

Village of Gates Mills
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
September 16, 2025

A regular meeting of the Council of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio was held at the Community House on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Siemborski presiding. The meeting was live-streamed to the internet.

1. Roll Call starts at 4:50

Councilmembers present: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.

Other Village officials present were Treasurer Morgan, Clerk DeCapite, Service Director Biggert, Police Chief Minichello, Fire Chief Majeski, Village Engineer Courtney, and Law Director Hunt.

2. Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of August 19, 2025 starts at 5:35

Councilmember Atton referred to the Tree Canopy Committee Report on page 11 and suggested "...they are here to help..." be changed to "...they are eager to help...".

Clerk DeCapite noted there was lengthy discussion of Resolution No. 2023-24 during the August Council meeting. Resolution No. 2023-34 is the correct number and that is what is reflected throughout the August minutes.

Councilmember Broome moved to approve the August 19, 2025 minutes as amended and Councilmember Press seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

3. Findings and Conclusions of Fact for 640 Chagrin River Road starts at 7:17

This item will be on the October agenda.

4. Pay Ordinance # 1301 \$501,259.67 starts at 8:19

Councilmember Press moved to approve Pay Ordinance #1301, and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

5. Mayor's Report starts at 8:54

- The 5K Fox Trot hosted by Gates Mills Elementary School PTC takes place this Sunday, September 21st. It's been almost ten years since the last race.

- Mayfield City School District has received their State of Ohio Report Card. The school system is rated 5-star again, and GM Elementary is a 5-star elementary school.
- Residents will soon be receiving an informational postcard explaining that the 3.5 mill levy on the November ballot is a renewal - the seventh renewal since first being approved by voters in 1996. All the proceeds (\$616,491 per year) come to the village for village services, and represent about 10% of our operating income. GM Improvement Society will also send out a postcard indicating their support of renewing the levy.

a. Senior Services starts at 12:34

A summary of the 151 Senior Services Interest Survey responses received to date was prepared by Town Hall Coordinators Jean Misch and Robin Berke, made available to Council tonight, and the Mayor commented in depth. Although the survey is still open until September 30, the overwhelming response has yielded some suggestions to follow up and work on now. There seems to be general support for contracting with the Community Partnership on Aging for some of their broad variety of services and activities, supplemented by in-house responsibility for services and activities unique to the village - luncheons, wellness and house checks, and community-based outreach. Recommendations from the Committee with a budget estimate for next year will be presented to Council in October for discussion.

b. Sidewalk Project - see 29:29

c. 2025 Road Program starts at 20:26

Congratulations to Service Director Biggert, Village Engineer Courtney, and their teams and companies for accelerating and completing the road program by the end of August - allowing us to submit for reimbursement and hopefully receive those monies this year yet. The road program included Andrews and Hillcreek and some repair work on Colvin. Colvin is going to need a total redo next year. Village Engineer Courtney reports that we've spent about \$820,000 of the \$850,000 budgeted this year.

PMG has re-evaluated all the roads since the master road assessment was conducted 3-4 years ago. Colvin is in the failed category, two or three roads are poor, and all of our other roads are now fair, good, or excellent. The results will be presented to the service committee in the next two weeks, and a formal report will be presented to Council in October.

d. Encore at Burton Court starts at 22:42

This is our third year as a village of supporting Encore. We have committed a soft target dollar amount that we would help them raise. An October 11th by invitation event of 50-75 people will be held at Burton Court. We hope those invited will find the generosity to donate prior to the 2026 season.

e. Gates Mills Estates Drive starts at 23:34

Of the 21 homes retaining yard water after heavy rains on GM Estates Drive, three remain categorized as yellow (needs some work) and one remains red (needs significant work) after our Service Dept cleaned out culverts and ditches. All residents on GM Estates Drive have been invited to a meeting this coming Monday to air their concerns, view the correction plan, and discuss cost sharing.

f. Humphrey Benches starts at 25:13

Since the passing of Bonnie Humphrey, a daughter of village leader and Mayor Courtney Burton, we were approached to collaborate with the GM Land Conservancy in memorializing Bonnie and her family. The Land Conservancy contributed two benches and a plaque describing Bonnie's appreciation of nature and her legacy back to the Rankin and Burton families. The village contribution is the downtown park space east of River Road next to where the library ends. A ceremony will be scheduled at a future date.

