Utilities, Fire and Police Protection Services to Certain Property Title to RF Asset, LLC, an Ohio Limited Liability Company, which Holders are Seeking Annexation of Said Property Pursuant to Lucas County Annexation Petition 2026-1 to the Village of Whitehouse.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes; 1 Nay, Tuohy

- B. **Resolution 03-2026:** Request Authorization for Legislation Indicating the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, Will Provide Utilities, Fire and Police Protection Services to Certain Property Title to Travis and Amanda Ratcliff, which Holders are Seeking Annexation of Said Property Pursuant to Lucas County Annexation Petition 2026-2 to the Village of Whitehouse (2nd Reading)

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to pull **Resolution 03-2026** from the table.

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Yunker to approve **Resolution 03-2026** to be read by title only, as an emergency, second reading. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve to suspend the rules and have the third reading of **Resolution 03-2026** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve **Resolution 03-2026** by title only, declaring an emergency. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riggenbach to adopt **Resolution 03-2026: Request Authorization for Legislation Indicating the Village of Whitehouse, Lucas County, Ohio, Will Provide Utilities, Fire and Police Protection Services to Certain Property Title to Travis and Amanda Ratcliff, which Holders are Seeking Annexation of Said Property Pursuant to Lucas County Annexation Petition 2026-2 to the Village of Whitehouse.** Third reading vote by name. 5 Ayes; 1 Nay, Tuohy

C. **Resolution 04-2026:** Request Authorization for Legislation Authorizing the Village Administrator to Prepare and Submit an Application to Participate in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program and Designating the Administrator as the Signatory Representative for the Village of Whitehouse on Any and All Contracts with Full Power and Authority to Execute Same

Motion by Councilman Riggenbach, seconded by Councilman Yunker to approve **Resolution 04-2026** to be read by title only, as an emergency. 6 ayes

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Fine to approve to suspend the rules and have the second and third reading of **Resolution 04-2026** by title only. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Bublick, seconded by Councilwoman Artiaga to approve **Resolution 04-2026** by title only, declaring an emergency. 6 Ayes

Motion by Councilman Yunker, seconded by Councilman Bublick to adopt **Resolution 04-2026: Request Authorization for Legislation Authorizing the Village Administrator to Prepare and Submit an Application to Participate in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program and Designating the Administrator as the Signatory Representative for the Village of Whitehouse on Any and All Contracts with Full Power and Authority to Execute Same.** Third reading vote by name. 6 Ayes

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Riggenbach wants to reiterate that his goal is to work with the Township – today’s legislation does not mean anything other than following a process, when the final decision comes back that’s when the opportunity to honor a relationship can exist. He comments he is sticking with the legal counsel representing him to do so – following the advised legal process.

Fine reiterates that they do want to work together with Waterville Township – following a legal process currently, does not indicate how a vote goes when the final decision time comes back around.

Bublick shares they were contacted by Wayne Wagner from Waterville about a collaborative meeting on February 11th and he is unable to attend.

Yunker echoing comments heard from other Council members. Comments there are certain laws written in a way that wording does not make them permissive; you are required to work a certain way. The word in this case ‘shall’ leaves no room for interpretation. Ordinance followed today from the ORC had the word ‘shall’ in it – so Council is following that – this does not mean it is the final decision. Have not had any discussion yet whether it makes sense for the properties to come into the Village. Reasons on both sides to protect residents. The next ordinance, after the County makes their decision is the permissive ordinance. Between now and then they can plan to have conversations with representatives from the Township.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

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

Toby Miller – Waterville Township Trustee: Miller shares that the annexation agreement has good faith clauses in it. Shares that this petition for annexation has been in Whitehouse hands since December. He waited to hear back and heard nothing. Feels this is not being handled in good faith. Feels that this has been rushed through passing.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Riggensbach at 8:05pm to enter into an executive session pertaining to ORC121.22(G)(2) to consider the purchase of property for public purposes.

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Bublick at 8:29pm to reconvene the Council meeting. 6 ayes

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilwoman Artiaga, seconded by Councilman Bublick to adjourn the meeting at 8:29pm. 6 ayes

Duly Appointed Clerk of Council

Mayor