

Village of Gates Mills
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
October 21, 2025

A regular meeting of the Council of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio was held at the Community House on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Siemborski presiding. The meeting was live-streamed to the internet.

1. Roll Call starts at 2:37

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

Other Village officials present were Assistant Treasurer Spear, Clerk DeCapite, Service Director Biggert, Police Chief Minichello, Fire Chief Majeski, Finance Administrator Mulh, Village Engineer Courtney, and Law Director Hunt.

2. Mayor Siemborski administered the Oath of Office to Kameron Williams, Firefighter, at 2:55

At 6:01 Mayor Siemborski stated we are here to discuss Council business and the business of the village that's on the agenda. We are not here to discuss candidate business. Ending comments from the audience will hopefully concern village business. He asked for a level of decorum.

3. Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of September 16, 2025 starts at 8:18

Councilmember Turner moved to approve the September 16, 2025 minutes and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

4. Conclusions of Fact and Final Decision for 640 Chagrin River Road starts at 8:56

Following the Architectural Review Board's order of demolition of the house structure at 640, homeowners filed an administrative appeal to Council. Council held several hearings on this matter and determined the structure could be saved and would be completed under certain guidelines. Law Director Hunt explained the "Conclusions of Fact and Final Decision" document provides a good record of the final decision of Council, taken from minutes and video. Going forward the Chief Building Official of the Village can enforce it, if necessary.

Councilmember Broome made a motion to approve the Conclusions of Fact and Final Decision. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Councilmember Broome commented there was good input by everybody. It's a harder situation than one might have thought to remedy. It's worked out pretty well.

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

5.. Pay Ordinance # 1302 . \$1,413,498.79 starts at 11:35

Councilmember Deacon moved to approve Pay Ordinance #1302, and Councilmember Atton seconded the motion.

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

6. Mayor's Report starts at 13:02

a. Senior Services

As of the end of September, we received another 30 responses to the Senior Services Interest Survey. Town Hall Coordinator Misch will tabulate the additional data including the narrative comments that have come in. It appears the results in the mid-September preliminary report remain consistent. Wendy Albin Sattin from Community Partnership on Aging has been contacted regarding a possible contract. The Mayor is hoping to get the committee together to discuss a recommendation that could be brought to Council in November.

b. Sidewalk Project - see 1:24:27

c. Encore at Burton Court starts at 14:29

Moving into the third year of our association, the Village and Encore co-hosted a musical fundraiser at Burton Court attended by 50 invited guests two weeks ago. Between \$15,000 - \$20,000 was raised. The theme for the coming year was revealed to be "Home".

d. Heritage Home Program starts at 15:50

A program of the Cleveland Restoration Society that has been available to the Village by contract for 10-12 years provides home consultation and low interest loans with no income restrictions to owners of homes over 50 years old and up to \$750,000 in value. Councilmember Turner advised that while the program will continue, the attractive 2% interest rate will only be available for applications submitted to KeyBank by December 31, 2025. There will be a presentation by Heritage Home on November 12th at 7 p.m. at the Community House. In addition, homeowners who have participated in the program will be there to answer questions about the process. Community Coordinator Chuck Spear has agreed to assist residents needing help with the application process.

7. Financial Report attached and, on the website, starts at 19:52

Mayor Siemborski reported we continue to run at a surplus. We have received about \$250,000 this year as reimbursement for payments made last year - meaning we're \$250,000 less good than the numbers show.

Councilmember Press asked why traffic camera revenue now has caught up to budget, when most of the year it has run behind budget. The Mayor agreed - we're 2% behind - and added we now have two years of history to interpret for trends. That will happen at next week's Safety Committee meeting.

Councilmember Press then asked what the schedule is for the 2026 budget preparation process. The Mayor answered the Finance Administrator already has been pulling together the numbers from department heads. Putting approximately \$1,000,000 into the budget for the road program will be discussed tonight. We'll have the traffic camera analysis next week at the Safety Committee meeting. In about three weeks we should be able to sit down and go through the first cut budget for next year.

8. Clerk's Report - None

9. Treasurer's Report starts at 23:50

Treasurer Morgan was excused from the meeting. Assistant Treasurer Spear is here for questions. Mayor Siemborski advised an Investment Committee meeting was held this morning with Ancora and the Investment Board.

