

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 May 28, 2026

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order on Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 7:05 p.m. in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

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

Cell Phone Reminder to Turn off Devices

Pledge of Allegiance (Audio: 0:18)

ROLL CALL (Audio: 0:41)

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

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

Absent: Councilman Joe Jarmuszkiewicz and City Engineer Pete DiFranco

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

Discussion on the Motion:

No discussion.

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

The aforementioned motion has carried to excuse **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz** from the May 28, 2026 Regular Council Meeting.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE (Audio 1:40)

Email dated 05/21/2026 from Hallum, Chris Mayor's Report to Council = May 14, 2026
Email dated 05/20/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine FW: WH Public Hearing & PCABR Meeting on Thursday, 6/4/26
Email dated 05/20/2026 from Mehollin, Karen Re: FW - Community Center rate document
Email dated 05/20/2026 from Hallum, Chris RE: council chambers audio
Email dated 05/20/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: Legal for Public Hearing on 6/4/26 Thursday.
Email dated 05/20/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Legal for Public Hearing on 6/4/26 Thursday - Classic
Email dated 05/19/2026 from Bushman, Lindsey Re: Liquor Permit Address Update
Email dated 05/19/2026 from Thomas Lobe Fwd: short term rentals
Email dated 05/18/2026 from Kline, Mike Re: 2027 TAX BUDGET
Email dated 05/15/2026 from LiquorLicensingMailUnit@com.ohio.gov Automatic reply: Willoughby Hills Liquor License Persimmon Lane
Email dated 05/14/2026 from Taylor Draper, Tanya Re: White road apartments
Email dated 05/14/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: FOIA Request - Willoughby Hills [Ref: Zoie Maddox]
Email dated 05/14/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: New Ohio Public Records Act - City of Willoughby Hills submitted on 05/14/2026
Email dated 05/14/2026 from Nardo, Celia S. Senior Center Ice Cream Social * new updates *
Email dated 05/13/2026 from Gloria Majeski Re: Sanctioning
Email dated 05/12/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine WH BZA Meeting 5/12/26 Tuesday - Not Called
Email dated 05/11/2026 from Mehollin, Karen Memorial Day VFW Fundraiser
Email dated 05/11/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine FW: WH PCABR Meeting 5/21/26 THURSDAY
Email dated 05/11/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Liquor License - 2749 SOM Center - Persimmon
Email dated 05/11/2026 from Gloria Majeski Re: Website-spelling error
Email dated 05/08/2026 from Jarmuszkiewicz, Joe Re: Legislation for Next Week
Email dated 05/08/2026 from Gandee, Robert MEDIA RELEASE - Willoughby Hills Fire - 2026 May 8 - Multi-Department Drafting Training
Email dated 05/08/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Resolution of Intent - Res 2026-008
Email dated 05/08/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: FOIA Request [Ref: Patrizio Vicentini]
Email dated 05/07/2026 from Gandee, Robert Inquiry from Civil Service on Proposed Updates to Lateral Transfer for Career Fire Fighters
Email dated 05/07/2026 from Michney, Sharen RE: WH Civil Service Meeting 4/16/2026 - Wednesday - 4:00 P.M.
Email dated 05/07/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: Legislation for PD
Email dated 05/07/2026 from Novak, Alisa 2026-36
Email dated 05/07/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: Question
Email dated 05/07/2026 from Willoughby Hills Re: Legislation Needing Review for Next Week
Email dated 05/06/2026 from Naegele, Matthew Re: Legislation for Next Week
Email dated 05/06/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: CG46AC / CG47AC - ODOT 1st Billing

PUBLIC PORTION #1 (Audio: 1:50)

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

Public Portion #1 opened at 7:07 p.m.

- **Nobody spoke for Public Portion.**

Public Portion #1 closed at 7:07 p.m.

MAYOR'S REPORT (Audio: 2:15)

