

President of Council
MICHAEL KLINE

Vice President of Council
TANYA TAYLOR DRAPER

Council Clerk Pro Tem
NICHOLAS AIELLO

Council
JULIE A. BELICH
JOE JARMUSZKIEWICZ
DANIEL KNECHT
VICKI MILLER
KATHLEEN SIVO

City of Willoughby Hills

Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation

Minutes of February 12, 2026

The Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation was called to order on February 12, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 6:30 p.m. (0:08)

ROLL CALL (Audio: 0:19)

Members Present: Council President Michael Kline, Councilwoman Miller, Councilwoman Kathleen Sivo, Council Vice President Tanya Taylor Draper, and Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz

Also Present: Mayor Hallum, Finance Director Bruce Scott, and Law Director Michael A. Kenny Jr.

Absent: Councilman Dan Knecht, Councilwoman Julie A. Belich, City Engineer DiFranco

BEGINNING DISPOSITION: (Audio 0:50)

ORDINANCE 2026-001 - SECOND READING

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN CITY SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY 1ST THROUGH DECEMBER 31ST OF 2026; REPEALING ALL LEGISLATION INCONSISTENT HEREWITH.

- **Council President Kline:** This is our annual budget. We had our first Finance Committee meeting this Monday evening for the police and service departments. It was very informative. Thank you both Chief Naegele and Road Superintendent Mark Grubiss for your participation. We just got updated information on this from Finance Director Scott. I will open up for any comments or questions on this ordinance.
- This Monday, we will hold our second Finance Committee meeting covering the fire department and administration starting at 6:00 p.m.

ORDINANCE 2026-003 – AMENDED - FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, OHIO AND RICHARD L. BOWEN + ASSOCIATES, INC. TO ACCEPT THE ARCHITECTURAL FEES PROPOSAL FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT AND THE SERVICE GARAGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Council President Kline:** For part of Monday’s Finance Committee meeting, we had a representative from Bowen and Associates. He gave a very informative presentation on the architectural concept, explaining how it works, and what is involved in it. I will open up for any comments or questions on this ordinance.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I agree with everything that is going to be in the projects we are looking at doing. I think we should hold off until the third reading after the Monday meeting to talk a little more about the financing and cost of this project. I have had a lot of people question me on where the money is coming from, thinking this will raise taxes. I think it will be better to wait one more reading and discuss this a little further.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** The comments that I have received have been people asking if it’s really that bad. Is there any way that we could have pictures or more information that we could share with our residents? I have seen it, they haven’t. They have no idea it’s that horrible that we have to spend all this money. I am wondering if there is anything we could do to help them learn more about what the issues are and the specific problems we are trying to solve.
- **Mayor Hallum:** I am sure we could provide some pictures. The building has been around for almost sixty years and has been patchworked over that period of time to make it work. For those of us who own homes, we would certainly not do anything to our houses for sixty years. There is just a time when you have to improve things in your home for the people who are working and living there. I will see what I can do for you all. You all have taken the opportunity to go and see for yourselves the conditions that our employees are working in. In some cases, it is potentially dangerous. I would advise you not to delay any longer than tonight to get this moving forward for our residents.
- As I said a couple meetings ago, we already have enough in our Capital Fund to pay cash for the police station updates. I believe that we will have enough to pay for at least half of the entire project without raising anybody’s taxes at all. Perhaps we will have to get the other half or less through a municipal bond that will be payable between ten and twenty years. We have done this many times in the past. Ultimately, it is up to Council to make those decisions. I implore you to consider not waiting any longer. As Mr. Emling stated the other night, the longer we wait, the more expensive it gets. Every year that this delays is another million dollars in costs. The sooner we get this moving, the sooner we can figure out exactly what we are going to do, and get to building before some potentially bad things happen, especially for the service garage in particular. Even Mr. Emling himself said there were areas he would not go in. That speaks volumes to me. It’s really bad. Thank you all.

