

MINUTES REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

7:02 p.m.

March 18, 2025

Pursuant to Codified Ordinance Chapter 107 and ORC Section 121.22, notice of the following meeting was given on March 14, 2025.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Sievers, Tomaselli, Anderson, Carr, Garry, Kary and Merhar

Others Present: Mayor Fiala, Law Director Lucas, Service Director Palmisano, City Engineer Lannon, Fire Chief Ungar, Police Chief Schultz, Chief Building & Zoning Inspector Keller, Parks & Recreation Director Keller, Finance Director Hoffman, Clerk Novak

The meeting was led in Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance by Councilwoman Sievers.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Mr. Tomaselli and seconded by Mr. Garry to approve the Regular Council Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2025.

Roll Call	6 yes	
	0 no	Motion carried 6 to 0
	1 abstain (Sievers)	

STANDING AND REGULAR COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee of Full, Mr. Carr – Mr. Carr stated there will be a committee meeting prior to the next Council meeting to discuss the salaries for the Mayor and Council

Economic Development Committee, Mr. Anderson – No report.

Environmental Planning Committee, Mr. Kary – No report.

Finance and Audit Committee, Mr. Tomaselli – The committee met this evening to discuss the 2025 operating budget with the recommendation to Council to pass the budget.

Parks & Recreation Committee, Ms. Sievers – No report.

Personnel Committee, Mr. Merhar – No report.

Safety Committee, Mr. Tomaselli – No report.

Service Committee, Mr. Anderson – No report.

WPCC Committee, Mr. Garry – No report.

Planning Commission, Mr. Kary – No report.

CORRESPONDENCE: No correspondence.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Richard Zurga, 36930 Stevens Boulevard, Willoughby – Mr. Zurga stated he was walking his dog recently at the F. Alex Nason Park and ran into a surveyor who told him that a road was going to be installed on the south side of the basin so that the City has access to the corner of the basin. He questioned why the City would waste money on this when there are two gates with access from Harvard Road. He stated there are bald eagles, coyotes, wild turkeys, hawks and deer in the park area and they will be disturbed with the road going in. He stated there are two large piles of dirt when the road was built causing water flow in his back yard when the snow melts. City Engineer Lannon stated he was not aware of the water issue but would check into it. He stated that the road being built is for a storm sewer project that will begin soon.

Erin Logan via Zoom (Councilman Carr’s daughter) – Ms. Logan wanted to say hello to her Dad and stated he was doing a great job. Go Wildcats.

Motion made by Mr. Tomaselli and seconded by Mr. Garry that all ordinances and resolutions be read by caption only and that as to legislation not containing an emergency clause, the rules requiring that ordinances and resolutions be read on three separate days be waived.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

NEW BUSINESS:

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-28

An ordinance granting an easement for an underground electric utility line to Willoughby Union Realty LLC on a portion of Permanent Parcel No. 027-A-029-0-00-003-0, and declaring an emergency.

Motion made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Garry that the rules of Council requiring three separate readings be suspended and that Ordinance No. 2025-28 be declared an emergency measure.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

Motion made by Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mr. Garry to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-28.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-29

An ordinance accepting Amendment No. 2 to Ordinance No. 2024-38, the Manning & Payroll Ordinance, relative to the Parks and Recreation Department, hourly personnel, part-time (seasonal), and declaring an emergency.

Motion made by Ms. Sievers and seconded by Mr. Tomaselli that the rules of Council requiring three separate readings be suspended and that Ordinance No. 2025-29 be declared an emergency measure.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

Motion made by Ms. Sievers and seconded by Mr. Tomaselli to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-29.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-30 Amended 3/18/25

A resolution to make appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Willoughby, Ohio, during the period ending December 31, 2025, and declaring an emergency.

Motion made by Mr. Tomaselli and seconded by Mr. Kary to amend Resolution No. 2025-30 on Page 8, Fund 6040 – East Island Equalization, striking the amount \$11,500.00 and replacing with \$11,500,000.00.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

Motion made by Mr. Tomaselli and seconded by Mr. Kary that the rules of Council requiring three separate readings be suspended and that Resolution No. 2025-30 be declared an emergency measure.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

Motion made by Mr. Tomaselli and seconded by Mr. Kary to adopt Resolution No. 2025-30 as amended.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-31

A resolution authorizing the Mayor to accept the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Grant to provide financial assistance for the design and construction of the Chagrin Floodplain Restoration and Public Access Project, and declaring an emergency.