- **Mayor Hallum:** Good evening!
- On Saturday, May 23 Zoom Car Wash sponsored the City's Electronic Recycling Day. The event was held in Marc's parking lot at The Shoppes of Willoughby Hills. Over 90 cars came through even with the inclement weather we had at the start. Thanks to Zoom for sponsoring the event. Thanks to Council President Kline and Karen Mehollin for their help during the event.
- ODOT has informed us that the portion of River Road south of Chardon will reopen on May 29. They have not yet provided an update on when work will begin on the section north of Chardon. The good news is that school will be out before construction begins on that portion. We will keep you updated as ODOT provides more information.
- As we enter home renovation season, I want to remind everyone that some projects require a permit. You can visit the City's website, navigate to the Building & Zoning Department, and review the Building and Zoning Forms to determine whether your project requires one. Before listing examples of projects that need permits, it's important to emphasize that all contractors working on these projects must be registered with the City. Contractor registration allows us to verify their licensing and ensure they are bonded and insured, which protects you from unqualified individuals working on your home-likely your most valuable asset. Registration costs contractors \$100 annually.
- Permits are required for projects such as new roofs, siding, sheds, driveways, and pools, and typically cost between \$50 and \$75. The main benefits of obtaining a permit include third-party oversight through City inspections and recourse if a contractor fails to complete work properly.
- Each contractor is required to provide a performance bond to the City. If issues arise, the City can intervene on your behalf. If the contractor does not resolve the issue satisfactorily, we may pull their bond, allowing the surety company to pay the claim and then pursue the contractor for reimbursement. Most reputable contractors prefer to resolve issues directly rather than risk action against their bond.
- I hope this provides clarity on the value of following City code when completing home projects. Not doing so may result in work stoppage, fines, or-worst of all-improperly completed work.
- The Willoughby Hills VFW Post Home held its annual Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 25 at 11:00 a.m. Thanks to former Council President Ray Somich for MC'ing the event, Former Councilman Kevin Malecek for his address, Dave Broadwater, VFW Post 4358, and the Auxiliary for their work on planning the event. Thank you also to Vocalist Dante Citraro for sharing his musical talent. Finally, thank you to Karen Mehollin and Celia Nardo for their work in planning and preparing for the event. Special thanks to Laura O'Donnell for the beautiful wreath that was placed at the war memorial.
- This week, we also took delivery of the new mural wall for the Campbell Park pavilion designed and painted by the students at the School of Innovation. Check out the pictures on Facebook, the newsletter, and visit Campbell park to view their artistic & design talents.
- That ends my report and I stand open for questions.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- No Law Director's report.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Audio: 5:45)

- **Finance Director Scott:** As Council probably remembers, we hired a new company to do our GAAP conversions. Our financial statements need to be filed with the State by May 31. I am happy to report that they have gotten the information to me in plenty of time. I have been going through the 83 page report with due diligence as much as possible. That will all be filed on time. It was a huge upgrade over prior years, and will save hours of time pulling documents that the auditors will be able to obtain from the same service. Otherwise, I am open for questions.

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT

- No Law Director's report.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS REPORTS / COMMITTEE REPORTS (Audio 6:35)

PC-ABR reported by Council Vice President Taylor Draper (Audio 6:40)

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I would like to report on Planning and Zoning Commission Architectural Board of Review. The group met last Thursday, May 21. During the Architectural Board of Review portion of the meeting, we approved:
- A new sign: **2760 SOM Center Rd - New Building Sign - Papillion Enrichment Center.** This is the child daycare on 91. We had previously approved the sign, but they slightly moved it, so it had to come before the board, and the new location was approved.
- **A Rear Covered Patio at 2821 Forest Ln.**

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

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** There were two discussions held about small-box discount stores. We will be having a meeting next Thursday, June 4, on small-box discount stores for further discussion.
- We also discussed the possibility of allowing a second dwelling on lots that already have homes in it. This would be for elderly parents, relatives, children, etc. who want to stay in the area with their homeowner. There will be continuing discussions on that. Thank you.

Recreation Commission reported by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz

No report.

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: 8:35)

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I am interested if there are any updates with the cell tower and with the flooding issues going on in our city.
- **Council President Kline:** I have some comments on the cell tower that I wanted to make. At the last Council Meeting, Mayor Hallum brought us up to date on the current status, but there was an excellent article in the News Herald last Monday titled “Cell Tower Site not Funded for Coverage.” If you get the News Herald, and didn’t read it, I suggest you do.
- There are four parts to getting a tower. The first is recognizing the need for it, which we certainly have at the eastern end. The second part is getting a cell tower company and consultant involved in working with us. Those are the two parts that are really the City’s responsibility, and we have done that.
- The next step involves the cell service providers having to come forward and agree to put their equipment on the towers. We can’t control them, who wants to do that, or when they want to do it. It is out of our hands when they come forward. I have heard some people suggest the City put the tower up. If the City were to put a tower up now, we would have a 150 ft. monopole to stare at because there would be nothing on it. Nobody has an interest in putting their equipment on it. Until that happens, there is nothing more the City can do. If the Mayor has any updates on the flooding, I will turn it over to him.
- **Mayor Hallum:** We did meet with Mayor Bodner of Mayfield Village. It was a really good conversation. We agreed that Mayfield Village and Willoughby Hills will reach out to mayor Brunello from Highland Heights and the mayor of Richmond Heights. We have identified what could potentially be part of the issue. The section of the drainage ditches that are ODOT’s responsibility are way overgrown. There are trees growing in them. Instead of retaining water, the water is just rushing right across it because there is no ditching maintained by ODOT.
- We feel the best course of action is for 4 cities to get together and send something to Senator Cirino and State Representative Troy. We want to show them the issues and areas we are talking about and ask what they can do to help us get ODOT funding. This would be for an investigation or survey to identify whether those issues are causing problems. Assuming they agree with the issues, the funding would be to clear out those areas and make them act as they should. We are working through that right now, and I hope to have more information for you next month.

