

President of Council
MICHAEL KLINE

Vice President of Council
TANYA TAYLOR DRAPER

Clerk of Council
NICHOLAS AIELLO

City of Willoughby Hills

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

Regular Council Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2026

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order on Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 7:39 p.m. in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 7:39 p.m. (0:05)

Cell Phone Reminder to Turn off Devices

Pledge of Allegiance (Audio: 0:12)

ROLL CALL (Audio: 0:32)

Members Present: Council Vice President Tanya Taylor Draper, Councilwoman Julie A. Belich, Councilman Joe Jarmuszkiewicz, Council President Michael Kline, Councilman Dan Knecht, and Councilwoman Vicki Miller

Also Present: Mayor Christopher Hallum, City Engineer Pete DiFranco, and Finance Director Bruce Scott

Absent: Councilwoman Kathleen Sivo and Law Director Michael A. Kenny Jr.

Motion made by **Councilwoman Miller**, seconded by **Councilwoman Belich**, to excuse **Councilwoman Kathleen Sivo** from tonight's meeting.

Discussion on the Motion:

No discussion

Roll Call: **AYES:** Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller
NAYS: None
Vote: 6/0

The aforementioned motion has carried to excuse Councilwoman Sivo from the April 9, 2026 Regular Council Meeting.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE (Audio 1:35)

Email dated 3/31/26 from Taylor Draper, Tanya Re: Small Box Discount stores
Email dated 3/30/26 from Mehollin, Karen Steven Nelson
Email dated 3/30/26 from Jennifer Varro Re: Public Records Request Pertaining to Mr. Schroeder
Email dated 3/30/26 from Fink, Sandra RE: Public Records Request: Legislation Pertaining to Small Box Discount Stores
Email dated 3/30/26 from Jennifer Varro Re: Records Commission Correspondence Public Records Request
Email dated 3/27/26 from Taylor Draper, Tanya Small Box Discount stores
Email dated 3/27/26 from Jennifer Varro Re: Public Records Request Pertaining to Ordinance 2009-25 Exhibit
Email dated 3/27/26 from Michney, Sharen RE: Is a city ordinance or policy being violated
Email dated 3/27/26 from Scott, Bruce RE: URGENT: Records Commission Meeting
Email dated 3/26/26 from Lloyd, Katherine PCABR Meeting 4/2/26 THURSDAY
Email dated 3/26/26 from Stergar, Jeff Deferred Compensation
Email dated 3/25/26 from Bell, Jennifer RE: ORC 5709.85 TIRC
Email dated 3/25/26 from Fink, Sandra RE: Contacts
Email dated 3/24/26 from Glassman, Tracy City of Willoughby Hills - Art Fest 2026
Email dated 3/24/26 from Scott, Bruce FW: Willoughby Hills Tax Incentive Review Council
Email dated 3/24/26 from Taylor Draper, Tanya Re: District 2 Meeting Slides
Email dated 3/24/26 from Grubiss, Mark RE: Records request
Email dated 3/23/26 from Jarmuszkiewicz, Joe Re: REMINDER: Housing Council Tomorrow March 24, 2026 6:00 P.M.
Email dated 3/23/26 from Lloyd, Katherine FW: WH BZA Meeting 4-14-26 TUESDAY - 7:00 PM
Email dated 3/23/26 from CLE Grilling Records request
Email dated 3/23/26 from Mehollin, Karen Fw: Question on codified ordinance formats
Email dated 3/23/26 from Willoughby Hills Re: Records request
Email dated 3/23/26 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Meeting Notes - Pylon Signs - 28301 Chardon Bishop Plaza
Email dated 3/23/26 from Mehollin, Karen TIRC composition
Email dated 3/22/26 from Rodd Schroeder Records request
Email dated 3/22/26 from CLE Grilling Records request
Email dated 3/20/26 from Miller, Vicki Re: Agendas, Minutes, and Legislation for Next Week
Email dated 3/20/26 from Willoughby Hills Re: Please Review Ordinance 2026-019
Email dated 3/19/26 from Lloyd, Katherine SIGNED Review for 38151 Pleasant Valley Rd
Email dated 3/19/26 from Gandee, Robert MEMO - 2026 Mar 18 - Request for Additional Three Career Firefighters from SAFER Grant
Email dated 3/19/26 from Gandee, Robert RE: Please Review Ordinance 2026-020
Email dated 3/19/26 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: PCABR Meeting 3/19/26 THURSDAY
Email dated 3/19/26 from DiFranco, Pete RE: Signed Exhibit to Ordinance 2009-25
Email dated 3/19/26 from Mehollin, Karen 2008-43 Ordinance
Email dated 3/19/26 from Scott, Bruce RE: Ordinances from 2024-2025 pertaining to bidding

