

President of Council
MICHAEL KLINE

Vice President of Council
TANYA TAYLOR DRAPER

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 May 28, 2026

The Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation was called to order on **May 28, 2026** at **6:16 p.m.** in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 6:16 p.m. (0:10)

ROLL CALL (Audio: 0:20)

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: Finance Director Bruce Scott and Law Director Michael A. Kenny Jr.

Absent: Councilman Joe Jarmuszkiewicz

BEGINNING DISPOSITION: (Audio 0:40)

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.

- **Council President Kline** stated that Police Chief Naegele provided some additional information regarding this. At the last meeting, there was a question that was raised about the insurance cost on this vehicle. Police Chief Naegele has checked and was told by our insurance carrier that there will be a nominal increase over what the standard police vehicle would cost in terms of insurance.
- There was also another question asking to what extent other cities in Lake County had pieces of equipment that were available for other police departments to use. The Police Chief stated that Willoughby has several transport vehicles that are used by other police forces. Willowick has a different type of ballistic vehicle, though not comparable to the vehicle we are looking at here, but a vehicle that is available for other departments to use.

- Another question that was raised was whether this vehicle could be used for other purposes since this is coming out of the photo enforcement fund. The Police Chief stated it is his feeling that this falls into this category, as this contributes directly to the safety of our officers, students, personnel, churches, etc. in the event of a mass casualty incident. This is not to say that this vehicle will not be used in other incidents. It is more to say that this piece of equipment does have a direct impact on school safety type matters. The school superintendents agree on that aspect.
- **Council President Kline** opened for additional comments.
- **Councilwoman Belich** expressed her appreciation for the Police Chief coming in during the last meeting and providing Council with this information. She expressed interest in wanting to know the nominal cost of this truck. **Mayor Hallum** responded saying this increase would be a little under \$100.00 a month.

RESOLUTION 2026-010-FIRST READING

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

- **Finance Director Scott** stated that an ad for this public hearing will need to be posted in the News Herald. He stated that he would work with Council Clerk Nicholas Aiello to make sure this is completed properly.
- **Councilwoman Belich** pointed to page 3 of the memo, where it showed the estimated revenues and expenditures under the grid. She asked if there was anything included in this that was based on the photo enforcement and traffic tickets, or if this is just the property taxes that we will see as income tax. **Finance Director Scott** responded saying that the box contains revenue and expenses only for the General Fund. The photo enforcement has no bearing on that.

Discussion of short-term rentals in the City of Willoughby Hills (Audio 7:15-40:00)

- **Council President Kline** noted that he would like to pick-up this discussion and carve out a section where short-term rentals would be allowed for specific situations, referring to historical sites like the Frank Lloyd Wright Homes.
- **Council President Kline** noted that the original Willoughby Hills Frank Lloyd Wright Penfield house was built in the early 50's on River Road. After the house was complete, the owners were notified that the State was going to build I-90 through their property. The owner then went out and contacted Frank Lloyd Wright for a second home on the property, in anticipation of the original property being destroyed. While the State did take up a part of their property, they altered their course and their house was saved. At the end of the decade, the Penfield's received a package in the mail containing another set of blueprints and all the necessary documents and forms to build a second home. Frank Lloyd Wright completed the design, blueprints, and specifications for the home, and unfortunately passed away. The plans were sent to the Penfield's, and that is where they remained for the next 65-70 years.

- **Council President Kline** noted that around 2018, the property changed hands, and the plans for another Penfield Home were given to Sarah Dykstra. Now, there are 2 Frank Lloyd Wright Homes on River Rd. They wish to continue to operate as short-term rentals.
- **Council President Kline** noted the City was involved in a lawsuit over short-term rentals, yet the City prevailed. The court ruled that the City’s zoning code did not specifically state that short-term rentals are allowed, and therefore, the City currently holds that short-term rentals are not allowed in Willoughby Hills. However, the 2 Frank Lloyd Wright homes are a gem in the City.
- At this point, there are 9 Frank Lloyd Wright Homes in the State of Ohio. Of those 9, 6 are private residents, one is part of Oberlin College, and the 2 others are in Willoughby Hills. Those 2 have been used as short-term rentals in the past.
- **Council President Kline** expressed that what the Council was hoping to do was carve out a zoning change that would allow the Frank Lloyd Wright Homes to continue being utilized as short-term rentals. He noted that there is a very rough draft ordinance that is not for consideration, but rather, review and comment. The bulk of said ordinance was created in 2021 by former Law Director Michael Lucas. This has been taken as the framework. On the third page, where the definitions are listed, the last two were added as (k) and (l). They read as follows:
 - (k) “Historic Properties” means any properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the U.S. Department of Interior) having architectural significance or any other properties affiliated with the listed properties.
 - (l) “Architectural Significance” means the property must embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.
- **Council President Kline** stated that the Frank Lloyd Wright Penfield home is in the National Register of Historic Places, and happens to be the only property in the City of Willoughby Hills that is in the national registry. Though there may be other properties in the City with plaques on their house claiming other distinctions, they are not in the National Register of Historic Places.
- He noted that there is an effort to try and pull in a second property (the River Rock home) that is not listed separately, but is involved with the Penfield Home. He noted that according to his research, that property could qualify as a historic place if proper filing is done. This does meet all the requirements. As a general rule, historic properties are considered to be over 50 years old, but there are exceptions.
- **Council President Kline**, referring to section (l), stated there is a precedent here in the City for this. In 2005, there was an ordinance passed dealing with admissions tax. Within this ordinance, one provision in this ordinance had exclusions where the admissions tax would not apply. It reads, “The existing properties and/or existing historical architectural sites or museums within the City named to the National Register of Historic Places would be exempt from this admissions tax.” At the time, this was done solely for the benefit of the Penfield Home.