10. Police Department Report attached and starts at 24:26

Police Chief Minichello indicated Lieutenant Pollutro's retirement at the end of the year will be a big loss. He has served Gates Mills for 28 years, the last 4-5 years as Lieutenant. We are looking to replace his position with a patrolman initially.

11. Service Department Report attached and starts at 27:11

Service Director Biggert recommended, and Mayor Siemborski approved the site at the 900 block of River Road (aka Old Dump) for use by Chagrin Valley Gig to store their vehicles and equipment for the next 12 - 18 months. Dirt piled in the back of the site has been moved to the front to create a barrier. Wildflowers will be planted in the spring. Signage in both directions will alert drivers to construction vehicles turning in and out. Five sites around the village were evaluated against 4-5 criteria. Councilmember Atton asked if consideration had been given to Feller Field or the Kish property upon demolition. Yes, Feller Field is a recreational facility, and the Kish property is being readied for sale.

2025 Road Program Report starts at 30:09

Village Engineer Courtney detailed the midterm progress of our 5-6-year \$6,000,000 road program, the next steps anticipated for years 2026-2028, and the next PMG assessment in 2028 - via a PowerPoint presentation titled "Gates Mills Roadway Condition Comparison 2022 vs 2025" that can be viewed with this meeting on the Village YouTube Channel.

At 51:15 the Village Engineer stated Council permission to go out to bid for the 2026 Road Program consisting of Colvin/Glenwood/Beverly/Chelsea/Settlers Ridge Roads, county road maintenance, local road maintenance, and culvert and drainage is being sought and is expected to be a \$1,014,000 cost. Bids should be available in February or early March. At that time, Council would make the decision on the actual expenditure.

At 58:07 Chip AuWerter, Berkshire Road, offered additional comments from his perspective as a past Councilmember dedicated to establishing an assessable road program.

Motion to authorize competitive bidding for the 2026 Road Program starts at 1:02:00

Councilmember Deacon moved to authorize competitive bidding for the 2026 Road Program. Councilmember Press seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

12. Fire Department Report attached and starts at 1:02:51

Fire Chief Majeski, in response to Councilmember Atton's question about the 9/24 smell of natural gas listed on the report, stated readings made in the basement at Town Hall indicated the smell was not from natural gas and was probably from the sewage plant. Councilmember Press asked whether any of the oil and gas wells in the Village are leaking. The Fire Chief replied that every well has a well operator and they check their wells periodically. Any odor complaint is investigated by the Fire Dept - any findings are addressed with the operator. Councilmember Broome noted the number of Mayfield Village EMS calls dropped on a monthly basis, indicating the conversation with the high users went well.

At 1:05:02 Mayor Siemborski stated the summary in Council's packet titled "Purchase of a New Fire Engine 1413" is a condensation of the 101-page spec book. We're expecting this to be a 3-year process. We want to get the bid package out to five vendors now to get in the queue. The backlog of engines being requested is huge, and we're among much larger institutions seeking multiple units.

Fire Chief Majeski added that he and Assistant Fire Chief Jamieson have been part of our fire engine design process since 1994. We need an engine that will fit in the station, navigate the steep hills, and maneuver through the tight roadways and driveways. This new engine will replace the 1987 Pierce Arrow fire engine we purchased used from Pepper Pike when it was 21 years old.

The Mayor addressed the cost - this will be a 7-figure item. Once bids come back, we can start to think about how we finance this. Lease? Buy? Installments? Councilmember Onysko is willing to pay for a little engraving of his name on the side of the truck - how about anyone else in the community?

Having heard many times that the size of the fire station dictates some of the specifications, Councilmember Turner suggested altering the station rather than the fire engine if the numbers made sense. The Fire Chief agrees the size of the station is a limiting factor, but it also is a good fit with the design necessary in our community. A smaller fire engine has a much better ability for hill climbing and getting down narrow driveways. Standards have changed dramatically for fire trucks, and they've grown enormously. We don't want to just go out and buy a fire truck - we want to buy something that is safe, reliable, does the job, and is rated for the community.

