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Vice President of Council
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Council Clerk
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 April 9, 2026

The Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation was called to order on **April 9, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 6:15 p.m. (0:19)

ROLL CALL (Audio: 0:16)

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, Finance Director Bruce Scott, and City Engineer DiFranco

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

BEGINNING DISPOSITION: (Audio 0:54)

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.

- **Council President Kline:** This ordinance is for a 2022 Ford Explorer with 82,000 miles and an estimated value of \$7,000.00.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** The estimated value of \$7,000.00, where does that money go when it's sold?
- **Finance Director Scott:** It goes into the Capital Improvement Fund.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** Regarding all the other auctions we have had, is there a listing that shows what they have sold for?

- **Finance Director Scott:** We can provide that information.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I am just curious because we never hear if they have sold or not or gotten donated.
- **Finance Director Scott:** To my knowledge, I don't think we have had anything not sell. Values fluctuate. Sometimes you get more and sometimes you get less. They are pretty good about estimating the values.

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.

- **Council President Kline:** This is the new Union contract with the fire fighters. Chief Gandee is here this evening, I will ask the Fire Chief if there is anything he would like to say about this contract/ordinance.
- **Chief Gandee:** Having a good contract does attract some very quality and above-standard employees. It also gives us the opportunity to keep members who may be looking at going elsewhere in Willoughby Hills, as well as get members coming from other departments. We currently have some other positions for that and you will be hearing about that shortly.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** I was wondering if someone could comment on Article 18 The Overtime Compensation, and what the difference is from that last contract to what it is currently.
- **Finance Director Scott:** Overtime is always a concern, but it is necessary. The City wanted to try to be able to mitigate those costs as much as possible. This allows for a situation where if you call in for a non-scheduled sick time, you cannot get overtime until you work your next scheduled shift. Let's say you were scheduled to work Monday, but then called in sick and had to be called in Tuesday for mandatory overtime. You would not be entitled to get overtime pay for that until after you have worked your next scheduled shift, which would typically be a Thursday because they work 24 on 48 off. This helps the City a bit but it doesn't necessarily penalize the firefighters who had already worked overtime. We did not want to take overtime away from them if they have already earned it. The thought was, if you are working the same amount of hours, we didn't feel there should be a benefit as well.

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.

- **Council President Kline:** I am glad Chief Gandee is here with us tonight. He has supplied Council with a detailed memo which explains this ordinance and what is behind it. For the benefit of both Council and the public, I would just like to ask the chief if he could quickly summarize the purpose of this.

- **Chief Gandee:** We have previously applied for the SAFER Grant four times without success. This is a very difficult grant to obtain. I will give credit to Lieutenant Planisek who had inquired about utilizing a grant writer they learned about through the Union. We did end up hiring them and we got the grant. Now, we have three spots that we can look at filling. This gives the ability to have three career firefighters, one for each A, B, and C shift. This is the 24-48 hour rotation. This covers one career firefighter for each spot. It gives us the opportunity to have more stability with the organization. Our career members are extremely important to us and having career members definitely adds to that stability. We are a combination department meaning we have both full-time and part-time.
- Unfortunately, it is a revolving door. The number of firefighters out there isn't as vast as it once was. We are very fortunate to have members who have gotten hired full-time in other places. Some have stayed and some have not, but at least this gives us a better opportunity to have more standardization among shifts throughout the department. We've got one part-time member we are paying full-time benefits for just because of the number of hours. Last year, we had seven members that were essentially working over the minimum threshold that would qualify them for healthcare. This should hopefully provide us more stability and better staffing throughout the year and beyond. Over the next three years, the City should decide if they want to continue with it. The burden would be on the City to continue. It is through FEMA that we have this funding available.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I would assume that part-time members are interested in full-time positions, correct?
- **Chief Gandee:** Correct.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** So, we wouldn't be going out and searching for people to fill these slots, correct?
- **Chief Gandee:** Yes. Our plan is to essentially advertise and do this through lateral transfer. In the past, we have been part of the regional test. This will be the first year that we are not part of the regional test. The reason is because we have so many qualified part-time candidates within, as well as candidates that are working full-time at other places that would like to come here. Part of this is because we do have a good contract. Part of it is the culture and equipment as well. We do currently have some members, but we are not limiting it to that. We would also like to open it to any other career members. The point is to advertise to see what qualified candidates we can get.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** After the grant is over, what plans do you have to maintain their salaries and benefits?
- **Chief Gandee:** Finance Director Bruce Scott and the Mayor have taken a lot of time and energy to look at a lot of different ways to make this happen. He may be able to provide further information. The sustainability and continuance of these three positions is something we have had extensive conversations about.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I would hate to invest three years in a person and then all of the sudden the grant would be over and we would not be able to maintain them. That would be a loss in a lot of different ways so I hope there is an effort to try and make sure we keep them.