Added agenda item:

g. Fire Engine Specs starts at 27:15

About three months ago, we asked Assistant Fire Chief Rob Jamieson to pause the preparation of fire engine specs thinking that the new federal administration would back off the standards for electric vehicles, emission standards, and other types of things that seem to be adding 20-30% cost to the already very expensive engines. There has been no back off, so we will finalize the specs over the next few weeks and bring those to Council for approval in October to go out and determine what the cost would be. Councilmember Press suggested buying and rebuilding a used fire engine.

b. Sidewalk Project starts at 29:29

At last month's Council meeting people were looking for more information to determine whether we need a sidewalk along Chagrin River Road between Colvin and the lower school parking lot. Subsequently the Mayor met with Mayfield City School District Superintendent Dr. Barnes and Treasurer Scott Snyder. The contribution that Mayfield School District directed to this project was safety driven and based on the number of feet of sidewalk in the school zone running along River Road. They pointed out that they redid the circular driveway to provide a wider driveway and they moved the front school entrance to provide better security. The newly installed playground will increase the use of the school and not just for school students during school days. They view the sidewalk project as an important part of a broader safety improvement plan and one they want done.

Mayor Siemborski spoke with the School Principal who believes going down Colvin is not a safe route. On the south side the hedges are 10-12 feet tall and come right to the edge of Colvin. On the north side there is a stone wall. Chagrin River Road is a preferred way to go. Kids would be brought down to do things in the village center if we had a sidewalk on River Road. The room housing the school library is now being used as a classroom, and the public library would be used if there was a sidewalk built.

Last month Jared and Ariel Capella expressed their desire to keep their straight fence the way it was. The plans that Council saw last month had that straight fence

line. In addition, since then, we received notice from CEI that the utility pole would be moved if needed at no cost to the village. The plans presented at the last meeting took into account the recommendation by the safety consultant firm hired that the sidewalk cross over closer to the corner of Colvin taking advantage of the intersection where people are naturally going to pause and look for traffic or people crossing, as opposed to farther north along River Road where there wouldn't be a natural intersection.

The seed money that Council approved three years ago was for a sidewalk program that went to the GM Elementary School from the village center. We used similar language to raise money from the Mayfield School District and Friends of the Library. Those donors are looking for us to fulfill our commitment that we made. Getting the sidewalk to Colvin Road is not getting it to the school. We have an obligation to fulfill our commitment.

Comments and questions from Councilmembers starts at 36:37

Press - The impression he got last month was the primary use for the pedestrian sidewalk would be the summer campers who are only here for 6 weeks. The project is pretty expensive at over \$300,000 to solve a six-week problem. A lot of residents, particularly those living on River Road, were against doing this. That should be given a significant amount of weight. The sidewalk alters the look and feel of the village - in particular, the ODOT compliant crossings with flashing lights. He is not aware there's ever been an issue in the past of somebody from school or camp having an incident of any kind. Having texted seven people this afternoon, three of whom are residents on River Road, all seven said not to go forward with the project. We don't have to vote on this until next month, but he is leaning against.

Siemborski - Let's keep to the facts. Per the cost handout distributed to Council tonight, the amount we requested was \$304,750. The amount granted was \$243,000. The project amount is \$250,000.

Turner - This project has been ongoing since 2023. It was a high-level overview, and we never saw any details of what the project would look like until recently. At our last meeting, we had differences of opinion about what the project should be. She hears the Mayor saying today that the project is the bridge, the crossover to Colvin, and all the way down to the lower school parking lot. She does not hear that there are options for us to consider. It was her understanding that students who go into the village mainly walk down Colvin. Having the sidewalk all the way down to the lower school parking lot would allow students to come down the steps into the parking lot and down the street that way. She doesn't know that's what they're going to do. Are we creating something unnecessary by having a sidewalk from Colvin to the lower school parking lot? Yes, during the summer the campers go from the camp down to the lower school parking lot. She is not sure all of them would walk on a sidewalk - they probably would cross over the Ohio Bell Telephone building right into the parking lot. She is not sure that a sidewalk there is any safer than the grass. There's no curbs, and a car could hit them on the grass or on the sidewalk. We're not proposing that the sidewalk is going to be for strollers or wheelchairs - once you get to the lower school parking lot, it's not accessible to get up to the school. She would like to go back to considering portions of the project rather than the whole package.

Onysko - The US Federal Highway Association found that having a sidewalk makes it 88% less likely to have an accident than without a sidewalk. He gets frustrated because we are an aging society that is taking away all the ability for us to have mobility access to these places. He didn't have sidewalks when growing up in Hudson, and now they

have them everywhere. He is surprised our community doesn't want to have access for mobility. He loves sidewalks and does not think they affect the aesthetics at all.

Steinbrink - He is confused about the need for the flashing signs. Neighboring school crossings do not have flashing signs. Some have school guards at their crossings. He agrees with Councilmember Press on the aesthetics of a painted crosswalk in the middle of the village with a flashing sign. He wonders if there is a way to get around that. The sidewalks on both sides of Old Mill near the Hunt Club are brick and very nice - the look of a four-foot-wide concrete sidewalk is not in keeping with the character of the village. He agrees Councilmember Turner's incremental approach is better than doing this all at once. While he understands the need to get the sidewalk down to the lower parking lot, he doesn't know why we need the flashing light.