Councilmember Press asked the Fire Chief to comment on his efforts to find and fix up a used engine. The Chief responded a search for a used fire engine has been made at both used fire apparatus brokers and local communities. Units meeting size requirements could not meet the horsepower necessary for hill climbing ability. Pepper Pike, Highland Heights and other communities have decided to put their used trucks in reserve, instead of rotating immediately, because fire apparatus is getting so expensive. We are stuck in a Catch 22. If we find something used, are we really going to pay \$400,000 - \$500,000 for something we may only get 15 years out of? The new pumper we are looking to buy should last the Village between 30-40 years.

Motion to authorize competitive bidding for a new fire engine starts at 1:16:17

Councilmember Deacon moved to authorize competitive bidding for a new fire engine. Councilmember Steinbrink seconded the motion.

Ayes: Atton, Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Press, Steinbrink, Turner.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

13. Committee Updates starts at 1:16:45

Broadband (Councilmember Deacon)

- CVG office hours for residents at Village Hall have not been well attended, so CVG has reduced the number of sessions to November 12, December 10, and January 14 from 4 p.m to 6 p.m. Check the Pink Sheet for changes.
- Don Fellows from CVG indicated that build plans have been provided to our engineers and January 1 is still the expected start date.

Village Engineer Courtney added the cursory plans provided show CVG's first work area. He is in the process of putting together existing conditions drawings for CVG showing all the utilities in the right-of-way, so CVG can do their final design drawings on a plan that shows all the important information. Then they've got the ability to prepare as-built drawings so we have a permanent record of where they are located within the right of way.

Councilmember Press asked if CVG should be advising the choices and cost to stimulate resident interest. Councilmember Deacon stated talk about signing up is premature since the first area being done is buildings in the village center. Councilmember Atton finds CVG will prioritize residential areas based on the demand, so they'll go to the people who want it most first.

Tree Canopy (Councilmember Atton) starts at 1:20:37

- The committee hosted two leaders of the embryonic Holden Arboretum Consulting Forestry practice at the October 14 meeting. They discussed the forestry planning capacity they have to assist us in developing a 10+ year plan for a village-wide tree canopy protection and enhancement program. The committee subsequently agreed that two or three other county recommended providers of such services should be contacted and invited to upcoming committee meetings.
- The first year of invasive control work has been completed on 75 acres (the initial 60 acres of properties owned by GMLC, the Village, and Metroparks approved by Council and funded from the land conservation levy, and the subsequent 15 acres of GMLC and Village property approved by Council). In 2026, the second year phase of invasive control on those 75 acres, plus possibly broadening the program, will be the basis for our operating budget.
- GMLC, the Garden Club, and Metroparks are each interested in continued and expanded participation in the invasives program.
- We're also pursuing federal grant possibilities for invasive control based on adding to our existing program on GMLC properties and adjacent privately owned properties.

Finance Administrator Mulh asked when the committee would have the budget figures and Councilmember Atton replied the week before the November Council meeting. Councilmember Turner suggested that is too late and we should talk with Chairperson Bass to try to get it done sooner.

Safety-Emergency Management (Mayor Siemborski) starts at 1:23:50

- Next meeting is Wednesday, October 29 at 5 p.m. in Council Chambers. We'll cover the safety priorities that we have achieved this year. We'll review the traffic enforcement program, fire station duty, and other matters. Meetings are open to the public.

15. Resolution No. 2025-36 (Third Reading) starts at 1:24:27

"A Resolution Accepting a Bid and Awarding a Contract for the Downtown Sidewalk Improvements; and Declaring an Emergency" was read by the Mayor. We will start with a discussion of the open items from the last meeting. Then the Village Engineer will discuss three plans evaluated - the revised original, the east side, and another that was suggested. Then Council questions and comments, followed by those from the audience.

Since the last Council meeting, Laurel Ravida, GMES Principal, provided, in writing, the following uses and opportunities she foresees for the sidewalk:

Access to More Books & Resources: Students can borrow a wide range of books, eBooks, audiobooks, and databases beyond what the school library offers.

Research Support: Librarians can help students learn how to research, cite sources, and use digital tools effectively.

