

Village of Gates Mills
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
March 17, 2026

A regular meeting of the Council of the Village of Gates Mills, Ohio was held at the Community House on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Siemborski presiding. The meeting was live-streamed to the internet.

1. Roll Call starts at 0:12

Councilmembers present: Broome, Greco (via Zoom), Onysko, Perez, Steinbrink, Turner, Young.

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

2. Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of February 17, 2026 starts at 0:34

Councilmember Turner indicated a correction was necessary on page 10 at the second paragraph beginning with “MetroParks is extending the work they’re doing on their own property along Sherman Road”. “Sherman Road” should be replaced by “Chagrin River Road between Mayfield and Sherman Roads”.

Councilmember Broome moved to approve the February 17, 2026 minutes as amended and Councilmember Steinbrink seconded the motion.

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

Law Director Hunt clarified that a Councilmember attending a Council meeting virtually can participate in the discussion, but the virtual attendance does not count toward a quorum and the Councilmember does not have the authority to vote.

3. Pay Ordinance # 1307 \$823,239.44 starts at 2:18

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Pay Ordinance #1307, and Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

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

4. Mayor’s Report starts at 3:00

a. Aging Well

Recall we have supplemented the offerings of the Community Partnership on Aging (CPA) with some of our own offerings. Specifically, we have planned to have leadership lunches meant to provide socialization opportunities for village seniors on the third Wednesday of every month from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Community House. The first lunch will be hosted by the Mayor tomorrow, and the topic will be village priorities for 2026. Don Fellows, President of CVG, will speak at and has offered to pay for the April lunch. Subsequent lunches will be led by the Police Chief, Fire Chief, Building Commissioner, and others.

b. 200th Anniversary - no report

c. Arboretum - starts at 4:53

AB Forestry and Better Meadows & Woodlands will meet with us at the arboretum Thursday to discuss the next year of invasive controls, the tree management plan, and thinning out overgrowth.

d. 2026 Priorities - starts at 5:21

Since our last meeting the Mayor made two changes suggested by Council, and the revised 2026 Priorities list is before you tonight. This is the list that will go forward in organizing where we spend our time, money, and efforts this year.

“Update the 3-5 year financial plan” was added to the Community Engagement section. One Councilmember wants to be on the small working group that will be tasked with putting together the plan.

“Evaluate Town Hall and future Village needs” replaces language in the Safety section considered too narrow. There are some village needs beyond Town Hall - the use of the waterfront location for the salt bin and the adequacy of space for equipment storage.

e. Ohio Capital Budget Application - starts at 7:07

We submitted last week to State Senator Jerry Cirino and Representative Dan Troy an application for funding a salt bin at a cost of about \$750,000. The State makes dollars available for community-based projects supported by our legislators.

f. Pedestrian Bridge - starts at 9:00

Preliminary findings from the structural engineering firm R.E. Warner, following a visual assessment in February, include 32 deficiencies requiring some degree of repair within one year. We have no unsafe situations. When the finalized report is received, we will have a rough sense of cost, and we will determine if we agree with their recommendations and if we need construction drawings in order to get proposals.

Added Agenda Items:

g. Wastewater - starts at 12:07

Recall that last year the Village applied for funding from the Ohio EPA for a loan and from the Ohio Dept of Public Works for a grant. Those two funding sources would provide the total cost for constructing and replacing the plant currently operated by the Hunt Club. We were successful on the loan; not on the grant. Last fall we submitted a revised application to the Ohio Dept of Public Works to ask for the grant, and we recently were notified by the Ohio Dept of Public Works District One that we had met the requirements to be recommended to go to the state of Ohio for consideration. This morning we submitted to the Ohio Dept of Public Works Small Business Government Subcommittee the 148-page application to be considered again for the grant. We will know the outcome on May 6. The Hunt Club is supportive of going forward with the village.

h. Old Mill Stormwater Information - starts at 15:25

The east Old Mill at Chagrin River Road stormwater overflow problem has returned, the County televised the system, and the cost to fix it will be about \$125,000. We've been able to put together about \$110,000 from 1) a balance we have in a community cost-share fund with NEORS and 2) a NEORS allocation program where we can draw on up to five years future collections of storm water management fees. The project needs to be approved by and has been submitted to NEORS. An allocation agreement was received from NEORS today and will be presented to Council for approval in April.