Deacon - She knows of one community that effectively uses very visible orange flags at crossings. She would like to better understand how the pedestrian bridge would work in that area. She would like to know what the bridge looks like. It is in the historic district. More detail would be helpful.

Siemborski - The plan would be to leave the Community House parking lot. There would be a pedestrian bridge over the creek. A few evergreens and trees there would be cut down. We would not touch the Capella's fence. The sidewalk would be on the outside of the fence. The Capella's front yard is not changed inside the fence. There is a utility pole and a few trees on the corner of River and Glenwood Roads. We could either leave the pole or move it - the current drawing indicates the pole stays, but if we want to move it, that's an option. Cross Glenwood. Cross River Road. Do we have some options on the width of the sidewalk?

Courtney - Five-foot sidewalk to be ADA compliant.

Deacon - A visual of the pedestrian bridge would still be helpful for us visual folks.

Broome - Some of the comments from residents at the last meeting were good, but not all good. Do we need this or not? Do we need part of it or do we need it all? It's true we have not had any incidents - is that good fortune or evidence that there is no safety issue? Drivers regularly text and drive. The world is changing. The safety issue probably is real. Like Councilmember Steinbrink, he does not think we need to have flashing lights there at all. Using Councilmember Press' phrase, the question is whether it's going to change the essential feel of the village - the village always changes a little bit. There have been a lot of changes, and a lot of times, what you believe the essential feel of the village is depends on when you got here. Like Councilmember Turner, the idea of having the bridge just generally speaking sounded like a fair idea. He was not on Council at the time and thought the existing bridge would be widened out so there would be room to pass. There's a need to do something. What we do needs more investigation. This seems like a lot right now. If we were to do it, in four or five years it wouldn't seem like a lot anymore. If we were to do part of it and then do part of it later, how does that work with the ARPA money that we have? The ARPA money does have an expiration date. If we give the money back, it's going to get spent the next day on something else. A comment made last month from the audience that we have to take into account maintenance costs is a fair comment. There will be concrete breaks and chips and roots grow. Could this be a positive change? Would it make it easier to park at the lower school parking lot if you were going to see the Players at the Community House? Would it make it easier to use that auxiliary parking to do something? If the post office gave up their lease? There's probably other advantages and disadvantages to this, but we need to hash it out a bit.

Atton - On the specifics of the project, if forced to support all or part of it, the sidewalk section running from Colvin north to the lower school parking lot is unnecessary. He does not see why flashing lights are better than lollipop ladies (crossing guards). On a

higher level, if we're a responsible government, we should only be spending free money if we would be prepared to spend our own. He is not sure that we're at that point. If the money were returned, we ought to trust that other people wouldn't waste it, and it would be used perhaps for a better purpose than what we have. Free money shouldn't compel anything.

Siemborski - It's not free money. No one said we're spending free money. It's a grant we competed for and were awarded.

Atton - Another point is there are lots of safety issues on Chagrin River Road. As we go north from Old Mill to the edge of the village, there are all those curves, people going 45 mph. He has seen lots of accidents, actual accidents, some fatalities have happened on that stretch of road over the last ten years. He wonders how far \$250,000 could go to addressing the broader safety issues on Chagrin River Road, particularly where he lives just north of Mayfield Road. He is worried about whether this is value for money compared to alternatives. He is worried about being a little frivolous about granted money. If forced to vote on what's on the table right now, he would vote for the bridge and for the lower end coming towards the Community House. He would vote against the section north from Colvin to the school parking lot.

Siemborski- Are we required to be ADA compliant or do we have latitude?

Biggert - It is a grant requirement.

Siemborski - Do the ADA requirements require the flashing lights and those types of things, or are they required due to the school zone?

Courtney - There's a combination of standards being applied. There's the ADA standard as it relates to slope, slope length, cross slope of the sidewalk, width of the sidewalk. Then there's also ODOT standards because this is a state route. The sidewalk and the crosswalk have been designed consistent with the ADA and ODOT standards.

Press - If we do go ahead with the project, it would be nicer aesthetically to do a red brick sidewalk like in front of the Hunt Club than it would to do asphalt paving.

Broome - Suggested moving the 25 mph sign currently just north of the bridge further north on River Road to where the sign is that says 25 mph zone is ahead would be a significant safety improvement. If we were slowing the cars there, it would give us a chance to do some radar enforcement on Glenwood. He is aware it was not an easy thing that went into lowering the speed limit on River Road from 50 to 40 mph.