- **Finance Director Scott:** It is a concern we all have. Obviously, we want to staff as many qualified people as we can in the department. One thing we could do is reapply for the SAFER Grant again after the termination of this one. What the Fire Chief, Mayor and I have talked a lot about is how much these positions are going to reduce our part-time staffing and their required overtime. Ideally, what we would love to be able to do is hire enough full-timers that would essentially eliminate that part-time need. That does happen in some surrounding communities. Due to the call volume in the City, it doesn't seem like we can do that unless we hire nine more, which I do not see how we could stomach being a small City. The jury is still out as far as what the results will be. We are going to be spending a lot of time and effort reducing overtime and part-time staff. This is going to give us a three-year window to test it and see how we do.
- **Mayor Hallum:** In addition to that, we have talked to the career firefighters and expressed to them that the ability for this to be successful is going to be depending on how they handle overtime. They have some control over making this program work. We all agreed that we do want it to work. Some of the people who were not utilizing sick time properly are no longer here. they felt like this would not be an issue. We hope that we can make this work.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** A lot of my questions have been answered with the other questions. We are looking to make up the difference of what we have to pay by not having as much overtime and part-time staffing. My other question is about the call volume. Can you speak to that? How much of an increase in call volume have you seen over the course of your tenure here as Fire Chief?
- **Chief Gandee:** Since I have been here, we have had a constant influx. We had one year that went down a bit but the last three years we have increased unsubstantially from maybe 50 to 75 calls roughly. A lot of this is the overlap. We are running around 30 percent overlapping calls meaning typically our minimum staffing is five firefighters on duty. Sometimes, we will have six because it gives us a little more latitude to handle a number of different situations. Typically, with one EMS call, you are going to automatically lose three members of the department. If it's a full arrest where somebody is not breathing and we have to do CPR, all our members would be occupied. Typically, we lose three people for general EMS calls. We have a strong reliance on our neighbors. By having staffing to five or six, we could typically handle at least two EMS calls. We try to see if we could have one member left back at the City should we have a fire or an EMS call. By having the staffing that we do, we can typically handle two calls routinely relatively efficiently.

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.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** What is the difference between this and going out to bid for road salt?
- **Finance Director Scott:** This assigns us with ODOT's bid. It pulls everyone's resources. Hopefully we get a better price that way.

Discussion of impact and solutions for illegal storm water intrusion to the sanitary sewer.

- **Mayor Hallum:** As many of you know, we have had some significant rain, almost two and a half+ inches in just a few hours in many places in the City. Specifically, the central part of the City. We have experienced flooded basements and sewage in people's basements. This is not the first time. This has happened many times. We have had meetings in the past with residents to discuss what is happening and to help identify the issue. It happened again. While we cannot control nature, there are some things that are causing problems. Just so everyone understands, within the last five years, the City relined most of its clay mains where most of the flooding was at, which sealed off any cross contamination of storm water into our sanitary sewer. There are two things that we believe are causing these issues for our residents. One is the potential that downspouts were illegally connected to the sanitary sewer, probably most likely by the builder and unbeknownst to the property owner.
- Secondly, the laterals running from the main to the homeowner's property potentially deteriorated and cracked because most of them are clay. Those are the two things that are primarily causing these issues from the engineer's perspective. Whenever you have gaps in your lateral, the water is going to force its way in and it will force its way through the simplest way to get there, which would be drains and toilets in your basement.
- I would like Council to consider instituting a point of sale that would require anyone selling their properties to do a sewer dye test at their property. Paper work would then have to be submitted to the City to show that it is certified. If it is not certified, it has to be certified by the sale, or it has to be escrowed by the buyer to be taken care of within a certain time frame. I would suggest that within 90 days after closing it would need to be resolved. That has helped in many surrounding communities. That is how they addressed this problem.
- Additionally, while that would fix things eventually, I would like to consider other options that might fix this sooner. If we perhaps instituted something that required people who are in X yards from a major water area, within the next 180 days, to do a sewer dye test and send that to us, that might have some more immediate solutions. I have met with some people who are suffering the most from this and have asked them to provide information about what they currently have in place and what they have done to try and curb this issue. I am setting up meetings with them and the City Engineer so that we can look at their specific situation to see if there is anything else that might be creating this issue for them. With that, I am open to questions.
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** I can add that the City is very proactive in inspecting and maintaining our public sewers. The public sewers are within the right of way. Our Service Department cleans them out every year with high pressure jetting. That is very proactive. Most cities do this every three-five years. We do this every year. We started the program in 2019 of video inspecting our sewers and identifying any repair areas. Once those are found, we repair them and sometimes line them. We started that in 2019. We made it through the entire sewer area of the City last year. This year, we didn't do the program but we will be starting that up again and going through the City again. In addition to the sewers, we have eleven pump stations that require maintenance every year. All of those have an emergency generator. For those who don't know, the sewer area of the City is west of SOM Center Rd. There's a little bit east of SOM Center, but for the most part, it is the half of the City that is west of SOM Center. The homes on the east end are still on septic.