5. Financial Report attached and on the website starts at 18:40

Mayor Siemborski reported the lag in February real estate tax collections has been caught up with by the \$1,039,000 in taxes collected to date in March. We have some excess service, police, and fire dept overtime pay related to storms.

6. Clerk's Report - None

7. Treasurer's Report - None

8. Police Department Report attached and on the website starts at 20:52

Chief Minichello reported the St. Francis summer festival typically held every June will be placed on a one-year hiatus and is expected to return in some capacity in 2027.

Mayor Siemborski asked what led to the decrease in citations issued in January and February. Subsequent discussion indicated there are more questions than answers tonight; Council will receive a write up (including Sensys Gatso's parameters for culling out citations prior to sending to GMPD for verification) over the next couple weeks; and we will pick this subject up at the April meeting. Collection efforts following the second request have not yet commenced, and we have been promised the final language would be done by March 31.

9. Service Department Report attached and on the website starts at 30:37

Motion to authorize the re-advertisement for competitive bids for the Village's 2026 Guardrail Program

Service Director Biggert explained the guardrail work planned for 2026 initially was estimated to be below the publicly bid threshold. Of the 3 contractors contacted, only one bid was received from Lake Erie Construction in the amount of \$89,000. That is 18% over the engineer's estimate, above the bid threshold, and now we are required to publicly advertise the work.

Mayor Siemborski prompted an update on our remaining salt purchase obligation. Service Director Biggert advised that of the 2100 tons contracted for this season, we have the option to buy or store 85% (128 tons remain) or to buy or store 115% (758 tons remain). Available space in the salt bin and next season's price estimate will guide the decision.

Councilmember Steinbrink made a motion to authorize the re-advertisement for competitive bids for the Village's 2026 Guardrail Program. Councilmember Broome seconded the motion. The Mayor recalled most of the guardrail work was the result of the August 6, 2024 storm. Over \$125,000 in guardrail damage was split into a two-year program with about \$80,000 completed last year. This is year two.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

10. Fire Department Report attached and on the website starts at 35:08

Fire Chief Majeski reported the storm activity of the last 3-4 days caused damage to one structure on Riverview, a lot of downed trees, and generated 22 calls of storm damage and assessments. Most of the impact damage was on West Hill, Woodstock, and Riverview. Power still has not been restored to a few areas of the village. We used our radio system to its advantage this time - members of the Service Dept now have upgraded radios and we were able to better coordinate with them.

Councilmember Broome thanked Scott Magoch for his 38 years of service.

The Mayor thanked all depts and crews for their dedication during this latest storm.

11. **Ordinance No. 2026-17 (First Reading)** starts at 39:36

"An Ordinance Authorizing All Actions Necessary to Accept Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) 2026 Energized Community Grant" was read by Mayor Siemborski. This is an \$8,000 grant from NOPEC made from time to time to member municipalities and is to be used for energy-based expenditures - in this case, three windows in the police dept locker room downstairs are in need of replacement.

Councilmember Turner moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Ordinance No. 2026-17 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Councilmember Turner moved to approve Ordinance No. 2026-17, and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

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

12. **Resolution No. 2026-18 (First Reading)** starts at 42:33

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Phase II Stormwater Services Agreement with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health for Authority and Consent to Provide Phase II Stormwater Services in 2026 and 2027” was read by Mayor Siemborski.

Village Engineer Courtney explained, as a municipality of a certain size in Ohio, we must have a permit from the EPA to operate our storm sewer system. Resolution Nos. 2026-18 and 2026-19 are a part of that permit program. In conjunction with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Chagrin River Watershed Partners, NEORSD, Cuyahoga County Dept of Public Works, Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District, Service Dept and Village Engineer, we administer the permit program. There are 6 elements to the program - Public Education, Public Involvement, Elicit Discharge Detection and Elimination, Construction Site Runoff, Post-Construction Stormwater Management, and Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping - and each has a prescribed requirement. Each April we have to assemble a combined report for all activity over the last year and then submit that to the EPA for permit compliance. Every 3-4 years the EPA visits and audits a certain portion of our program.