Technology Access: Students can use computers, printers, Wi-Fi, and even tablets or makerspace equipment. Our Synergy class can collaborate and create projects with the library to extend learning.

Classroom Support: Teachers can request book bundles on specific topics to support lessons.

Curriculum Collaboration: Librarians can collaborate with teachers to plan research units, book talks, or literacy events.

Additional Support: Working with students to complete topics and help with homework and study habits.

The Principal's email continues "My 5th grade teacher specifically does a lot with ecosystems (water quality), erosion, deposition, landforms, soil composition, etc. It would be great for them to have the sidewalk to be able to utilize the area more. Also, kindergarten just went on a hike to observe animals, leaves, etc...around the area. The sidewalk would have been great for them to utilize during this". Followed by "We'll do this often. At least monthly. At least twice a year for all grades".

Councilmember Press views the GM Library as great, but they have a small inventory of books. Maybe we could have the library deliver books to the school.

Mayor Siemborski proceeded to the next open item - can we change the speed limit on Chagrin River Road and move signs around? Any signs on Chagrin River Road, a state route, are governed by the Ohio Dept of Transportation. We have no ability to change the speed limit without going to ODOT with a formal request that requires studies. The studies often take 1-2 years. What we can do is put up a few signs that say "speed limit 25 ahead" to let people know a lower speed limit is coming and they should start slowing down.

Next open item - can we change the school zone flashing lights to incorporate a non-school zone time period? No, state law is the 20 mph school zone flashing lights can only be used during schools' days and during school hours. We could not turn them on during summer camp or any other time.

Can we increase the current business zone that starts at the little creek bridge and goes to the green bridge? No, not without a request. We would be willing to request the state, as part of a solution to a slow down safety problem, expanding the business zone to start before the creek bridge - perhaps down to the nursery road/lower school parking lot. That may take 12-18 months.

Can we put speed tables on the road to slow traffic? These are not practical for us. They have to be picked up in the winter, or they'll interfere with the plows.

There was a question about flashing lights. The 20 mph school flashing lights we currently have are the only flashing lights. There is nothing additional to be added to that.

At 1:34:37 Mayor Siemborski and at 1:35:50 Village Engineer Courtney described and evaluated four sidewalk routes - 1) the original 5-foot route, 2) the revised and recommended 3-foot route, 3) the all east 3-foot route, and 4) the Old Interurban Railroad route. A "Summary on the Pedestrian Sidewalk Project between GMES and Village Center" was included in Council's packet. Drawings of the various

routes were projected for all to see and can be viewed with this meeting on the Village YouTube Channel. At 1:43:46 the Village Engineer provided a graphic and description of what the pedestrian bridge would look like.

Comments and questions from Councilmembers start at 1:44:57

Onysko - After spending a huge amount of time making a forum available for the community to discuss subjects like sidewalks, he did not get the engagement he wanted, yet the feedback he did get was positive for sidewalks. We have had a lot of time to talk about it. A lot of intelligent people have worked on this for a long time. It's time to vote and to get it done.

Broome - The original plan presented to Council was a five-foot walk with a six-foot wide bridge. The revised drawing and specifications for a three-foot walk with a four-foot-wide bridge and the drawing for the east side option came about after the first meeting. Looking at trying to minimize the impact to any landowners was Council's first question. It's not like these subsequent drawings came about in a vacuum - they were done with the idea of trying to flush out is there a different, better way to do this even if it costs a little more. What's the right answer in a situation like this? A lot of the people that are here are saying we don't need it. Perhaps. But perhaps we do. Traffic is up. There are more people. They're not paying attention. This is a difficult decision. There's been a lot of time spent on this, but it deserves the time. If there was ever a horse to beat until it couldn't walk anymore, this is the one because it's a permanent change and a hard one to undo later. We want to make sure that we get it right.

Press - There seems to be mutual agreement amongst all of us that there's two danger spots. One danger spot is Colvin Road. The only option that addresses that is the interurban one. The other danger spot seems to be traffic coming from the north driving south into the village - there's apparently a speed problem and a visibility problem. He is troubled by the base case recommendation because it requires students to cross the road twice. It's absolutely insane. He is leaning towards not supporting any sidewalk. If we are going to have one, let's put it on the right side of the road so there's no crossings of the road. And if anybody crosses to go to the Community House, they'll do it downtown where there isn't a visibility or speed problem.