PUBLIC PORTION #1 (Audio: 1:48)

An opportunity for the public to address Council concerning anything pertaining to tonight's agenda.

Public Portion #1 opened at 7:41 p.m.

- Nobody spoke for Public Portion.

Public Portion #1 closed at 7:41 p.m.

MAYOR'S REPORT (Audio: 1:45)

- **Mayor Hallum:** Good evening! Many of you may have seen the water company and other utility providers on your street marking underground lines. If you weren't sure why, it's because AT&T has begun installing fiber. Yes—fiber has finally come to Willoughby Hills! For those unfamiliar, fiber is an alternative to cable and satellite internet, phone, and TV service. It is significantly faster and often less expensive than other options. Watch your mailbox for service offers once the project is completed this summer.
- This week, the scope meeting for the new multi-use path on the east side of SOM Center Road took place. Engineering and planning will occur over the next 12 months, followed by going out to bid for construction. Construction planning and scheduling will begin once the winning bid is selected. Path construction is expected to begin in April 2028 with completion in August 2028. The project will require some tree removal, minor relocation of the bridle path by the Metropark, and several utility adjustments. Traffic will be maintained, though occasional lane closures may be necessary during active work. The total project cost is approximately \$1.8 million, with the City's share around \$100,000. The remainder is funded through federal grants and in-kind support from the Metropark. We look forward to making it safer for residents to access the trail and enjoy our parks.
- Last Friday's Shred Event presented by Thrivent was a great success! Over 90 cars dropped off papers and documents to be securely shredded. The City will host its own shred event this fall, and we'll share details as the date approaches. Please also mark your calendars for our spring Electronics Recycling Day on May 23 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Shoppes of Willoughby Hills.
- If you haven't visited the west-end shopping area recently, you'll notice it has been completely transformed. AutoZone is now open, and Burlington, Five Below, and Grocery Outlet are expected to open in the coming weeks. Plans are also underway for a new pylon sign on Bishop Road that will allow the City to regularly advertise events and other messages.
- Tonight, I support passage of ordinance 2026-020 to declare a city vehicle as surplus, ordinance 2026-021 to authorize the signing of the fire union contract, and ordinance 2026-022 for SAFER grant hires for the fire department. I want to thank the members of the fire department for working with the administration to come to a fair and reasonable agreement.
- That ends my report and I stand open for questions.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- No Law Director's report.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Audio: 5:08)

- **Finance Director Scott:** March financials were closed this afternoon. I think the financials have been updated to the website already. If not, they will certainly be updated tomorrow. In regard to the union negotiations, I would like to publicly thank Chief Gandee, Assistant Law Director Tom Lobe, and Mayor Hallum. We couldn't have done it without them. There was a lot of hard work and effort from our team. I am very proud that we were able to get these things done. With that, I am open for questions.
- **Mayor Hallum:** Bruce Scott did a fantastic job with the numbers and helping the firefighters understand the numbers. He does a great job parsing out where other people are compared to other communities similar to us. While we may be lower in total revenues compared to what we bring in, our people are paid in the middle-high range compared to other communities.

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT (Audio: 7:00)

- No City Engineer's report.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS REPORTS / COMMITTEE REPORTS (Audio 7:17)

PC-ABR reported by Council Vice President Taylor Draper

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I would like to report on the Planning and Zoning Commission Architectural Board of Review. The group met last Thursday, April 2. During the Architectural Board portion of the meeting, we approved the following:
 - An in-ground pool approved at 2496 Mapleview Lane
 - A rear covered porch at 3485 Giovanni Avenue. The house structure had already been approved prior, so we were just adding the rear porch.
 - The pylon sign at the Shoppes at 28301 Chardon Road

There was no business for the Planning Portion of the meeting.