- *City Engineer DiFranco presented options for homeowners including float valves, stand pipes, and bag water valves.*
- **Mayor Hallum:** One of the residents thought perhaps one of our manhole covers was either broken off or lower than it should be which could allow water to infiltrate and cause that additional pressure. I did talk with the Road Superintendent about that and he told me that every year, he walks the entire easement and all the manhole covers are reviewed and inspected. He said he just did it last year. All the manhole covers are bolted and sealed, so no water intrusion can come in through the manhole covers. As City Engineer DiFranco said, we do clean out our sewers every year; the State requirement is every five years. We are open to questions.
- **Councilwoman Belich:** How about the people who have been impacted now? Whether they had something like what Pete just showed us in their homes or not, there's clearly a problem. Now that this backup is occurring, what do we do to help the people who have had this impact at this point? There is clearly a cost that is involved for them. What do we have in place, if anything, to help our community with this issue?
- **Mayor Hallum:** I think, at this point, the City's way of helping is identifying these points of intrusion. If you get that much water coming in through people's gutters and flowing into a sanitary sewer that is not meant to handle that kind of volume, it is going to create the kind of problems that we are seeing. That is why I am presenting to Council that the way for us to help is to put an ordinance into place that requires that homeowners test their system to verify that they are not part of the problem. This is how other communities have handled this issue and it has solved many, if not, all of their problems. Wickliffe is a good example of that. They have had this in place for many years. This is solving the problem of getting sewage and storm water into people's basements. If we can come up with a way to require some of these other properties in close proximity to the areas where the water travels to have these dye tests done, this would be better.
- As you all know, we do not work on private property. Our residents are responsible for the main where their lateral attaches all the way back to their house. That is the responsibility of the homeowner.
- **Councilwoman Belich:** As this is occurring, we understand that it's not necessarily the fault of the homeowner.
- **Mayor Hallum:** We are not looking for fault. You can see when your dryer vent comes detached and your dryer is now blowing hot air and lint into your basement. You cannot see when your sewer lateral has cracked unless you have a camera like we did with all of the mains that we are responsible for. We had cameras, found problems, and repaired them. Most homeowners don't ever check their laterals. More likely than not, because these are made of clay in most of the City, if our main was cracked and we had to make repairs to our main, many of our homeowners' laterals are probably also cracked. It is incumbent upon the residents to check the stuff that they are responsible for and ensure that it is not creating a problem for them.
- **Councilwoman Belich:** If it's my dryer vent, I know it's my dryer vent. If we are talking about a crack that has occurred, and the homeowner has determined that the crack is not on their end, the issue is not from their vantage point. There is clearly a cost that is involved in fixing that. Is it the

homeowners insurance company that ends up stepping in?