Atton - He thinks it's important that we differentiate within this project how much is safety driven and how much is convenience driven. The majority of our residents knew coming here that there were no sidewalks. Sidewalks beyond the village center are very rare. We all would love for the convenience of having sidewalks throughout the village. Before we spend a lot of money on convenience for this particular stretch, let's bear in mind other sidewalk options elsewhere in the Village. He has seen no data that demonstrates traffic patterns or pedestrian patterns today. The summer camp people clearly are happy that it's safe, otherwise they wouldn't operate here. The case on a safety basis alone has not been made. If we were enforcing the speed limit, would there be a safety problem? If he is asked to vote on the west side option, he would say no emphatically.

Onysko - He couldn't disagree more. The people running the day camp would not shut down day camp because they have the inconvenience of a safety issue. They're going

to do more to make it safe. There's no way a camp shuts down because of a road nor does it come into play here.

Turner - Having discussed this important and complex issue since just August, her view has changed as more questions and answers have come up. She appreciates how the Mayor, Village Engineer, and Service Director have responded to the questions and attempted to give Council information to bring a needed conclusion at this third reading. When we get a safety study that says it's dangerous to walk down Colvin, then going forward, the school is not going to be able to have kids walk down Colvin as they put themselves at risk. So that means going down the steps to the parking lot and then either across the grass or a sidewalk with a curb to get to the village center. Discussion about the east side option seemed like a perfect solution, but it's impractical given the loss of Levering's front yard and moving seven utility poles. There was a time when there was no water in the village. It was all wells. We had a big brouhaha about that, but we've got water in the village. Everybody is on their cell phone wherever they go. It's more dangerous. There's impetus for speed with sports cars that we like to show off. The world has changed. She doesn't need more safety or risk information that says the world has changed. She does not want to leave here and tomorrow some child is hurt after we said no to this opportunity. We are at a critical point, and we've had good collaborative discussion. It's time to make a decision.

Deacon - She totally agrees with Councilmember Turner. The world has changed, and one of the primary functions of government is the safety of its community. Safety was a key priority in the Comprehensive Plan. We need to take care of people's safety. It's important and it's hard because we are impacting folks' property and some of the look and feel, but safety is more important. She would also be concerned if it were her yard, but would find comfort in doing the right thing for the kids, the school, and anybody walking along there who might be at risk. We need to do this.

Steinbrink - Asked the Village Engineer to give us an idea of the right-of-way in relation to the property lines, and where the sidewalk will be.

At 2:06:24 the Village Engineer answered the right of way lines are shown on the design drawings. The back of the sidewalk, in much of the installation, is about ten feet into the right of way. There are a couple areas where it might get as little as seven feet, but we are trying to follow the path of least resistance and minimize impact on adjoining properties. We tried to provide as much room as possible between what is people's front property line and the back of the sidewalk.

Steinbrink - He heard from a lot of residents. Being village officials, from time to time, we are forced to make hard tough decisions that may upset some people. He went through the Comprehensive Plan and looked at the comments from village residents and what they were looking for, particularly as it relates to the village center, and got some feedback there. From a safety standpoint, just because something hasn't happened doesn't mean it can't or won't. We can't sit here as a public body and discuss and not do anything when we have the chance. GMES enrollment is up. They don't have a library anymore. The fact that the District was willing to contribute a not insignificant amount of money to this project suggests support for putting this in. He understands some homeowners are going to be upset by what Council may or may not do today. He has a fire hydrant in his front yard that was not there 25 years ago. There are telephone poles on people's property. There are homes on Chartley that have huge

transformer boxes for electricity. So, we're left with pieces of the Comprehensive Plan which asked us to link certain parts of the downtown village, we're left with safety, we're left with a school that has asked us, and the library has contributed money. This decision is better than where we were three months ago because of the feedback we've gotten from residents. We were at a five-foot sidewalk and now we are at a three-foot sidewalk. The bridge was going to be bigger. We really only have one chance to get this right. It would be his preference for this to be on the east side, but to drive through from the north part of the village coming south to see huge retaining walls up against homes would mar the landscape. Based on the numbers in the summary, there is an opportunity for plantings, fencing, and some other things that will make the appearance at the north part of the Village coming south better than the current gravel drive going into the Ohio Bell building and the guardrail runoff areas.