Courtney - We would need to make a formal application to the state for any change of the speed limit on a state route. We very likely might have to complete a comprehensive safety study showing why the lowering of the speed limit is justified. There would be a potential cost implication with respect to studies required to justify our position.

Deacon - Wouldn't the fact that there's a school parking lot there being used for student transportation or school purposes make a difference if we're making application?

Courtney - Those are certainly things that swing in favor of lowering the speed limit.

Turner - This is a really good discussion. She hates to lose sight of the importance of the bridge though. After hearing from the residents, a drawing of the bridge and what goes before and after, a site plan, available at the next meeting would assist in coming to some consensus.

Deacon - There are some very nice photos. If you went to the ARB and got some feedback on what would look good, it would look really nice.

Onysko - The references tonight to character of the village are all tied towards visual. The character of Gates Mills isn't just visual - it's safety, it's welcoming, it's accessibility. Let's not just limit the character of Gates Mills to what you see, but about the feel of the city and how welcoming it is.

At 1:06:51 the Mayor invited the audience to comment at the microphone:

Dr. Birnbaum, Colvin and Chagrin River Road - The proposed sidewalk project is a solution in search of a problem. The concern being raised is limited to the summer camp which operates only 5-6 weeks each year. In more than 50 years, there has not been a single incident to justify such an undertaking. To spend \$250,000 on a sidewalk that will never be used is neither reasonable or responsible. Children at the camp play on the school grounds, and when walking to the Community House, they travel down Colvin, not Chagrin River Road. They are always escorted in small groups by adults. A sidewalk along Chagrin River Road would permanently diminish the aesthetics of our community. The only outcome of this project would be a lasting reminder of how \$250,000 was wasted; funds that could be directed toward a wide range of meaningful projects that actually benefit the residents. He commends the Mayor, David, and Sandra who took the time to meet him in person, walk the property, and carefully evaluate the facts. He is disappointed the remaining Councilmembers did not extend the same courtesy to himself or his neighbors - many were not even aware this proposal was under consideration. A far more effective and fiscally responsible approach would be to implement simple targeted measures such as a seasonal crossing guard, additional signage, or visible police presence. These solutions would cost next to nothing and would address the concern in a prudent and proportionate way.

Jared Capella, Chagrin River Road - As the most impacted property owner on this project, he pointed out one inconsistency in the Mayor's statement tonight. Based on the drawings he sees, yes, his fence line won't be impacted because of the utility pole movement. However, his fence line where the pedestrian bridge will be kinks toward the sidewalk, and that kink will have to come down. Am I mistaken?

Siemborski - The kink will probably get straightened in line with your fence - we will look at the kink.

Jared Capella - There's also an elevated bed with evergreen trees through which the sidewalk will be placed. He and his surveyor believe some of the trees are going to come down. His concern with that is the loss of privacy that he and his family have enjoyed on their beautiful deck since purchasing the house in 2014 once the bridge brings people 12-14 feet closer. After deliberating with Ariel, if this project were to move forward, they are going to be moving out of Gates Mills. Councilmember Onysko has stated that Gates Mills is a community of inclusion.

Suzanne Snelson, President of the Friends of the Library - The village has the full support of the Friends of the Library on this issue. We did contribute a sum of money after evaluating a preliminary schematic at that time. We would have preferred it come down the east side of Chagrin River Road directly to the library, yet we still thought it was a valuable change for the school to be connected to the village and library - especially since the school has lost their library because of increased enrollment. Recently she saw on Facebook that the students took a walk down to the village on a beautiful day. The students come to the library for all of their emergency preparedness. It isn't just the camp, and we need to take the school into consideration. She encourages a commitment to a fully funded project. She appreciates the concerns of neighboring residents, thinks there's a way to make it work, and encourages cooperation and following through. Aesthetically, the brick looks great down by the Hunt Club, but there's no brick up here except for the walkway to the village hall. A standard concrete cement would flow more easily to the concrete that's currently here.

Anne Evans Barnes, Colvin and Chagrin River Road - She is happy to consider allowing a sidewalk or other passageway across her front lawn to the portion of the current bridge over the creek, somehow expand the width of that portion instead of a pedestrian bridge, and then maybe the crosswalks. We would need to involve the Leverings of course. It might be helpful with the hill situation, but she is not sure what a safety expert would say. Nobody should move because of this - she does not have the same privacy concerns the way her lot sits.

Siemborski - That was considered and seemed fairly intrusive, which is why it wasn't followed up on.

Press - Miss Barnes has an interesting point. It's got to be safer for the kids to go down the east side than to do two crossings of a state highway.

Courtney - The east side of Chagrin River Road contains some very steep slopes that are very close to the edge of the road.