- **Mayor Hallum:** I would imagine it is homeowners insurance and out of pocket. Insurance does not cover everything unless you cover everything. Even then, insurance agents are notorious for making sure that they have to pay out as little as possible.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** From what I am hearing and understanding is that it's certain areas in the City that are mostly affected by this such as end-of-streets and cul-de-sacs. Is there any way we can assist the homeowners closest to the problem in getting this checked?
- **Mayor Hallum:** Council has the ability to do those kinds of things if they want to institute some kind of program. You all have the authority to do that. It has been the practice that most times, we don't pay for things on private property.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** From what I am hearing, it is not the whole City that is affected by it. It seems like certain areas are affected more than others. We can target those areas and possibly find out if it is the problem of the homeowner or a bigger problem in the whole City. At least we would be eliminating one of the factors that could be causing it. I know people have had backflow valves. They have already taken the proactive approach to try and protect their houses and their houses still aren't protected.
- **Mayor Hallum:** As Mr. DiFranco showed tonight, there are different options for backflow. Some may not be able to handle many things. The homeowners need to make their own decisions as to what level of protection they can afford and want. We don't really have a say in that. I am open if Council wants to come up with some type of program to help residents with this. I would be happy to be involved, as I am sure the engineer would.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I understand there was a problem on Lamplight Ln. What other areas were affected?
- **Mayor Hallum:** Gatsby was affected. Also, on White Rd, there was impact. The southern part of the central area of Willoughby Hills was impacted by excess water coming from Richmond Heights, Highland Heights, and Mayfield Village. I am reaching out to the mayors of the City to see how they can help us by diverting some of that water elsewhere so that it is not rushing towards our residents.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** Are they all serviced by sewer on White Rd?
- **Mayor Hallum:** Yes, they are.
- **Council President Kline:** 2023 was a very wet summer. There were rainstorms where it just rained for days on end. Were residents reporting similar problems like last week?
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** I remember having a meeting with one of the residents. I don't remember what year it was, but it was within the last few years.
- **Council President Kline:** Council will give serious consideration to what has been said here this evening.

Discussion of 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.

- **Councilwoman Belich:** I think this is a nice program. On a cost level, it is a very reasonable opportunity for Willoughby Hills. We did this last year I believe. Is this something that is factored into the budget with respect to recreation?
- **Mayor Hallum:** It is. I think we budgeted around \$10,000.00 for this program. I think last year, we were under three subsidy wise. It is much cheaper than owning a pool.
- **Council President Kline:** I think Mayfield Village is a much more enjoyable pool.
- **Mayor Hallum:** The Euclid Avenue pool has been closed for a few years. They are planning on some new modeling and reenvisioning of that location. The proximity for this pool is closer and easier to get to. But, who knows? Maybe we will do something with both Willoughby and Mayfield Village.

Discussion of motion to go out to bid for road/rock salt for the 2026-2027 season.

- No discussion.

PUBLIC PORTION: (Audio 40:30)

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

Public Portion opened at 7:10 p.m.

- **Mark Belich 37200 Chardon Rd:** Being the resident's sewer contractor, I too have gotten calls from the community. As we know, sewer dye testing only happens to homes as they sell. Are we paying for the continuous infiltration of water into our sewer systems at the Euclid water treatment plant?
- **Councilman Knecht:** No. The communities of Wickliffe and Willowick do because they are master metered. Willoughby Hills is built on your water usage so it's actually being treated for free as far as Willoughby Hills is concerned. It still creates problems at the pump station.
- **Mark Belich 37200 Chardon Rd:** We can't just march on to people's property and demand that they test their sewer system and infiltration. However, we can get prices here as a community to have a testing company come and put fans on the sanitary manholes and infiltrate smoke into the sanitary system. The inside of the house is treated with water traps; it stops smoke going to the house. The water should come out of the stack of the top of the house. If it comes out to the downspouts, it is visually observed. Getting pricing for the smoke testing for the manholes of those communities would be a proactive way to handle this. It's something we can do from the street. Other communities do it. If the house fills up with smoke, people would also realize that they don't have their sanitary sewer trap as well. You can video the house with smoke rolling out of the downspouts and send them a letter that they need to have their system tested. That will help us help the wastewater treatment plant and it will stop the infiltration. Maybe we can just concentrate on those areas. Thank you.
- **Nadette Russo White Rd:** Last week, my basement got flooded again. I have over four ft. of water in my newly remodeled basement. It's devastating to me. This happened to me in 2023 when we had a flash flood. I don't know what to do. I have two sump pumps. I do everything proactively. I have contractors out that say this will not happen again. When I looked outside the day of the storm, I had

no front yard. The yard was like a lake. I was told that it is flowing from Mayfield Village. What do we need to do to correct this? I can't go through this again and again. I have done everything proactively and I don't know what to do anymore about it. I am looking to you for suggestions or assistance.