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** The shop owners would like to install a digital reader, which I fully support. This would be an opportunity for those on the west side, who don't pass City Hall every day, to get information and keep up with what is going on. That sign would be very valuable and I look forward to it.

Recreation Commission reported by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** The City garage sale will be Saturday, April 25. The applications have to be in by the 17. Applications can be obtained on the Community Center or online.

Beautification Committee reported by Council Vice President Taylor Draper

No report.

Finance Committee Report by Council President Kline

No report.

WHISPER reported by Councilwoman Miller

No report.

Deer Management Committee reported by Councilwoman Belich

No report.

Business Subcommittee – reported by Councilwoman Sivo

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: (Audio: 9:15)

- **Mayor Hallum:** I did speak to Jesse Styles concerning our cell tower. He said that he had a conversation with one of the main cell tower companies in Columbus. He is supposed to be sharing with me what happened. It sounds like there is some positive movement on this for us. I will give you more updates once I receive that. I non-stop bother him at least monthly. He is working on that for us. Thank you.

CONSENT:

DISPOSITION OF THE JOURNAL

Approval of the March 26, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Approval of the March 26, 2026 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation Minutes

ORDINANCE 2026-020-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE TO DECLARE ONE (1) CITY VEHICLE AS SURPLUS PROPERTY AND GRANTING AUTHORIZATION TO SELL SAID SURPLUS VEHICLE ON THE OPEN MARKET UPON SUCH TERMS AND AT SUCH PRICES AS ARE DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE 2026-023-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION’S (ODOT) ROAD SALT CONTRACTS AWARDED IN 2026 IN ACCORDANCE WITH OHIO REVISED CODE 5513.01(B) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Motion to adopt subsidy amounts for Parkview Pool in Mayfield Village. Cost to Willoughby Hills residents ages 5-59 would be \$8/visit; seniors 60+ rate would be \$5/visit. Children 5 and under are free.
- Motion to go out to bid for road/rock salt for the 2026-2027 season.

Motion made by Councilman Knecht, seconded by Councilwoman Miller to approve the items on the consent agenda.

Discussion on the Motion:

No discussion

Roll Call: **AYES:** Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller
NAYS: None
Vote: 6/0

The aforementioned motion has carried to adopt the items in the consent agenda.

LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE 2026-021-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS AND THE WILLOUGHBY HILLS FIRE FIGHTERS, LOCAL #3149 OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS, AFL-CIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Mayor Hallum:** This contract is essentially the same as the other ones that you have passed. The difference is instead of the 3's across the board, there is a 3.6 on the first year, a 3.5 on the second year, and a 3.5 on the third. This is the difference in the raises.
- Second, in the past, we have given a \$1,500 paramedic pay as part of the contract. They just asked if we can roll that in instead of making it a separate payment. So, instead of getting a one-time payment of \$1,500 every year, it will just be rolled into their pay.
- We are trying to avoid a situation where firefighters are sick one week, and they pick up a shift and automatically get overtime. We agreed that wasn't reasonable. If they worked the overtime already on Monday, and they got sick, they did not want to lose that time.
- For President's day, they will be paid time and a half if they work it.
- Prior to this contract, they can be sick for two tours (two 24 hour shifts) before we could request a sick note. That is a long time to be sick and not be required to have a note. I would like to have it to where we can request a note the second time they call in sick. They agreed that made sense. Everybody gave a little bit to make this better for everybody. This was done without attorneys. We sat down and worked this out. I hope we can continue to do this going forward. The attorneys, in this particular case, were not helping the situation. In my opinion, the attorneys were gaslighting. Both parties agreed it was not going well and wanted to sit down and talk. I was one hundred percent on board. We sat down and we were able to work something out that was reasonable.
- That is another reason why I would like to see this get done. They worked so hard on making something that would work and would benefit us all.
- **Motion made by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz, seconded by Councilman Knecht, to waive the three reading rule on Ordinance 2026-021.**

Discussion on the Motion:

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** This seems like a reasonable contract. It will be retroactive to January 1 regardless of if we pass it tonight or in two weeks. It would benefit the City to get this passed as soon as possible and get the overtime provisions in place.