Press - Understands that it's more expensive to put it on the east side, but it's safer.

Sean O'Hagan, Colvin Road - His son, not able to attend tonight, wanted everyone to hear "you don't see kids there because it is not safe". This is not just about a camp nor is it just about the school. This is about improving safety along a heavily trafficked part of our village that is highly desirable for folks to walk on, but for the utter lack of safety. Timing - We hear over and over again in this village that people do want to walk and they want to have a safe pedestrian experience. We heard it at the beginning of this evenings meeting. The senior survey said folks want to walk. The final text of the Comprehensive Plan specifically mentions the sidewalk and a crosswalk. We've had an agreement with the County for at least two years. We've talked to the School District. We've talked to the Friends of the Library. The Mayor and his administration have dutifully shown up to these meetings and provided routine updates, not every month, but probably quarterly. This has not been hidden or progressing without public knowledge. Aesthetics - He lives in this part of the village. It is uniquely situated as one of the most densely developed parts of the village - the village where there happen to be a lot of sidewalks, except on this stretch. It's entirely consistent with the aesthetics of our village to have a sidewalk along this stretch. With regard to the flashing sign, we see the flashing mobile speed awareness monitor sign commonly throughout the village. And on the northbound side of River Road, in front of the Levering's house, there's a blinking school district sign. We have a flashing sign in our village, so that's not entirely inconsistent with our existing aesthetics and it's important - the rise of elevation as you cross the creek makes it so that motorists traveling northbound cannot see you. When traveling northbound on River Road the speed limit is 25 mph all the way until you're up at the nursery. Motorists get through all the traffic calming that is outside of this building, then accelerate to get over that creek and keep their foot on the gas. It's still 25 mph and we have no enforcement. He's never seen any enforcement along that stretch of road in the ten years he's lived here. Safety - We do a lot to protect property. What is before us on this issue is a chance to protect people. This is something that the village needs to do. We've committed to our residents, to the County, to the School District, and to the Friends of the Library to do it. Maybe it's a failure of process, a failure of imagination, or a failure of caring. Good luck with resident participation for anybody that just doesn't show up to these meetings and say no. Good luck finding partnership with important stakeholders when seeking resources for other initiatives if our small village reneges on commitments made.

Jared Capella, Chagrin River Road - Mr. Capella refutes Mr. O'Hagan's statement. His children, as well as the hundreds of campers in June and July, walk along that stretch

of Chagrin River Road almost every day into the playground and back without an incident of safety.

Onysko - Are your children in a wheelchair due to a disability? Or have a problem walking on uneven surfaces?

Sara Carracher, Colvin Road - She understands concerns about aesthetics, but there should be no debate that this stretch of road is unsafe and needs to be addressed in some serious way. She's seen countless near misses when cars veer to avoid her and her husband walking and then almost hit a bike. She is not comforted by the fact that no one has been hurt or killed yet. This project connects our village to the point of character - a great sledding hill, basketball courts, soccer fields, and a great new playground.

Jerry Bohinc, Cairn Lane - Keeping the sidewalk and the whole project on the east side of River Road has been defined as prohibitive and difficult, but what is the number roughly?

Courtney - It would be three times the cost, if not more, and probably involve retaining walls and much more clearing and grading. He would have to draw it and estimate it.

Laurel Smith, Chagrin River Road - The bigger issue is speed in the area. People take off from downtown and accelerate to 50-60 mph by the time they get past the nursery. Nothing is being done about that. There was a light at the corner. Why did we take it down?

Siemborski - The light was taken down by the state probably 25 years ago.

Courtney - Traffic lights have to be warranted, which means there's got to be certain traffic conditions and certain driving conditions that are met in order to warrant the installation of a signal. If you have a signal that's installed at an intersection where it's not warranted, there's a huge liability issue for the village and for the state if there's an accident. The reason the flashing yellow signal came down is because those conditions were not met at that point in time when the state was doing a resurfacing project on Chagrin River Road.

Laurel Smith - There is more we could do about safety before we go putting sidewalks in. We should think more about the speed that goes through there.

David Young, Old Mill Road - Are there any plans to share these renderings with the village residents and in a town hall meeting or a mailing and seek their feedback before a decision is made?

At 1:31:56 Mayor Siemborski summarized. We're on second reading. While there are two resolutions today to act on if we chose to, there are some good questions that have been raised - ODOT versus handicap ADA standards, doing the project in 2 or 3 pieces with the last piece maybe not being needed, and aesthetically how we ensure this doesn't look onerous. If Council wants we could do more research, come back with renderings, and make them available to people. He cautioned this money is not going to be redirected in the village. If we don't use the money for the specific purpose contracted for, it's going to go back to the County. Also consider that will hurt us the next time we wish to collaborate and ask for a contribution. Does Council want to do anything different? Do we want to bring it to the third reading next month? Councilmembers Atton, Press, Steinbrink, Broome, and Turner agreed.