- **Councilwoman Miller:** I know the public is concerned looking at the price tag we talked about Monday night. It seems like a considerable amount of money. But, again, I understand that we have money to cover the police station. I think people are concerned that we are going to raise taxes. That is not the case. That is not the plan we have. We will cover what we can through municipal bonds and what we have on hand. I am in agreement that there is a considerable need. Like the mayor said, we don't stop doing improvements on our home. That building out back (the service department) was, at one point in time, the City Hall when I was a child in the City. I am sure that has just been patched together at the time. There is a lot of work to be done. We need to be forward thinking and looking ahead to the future and making sure that we have a safe environment for our workers. We want to be able to bring in good, qualified workers who are not going to be fearful of getting injured because of the conditions they are working.

ORDINANCE 2026-007 - FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, PART 1 ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, TITLE THREE- LEGISLATIVE, CHAPTER 121 COUNCIL BY ADDING SECTION 121.04 TITLED "CONSENT AGENDA" AUTHORIZING THE USE OF A CONSENT AGENDA FOR THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS.

- **Council President Kline:** This is the ordinance that would allow us to use a consent agenda when voting at our Council meetings. To reiterate some of the points we have previously talked about, this is a means to save time in our voting. Tonight's Council agenda is another very good example of where time can be saved. If you have looked at the agenda, you will see, amongst other things, there are a number of motions. We have our minutes for approval as well as some ordinances and resolutions that may be passed under the consent agenda. This would all be brought together one yes-or-no vote. It can include items on first reading. Through the use of the consent agenda, the three reading rule is automatically waived if the item is in the consent agenda.
- As we have mentioned before, anyone on Council can request any item on the consent agenda to be removed for any reason. It could be as simple as if one member on Council were to be opposed to one item and favor everything else. What they would do is ask for that item to be removed from the consent agenda. If asked to remove any item, it would be removed from the consent agenda and be put back on to the regular agenda. Everything else would remain for a vote.
- There is no discussion of items within the consent agenda. Some cities have someone who will give a brief synopsis of the legislation included. Captions are read. It is the up or down vote on everything.
- Complicated or involved ordinances would not be included in the consent agenda. You would not find the budget on the consent agenda. This is normally repetitive items such as contracts that may be renewed once or twice a year or other minor purchases. This is a time saver. I will open for questions on this ordinance.

- **Mayor Hallum:** For clarification, consent agenda items would be ordinances, resolutions, and motions?
- **Council President Kline:** Yes.
- **Mayor Hallum:** With regard to complicated ordinances, couldn't some more complicated ordinances, that may be on third reading, be added to the consent agenda?
- **Council President Kline:** Absolutely. It is not restricted. You could include items that have gone through three readings. If it gets to the point where everybody is comfortable and ready to vote, this can be rolled into the next consent agenda and included with everything else.
- **Mayor Hallum:** So, it's not that they can't be included. Rather, they would be first vetted out like we normally do.
- **Council President Kline:** Correct.
- **Mayor Hallum:** Thank you.
- **Council President Kline:** I would like to see the consent agenda available for everyone to use. I hope that everyone feels comfortable with this ordinance passing on first reading.

ORDINANCE 2026-008 - FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PART NINE - STREETS, UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE, TITLE FIVE - OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES, CHAPTER 941 - USE OF PUBLIC PROPERTY, OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, REPEALING CONFLICTING LEGISLATION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Council President Kline:** This ordinance is one that is dealing with sanctioning groups. There's been some additional information provided to Council. I know there are some individuals on Council that have an interest in seeing this ordinance further amended and modified. I would like to ask Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz if he would like to comment.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** There are some concerns with the way we have this ordinance written. The rental property on SOM Center road listed on this ordinance needs to be removed. That is no longer in our City's possession.
- There is a section of the ordinance where it talks about providing monitors for meetings at night. There are only a couple meetings a month at night like that. We have a section that added hours of operation from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and after that the sanctioning group would have to pay for a monitor. I do not think we should change this right now. Most of the groups meet during the day, anyways; only a couple groups meet later. This year, we are going to set this up to require a minimum of four volunteer hours. We are going to keep track of how the groups responded with the four hours at minimum requirement and what events they have applied to. We have gotten the sanctioning letters and we will have these sent out with an application with all the events listed to volunteer for.

