

Village of Gates Mills
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
January 20, 2026

A regular meeting of the Council of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio was held at the Community House on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Siemborski presiding. The meeting was live-streamed to the internet.

1. Mayor Siemborski administered the Oath of Office to Treasurer Charles Spear at 1:48
2. Mayor Siemborski administered the Oath of Office to Councilmembers Karen Greco, Meghan Perez, Craig Steinbrink, and David Young at 3:01
3. Roll Call starts at 7:40

Councilmembers present: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.

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

4. Election of Council President Pro Tem for one-year term starts at 8:03

Councilmember Steinbrink made a motion to nominate Sandra Turner to serve as Council President Pro Tem. Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

5. Mayor Siemborski administered the Oath of Office to Council President Pro Tem Sandra Turner at 10:00
6. Mayor Siemborski administered the Oath of Office to Firefighter Bruce Borthwick at 10:57
7. Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of December 16, 2025 starts at 14:53

Councilmember Broome referred to Agenda Item No. 10, 2nd paragraph and suggested the sentence "Councilmember Perez asked the Fire Chief if he was concerned that some fire truck vendors had declined to bid" be followed by "on the new fire pumper truck". This will distinguish from a different fire truck mentioned in the prior paragraph.

Councilmember Broome moved to approve the December 16, 2025 minutes as amended and Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner.
Abstain: Young
Nays: None
Motion carried.

8. Pay Ordinance # 1305 \$862,144.33 starts at 16:06

Councilmember Steinbrink moved to approve Pay Ordinance #1305, and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

9. Mayoral Appointments to Administrative Offices starts at 17:00

Charles Spear, Income Tax Administrator
R. Todd Hunt of Roetzel & Andress, Law Director
Chris Courtney of C.W. Courtney, Village Engineer
Michael Cicero of Nicola, Gudbranson & Cooper, Prosecutor
David Biggert, Service Director, Building Official & Building Inspector
Trevor Murfello, Service Manager
Janet Mulh, Finance Administrator and Assistant Tax Administrator
D. Gregg Minichello, Chief of Police
Thomas Majeski, Fire Chief

Councilmember Turner moved to approve the Mayoral Appointments to Administrative Offices. Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

10. Mayoral Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Committees starts at 17:44

Planning & Zoning Commission for Term Ending 12/31/2026:

Council Representatives (One-Year Term):
Craig Steinbrink (Chair) and Scott Broome

Councilmember Greco moved to approve the Mayoral Appointments to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Architectural Board of Review for Term Ending 12/31/2028:

John Spirk (Chair) and Judi Embrescia

Councilmember Turner moved to approve the Mayoral Appointments to the Architectural Board of Review. Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Historic Review Committee for Term Ending 12/31/2026:

Sara Welsh (Chair), Council Representative needed, Jane Lindmark, Greg Nosan, Chuck Spear, and architects David Ellison, Joseph Giglio and William Childs (alternate)

Councilmember Broome moved to approve the Mayoral Appointments to the Historic Review Committee. Councilmember Steinbrink seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Gates Mills Land Conservancy for Term Ending 12/31/2029:

Scott Broome

Councilmember Greco moved to approve the Mayoral Appointment to the Gates Mills Land Conservancy. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

11. Mayor's Report starts at 21:20

a. Aging Well

Having heard no comments since last month, the Mayor is hopeful the Membership Agreement with Community Partnership on Aging (CPA), on its third reading tonight, will be approved. A second document providing more mechanical detail, the Operating Agreement, was drafted by CPA and distributed last month. Comments have been received and we can work on the Operating Agreement following approval of the Membership Agreement.

12. Financial Report attached and on the website starts at 22:45

Mayor Siemborski reported we ended the year with a \$250,000 surplus, and he proposed we use the surplus to begin to pay for the new fire truck at a cost of slightly under \$1,000,000.

Councilmember Turner observed lower speeds on Mayfield Road and high net collections are both positive accomplishments.

13. Clerk's Report - None

14. Treasurer's Report starts at 26:15

Treasurer Spear authored and distributed a two-page “Executive Summary of Memorandum - Real Estate Taxation in Gates Mills, Ohio” to assist in understanding how real estate taxes work. A current petition to ban real estate tax in Ohio would have serious effects on school systems and communities.

In our investment portfolio, managed by Ancora, \$850,000 will be maturing this quarter at an average rate of about 1.39%. Because we use a very conservative approach, we will roll those funds into a longer maturity, and we will put some money aside for the fire truck as well.