Roll Call: **AYES:** Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller
 NAYS: None
 Vote: 6/0

The three reading rule on Ordinance 2026-021 has been waived.

Motion made by **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz**, seconded by **Councilman Knecht**, to adopt Ordinance 2026-021.

Discussion on the Motion:

- No discussion.

Roll Call: **AYES:** Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller
 NAYS: None
 Vote: 6/0

Ordinance 2026-021 has been adopted.

ORDINANCE 2026-022-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PART ONE – ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, TITLE FIVE – ADMINISTRATIVE, CHAPTER 141 – FIRE DEPARTMENT, SECTION 141.01 – COMPOSITION; REPEALING CONFLICTING LEGISLATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Mayor Hallum:** I want to make it clear that this grant started on the date that it was given. The clock is already running on the first year. The longer it takes us to hire somebody, the less money we get this year. That is why it is really important that we change this as soon as possible so we can hire and take advantage of the grant. The first year is the most money that we get.
- **Council President Kline:** Based on Chief Gandee’s memo, it took quite a while to find qualified individuals.
- **Chief Gandee:** Yes, it did. From March 23, 2017 to when I was hired on April 15, 2019, one of the positions was in the process of being filled and the remaining positions were also being filled. At that time, we didn’t have a test. We ended up having to make provisions to hold the test and organize through Civil Service. This year, we should be able to go relatively quickly as we are planning to change course a little bit and go strictly to lateral transfer since we are a combination fire department. We have a very good amount of part-time firefighters that will be eligible to occupy these three career positions. In addition, anyone outside the department would have the opportunity to as well. One of the concerns Civil Service had was making sure the City had the best possible candidates.

Motion made by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz, seconded by Councilwoman Belich, to waive the three reading rule on Ordinance 2026-022.

Discussion on the Motion:

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** As the Chief stated, the grant is in affect and we are actually losing money by not using it at the present.
- **Mayor Hallum:** The firefighters are very excited about having this extra help. Having an additional career person per shift gives us better service for our residents.

Roll Call: **AYES: Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller**
 NAYS: None
 Vote: 6/0

The three reading rule on Ordinance 2026-022 has been waived.

Motion made by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz, seconded by Councilman Knecht, to waive the three reading rule on Ordinance 2026-022.

Discussion on the Motion:

- No discussion.

Roll Call: **AYES: Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller**
 NAYS: None
 Vote: 6/0

Ordinance 2026-019 has been adopted.

NEW BUSINESS (Audio 24:30)

- No new business.

PUBLIC PORTION #2 (Audio 24:40)

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

Public Portion #2 opened at 8:04 p.m.

- **Ed McKenna 2963 Lamplight Ln:** I previously emailed Kathy, who is our district councilperson, concerning our street. Each year, it needs repairs over and over again. I wanted to know if the repairs would be done with asphalt. It is a concrete street, but repairs over the last number of years have been done with asphalt. A number of years back, I remember a council person said to maintain concrete streets with concrete and asphalt streets with asphalt. I think we had to go away from that because of the urgency to make a repair one year, and then we repeated that. She told me to contact the Service Department. I put in about six contacts with the Service Department and didn't have any reply. I found out that Lamplight Lane is one of the four streets that is to be repaired this year, but I don't know if it is going to be repaired with asphalt or concrete. My concern is – it should be repaired with concrete. I can appreciate that it is expensive. I don't know if it was in the budget. I would like to find out what the other three streets are. If it's not in the budget, and it can't be done, and asphalt has to be done, next year, it needs to be done with concrete. The people who originally purchase a house with concrete deserve to have that

continue.