- There are a couple of things we changed. The ordinance, in one of the whereas clauses, said “for a nominal fee” sanctioned groups can use the Community Center. It said in consideration of volunteer hours, they would use it for free unless it was after 4:30 p.m. Just to clean all this up, we should leave it the way it was. We shouldn’t worry about the monitors right now and we should not have a fee for the sanction group as long as they provide the four or more volunteer hours. This is what I wanted to get changed with this so that it is in writing. This seemed as if we were moving too much around and it was getting confusing. At the end of this year, we would like to review this and see how it has been working. Next year, we can set this up a different way to clear up things we may need. Perhaps four hours isn’t enough. My impression is that most of the groups do more than four hours so I don’t think that will be a problem.
- I think we should concentrate more on renting those rooms out at night. We used to have Zumba classes and different night events that would facilitate a monitor being there anyways. I would like to have this rewritten and voted on at the next meeting. We are going to send out the sanctioning letters. The letter that was going out will have to be changed a little bit. We will have to eliminate the section that has the 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. hours and the section that charges hourly rates for the monitor. We can then go ahead and send this out with a list of all the opportunities available for volunteering. The pancake breakfast SignUpGenius is already up. The events for the rest of the year will be listed online so that people will be able to fill out a form in order to see which events we need volunteers for. This would be on a first come first serve basis.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** What were the sanctioned groups that were grandfathered? There sanctioned groups that were grandfathered, correct?
- **Council President Kline:** Yes, there were some.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I am not sure; I do not have that information with me.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I would like to say a couple things. We have three HOA’s in our City that I know of (Stratford, Steeple Run, and Pebblebrook). These are working families and working residents. It shouldn’t be cut-off for them. Evenings are really the only time they can meet. If there are groups that are in there, I think HOA’s should definitely be there.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I agree with you.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Just for clarification, did you say the ability for groups to use the Community Center for free should stop at 5:00 p.m. or should not?
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** They should be able to use this for free regardless of the hours if they provide volunteer hours.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Good, I agree with that too. We have too many working families and that cuts them short.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** We don’t want to shut the doors at 4:30 p.m. I personally do

not get off work until 5:30 p.m.

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Me too. It just cuts them short so I would not want that included in this ordinance. I agree with you.
- **Council President Kline:** To answer your question, Council Vice President, the groups that were mentioned in the original memo were League of Women Voters, Quilt Guild, and the Willoughby Hills Lion's Club.
- **Mayor Hallum:** We did grandfather this for this next year to give groups the opportunity to figure out how they might want to rearrange their schedules so that they could meet at times where they would not be charged a monitor rate. Perhaps what we need to add in here is something that clarifies that if there was already a function going on that required a monitor to be there, there would be no charge to the group because there would already be someone there for a rented purpose. I think, especially for HOA's, usually they are planning their meetings out a bit. They would be able to look at what nights there is a monitor there so that they can schedule their meeting during that time so that they are not impacted monetarily.
- I think most of you know, the Community Center is not intended to make money. It is a Community Center. But, we can save ourselves additional money by asking people to try to arrange their schedules for when we have a monitor. If we have a small group of six people over there and we are paying somebody forty dollars to be there for a couple hours, perhaps they could schedule it when a monitor is there. This would be more efficient for everybody. Either way, I just wanted to mention that to you all. We just want people to be more conscientious. We would be willing to work with people to find a date that would not cost them anything. We are trying to get people to work with us to not create more costs unnecessarily.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** Another item that was brought up was limiting use from Monday to Friday. We try to use the weekends for rentals and scheduled events with the Community Center. We should probably put something like this in the ordinance. If another event is not already scheduled, this would be first come first serve. They would have to say what nights they need or want to use a room so we could rearrange the schedules.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I have a question for the Finance Director. Do you have any data that determines how much money we are spending on monitors in the evening?
- **Finance Director Scott:** I can get you a breakdown. It would take a considerable amount of time to break that down by time of day but I can do my best to provide that.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** It takes time, no problem.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** We used to get a usage report once a month that showed how many rentals we had and how many rooms were used. I don't know if this was something that was given to the Council or just Recreation Commission but it listed how many times a room was rented in a month, how many cancellations there were, how many weddings there were, etc. Another report had the dollar amount for the last ten years.