While it may appear tonight as if we are purchasing all varieties of vehicles, we really have been putting money aside for these purchases since 2020 when we had less than \$6,000,000 in the treasury. Today we have almost \$10,000,000 in the treasury.

15. Police Department Report attached and starts at 31:44

Chief Minichello reported the St. Francis Festival will be scaled back to a three-day event in June with reduced hours, no rides, and a focus on family-friendly activities. Details will be finalized at the March meeting. Councilmember Greco asked if less advertising and limiting attendance to parishioners and people in the area is going to solve the problem. If people appear that shouldn't be there, what are you going to do? The Police Chief's experience is teenagers come later in the evening, disruptions occur after closing, and closing earlier should help.

Councilmember Broome observed not just the speeds are down; safety has improved on Mayfield Road. Five million cars annually and we have not had any serious motor vehicles accidents in the past year.

16. Service Department Report attached and starts at 38:55

Service Director Biggert reported that Ted Zalewski, with just under 35 years on the Service Dept, is retiring at the end of the month. His talents will be missed. Mike Sanders, having medium-sized truck plowing experience and familiar with operating some of our equipment, will fill the open position.

Residents increased recycling with Rumpke by 348% in 2025 indicating the tote system is a tremendous success. That increase does not include the cardboard bins in the rear yard. All recycling results will go into the annual report to the County - we expect to exceed the results of some of our neighboring communities. If we continue this trend, we will have good data to ask for rate reductions when our contract with Rumpke is renewed. The Service Director will provide a breakdown of the recycling components - cardboard, plastic, glass, metal.

Salt Bin - Phase 2: Design and Drawings starts at 43:17

Last March Council approved a contract with R.E. Warner to provide three design sketches for a new salt bin in varying sizes (Phase 1 for approx \$5000) and to provide engineering and construction drawings necessary to go out to bid (Phase 2 for approx. \$80,000). Phase 1 is completed and the sketches (Site Plan) are in front of you tonight. Of the three options, the Service Director would prefer a 1000 to 1100 ton

capacity - roughly half our annual need - and not overbearing in size or cost. He is asking Council for approval to move into the second phase.

The Mayor asked what preventive measures R.E. Warner has suggested to avoid saline runoff into the river. The Service Director stated a set of doors primarily for off-season use and a gutter drain running along the front of the salt bin connected to the sanitary sewer. The Mayor asked for a construction cost estimate and was advised cost analysis is part of Phase 2, but the Service Director believes it would easily be a couple hundred thousand dollars. The Mayor asked for a timeframe for completion. The answer is dependent on the price and the budget.

Councilmember Onysko suggested finding another location for the salt bin to preserve the prime real estate next to the river. Service Director Biggert advised the Village owns other parcels of land further away, but they are either not large enough, not accessible enough, or not zoned commercial. Mr. Biggert has safety concerns when an operations center facility is meshed with public community facilities. Councilmember Onysko offered to work with the Service Director to explore how we could overcome that in some manner. Councilmember Greco agreed with Councilmember Onysko and would also like to explore another venue. Councilmember Broome cautioned moving the salt bin would require making a place for the loader. A loader malfunction requires getting tools back and forth to repair it, and a much bigger project starts evolving. Councilmember Perez asked if the new salt bin would be located where the current salt bin sits. No, the new bin would be to the right/north of where Rumpke is currently set up. That way any remaining salt would stay in the old salt bin, and the new salt bin could be built without any disruption in operations. A lean-to for undercover storage of expensive equipment would eventually take the spot where the old salt bin sits.

The Mayor suggested we take a pause, see if there are feasible alternate locations, and consider moving forward with Phase 2 at the next Council meeting.

17. Fire Department Report attached and starts at 56:39

Fire Chief Majeski advised probable causes for the increase in EMS calls from 2024 to 2025 are increased Aria House usage, an aging population, and earlier discharges from hospital to home. The Mayor added we have little control over the number of calls, yet there is a direct effect on our budget.