Press - Sounds to him like we have two votes. One, sidewalk or no sidewalk. If the answer is sidewalk, then the second vote is east versus west.

Mayor Siemborski - No. There's one issue which is the recommendation here - the three-foot walk with a four-foot wide bridge. He added the plantings and fencing mentioned by Councilmember Steinbrink have been offered to the Capellas and Dr. Birnbaum to make their part of the Village look a bit prettier and all put together.

Comments from the audience start at 2:13:52

Dr. James Birnbaum, Colvin and Chagrin River Road - He is trying to preserve the character and history of our village and is concerned about the aesthetic. His historic home was built in 1914. He has worked tirelessly to restore and maintain it. He has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to preserve the authenticity and beauty that defines Gates Mills. A concrete sidewalk would permanently damage the character and disrupt the natural landscape that makes our village special. This is more about residents who want to walk their dog and about safety during summer camp. Add a crossing guard or police presence. They have walked down Colvin for decades. It's direct, quiet, and out of the path of traffic. Forcing them onto a route with no curbs through a parking lot on a busy road is less safe. The sidewalk is a solution in search of a problem. He respectfully urges Council to preserve what makes Gates Mills unique.

Jared Capella, Chagrin River Road - He thanked those on Council who walked the corridor along his property and saw the impacts of this project up close. It harms a family home in our village streetscape without solving a real problem. He views his frontage along Chagrin River Road as an extension of the Metroparks character that defines Gates Mills. Approving this would permanently change that character without weighing how those most directly impacted feel about a project that solves no demonstrated need. A better path is simple and targeted. Don't build a new bridge and sidewalk. You can extend the speed limit on this segment of Chagrin River Road. The process may be lengthy and difficult, but ODOT does have a process to do that. Also crossing guards, automated speed enforcement, and physical police presence. He requests Council not approve this plan that removes mature trees, cuts into stable landscaping berm without a clear engineering solution, and opens a private yard to the street when focused measures will keep people safer for less cost and less impact. If Council won't vote no tonight, then he asks Council to table this until the Village Engineer brings back three items - 1) a 3D visual and sections that show the cut into

the elevated bed and any retaining or slope solution, 2) a complete stormwater prevention plan, and 3) an erosion study that addresses runoff and soil stability after that cut.

Ariel Capella, Chagrin River Road - This impacts her yard from start to finish. She promotes people to come live here, and one reason why is the great amount of privacy. This is taking away her family's entire privacy. The bridge will look directly onto the rebuilt deck over their creek. While the Old Mill residential sidewalks are all brick and look weathered, this is going to make their side look more commercial rather than the beginning of the residential stretch. Had she known of this project when purchasing the house nine years ago, she would have put in some serious consideration about buying this property. This is difficult for her family to digest because it will change how they go moving forward or resale of their house.

Betsy Dvorak, Brigham Road - When she was a kid, there were two teenage girls on Dorchester that were killed when their neighbor backed the car up in the dark. We didn't install sidewalks or lights then. She is asking to maintain the integrity of this village.

Ed Baker, Norvale Circle - He walks over 1,000 miles a year - a lot of it on Gates Mills roads. His personal experience is it's not a matter of if someone is going to get hit by a car in the Village of Gates Mills - it's only a matter of when. Build a sidewalk, they will come, they will use it. His preference would be a five-foot wide sidewalk. If we're going to have narrow sidewalks, then an aggressive hedge trimming program is needed to make sure the full three feet of sidewalk is clear. He requests Council consider putting in the sidewalk for the basis of safety.