At 1:34:26 Councilmember Deacon finds some detailed drawings are needed in addition to questions we still need to cover. Can we look at what it would cost to move it to the east side if it would mean the kids didn't have to cross at some point? We should be looking at different options, people's reactions, and the practicality. We ought to share whatever information we have so that people understand. Mayor Siemborski indicated we can put an information packet together to send to people if they ask. Councilmember Press stated we don't have to do third reading next month - we can take as long as we want between second and third reading. Councilmember Turner asked for clarification about using the east side - are we talking about adding a bridge there or expanding the road? Village Engineer Courtney replied it would have to be a bridge. The east side has many grade related issues and will require large tree removal and retaining walls. He will be happy to investigate further. Councilmember Deacon would like a description in order to visualize the impact. The Village Engineer stated the prefabricated bridge, whether on the west or east side, would be six feet wide and tucked up tight to the back of the guardrail. If you were to look at the back of the existing guardrail, the outer limit of the bridge would be about seven feet off the back of the guardrail posts.

At 1:37:14 Councilmember Onysko wants to go on record to say he would put this to a vote this month. Stop kicking the can. Either vote yes or no. Many man hours, not ours, have gone into this. There's qualified people looking at doing this. We got the money for it. Let's go ahead and do the project, or not and have egg on our face. He doesn't want to be part of a committee that can't make a decision after 3-4 years.

Councilmember Deacon advised the first time Council saw anything was the last meeting. It's complicated and there's a lot of different views. We still need to get our arms around it. We owe it to everyone who is impacted to understand. In these situations, she likes to know the details.

6. Financial Report attached and on the website starts at 1:39:50

Mayor Siemborski reported we are in pretty good shape. Councilmember Atton added we have the highest level of reserves ever.

7. Clerk's Report starts at 1:40:10

If you haven't already, get up to GM School to check out the new playground. The Mayor added it's nice to have something for a higher age group versus a younger age group at Marston Park.

8. Treasurer's Report - None

9. Police Department Report attached and starts at 1:40:40

Police Chief Minichello expressed his excitement over Sgt. Dylan Hustosky's acceptance into the high-level leadership course to be held in Columbus this winter. Not many people have this opportunity. We have a long-standing history of sending our supervisors to the once a week, three month program.

At 1:42:17 Councilmember Press wondered what the Chief's view was on landscape trucks parked on the road. He has noticed several times a very unsafe

situation coming down steep and curvy Old Mill and finding trucks parked right on the bend. The Police Chief responded it's not only Old Mill. If we feel it's a hazard or if there's a complaint, we stop and talk to them and ask them to move in the driveway. Some residents get upset about putting landscape trucks in the driveway. It happens more than we would like. Councilmember Deacon asked if any regulation provides at what length of road blockage a flag person would be needed. The Chief answered usually for big projects.

10. Service Department Report attached and starts at 1:42:00

At 1:44:25 Councilmember Atton asked the status of the Kish property. When and who would be doing the demolishing? Mayor Siemborski advised he spoke with attorney Eric Jochum regarding the property that Mr. Kish left to the village upon his passing. The house is very full. The process of going through the contents is going to continue for a couple more weeks. After that the house would be turned over to the village. We've been given approval, and advised the Service Director, to begin trimming trees, etc. to make the outside more presentable. Council approved hiring Seth Task several weeks ago, and he would like to turn the house over to him approximately four weeks from now.

11. Fire Department Report attached and starts at 1:45:54

Councilmember Broome noted the August 13 motor vehicle crash/pedestrian struck at Old Mill and Gates Mills Blvd. The Fire Chief advised he was on a bicycle.

The Mayor checked if we are on schedule for bringing to Council for review at the October meeting the specs on the fire engine. The Fire Chief responded yes.

Councilmember Broome noted we're about 20 EMS calls ahead of 2024 year to date. Is there anything we can do to lower it? Mayor Siemborski advised we have met with one of the more frequent users, a group home here in the village, and reminded them that emergency calls should be made by their medical staff without regard to what the cost is. At the same time, we pay the cost. Let's not call EMS when it's not necessary. We got their assurance that staff understands that calls to EMS and to 911 are for that purpose.