- **Mayor Hallum:** Was the report given from the Recreation Coordinator to the Recreation Commission?
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I think Sandy Grubiss used to do it.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** I think it came from whoever was in that office.
- **Mayor Hallum:** You might want to ask Celia to report on that, and then you can report on it here when you are doing your recreation report. Thank you for hearing me out.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** I have one little concern. How often do we have a month when there might be only one or two nights available where we have a monitor present due to another rental? Do we run into that situation?
- **Mayor Hallum:** I don't know. That would be a question for Celia. I would suggest reaching out to her and asking her or Jolene to provide you with some data regarding that.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I would like to have the Recreation Clerk send the letter out without the paragraph referring to the operating hours and the cost for the monitor. It does have the minimum of four hours of volunteer time listed. If it is in the group's interest to add Monday through Friday, we can add that. I would like to have the whole ordinance rewritten and voted on next time. We can get the application sent out.
- **Council President Kline:** Do we want to make the changes in the ordinance that have been proposed by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz and Council Vice President Taylor Draper and then vote on this at the next Council meeting?
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I am in favor of that.
- **Council President Kline:** If nobody is objecting to that, I would instruct our Council Clerk to make those changes and have it available for everyone's review as we go forward.

ORDINANCE 2026-009 - FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL AS SUBMITTED BY RICHARD L. BOWEN & ASSOCIATES, INC. FOR THE LAK-SR-091-00.00 MULTI MODAL PATH (PID 125062), IN THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, IN THE YEAR 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Mayor Hallum:** I would like to get this moving along. It is cheaper to get this sooner and we can get on everybody's contract to get things moving. This has already been budgeted for this year as well.

ORDINANCE 2026-010 - FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2026-004 INVOLVING THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES LOCAL 3058-2 CONTRACT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Council President Kline:** This ordinance is simply correcting a mathematical error in one of

the schedules in the Union contract. The standard type schedule showing 3% increases each year had an error. It was done by taking a very simple computation that involved taking 3% from the previous contract and using the same absolute dollar amount for each year. The way this should increase is by taking the starting amount and add on 3% to give you the new total. That number transfers over to the beginning of the next year, when you take the 3% again. That was the intent of the contract. The schedule itself was wrong. Though this is a very nominal amount, the computation still was not what it should have been. This is simply correcting the numbers on that schedule.

RESOLUTION 2026-001-AMENDED-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE TO DECLARE A POLICE SERVICE WEAPON AS SURPLUS PROPERTY AND GRANTING AUTHORIZATION TO SELL SAID SURPLUS PERSONAL PROPERTY UPON SUCH TERMS AND AT SUCH PRICE AS ARE DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- No comments were made.

RESOLUTION 2026-002-FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS OPPOSING FIRST ENERGY CORPORATION'S REQUEST TO THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO TO LET CLEVELAND ELECTRIC ILLUMINATING CO. EXTEND THE TIME IT TAKES TO RESTORE SERVICE AFTER AN OUTAGE AND REQUESTING THAT FIRST ENERGY'S REQUEST NOT BE GRANTED AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Council President Kline:** On behalf of their operating companies in Ohio, First Energy has filed a request with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to allow them to extend their average outage time. For us, under the illuminating company, they are asking for an additional fifteen minutes. The problem is this is a calculated average. In order to achieve this, it may mean some outages will last a day or two longer. It all goes into a computed average. A number of cities in northeastern Ohio are in the process of filing protests with PUCO on this matter for inconveniences in their daily lives including food and storage loss. These are all valid reasons. I personally feel that in our area, there are a number of more critical concerns beyond that. Currently, there is poor quality in some parts of the area for cell-service. When you have outages, people are stranded and people cannot communicate. It is going to get worse in the next two-three years because all the old landline phones are going to disappear. Everyone will have a computer based phone. When you have a major outage, nobody can communicate. I think it is imperative that we keep outages to the absolute minimum that we can. We are showing our support here by asking PUCO not to grant this request.

Discussion of motion authorizing the Clerk of Council to confirm with the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of Liquor Control, that no objection and need for hearing is requested by the City regarding the liquor license transfer of location from Sheffield Road LLC 128 E Front St. STE B Perrysburg OH 43551 to Fischer Family Markets LLC Willoughby Hills Grocery Outlet 28241 Chardon Road Willoughby Hills OH 44092 under transaction number OCT TFOL 10011041-1.