Resolution No. 2026-18 covers illicit discharge detection and elimination services provided by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health at a cost of \$500 per year. The County Board of Health monitors our stormwater outfalls during dry weather periods to determine if there's any illicit discharges connected to them. We have a program in place to track those back upstream and eliminate them.

Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-18 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Young seconded the motion.

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

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-18, and Councilmember Young seconded the motion.

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

13. **Resolution No. 2026-19 (First Reading)** starts at 47:09

“A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District for the Provision of Technical Assistance for the Village of Gates Mills’ Compliance with the Ohio EPA’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (“NPDES”) Permit Requirements” was read by the Mayor.

Village Engineer Courtney advised Resolution No. 2026-19 covers public involvement and public education (PIPE) services provided by the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District. There is no cost because it is paid directly by NEORS D under the regional stormwater plan. He will double check this since previously NEORS D reimbursed \$6600 to the village.

Councilmember Perez noted the PIPE activities provided by the Soil and Water Conservation District align with our Tree Canopy and Land Conservancy efforts. Are we taking advantage of the services and have we considered joint programming? Village Engineer Courtney stated we rely heavily on the Chagrin River Watershed Partners and the Soil and Water Conservation District for our PIPE program, and it would be terrific to include something with the Tree Canopy Committee. He will reach out to them tomorrow. Councilmember Turner noted we have taken advantage of the Rain Barrel program through the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-19 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

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

Councilmember Steinbrink moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-19 and Councilmember Perez seconded the motion.

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

14. **Resolution No. 2026-20 (First Reading)** starts at 49:27

“A Resolution Accepting the Bids of Specialized Construction, Inc. and Ronyak Paving, Inc. and Awarding Two Contracts for the 2026 Road Program; and Declaring an Emergency” was read by Mayor Siemborski. The two bids total \$1,062,260 (excludes engineering) which is slightly under the budget of \$1,118,000.

Councilmember Perez asked if we would seek reimbursement for last year’s construction damage to Settlers Ridge. Village Engineer Courtney replied that instead of reimbursement, we had the construction company complete about \$75,000 - \$90,000 worth of full depth repairs at the end of last year in preparation for our overlay this year.

The Village Engineer described Sections I and II of the project as county and local road maintenance programs - primarily striping and reclamite work on recently

repaved roads along with about \$70,000 in patching on roads that have yet to be determined based on winter damage. The County will reimburse us for about half of the county road maintenance program. Sections III, IV, and V cover local road reconstruction work on Chelsea, Beverly, Colvin, Glenwood, Settlers Ridge, and West Hill. Colvin will be reconstructed in concrete because of the bus traffic.

The Mayor noted we have addressed in five years what was a \$5,000,000 - \$7,000,000 nugget in front of us 5-6 years ago by doubling the spend from \$400,000 - \$500,000 to roughly \$1,000,000 a year while maintaining some of the improvements made. The Village Engineer added that once we complete this year's program, we will have addressed all the roads designated as failed, along with making headway on some of the roads designated as fair.

Anticipating a May start for reconstruction work, Councilmember Broome moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-20 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Young seconded the motion.

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

Councilmember Broome moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-20 and Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

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

15. **Resolution No. 2026-21 (First Reading)** starts at 56:00

"A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Enter Into a Second Amendment to the Indenture of Lease with Smyth Cramer Co., DBA Howard Hanna, for Office Space at 1501 Chagrin River Road" was read by Mayor Siemborski. When time came for renewal of their one-year lease, Howard Hanna indicated they would like to have a two-year lease with one two-year option. Essentially, this would identify them as the holder of that space for four years. They have agreed to a rent increase and a second rent increase at renewal two years from now. Law Director Hunt has prepared a document satisfactory to Howard Hanna. Their lease runs through the summer. We don't have to suspend the rules to approve this, but it is a relatively simple item, a relatively small space.

Councilmember Steinbrink moved that the rules requiring ordinances to be read on three different days be suspended and that Resolution No. 2026-21 be placed on its final passage. Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

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

Councilmember Steinbrink moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-20 and Councilmember Broome seconded the motion.