Fire Chief Majeski addressed Councilmember Press' earlier reference to used fire apparatus. Now 40 years old, we bought a used fire apparatus when it was 22 years old and we did put a lot of money into it. That was the final series of trucks built that didn't have a lot of electronics on it. Everything on that truck is cable driven. We have put out feelers to the national used manufacturers fleet to get quotes for trucks. Although we do receive some, the cost of used fire apparatus has gone up dramatically. A 15-year-old truck that used to sell for next to nothing is now going for a lot more money and you still have repairs that need to be done. The idea here is to rotate the 40 year old truck out of the fleet, move the 30 year old truck into its slot, and the new truck would replace that. We are still open to any options, but the options are very limited.

The Village Engineer reminded us that Brigham Road is going to be closed at Racebrook Road next Monday for about a week to complete the emergency repair that was authorized last month. Signs are up and there'll be a detour posted.

12. Committee Reports starts at 1:50:14

Broadband (Councilmember Deacon)

- First office hour was held September 10 at Village Hall Council Chambers. A few residents were there. CVG asked to put a table outside so more people know they are there. Next office hours are September 24. Hoping for more residents to take advantage of this informational portion.
- CVG to be participating at 5K Fox Trot this weekend

Tree Canopy (Councilmember Turner) starts at 1:51:18

- The national Land Trust Alliance held its annual conference in Cleveland on September 4. A group of 50 came to visit one of our four pilot projects for invasives removal - the Merkel property on Chagrin River Road south of Mayfield - until the rain came and we moved to the Garden Club Barn. Visitors from across the country were impressed with our cooperative approach to addressing the invasives problem, and it was a proud day for the village and all its contributing volunteers.

Gates Mills Land Conservancy (Councilmember Turner) starts at 1:52:40

- The Annual Meeting is on Wednesday, October 15 at 6:00 p.m. at the Community House. "The Tributary Smallmouth Bass Project" presentation is about the ecological role of our native lake-run bass and their importance to Ohio's fisheries. It's open to everyone in the community. Scott and Karee Broome prepare the shrimp boil.

Wastewater (Councilmember Broome) starts at 1:53:38

- The committee has tuned up some of the language in the contract. More to come in Executive Session.

Councilmember Press asked what Dr. Barnes had to say about tying the Gates Mills Elementary School into the sewer system. The Mayor advised he spoke to both Dr. Barnes and Scott Snyder after they gathered and provided basic information we requested. The flow generated by the school is less than 20% of what the Hunt Club's estimated flow is.

13. **Resolution No. 2025-35 (Second Reading)** starts at 1:55:15

"A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Purchase Agreement with Contech Engineered Solutions LLC for a Prefabricated Pedestrian Bridge System and Declaring an Emergency" was read by Mayor Siemborski. Discussion of this resolution can be found at 29:29 through 1:39:49

Resolution No. 2025-35 remains on second reading.

14. **Resolution No. 2025-36 (Second Reading)** starts at 1:55:39

"A Resolution Accepting a Bid and Awarding a Contract for the Downtown Sidewalk Improvements; and Declaring an Emergency" was read by the Mayor. Discussion of this resolution can be found at 29:29 through 1:39:49

Resolution No. 2025-36 remains on second reading.

15. **Resolution No. 2025-37 (Second Reading)** starts at 1:55:54

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Contract for Emergency Repair to the Old Mill Road at County Line Road Stone Culvert and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor. We discussed this last month. The quote received at that time was above the state bid limit, so we had to bid the project instead of receiving quotes.

The Village Engineer recommends Siteworx LLC build the project for \$88,035, and that is for the award of Section 1 and Section 1A #16 only.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2025-37 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Press seconded the motion to suspend the rules.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Press moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-37 and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

The Village Engineer anticipates starting by the middle of October, and noted Section 1A #16 provides money to address safety concerns raised by Councilmember Deacon last month. Fencing will be put behind the guardrail along the top of the slope making it more apparent that it's a dangerous area. The Mayor asked what's the chance \$88,000 will not be enough money. Village Engineer Courtney replied he doesn't anticipate that given the method of repair.

16. **Resolution No. 2025-41 (First Reading)** starts at 1:59:45

“A Resolution Accepting the Rates as Determined by the Budget Commission and Authorizing the Necessary Tax Levies and Certifying Them to the County Auditor” was read by the Mayor. This is a housekeeping item required by the County.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2025-41 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion to suspend the rules.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-41 and Councilmember Deacon seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

17. **Ordinance No. 2025-42 (First Reading)** starts at 2:00:54

“An Ordinance to Amend the Annual Appropriation Ordinance No. 2024-52 to Increase Certain Appropriations and Other Expenditures of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2025” was read by Mayor Siemborski. Finance Administrator Mulh provided an analysis of over budget professional services items, such as IT services and last year’s traffic study and the railroad bridge evaluation. The Mayor does not have a detailed understanding of every item on the analysis. This ordinance will be on the October agenda.

Ordinance No. 2025-42 remains on first reading.