18. Committee Updates starts at 59:18

a. Broadband (Village Engineer Courtney)

- Pre-construction meeting at Town Hall with CVG was held about two weeks ago. Minutes will be emailed to Councilmembers
- Mainline installation has started with one crew down at Hunting Valley working north on Chagrin River Road. It will take about 18 months for installation of the mainline fiber optic lines throughout the village and about 30 months to provide connections to the first round of signed up residents
- We can expect as many as five CVG crews working at any given time. It is the job of the Village Engineer's two inspectors to ensure the crews do not damage the public infrastructure

- CVG will provide updated 16-week look-ahead schedules at progress meetings on the second Thursday of every month at 2 p.m.

Councilmember Onysko finds email communication from CVG has had some glitches, and he suggests using word of mouth to spread the word to sign up.

Councilmember Broome asked where our feed is going to come from, and do we have any feedback from Hunting Valley residents now that they are connected? Village Engineer Courtney replied there will be two feeds - one that comes from Hunting Valley and one coming down Mayfield Road from the west. We can easily obtain Hunting Valley resident satisfaction info.

b. Budget & Finance (Mayor Siemborski) - Nothing further to report.

c. Tree Canopy (Councilmember Turner/Mitch Bass) starts at 1:04:24

Mayor Siemborski stated this year the land conservancy levy will generate \$275,000 - \$280,000. Half of that money goes to the Land Conservancy; the other half stays with the village. We have planned to use the village portion this year to 1) continue year two of the existing invasive pilot project, 2) initiate invasive control on additional village-owned and Land Conservancy-owned parcels for an additional \$50,000 per year for ten years, and 3) thin out trees on year two parcels before replanting. These items total about \$130,000 this year - the calculation sheet will be emailed to Councilmembers.

Tree Canopy Chair Mitch Bass explained the rationale behind the ten-year 40 acre per year invasive control plan. Considering the compounding effect of the acreage and continuing re-maintenance on all parcels for at least 2-3 years, the Committee determined 40 acres per year for ten years to be ambitious numbers. We did 66 acres last year, so we'll approach 106 acres this year of village-owned and Land Conservancy-owned land. That does not include almost another 50 acres of Metroparks land approved for invasive control at their own expense and private land funded by a federal grant program, EQIP. There is going to be a lot of acreage under management requiring a tremendous amount of work, coordination, follow-up, oversight, inspection, etc.

Councilmember Turner commented on the collaboration between the Committee, the Village, the Land Conservancy, Metroparks, and state and federal government. The Improvement Society will be discussing a proposal to plant 200 trees for 2026, our 200th anniversary. Having an Arbor Day activity also meets the requirement for becoming a Tree City.

Councilmember Steinbrink asked what would be needed to shorten the ten-year timeline to five years. Mr. Bass listed a variety of considerations - monetary resources, skilled people resources, length of the process prior to replanting is difficult to shorten, and the seasonal aspect makes quickening the cycle difficult.

Councilmember Young asked is this a war that can be won and then we move on, or once we stop fighting the invasives, do they work their way back in again? From a budgetary standpoint, should we expect a yearly maintenance cost to keep the invasives at bay? Mr. Bass replied it is not a war - it is an ongoing marathon. Invasives

never go away. Properties continuously have to be maintained, but the work becomes much less and much faster. The Mayor stated the calculation sheet from the Committee indicates the annual budget on a long-term basis after cleanup is \$15,000 to the Village and \$22,000 to the Land Conservancy.

Councilmember Broome clarified that levy funds are being used only for Village or Land Conservancy parcels. Anything that is on a private parcel would be funded through independent programs.

The Mayor met with leadership of the Land Conservancy to discuss the plan laid out at the last Council meeting to create an ad hoc committee of three individuals to identify the overall need “to preserve and protect natural resources and open spaces” in the village and how to allocate the funds to do that. The Land Conservancy is on board and will meet to also go through what they think the need in the village is. This approach is fact based and will be brought back to Council.

Mitch Bass believes the land conservancy levy is an amazing one from a preservation and access standpoint, as do the contractors and ODNR folks he comes in contact with. For 35 years the Land Conservancy and the Village have partnered to preserve over 750 acres. There is still 70% or more of Gates Mills that remains unprotected. We need to do a good job as stewards to maintain this village.

d. Heritage Home (Chuck Spear) - No report

19. **Resolution No. 2025-48 (Third Reading)** starts at 1:23:05

“A Resolution Authorizing the Village of Gates Mills to Enter Into a Membership Agreement with Community Partnership on Aging for Older Adult Services” was read by Mayor Siemborski. See Agenda Item No. 11a.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved to approve Resolution No. 2025-48, and Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Councilmember Turner asked if residents only age 60 and over are eligible to attend programs. Wendy Sattin, CPA Executive Director, answered age 60 and over is a guideline. Programs are open to everybody. Councilmember Broome reminded all that even with CPA services available, it is still important to check on your neighbors.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