- **Ed McKenna 2963 Lamplight Ln:** I was pleased to hear that Mark has walked the system. You talked about different proactive things you do. I think there should even be more than that. As we looked at the creek, we saw some water that comes down from the White Rd. area into our street. It just goes down into a hole. Where it goes, we don't know. When I saw that, I looked at my own property. I have a ditch on my property that heads towards the creek. As I mow the lawn, I notice a continual bump that I go over. That made me wonder if there is a hole that I am going through all the time.
- I put in some calls to the Service Department. I haven't had them returned. I wanted to report these and have somebody look at them. The disadvantage of me looking at them is that I have no idea where the maps of the lines are. If the clay lines have been relined; I think all the pipes in our neighborhood are all plastic. The people who got flooded this time were next to the creek. They have done all the proactive things to be done; they put in the backflow valves. The people who have damage have put those in and still have the same problems. While those are not foolproof, they invested in protection and they didn't get it. I am still thinking there is something in that area that is wrong. As I said, we saw the water go into a hole. We do not know where it was going, but it was a lot of water.
- **John Ciszewski Lamplight Ln:** I was not affected by the storm this time, but the last storm was August of 2023. It affected a number of houses on our street. Ours was affected at that time. Everyone around us who was affected last time was affected again this time. There are no cracks on our property line. I doubt there are any cracks on anybody's property. I can't believe they would have a crack. These are not old houses; these were put in in the early nineties. I don't think people from those newer subdivisions are tying their downspouts in to the sewer system. It just does not seem logical to me. Seeing my street built, being one of the first houses built on the extended part of Lamplight Ln, I saw everybody who did tie their downspouts tie them right to the gutters. They ran them all the way to the street. They didn't tie them down to their sump pump. The people that are being affected by this are not the ones who are causing the problem. It is coming from somewhere else.
- The only way you are going to see this is after the rain. You have to be proactive when it's raining. They supposedly scoped and fixed our street. We saw this, and I don't think it just popped up in the last couple of months. There's also another one in the middle of the yard a couple houses from that; there appears to be an entryway to the sewer system. That frustrates me. It was said all the streets were scoped and we have two issues that could possibly be causing part of the problem that should have already been caught when they scoped the street. It appears this is part of the problem. Most of the water that comes down comes from an empty lot at the end of the cul-de-sac from the properties between White Rd. and our street. There is a ditch in the back that leads the water over towards the creek that flows down and out. The guy who lives right next to the empty lot says there is a stream flowing between his property and that empty lot every time it rains. There is a lot of water coming down. It is not being diverted to the creek.
- There are two possible issues up near the cul-de-sac. The water is flowing someplace other than our street. The issue is not coming from the people being affected by this. We have invested in it; others have invested in fixing it and it's not working for them. We are not the ones causing the problem. We just happen to be the lowest ones on the line near the main. One of the reasons I went ahead and put the back flow in was because the neighbor next to me, who closer to the lower point where the main line is, put one in. He has had problems before. That was a relief point because he was getting flooded 4 ft. of water. So was the neighbor on the other side of the creek. Once they put their backflows in, I

was proactive and put one in which was an added expense of my own. The problem isn't coming from my property; it is coming from somewhere else in the City's sewer system.

- **Laura Ciszewski 2904 Lamplight Lane:** To put that in costs \$10,000.00. That is not cheap, and it was not our problem. We put it in because we were tired of having floods. We have lived on our street for 34 years and have had a dozen or more floods. This is unacceptable. I cannot tell you the loss we have had over all these years. As my husband stated, at the last meeting in August of 2023 after the floods, we were told that our pipe was cracked and that is why this was happening. It was not. It was an expense on our side. This is ridiculous. To say that the people who are closer to where this impact was should have the dye test; it isn't us. It's further that is causing this problem.
- Why is our street still flooding? When they put the new bridge in, we were supposedly never going to have one again. We have had two floods since. There is no reason for our street to still be flooding. The people on my side from the bridge to the cul-de-sac can't get to their homes. We can't leave our homes. The water is so high up; we can't drive through it. There is no excuse for this flooding. The original plans for the bridge was for it to be higher. The engineer told us not to worry because this would fix it. It didn't fix it. It isn't the fault of the people who live next to the creek because they are not keeping the creek clean. The stuff is coming down flowing and blocking the creek which makes it worse.
- It isn't just that we are having the sewer problem; we are also having the flooding, which is a massive problem in my opinion. I have had at least a dozen floods. There is no reason for this anymore. That needs to be brought up as an issue also.