Wayne Levering, Chagrin River Road - Once an element of safety is introduced, there is no backing away. You can't indemnify it. There's not a reasonable argument to ignore that prospect. The importance of considering that has been eloquently stated by several Councilmembers. He appreciates the concerns his neighbors have and he understands the aesthetic aspects. The best proposal put forth in his opinion is the current one. It has a minimum impact aesthetically. There's a five-foot sidewalk on the Hunt Club side of Epping that goes from behind the Southwick House up to about Beverly. It's covered. It's sandstone. We've had sidewalks in Gates Mills for a while. In the long run, he believes his neighbors feelings may be massaged away a bit. He has every confidence in, respect for, and trust in all the people involved in considering and developing this design.

Councilmember Deacon asked if we could do brick, and the Mayor replied we would be willing to take a look at brick. We're not going to commit to it not knowing what the cost or complication would be.

Councilmember Onysko moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-36 and Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Councilmember Atton asked why we are declaring an emergency. The Law Director explained it means that this resolution would go into effect immediately rather than waiting 30 days. The Village Engineer added the delivery time on the bridge is 6-8 months. We have a bid that is going to get stale. If we don't get started soon, we're going to have to rebid the project.

Ayes: Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: Atton, Press.
Motion carried.

14. **Resolution No. 2025-35 (Third Reading)** starts at 2:41:23

“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.

Councilmember Onysko moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-35 and Councilmember Steinbrink seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: Atton, Press.
Motion carried.

Mayor Siemborski stated we can go on record that we will work with the two affected neighbors to make sure we are as responsible as possible with the aesthetics for their properties.

16. **Ordinance No. 2025-42 (Second Reading)** starts at 2:42:53

“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. We have had approximately \$25,000 of services not budgeted for this year, and that requires us to increase our appropriation and Council approval. We have spent an additional \$2,800 on the study of the village buildings by JP Compass, \$5,000 on the Brigham/Chagrin River Roads sound study, and \$11,598 additional dollars approved by Council to the Taft Stettinius firm regarding the broadband contract. Also, an annual report and broadband postcards. We’ve also factored in \$27,000 estimated to finish out the year - primarily for the structural study of the pedestrian bridge. The previously engaged firm being non-responsive, we have a new proposal from R.E. Warner not yet presented to Council until a private funding request is responded to.

The \$1,000 Fire Dept benefits appropriation increase is due to the actual wages being different than the estimate for OPERS contributions. The Land Conservancy is due an additional amount for their portion of the real estate rollback from the state.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Ordinance No. 2025-42 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Deacon seconded the motion to suspend the rules.

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

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-42 and Councilmember Deacon seconded the motion.

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

17. Council Discussion starts at 2:48:17

The Mayor asked Council if they wished to discuss the memo circulated last night by the Law Director addressing House Bill 96 and percentages of 10% or 35%. Hearing no response, this is something to be carried forward to the November meeting.

18. Business from the Audience starts at 2:49:00

Resident Tom Flynn, Brigham Road, is concerned about a letter sent out recently by current and former village officials enumerating issues associated with Mr. Atton to encourage people not to vote for him. Subsequently Mr. Atton sent a letter refuting most of the issues. The resident urges Council to disallow or discourage that kind of tactic.

Councilmember Turner stated for the record there was a response to Mr. Atton with documentation to support the original flyer that went out to the residents. He will receive that response today. He has not yet received it.

Mayor Siemborski stated this is not village business. Neither village expenses nor village employees had anything to do with any letters or rebuttals.

Law Director Hunt stated everyone at this table has a first amendment right in their personal capacity to say whatever they want as long as they don't accuse someone of a crime or cry fire in a crowded room. That's politics, and that's outside of the village government business. This discussion should be held otherwise.

Councilmember Atton stated his candidacy is irrelevant. What this has done is to damage the credibility of government in this village past and present. It has told some people don't come into this game of being on Council, because you're going to have to expose yourself to this kind of nonsense. Councilmember Onysko repeated this is not the venue.

19. Adjourn

Councilmember Deacon moved that the council meeting be adjourned, and Councilmember Steinbrink seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Deacon, Onysko, Steinbrink, Turner.
Nays: Atton, Press.
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Beth DeCapite". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Beth" and last name "DeCapite" clearly distinguishable.

Beth DeCapite, Clerk

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Steven L. Siemborski". The signature is cursive and stylized, with the first name "Steven" and last name "Siemborski" clearly distinguishable.

Steven L. Siemborski, Mayor