CONSENT:

DISPOSITION OF THE JOURNAL

Approval of the May 14, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Approval of the May 14, 2026 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation Minutes

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

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

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

LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE 2026-036-SECOND READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO SECURE THE PURCHASE OF A BALLISTIC ARMORED TACTICAL TRANSPORT (B.A.T.T.) ARMORED RESCUE VEHICLE FOR THE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT FROM THE ARMORED GROUP, 5221 N. SADDLE ROCK DRIVE, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85018 FOR THE ESTIMATED PURCHASE PRICE OF \$381,140.00 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- Ordinance 2026-036 remains on Second Reading.

RESOLUTION 2026-010-FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A TAX BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 FOR THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS

- Resolution 2026-010 remains on First Reading.

NEW BUSINESS (Audio 15:00)

- **No new business.**

PUBLIC PORTION #2 (Audio 15:10)

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

Public Portion #2 opened at 7:20 p.m.

- **Gloria Majeski 2717 Graylock Drive:** We are asking Council to review Ordinance 2026-008 Amended, which sets guidelines for property owned by the City, specifically the Community Center.
- While this should have been a relatively easy Ordinance to prepare, as it aimed to set a number of volunteer hours a group would need to fulfill their sanctioning status, it failed to outline, more importantly, strict sanctioning guidelines and realistic hours of use, hours that should have mirrored what the Recreation Department is using and what is on the website.

- Since the Ordinance was passed on February 26, 2026, ten groups have requested sanctioning, all being approved immediately after their presentations. Two of these groups blatantly stated that they do nothing for the City and their group is not Willoughby Hills based with Willoughby Hills residents as members. Linda Sacerich will speak on this after I am finished. My thought is that the Recreation Commission should be trained on what the true meaning of being sanctioned entails, with the change in your Ordinance to say “and” instead of “or” in the third Whereas clause as it related to group requirements. I believe that training is an integral part of doing a good job and even suggest that all Commission members be expected to take the Ohio Secretary of State Sunshine Law Class (a 4-hour class available online) that will save us the embarrassment when they try to conduct a meeting without a quorum or say things like “we can discuss that after the meeting.” These are things that are going on that need to be fixed, and Administration and Legal Counsel should follow through.
- Ordinance 2026-008 Amended also specifically lists the dates available for sanctioned groups as “Monday through Friday,” assuming during hours when the Community Center is open. Unfortunately, these sanctioned groups were not advised of those hours and are scheduling evening meeting hours and/or Saturday classes and workshops. A Property Staff Member will then be paid to be available to the sanctioned group, some of whom are non-residents and not giving back to the community, except for volunteering 4 hours at a City event. Scheduling meetings during these times are currently in violation of the law that you passed. I personally would have no problem if the City made a room available to a group that is doing something to give back to the community. Often times, a group would do a morning workshop and that same room would be available later for an evening party rental.
- In closing, I respectfully request that you:
 1. Amend 941.02 (a) to indicate a group must be a Willoughby Hills Community Group and (not or) an organization whose primary purpose aims are educational, cultural or civic in nature, and
 2. Amend 941.02 (g) to remove the “Monday through Friday” clause, and
 3. Seriously encourage Administration/Legal to consider providing Sunshine Law training to all Commission members
- Thank you.
- **Linda Sacerich 2947 Rockefeller Road:** I have been in this community for 52 years as a tax payer. I wanted to come to Council to present my concerns about the practice at the Willoughby Hills Community Center. While going to the Recreation Commission meeting to be sanctioned for our Willoughby Hills Guild that has been here for 40 years, I found out that the Recreation Commission is basically giving away rooms for free at the Community Center for only 4 hours of volunteer work. Two groups in mind got sanctioned by the Commission, saying only that they wanted to be sanctioned so that they could use the rooms for free. When asked if they did anything for our community, they said no. I think that is wrong. When word gets out about this, people are going to be lining up to get sanctioned so that they could get a room for free. Prior to this, the Recreation Commission, and since the Community Center was built, I always understood that only community groups that serve the City could be sanctioned. There was also a provision that said it had to be comprised of some City residents in order to be accepted. Please review what is going on, and maybe amend the legislation that governs the Community Center sanctioning.

- I was a little upset with Dave Walters, because we had asked to meet with him, and he said no, this was going to stay the way it was until the end of the year. I think it needs to be done before then. Thank you.

Public Portion #2 closed at 7:26 p.m.

- **Mayor Hallum:** It is unfortunate that Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz, who sits on the Recreation Commission, isn't here tonight to speak to what the thought process was. Many of the things that they said, I remember too. Maybe the ordinance isn't as clear as it used to be, I don't know. I remember there were some aspects where you had to at least be benefitting the residents of Willoughby Hills to be sanctioned. Maybe there are some clarity issues, but I would love to hear from Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER/FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY (Audio 22:20)

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** Burlington Coat Factory is opening at the Shoppes tomorrow. They are having their grand opening at 8:30 a.m. and we welcome all the residents there.
- **Mayor Hallum:** If anyone on Council is available, that would be great to have as many people there as possible to show our support.

ADJOURNMENT (Audio 23:40)


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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

APPROVED: 6.11.26
 Date


Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: 
Nicholas Aiello
Clerk of Council