Motion made by Mr. Merhar and seconded by Mr. Anderson that the rules of Council requiring three separate readings be suspended and that Resolution No. 2025-31 be declared an emergency measure.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

Motion made by Mr. Merhar and seconded by Mr. Anderson to adopt Resolution No. 2025-31.

Roll Call 7 yes
 0 no

Motion carried 7 to 0

MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Fiala thanked Council for the passage of Resolution No. 2025-31. Regarding the Osborne Park grants, he stated the City is watching the \$3 million grant from the National Fish and Wildlife carefully. He stated the City is in the cycle for 2025 federal earmarks. A year ago, the City apply for a \$2.8 million grant but it didn't make the list for Dave Joyce or Sherrod Brown, however, Dave Joyce voted for it so it is on the list to be funded. All earmarks were struck from the federal budget. He believes that the 2025 earmark will be honored so the City will likely shift the focus of the 2026 earmark to the roundabout at Lost Nation Road and Hodgson. The roundabout project will be in collaboration with the Lake County Executive Airport, which will give the project a bit more visibility. The City could ask for dollars through the Greats Lakes Restoration Initiative.

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

Law Director Lucas – Mr. Lucas stated that there is a state house bill that will take effect in April that will permit virtual attendance at public meetings. Regarding the marijuana moratorium, Mr. Lucas stated that the proposed ordinance changes will need to go the Planning Commission first then to Council. Mr. Carr asked if he followed up on the commercial sidewalks on Rt. 91. Mr. Lucas stated he will have legislation before Council; there needs to be a resolution of necessity.

Service Director Palmisano – No report. Mr. Carr stated he had a few calls from residents on Colonial Road regarding the condition of the road; he drove through and stated the road is in bad shape particularly the concrete section. He asked if our Service Department could do any of the patch work. Mr. Palmisano stated the City has done that kind of work with success (grind the concrete joints and cover with asphalt) in the past and he will have it looked at. Mr. Carr stated that residents brought to his attention the garbage in the Laketrans bus shelters. He thought that Laketrans would provide garbage cans but would not empty them. He suggested reaching out to the businesses near the shelters i.e., Walgreens and see if they would be willing to empty the trash. Mr. Palmisano stated he would reach out to Laketrans.

City Engineer Lannon – Mr. Lannon stated that he did a study regarding the road levy income that has been flat for several years versus the cost of asphalt. The buying power has been reduced by about two thirds. Regarding the roundabout at Lost Nation Road and Hodgson, he stated the estimate is about \$5 million. He will be applying this week for a federal grant that he hopes will cover about 80% of the project. Bids were received for the Nason Basin to Grove Avenue Phase I project which is the large storm sewer that runs from Nason Basin to the railroad underpass on Vine Street. The estimate was \$6.25 million and the low bid was \$5.7 million from Trax Construction. He will have legislation before Council to award the project at the next meeting. For this project, the City received \$5 million from Ohio Department of Development and \$1 million from Ohio Public Works Commission.

Fire Chief Ungar – No report. Mr. Carr asked about the refitting of the ambulance. Chief Ungar stated the work will begin in April. No update on the ladder truck. Chief Ungar stated that having

purchased an ambulance during COVID that was fully outfitted has put the department in a good place so the department doesn't run short.

Police Chief Schultz – Chief Schultz reported there was a busy, but safe St. Patrick's Day.

Chief Building and Zoning Inspector Keller – No report.

Parks & Recreation Director Keller – Ms. Keller thanked Council for the passage of Ordinance No. 2025-29 and Resolution No. 2025-31. Work is progressing at Osborne Park; the City is waiting for the final permit and can't start in the water until June 19th due to the protection of a fish species in the lake. Mr. Carr stated he learned that the concrete in the water currently will be crushed, the rebar removed and will be used as underlayment.

Finance Director Hoffman – Ms. Hoffman thanked Council for the passage of Resolution No. 2025-29 and Ordinance No. 2025-30.

COUNCILMEN REPORTS

Ms. Sievers – No report.

Mr. Kary – Mr. Kary thanked Mayor Fiala and Tim Lannon for the efforts regarding the roundabout at Lost Nation Road and Hodgson. He offered his assistance with the project.

Mr. Tomaselli – No report.

Mr. Merhar – No report.


Mr. Garry – No report.



Mr. Anderson – No report.

Mr. Carr – No report.

The Regular Council Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Date approved 4/1/25


Robert E. Carr, President


Clerk of Council

Robert A. Fiala, Mayor