Council President Kline opened this up for discussion

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper** asked if there are any other homes or buildings in the City listed in the National Register of Historic Places other than the Penfield home. **Council President Kline** further clarified that the Penfield House was the only one.
- **Councilwoman Belich** asked if the passage of this ordinance would allow residents to get their properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places if they feel their property has historic significance. **Council President Kline** responded saying that if a resident were to claim to own a property that could qualify for a historic status and get listed with the National Register of Historic Places due to architectural significance, then they would be able to qualify for short-term rental status.
- **Councilwoman Belich** followed up asking who or what determines architectural significance. **Council President Kline** responded saying that this came right from the registry and they list out a number of qualifying factors. He noted that the intent was to try to restrict this to just the architectural significance. That is what makes Frank Lloyd Wright Homes unique.
- **Councilwoman Miller** asked if the Council was looking to allow other homes to become short-term rentals, or just narrow it down to just these two places. **Council President Kline** responded saying this ordinance would involve a zoning change, but the end result would be that the only two properties that would qualify would be the two Frank Lloyd Wright Homes.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper** asked if residents would be able to plead their case if they felt that their properties held historic significance. **Council President Kline** responded saying that if the resident were to go through the procedure and their property would be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, while also meeting the architectural qualifications, then they would also meet the qualifications that we are setting to count as a short-term rental.
- **Councilwoman Miller** asked if the City would be consulted as part of this process. **Council President Kline** stated in theory, any home on the National Register of Historic Places in Willoughby Hills would qualify to be able to be a short-term rental. Another home that could qualify could be Sears Roebuck and Co. homes. It was his opinion that a home like this could qualify as a historical site on the National Register of Historic Places. If there was such a home like that in Willoughby Hills, that home could qualify as a historic site.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper** clarified Councilwoman Miller's question and asked if the National Register of Historic Places communicates with the City to let them know who is petitioning in the community for this status. **Council President Kline** stated he did not know, but assumed they would not. He speculated that they may send out a notification to the City to let them know, but it's quite possible they wouldn't do anything.
- **Mayor Hallum** stated that the Penfield House sits on about 21 acres and the River Rock home sits on just over 9 acres. Both of these houses sit well beyond the minimum setback of 75 ft. from the road. He proposed the idea of limiting short-term rentals to people who have a minimum setback of X ft. from the road and X ft. from neighboring properties, and a minimum acreage of Y, rather than basing this on historical significance. He made the point that there wouldn't be a lot of properties in the City who fit this criteria, and the ones that do, would not impact the neighbors in the way that people are concerned about.

- **Council President Kline** stated that throughout the Council and BZA meetings regarding short-term rentals, the overwhelming number of residents complained about parties going on, people coming and going, etc. It is his opinion that anyone who would be renting out Frank Lloyd Wright Homes would not be wanting to hold parties. Frank Lloyd Wright Homes would attract students of architecture or history that want to experience the unique opportunity of spending time in that home.
- **Mayor Hallum** expressed his agreement. He further expanded upon his idea. Hypothetically, if a property were 500 ft. from the road and a minimum of 500 ft. from any neighboring property, with all parking confined to the property itself, this would not affect the Frank Lloyd Wright Homes, and it could open this up to people who have large properties, while ultimately not having any negative impact on the neighbors. He expressed that getting permits would be a good idea so that the City knows where the locations are. In addition to this, he stated the neighbors should be notified, and have an opportunity to speak on this before approval. Mayor Hallum concluded leaving this in the hands of Council, while also offering this as an alternative suggestion.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper** responded saying that the concerns from the residents were focused on loud music, loud voices, partying, and people being careless. She felt that having a short-term rental on 5 acres would not stop this.
- **Mayor Hallum** expressed his agreement. He offered a counter solution. If the resident were to receive X amount of complaints, that permit would be revoked for the individual operating the short-term rental.
- **Council President Kline** stated he would like to continue this discussion and absorb the ideas presented this evening, while encouraging other proposals.

PUBLIC PORTION: (Audio 40:05)

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

Public Portion opened at 6:56 p.m.

- **Jenna Bing 36951 Beech Hills Drive** stated that she had no problem restricting short-term rentals to homes registered in the National Register of Historic Places. This limits short-term rentals to a very small group of people. She expressed her disagreement with allowing short-term rentals on larger properties because this would create a situation where individuals renting the short-term rental would have to travel through neighborhoods to get to them. This would create an environment where you would have a whole bunch of people driving down roads that aren't made for that property. She stated, from her experience, she had seen cars parked all over the front lawn at a short-term rental location. She expressed that even if this was secluded by itself at the end of the cul-de-sac, she still would not have wanted 80 random cars driving down her street at all hours of the night.
- The short-term rental on Bates Lane also created traffic issues. These residents were blocked in their driveways. It is her opinion that Willoughby Hills is not good at policing these types of things. Ms. Bing stated that when this resident would call, the police would never register this as a true call, and there was no record of it. She followed up saying that there are even some short-term rentals listed now that are not being policed. She thanked Law Director Kenny for discussing this with her.

- She concluded saying for these reasons, she is okay with limiting short-term rentals to properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Public Portion closed at 6:59 p.m.

- **Councilwoman Belich** stated that while she has not confirmed it and is looking into it, she believes her home is a Sears Roebuck and Co. home.

LEGISLATION: (Audio 44:15)

- No discussion.

ADJOURNMENT: (Audio 44:30)

- **Motion** made by **Councilwoman Miller**, seconded by **Councilman Knecht** to adjourn the May 28, 2026 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation.


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

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

APPROVED: 6.11.26
 Date



Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: 

Nicholas Aiello
Clerk of Council