20. **Ordinance No. 2026-1 (First Reading)** starts at 1:26:33

“An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2025-50 to Correct an Error as to the Compensation of Certain Village Employees; and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor. This is a typo correction of two rates on the compensation ordinance.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Ordinance No. 2026-1 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Ordinance No. 2026-1, and Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Moved to Agenda Item No. 26. **Resolution No. 2026-7 (First Reading)** at 1:27:50

“A Resolution Accepting a Bid and Awarding a Contract to Johnson’s Fire Equipment Company for the Purchase of a New Fire Truck and Declaring an Emergency” was read by Mayor Siemborski. Two bids were received. The bid from Johnson for a Spartan product at \$974,119 was \$200,000 less than the bid from another vendor for a Pierce product. Both products would take close to two years to manufacture. The Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief, and Fire Captain recommend the purchase of the Spartan fire engine from Johnson’s.

We were offered a 3.5% discount to pay fully upfront. Investment maturities in 2026 will allow us to reinvest at 4% or higher. The cash discount is not attractive. We looked at outside lender financing and were quoted rates from 4.76 to 5.36%. There is no advantage to borrowing money and paying 5%. It is the recommendation of the Mayor, Treasurer, Finance Administrator, and Fire Dept to pay for the fire engine at the end of two years using the two-year period to save up the money. The 2025 surplus of \$250,000 could be transferred from the General Fund to the Safety Fund, and every month until the end of December 2027 we could transfer \$31,500 into the Safety Fund. Price and specs are good only through January 31, and therefore emergency legislation is called for.

Fire Chief Majeski explained that the proposed fire truck is a Spartan with a Spartan firebox on it - it wasn’t until recently that Spartan built a firebox. The two other units we own, the Spartan Darley and the Spartan Alexis, have proven to be very good vehicles for us. The new Spartan will replace a 1987 Pierce Arrow fire engine that will be 40 years old when the new one is delivered and will solidify the fleet for at least ten years.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-7 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-7, and Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

21. **Resolution No. 2026-2 (First Reading)** starts at 1:37:40

“A Resolution Authorizing and Directing the Transfer of Certain Sums from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund, Mayor’s Fund, Wastewater Fund and Police Pension Fund” was read by Mayor Siemborski. We have identified what we need over the first six months of 2026 to be transferred from the General Fund to the four funds listed so we can begin to spend money. The amounts are included in the budget.

Councilmember Turner moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-2 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Turner moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-2, and Councilmember Steinbrink seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

22. **Resolution No. 2026-3 (First Reading)** starts at 1:39:44

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Purchase Agreement with Rush Truck Centers for a 2026 International Truck Chassis Model HV507 SFA Under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor. This truck is in the budget and is replacing an existing truck. We would take possession later in the year, so this truck will not be available to service our roads currently. Resolution No. 2026-4 covers outfitting the truck with a plow and related equipment from a different vendor.

Councilmember Greco moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-3 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

Councilmember Broome asked if the reason for emergency legislation was to lock in price. Yes, and Service Director Biggert cautioned further tariffs would not be absorbed by the vendor.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Greco moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-3 and Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

23. **Resolution No. 2026-4 (First Reading)** starts at 1:43:30

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Purchase Agreement with Judco Truck Equipment for a Heavy Duty Front Plow Hitch, and Snowplow Under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-4 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-4, and Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

24. **Resolution No. 2026-5 (First Reading)** starts at 1:44:48

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Purchase Agreement With Lee Kinstle Chevrolet Buick GMC Inc. for a 2026 Chevrolet Blazer Under the State Cooperative Purchasing Program for Use by the Police Department and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor. The Police Chief stated that of the six police vehicles we have, two vehicles have over 100,000 miles and need to be replaced by a 2026 Blazer (Resolution No. 2026-5) and a 2026 Ford Explorer (Resolution No. 2026-6). The not fully equipped lower priced 2026 Blazer will be assigned to the Police Chief, and his 2020 vehicle with 80,000 miles will be re-assigned as the SRO vehicle, leaving the 2017 SRO vehicle to be traded in or sold off. The fully equipped 2026 Explorer will replace patrol car #4 which will be traded in or sold off.