18. **Resolution No. 2025-43 (First Reading)** starts at 2:02:27

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Execute and Deliver Subdivision Participation and Release Forms to Participate in the Direct Settlement of Claims Concerning Alleged Misconduct Related to Opioids Against Purdue Pharmacy L.P. & Sackler Family and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor. This is a requirement in order to participate in the opioid settlement. Law Director Hunt added we don’t know the amount that we would receive. It would be used for drug abuse education and issues such as that. There is a deadline.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2025-43 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion to suspend the rules.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Deacon moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-43 and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Councilmember Press would prefer this money be directed to someone who had experienced an opioid addiction problem, but is unaware of anyone in GM.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

19. Council Discussion starts at 2:05:18

a. Tabled Motion - Law Director Hunt explained there was a motion that was passed to consider charter amendment related to zoning and related to referendum on zoning changes. It was then reconsidered by Council and tabled, so it’s now sitting on

the table. Mr. Press was the one who made the original motion. Mr. Press was not here when it was tabled. It needs to be taken off the table to be discussed. Mr. Press has some information that he would like to present to Council with respect to that.

Councilmember Press stated he intends to make a motion tonight to take the motion from the table. He commented on the purpose of the motion and a bit of history. The motion to table came from Councilmember Broome who said clearly he wanted to table it until Councilmembers Press and Welsh were back, not indefinitely. Councilmember Press does not intend to discuss the matter tonight - people have complained about not having enough warning and not enough time to consider it. We should not start discussing it until October or later. If we do go ahead with a charter amendment, we need to first go through the zoning with a fine-tooth comb and clean up anything that needs to be cleaned up before we would put this matter to the voters.

Councilmember Press moved to take the motion off the table. Councilmember Atton seconded the motion and added the correct thing to have done was to postpone the motion, not table it. The first mention of tabling was from the Mayor. The second was from the Law Director. He thought we were postponing, not tabling.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

The Mayor charged Councilmember Press with working with Law Director Hunt to provide materials for Council as a briefing on what the motion is for the next meeting. Councilmember Broome mentioned the prior draft and Law Director Hunt offered to send it out.

b. House Bill 96 - starts at 2:14:22 - Councilmember Press had asked that time be put aside by Council to discuss H.B. 96, and he explained that it raised the threshold for a citizens referendum from 10% to 35%, a pretty high bar, effective September 30. It also limits to a period of 30 days for collection of signatures. Law Director Hunt further differentiated initiative and referendum, municipalities and townships. Under home rule, Councilmember Press explained, we don't have to go with the 35% or the 10%. We can do whatever we want to do. He is not unhappy with 10%. We could talk about what the appropriate percentage would be for our village. The Law Director stated it is 10% in the state code. Most communities who have passed something in the past, it's 10%. It will still be 10% for initiatives, but it would be 35% on referenda if you don't pass something. You can do it by ordinance, or you could put that on the ballot for a charter. Councilmember Atton added we can determine 10% of what - the last general election or the last gubernatorial election. We need that data. The Law Director will get both those numbers - the most recent.

The Mayor indicated two proposed motions will be available next meeting - one for initiatives and one for referenda - using 10% for each.

Candidates Forum will be held next Thursday, September 25 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community House. Mike McIntyre will moderate six Council candidates for four open spots.

20. Executive Session starts at 2:24:26

Councilmember Broome moved to go into Executive Session to consider the acquisition of property for public purposes and to obtain legal advice from our Law Director. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion. Councilmember Press would like to hear the Law Director's view on being more specific about what property we are talking about. The response was we're going to be discussing some very sensitive potential negotiations on property and once you put that out there to the public, it skews everything with respect to negotiations on real property.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

At 2:25:51 Councilmember Onysko shared he has developed a website that will be an app allowing everybody on Council to communicate with our constituents in a real time manner. It's not endorsed by the city right now. There are categories and then topics within those categories. Where this differs from social media is that social media is very transient, but with the app we can put our thoughts out there and we can have questions and answers on those topics, and the topics don't go away. The topics stay. Please sign up. The address is forum.gatesmills.app One other thing, we should register gatesmills.gov

Executive session commenced at 7:58 p.m.

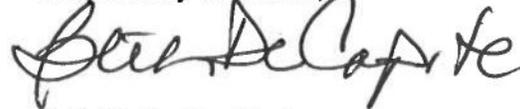
Mayor Siemborski reconvened the meeting at 8:54 p.m.

21. Business from the Audience - None

22. Adjourn

There being no further business, it was moved by Councilmember Broome, seconded by Councilmember Press, and unanimously carried, that the council meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Beth DeCapite, Clerk

Approved:



Steven L. Siemborski, Mayor