- I appreciate the comments that you made about the flooding into the sewers. It shouldn't be something we talk about for one night and forget about it. I appreciate that you continue to keep that in mind. I put in a few calls to the Service Department. Everybody should do that and I think people should do whatever they can themselves. I would like to have a map of where the sewer lines are. We have flags for everything else. One thing we don't have are the sewer lines. If that can be done, that would help us be proactive ourselves. I appreciate everybody's willingness to help, but when we have to get our paycheck/checkbook out to pay for a test, that is where we draw the line. Thank you for our time.
- **Joe Cortese Lamplight Ln:** I am here with Ed talking about the pavement replacement and repairs. I am just curious to see when that will be scheduled so we can stay on top of it. It would be critical to put that patch material in with asphalt. The concrete has been repaired with concrete before. It has been done that way on Oakwood and Gatsby. I don't know where the fourth street mentioned is in the City that is concrete. They have been patched with concrete properly and they are still holding up. The patches are doing very well. The asphalt patches that have been done were done pretty well too by our Service Department. They did very nice work. It was very nice and smooth for a while, but it deteriorates after several years. It's just throwing money away. I sure would appreciate it if it can be considered to pave this properly with concrete. It's not difficult. Mark could probably do it himself actually. I would like to know when the schedule is so we can talk about it more. I don't want to miss this. I would appreciate that. Thank you very much.
- *Public Portion #2 closed at 8:10 p.m.*
- **Mayor Hallum:** I am going to be having some conversations with City Engineer DiFranco and Mr. Grubiss about the concrete streets in particular, but also Lamplight, regarding what repairs need to get done and the costs of those repairs. The money that we get in the road levy does not cover as much as it once did. While I live on Lamplight Ln and would also like to see concrete repairs done, I think we need to identify the cost of doing it, all the repairs that need to be made, and whether or not we need to do this over time. I don't think anybody on the street necessarily expects us to go and completely repair every single thing on the entire street in one single year. I think they would like to see some progress. Maybe this year, we can do a section and then next year we can do another section until we finally get those all fixed. We might have to do some blacktop patchworking in the meantime to keep it safe at least. We are going to be sitting down over the next few weeks to try and see if we can come up with a plan that will work.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I have also heard from some people on Gatsby regarding the asphalt patching. It holds up for maybe six months to a year and then it starts falling out. I know it is impossible to just say we should take the whole street out and replace it. That would be millions of dollars. We should come up with a plan to fix the worst sections and then work out way through the rest of them.
- **Mayor Hallum:** It's mainly the joints that are the issue. Just so everybody understands, we are not talking about having to replace an entire block, it's just those seams. That is where it is intended to break, at the saw cuts and seams. And it has. Now, we are going to look at how we are going to solve that.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER/FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY (Audio 33:20)

- **Councilwoman Miller:** I just want to remind the residents that Monday, April 13 begins the project on River Rd.
- River Rd from Chardon Rd to the line at Gates Mills will become northbound only. Make sure you plan your trips accordingly.

- **Mayor Hallum:** I want to remind everyone that the businesses that are on either side of the bridge that is currently out on Chardon road are small locally owned businesses. I know it's a little out of the way now, but if you want those businesses to be here when the bridge is done, please take the extra time to drive around and give them your business. It is important for us to be able to stay a small community with small businesses like that.
- **Mayor Hallum:** I want to remind everybody that the electronic recycling will be in May.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Who is the individual putting the signs for the businesses out?
- **Mayor Hallum:** That is us.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** That is great. I've heard from a business owner there that was an excellent idea for the people who don't live in the City. People are seeing the signs and its working. We may need more of those.
- **Mayor Hallum:** I would like to put something around Eddy Rd. to remind people that Foster's is open. They are a landmark here. I will point out too that we have a deal with them, and they will be providing ice cream at baseball games at Roemisch Field.
- Lastly, I would like to mention that after many years of playing in Willoughby, Willoughby South freshman and JV teams are making Willoughby Hills their home field. We are looking forward to that and supporting our local school system.

ADJOURNMENT (Audio 38:00)

Motion made by **Councilwoman Belich**, seconded by **Councilman Knecht** to adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call: **AYES:** Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller
 NAYS: None
 Vote: 6/0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

APPROVED: Apr 23 2026
 Date


 Michael Kline
 President of Council

ATTEST: Nicholas Aiello
 Nicholas Aiello
 Clerk of Council