The Mayor will email to Council a listing of the current six police vehicles by year with mileage as previously requested.

Councilmember Greco moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-5 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Perez pointed out the purchase of the two police vehicles comes in at \$2000 less than what we budgeted for.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Greco moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-5, and Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

25. **Resolution No. 2026-6 (First Reading)** starts at 1:49:52

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Purchase Agreement with Statewide Ford for a 2026 Ford Interceptor Under the State Cooperative Purchasing Program for Use by the Police Department and Declaring an Emergency” was read by the Mayor.

Councilmember Greco moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-6 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Greco moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-6, and Councilmember Young seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

26. **Resolution No. 2026-7** - see 1:27:50

27. **Ordinance No. 2026-8 (First Reading)** starts at 1:51:35

“An Ordinance to Amend the Annual Appropriation Ordinance No. 2025-52 to Increase Certain Appropriations and Other Expenditures of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2026” was read by Councilmember Broome. This would provide for full upfront payment for the fire truck previously approved, and it was determined it would not be advantageous to do so.

Councilmember Broome moved to remove Ordinance No. 2026-8 from the agenda. Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

28. **Resolution No. 2026-9 (First Reading)** starts at 1:52:55

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Purchase Agreement with Revize LLC for Website Design, Implementation and Support Services” was read by Mayor Siemborski. The cost is \$8,800. The Office has looked at a variety of vendors and has recommended Revize LLC.

Councilmember Onysko finds that Revize is a great choice, having met with them as well. Our current website is outdated and not capable of working on every device. The new website will be compatible with all devices, is consistent and professional, with clients such as Willoughby Hills nearby. Finance Administrator Mulh added ADA requirements will be satisfied.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-9 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-9, and Councilmember Greco seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

29. **Resolution No. 2026-10 (First Reading)** starts at 1:56:25

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into an Agreement with Cuyahoga County for Payment of Legal Counsel Fees for Indigent Criminal Defendants and Declaring an Emergency” was read by Mayor Siemborski. The Law Director explained this applies to criminal defendants in the Lyndhurst Municipal Court who are being charged by the Village. If they are determined to be indigent under state regulations, the Village has to pay for their defense and would contract with the County to administer this for us. Prosecutor Cicero has said the amount is very small, if any, every year. We don’t know the amount. Every community in Cuyahoga County received the same contract in late December.

Councilmember Greco moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-10 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Onysko seconded the motion.

Councilmember Broome asked why is this emergency legislation. The Law Director answered because we may have had defendants as of January 1, and this contract will date back to January 1. Councilmember Steinbrink asked how this was handled previously. The Law Director does not know. We had this legislation last year.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.

Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Greco moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-10, and Councilmember Young seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

30. **Ordinance No. 2026-11 (First Reading)** starts at 2:00:09

“An Ordinance Amending Title Five, “Administration”, of Part One, The “Administration Code” of the Codified Ordinances of the Village, To Adopt New Chapter 167, “Elected Officials Code of Conduct” was read by Mayor Siemborski. It became apparent to the Mayor that we do not have a code of conduct, a standard governance and HR practice, so he asked the Law Director to draft one and that is before you tonight.

Law Director Hunt stated this draft is meant for discussion. His office looked at other municipalities’ codes of conduct. Not every municipality has a code. One of the better ones came from Green Bay, WI and was used for the draft. Our charter provides for the removal of any elected official, but it’s related to malfeasance, nonfeasance, and misfeasance in office. Some of the things in the drafted code of conduct may not rise to the level of removal, but some conduct may need to be sanctioned. So, the draft contains some proposed remedies and an escalation of remedies starting with a formal censure by Council, then a suspension from voting privileges for a period of time, and then the next escalator is to invoke the provisions in the charter.

Discussion starts at 2:04:35

Greco - How many communities around here have a code of conduct?

Hunt - He does not know of any in Cuyahoga County.

Greco - That’s a little odd. Is this something that we need?

Spear - This document says this Council can set the standard for the removal of an elected official, when we have a charter addressing this. One of the provisions in the draft code of conduct is four members of Council can start the process of removal. The charter says five members, not four. Council is taking an authority they’re not entitled to by the charter and coming up with a standard that is more restricted. He has some issue about the way conduct is described - facial expressions and things like that. It’s an infringement upon the right of the voter to put somebody on this Council.