- **Council President Kline:** At our last meeting, City Engineer DiFranco mentioned that there was a motion involving Fischer Family market. He indicated that there was going to be a second motion related to that facility. This business is unique since it involved an opportunity zone.

Discussion of motion to go out to bid for asphalt.

- No discussion.

Discussion of motion to go out to bid for limestone.

- No discussion.

Discussion of Motion to Declare Music Fest 2026 in Willoughby Hills a Public Purpose on August 15, 2026.

- No discussion.

Discussion of correct terminology used when going into and reconvening from executive session.

- **Council President Kline:** We have been asked to have an explanation related to when Council goes into executive sessions and the terminology that we use when we make the motion, go into executive session, and reconvene the meeting. I just wanted to spend a few minutes going over this so that everybody has the correct understanding on why we have to do this.
- This is all under Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3358:17-1-04.2 Executive Sessions. There are a limited number of reasons that we can go into executive session. That includes the consideration of the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against the public employee, official licensee, or regulated individual.
- Other reasons we can go into executive session are:
 - To consider the purchase of property (both real and personal, tangible or intangible), or consider the sale of property (either real or personal) by competitive bid if disclosure of the information would give competitive advantage to the other side
 - Conferences with the public body's attorney concerning pending or imminent court action
 - Preparing for, conducting, or reviewing collective bargaining strategy
 - Matters required to be kept confidential by federal law, federal rules, or state statutes by division
 - Finally, specialized details of security arrangements where disclosure of the information to be discussed in executive session might reveal information that could be used to commit, or avoid prosecution for, a violation of the law
- These are the only reasons why we would go into executive session. As you could tell by the wording, they are all highly confidential reasons, and that is why they are done in executive session. The final point regarding executive sessions is that we only have discussions in

executive sessions. We do not vote during executive sessions. That is all done in the open meeting.

- When we do go into executive session, there are strict requirements on how this is to be handled regarding the wording of the motions and how it is to be repeated. We have a script with these motions so when we have a need for executive session, we have the information right there and we are not misstating anything.
- In this hypothetical example dealing with imminent litigation, the motion read would be as follows, "Motion to go into executive session to discuss imminent litigation, inviting all members of Council, the Mayor, the Law Director, and the Finance Director." That is the motion we vote on.
- Then, the Council President would say, "Motion to go into executive session to discuss imminent litigation, inviting all members of Council, the Mayor, the Law Director, and the Finance Director has passed." Before we leave the room, we would have to indicate what is about to happen by saying, " The Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation is suspended at (insert time) and the executive session to discuss imminent litigation, inviting all members of Council, the Mayor, the Law Director, and the Finance Director will commence in the conference room at this time." We would then go into the conference room.
- After the executive session has ended, we would come back and say, "The executive session to discuss imminent litigation, whose invitees included all members of Council, the Mayor, the Law Director, and the Finance Director has ended, and I am reconvening the Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation at (insert time)." It is a requirement that we go through this process every time. It is required by law. Having said this, I will open this up to any more comments.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** I was wondering if we could get copies of this documentation.
- **Council President Kline:** I will make certain that everybody gets a copy of the script, which changes depending on why we are going into executive session, as well as the Ohio Administrative Code.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I know that this is important because there was someone going around and suing different municipalities because they did not say a certain phrase. I understand the importance as to why we need to understand this correctly. Thank you.

PUBLIC PORTION: (Audio 44:50)

An opportunity for the public to address Council with any comments, issues, or concerns.

Public Portion opened at 7:15 p.m.

- Nobody spoke for Public Portion.

Public Portion closed at 7:15 p.m.

LEGISLATION: (Audio 45:10)

- No comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT: (Audio 45:20)

- **Motion** made by **Councilwoman Miller**, seconded by **Councilwoman Sivo** to adjourn the February 17, 2026 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation.

Roll Call: **AYES:** Kline, Miller, Sivo, Taylor Draper, Jarmuszkiewicz
 NAYS: None
 Vote: 5/0

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

APPROVED: FEB 26, 2026
 Date



Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: Nick Aiello
 Nicholas Aiello
 Clerk of Council