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

16. Executive Session starts at 58:53

Councilmember Broome moved to go into Executive Session to receive legal advice from our Law Director. Councilmember Turner seconded the motion.

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

Executive Session commenced at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Siemborski reconvened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

17. Council Discussion starts at 59:23

a. Rust Belt Riders - Councilmember Turner

Information was emailed to Councilmembers on Sunday. Rust Belt Riders (RBR) is an employee-owned business that specializes in recycling food scraps into compost. Their composting services align well with our environmental goals and could represent a logical next step for the village. RBR bins are located at all 18 Heinen's stores, businesses, schools, and municipalities such as Beachwood, Shaker Heights, Lakewood, and Rocky River. This idea was brought forward by residents Jennifer Pinto, Jann Holzman, Evans Barnes, and Laurel Smith. It would cost us about \$12,000 per year for a corral with three bins to be located possibly either in the recycling area behind the Town Hall or in the school parking lot. Bins are emptied on a weekly basis. Other village entities - i.e. Sara's, Addies's Cup, multiple schools, Hunt Club - could participate. The purpose tonight is to get feedback about the concept and to determine if a presentation by RBR is desired and if seeking approval at the April meeting to distribute a resident interest survey is supported.

Discussion starts at 1:05:02

Young - His wife and he participate at the Heinen's location for \$12 per month. If we have three bins here in GM for \$12,000 per year, does that change the cost for the individual participant?

Turner - The individual participant would pay zero.

Perez - If we wanted more bins or multiple locations, what would the cost be?

Turner - Bins are \$85 per week.

Perez - Her husband uses RBR and has had a great experience with them since 2018. Does RBR report what they collect to Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District? There is a metric that they capture about composting.

Turner - Yes, and RBR will make a utilization report to the village on a monthly basis.

Steinbrink - Are the bins sealed for smell?

Turner - Yes. The bins, similar to recycling bins, have locking lids.

Broome - He puts food outside in compost bins. This would only make sense if we had good participation. The barrier is people having some way to store it before they bring it down. Is there a container that sits under the sink?

Young - They have a container that sits under the sink, and they drop food into a green compostable bag inside. Put the bag in the freezer as needed until the next trip to Heinen's.

Turner - There is a community education component to RBR's program.

Mulh - What happens if the bins are filled by midweek?

Turner - They would come out and get them. If it becomes a trend, they are going to add a bin.

Onysko - Will RBR provide a trial run for 60 days at a pilot price? We'll put the word out. If it works, it works. If it doesn't work, it doesn't.

Steinbrink - He thinks it would be better to have RBR come in before sending out a survey. That way we'd be more knowledgeable and it might help formulate questions for a survey.

Turner - She is not fast-tracking this per se. It could be part of the 2027 budget. If we start a trial period, then people who do participate are going to say "you quit already" at the end of the trial.

Onysko - It is the law in England and Japan.

Mayor Siemborski summarized that we will invite RBR to the April meeting. In the meantime, Councilmember Turner can start creating survey questions in order to be prepared if we go forward.

b. Speed Camera Citations Issued - Councilmember Onysko - starts at 1:14:50

Councilmembers Onysko will work personally with Police Chief Minichello before the next meeting to augment his PD report with two columns in preparation for discussion at the next meeting. The notable oddity is in February 2026 when citations issued dropped to 57% of eligible speeders - the norm has been 72-76%.

c. Fiber Optic Construction Map - Mayor Siemborski - starts at 1:16:30

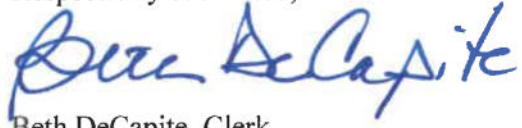
The colored zones depict CVG's best estimate of their construction schedule by quarter through June 2027 when construction should be completed. The map will be posted in places like the library and Town Hall, so residents can get a sense of what zone they are in and roughly in what quarter they will be affected.

18. Business from the Audience - None

19. Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted,



Beth DeCapite, Clerk

Approved:



Steven L. Siemborski, Mayor