Broome - These are all valid comments. Who is able to initiate? It would be difficult if the Mayor could initiate the process to remove.

Hunt - The Mayor has the authority to introduce legislation, but can not vote.

Perez - She appreciates the sentiment of the document and thinks we all want to ensure a respectful forum. She has concerns over how some infractions, like an eye roll or scowl, would be measured. If the communities looked at did not have a code of conduct ordinance, maybe their Council standards are addressed as part of a new member orientation or other option versus putting it in an ordinance?

Hunt - Council has the authority to adopt rules and regulations separate and outside the codified ordinances. It just memorializes it much better if it's in the codified ordinances.

Turner - She thinks the purpose paragraph of the draft summarizes what we would expect of Councilmembers and our elected officials. What follows in the draft would be good examples for use at an ethics training, which we already have and we incorporate the Ohio Ethics Law. However, going into that detail in an ordinance felt like we were usurping the right to have a personality on Council.

Greco - Sometimes when these kinds of things are put into writing, it backfires and it restricts people from being who they are. There should be spirited discussion. Right now we have a very good group of people. She found the draft offensive, did not appreciate the spirit, and does not see the need.

Steinbrink - He agrees with a lot of what has been said. The reality is the decorum over the last four years has not been what residents would expect of their elected officials. He proposed to have rules of Council, rather than a code of conduct. Basic Robert's Rules of Order - the Mayor is the one person to preside over the meeting, to bring discussion forward, to end discussion, and to say you're out of order. He is pained to say that after 200 years as a village that we find ourselves here, but something needs to be done.

Onysko - He assumed our rules were as just described.

Hunt - Almost every Council has rules of Council in the codified ordinances. This Council does not.

Greco/Turner - Rules of Council, rather than code of conduct, might be the way to go.

Siemborski - He is hearing this is too strong, may not be needed, and should be refashioned into rules of Council versus code of conduct. He will come back next month with another version.

Young - Not advocating for one or another, the issue here is not how we behave, but the consequence of misbehavior. Does the code have any teeth if there aren't consequences for violating the code?

Spear - Five members of Council can remove an elected official. It's in the charter.

Hunt - It's just not clarified, and it's for reasons of malfeasance (bad conduct), nonfeasance (not doing your duty), or misfeasance (a violation of law) in office. This was an attempt to lay out a code of conduct where sanctions could be issued without removal.

Broome - There's been acrimony on Council before. We should be careful as we consider this to not allow any past acrimony to cloud our judgement. We don't want to overdo it.

Ordinance No. 2026-11 remains on first reading.

31. **Resolution No. 2026-12 (First Reading)** starts at 2:21:14

"A Resolution Confirming the Mayor's Formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to be Known as the "Land Conservation Levy Committee" and the Appointees Thereto and Declaring an Emergency" was read by the Mayor. Desiring a fresh and more robust approach in working with the Land Conservancy to identify the overall conservation and open space needs in the village, irrespective of who owns the land, the Mayor has asked the Land Conservancy to dedicate three individuals and Council to dedicate three individuals to serve on the Committee. The Mayor has asked Councilmembers Young, because of the freshness of his views, and Turner, because of her longevity with the Tree Canopy Committee and with the Land Conservancy, to join him in doing the yeoman's work of slugging through the need, working with the Land Conservancy representatives, and coming back to Council with recommendations. The Mayor's goal is an agreed upon understanding with the Land Conservancy of the needs of the village over the next five years and any language changes or allocation changes that would come based on the needs.

Councilmember Greco moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-12 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Councilmember Greco moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-12, and Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Onysko is 100% for this and wonders if Councilmember Turner being on the Board of the Land Conservancy is a conflict of interest. Neither Councilmember Turner nor Law Director Hunt see a conflict of interest.

Ayes: Broome, Greco, Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.
Nays: None
Motion carried.

32. Council Discussion starts at 2:29:42

- a. Land Conservation Levy - see Agenda Item Nos. 18c and 31.
- b. Accessory Structures - Councilmember Steinbrink - No report
- c. 2026 Priorities - All Council - starts at 2:29:58

Mayor Siemborski distributed and read a draft of what he believes our 2026 priorities are. He asked Councilmembers to provide input any time between now and the next meeting.

33. Executive Session - None

34. Business from the Audience - None

35. Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted,



Beth DeCapite, Clerk

Approved:



Steven L. Siemborski, Mayor