Public Portion closed at 7:25 p.m.

- **Councilwoman Miller:** There is a lot to take in from all the comments we have had tonight. We hear you and I want to make sure you understand that. I don't know what the answers are for you. We can definitely look into it. I would suggest as you have ideas or you see problems, make sure you contact the City and Service Department so you can point out where the problems are. It's not for us to go around and guess what the problems are. There should be an ongoing discussion so we can get to the bottom of this. I am not on a sewer, but I am at the bottom of a hill where we get a lot of run off. I was watching the water within feet of going into my basement. We put one of those pipes in our basement to try and level the water out. We were fortunate that it didn't come in this time but we have had it come into our basement as well. Initiating that pipe did make a big difference. Let's continue this discussion and hopefully we can find a solution.
- **Mayor Hallum:** Just to be clear, I don't think it is anyone on our street that has their gutters tied in. What I think is that the people upstream of us closest to where that storm water is going to get fed in might be a good place to start doing this dye testing. I don't foresee anybody on our street having our gutters tied in.
- I'm hopeful that some of this water is coming from across White Rd. If I could get Mayfield Village and Highland Heights to help divert some of that water somewhere other than at us, that may also have an impact on resolving this. I do think that we have some issues and I highly suggest that we check our own houses first. Make sure that your own lateral is in good shape. Anybody that is getting sewage in their basement; it's getting in from somewhere. Most likely, it is from a crack in your lateral. The pressure and the ground water is pushing that up through the crack in a lateral. They put gravel on top of the entire waterway that goes to the Euclid Creek including the pipe that they put in. All the water that rains down on that is sitting there all the time in that gravel. When we get heavy rain, it creates even more pressure. We did not design that. When they put that in, I don't think they gave that much thought as to what that was going to cause down the road. We will do what we can to try and help identify issues. If there are some things that we have overlooked that is the responsibility of the City, we will take care of these things. I want to try and help you all figure out if there are

some things that are adding to the problem so that we can resolve any issues down the line. I am happy to set up a conversation with you and the engineer to try to figure out what we are missing. I can't imagine how frustrating, expensive, and costly that can be.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** With all the new construction and building going on in Highland Heights and Mayfield Heights, when they plan their housing out, do they take into consideration the runoff of the water? Do they just divert it north? I saw one of the homes that flooded out was a brand new house on White Rd. It was a million dollar home that had five inches of water in the basement. Their pipes weren't cracked. Nothing was wrong with the way their house was designed. I know our building looks at elevations and how the land is around the house to make sure the water is diverted to where it is supposed to go. Do other cities follow the same rules and laws? Sometimes, basins are put in to catch the water but when that overfills, where does that go?
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** They are required by EPA. They are self-governing. There is not someone that comes down every time a subdivision is put in to make sure they are complying. All the city engineers are supposed to be following the same rules.

LEGISLATION: (Audio 1:02:20)

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Are we needing the firefighter's union contract to be decided on tonight? Is it possible to go to a second reading, or would that cause major issues?
- **Mayor Hallum:** Council can do what they would like but that would prolong their raises.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** But they will get them eventually, correct?
- **Council President Kline:** I wanted to make everyone aware of the two discussion points that are going to come up for the next Working Committee. We will have a resolution on the disc golf that came up a few meetings back. Everybody now has a copy of the survey that was conducted, as well as a copy of the usage of the pavilions around the area where the disc golf would be constructed. We will be discussing this project at our next meeting.
- The other discussion item will be on the issue of short-term rentals. As everyone knows, the City won the court case regarding short-term rentals, meaning they are not allowed in the City. Council is going to have a discussion on whether or not there should be some exceptions and qualifications on whether some areas should be able to have short-term rentals. This will be up for discussion at our next meeting as well.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Can we keep this flooding issue on unfinished business so we can continue to get updates and continue the conversation about it?

ADJOURNMENT: (Audio 1:05:30)

- **Motion** made by **Councilwoman Belich**, seconded by **Councilwoman Miller** to adjourn the April 9, 2026 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation.

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

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

APPROVED: Apr 23, 2026
Date


Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: Nich Aiello
Nicholas Aiello
Clerk of Council