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 July 9, 2026

PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTION AND MAYORAL PROCLAMATION HONORING THE WILLOUGHBY HILLS MIND CHALLENGE TEAMS (Audio 0:01-7:15)

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order on Thursday, July 9, 2026 at 7:12 p.m. in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 7:12 p.m. (Audio: 7:18)

Cell Phone Reminder to Turn off Devices

***Pledge of Allegiance* (Audio: 7:30)**

ROLL CALL (Audio: 7:50)

Members Present: Councilwoman Kathleen Sivo, 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, Finance Director Bruce Scott, and Law Director Michael A. Kenny Jr.

COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE (Audio 8:20)

Email dated 6/30/2026 Pat Grebenc Tax revenue from Classic Dealership
Email dated 6/30/2026 Grubiss, Mark Re: 1996 Bucket truck
Email dated 6/29/2026 from Sivo, Kathleen Re: Bowen and Associates Police and Service Garage Working Committee Meeting
Email dated 6/29/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: PCABR Meeting 7/2/26 THURSDAY
Email dated 6/29/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: PID 125062 LAK SR 091 00.00 Multi Modal; Preliminary Participatory Legislation and LPA ODOT-Let Agreement
Email dated 6/29/2026 from Taylor Draper, Tanya Cameras
Email dated 6/29/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: Res 2026-010 Signed and Certified
Email dated 6/26/2026 from Brendan McPherson RE: 27853 Chardon Road - CRA Agreement
Email dated 6/26/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Tentative 7/13 Council Presentation - Police & Service
Email dated 6/26/2026 from Aiello, Nicholas Council Recommendation of Short-Term Rentals Ordinance to the Planning and Zoning Commission
Email dated 6/26/2026 from Kline, Mike Meeting with Bowen
Email dated 6/26/2026 from Kline, Mike Re: Letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission Regarding Short-Term Rentals
Email dated 6/26/2026 from Naegele, Matthew Surplus
Email dated 6/25/2026 from Scott, Bruce RE: FOIA Request - Willoughby Hills [Ref: Nancy Thoreau]
Email dated 6/25/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: Any other project for the 7/2/26 mtg?
Email dated 6/25/2026 from Willoughby Hills Fwd: 27853 Chardon Road - CRA Agreement
Email dated 6/25/2026 from Willoughby Hills Law Director Re: CRA Ordinance
Email dated 6/24/2026 from Miller, Vicki Re: Paving of Fowler
Email dated 6/24/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Paving of Fowler
Email dated 6/24/2026 from Kline, Mike Re: ODOT Multi Modal Path
Email dated 6/23/2026 from Jenna Bing historic properties and short term rentals
Email dated 6/23/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine WH BZA Meeting 7/14/26 Tuesday - Not Called
Email dated 6/23/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine FW: WH PCABR Meeting on Thursday, 7/2/26
Email dated 6/23/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: Preliminary Review for Classic, continued.
Email dated 6/23/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: Projects for 7/14/26 BZA Meeting?
Email dated 6/23/2026 from Blake, Christian N. Lake County CDBG/HOME; Urban County Entitlement Program Cooperation Agreement
Email dated 6/22/2026 from Mehollin, Karen Re: 27853 Chardon Road - CRA Agreement
Email dated 6/20/2026 from Willoughby Hills Law Director Re: Appropriation Revision Ordinance 2026-040 - LATE ADDITION!!!
Email dated 6/19/2026 from Jarmuszkiewicz, Joe Re: Agenda, Legislation, and Minutes for June 25
Email dated 6/19/2026 from Willoughby Hills Law Director Short-term rental Ord.
Email dated 6/18/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine 2 Signed Review Sheets
Email dated 6/18/2026 from DiFranco, Pete RE: ODOT Multi Modal Path
Email dated 6/18/2026 from Scott, Bruce 2027 Tax Budget
Email dated 6/18/2026 from Harlan Abramson Re: Mind Challenge Recognition and Celebration!
Email dated 6/18/2026 from Pietro DiFranco RE: Multi-Use Path Ordinance
Email dated 6/17/2026 from Lloyd, Katherine RE: WH PCABR Meeting 6/18/26 - THURSDAY

PUBLIC PORTION #1 (Audio: 8:50)

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

Public Portion #1 opened at 7:14 p.m.

- **Jenna Bing 36951 Beech Hills Drive:** Spoke in regard to Ordinance 2026-039 and Ordinance 2026-045. She stated that she feels Council does not listen to her and views her as a burden. Jenna Bing clarified that she is supportive of Ordinance 2026-039, and stated that the way this ordinance was written, not referring to the whereas clauses, left out the whole aspect of *historic buildings only* being permitted for short-term rentals. She also emphasized her concerns with the process of getting a permit as currently laid out in Ordinance 2026-039.

- She also expressed her concern over the lift truck the Service Department was looking to purchase. She stated that in the five-year schedule of capital requirements, there were $200,000.00 for a snow plow, and nothing else. Jenna Bing stated that she likes Mr. Grubiss, but feels he does not plan well, unlike the Fire Department and the Police Department. It was her opinion that this purchase was ridiculous, and she questioned how the City did not know this truck was not going to be insurable. She expressed that she believes this is not a good way to run the City.

- Jenna Bing stated that she is willing to put her eyes on a lot of things to help the City, including the situation where Serpentini is storing cars in the Shoppes of Willoughby Hills. City Engineer DiFranco has been very attentive to this situation. She emphasized that she wants the City to follow the laws it has on the books, but feels this is not currently happening.

- She also stated that Law Director Kenny has been very attentive to the illegal operations of short-term rentals in the City.

Public Portion #1 closed at 7:18 p.m.

- **Finance Director Scott** stated he wanted to stand up for Mark Grubiss, who he described as an incredible employee, and one who saves the City hundreds of thousands of dollars on an annual basis. He worked through the heat last week every day tearing up the sewer line for the Fire Department. Mr. Scott emphasized that if the City had bid that job out, it would have easily been six figures, yet, Mr. Grubiss did this on his own time and his own staff. He emphasized that to besmirch one of the hardest working people in this City is unacceptable.

- Pertaining to the budget, Mr. Scott stated that there are $200,000.00 in there that says "plow truck." He said that this was his fault because he didn't change the description. Mr. Scott stated that Mark plans extremely well, and he believed that from a budgetary planning standpoint, Mark is the best person that he has ever worked with in his thirty-five years of being an accountant.

- **Council President Kline** responded to the comments made in Public Portion regarding the short-term rentals ordinance. He stated that this ordinance is in the process of being revised, and upon talking with the Law Director, some changes are being made so it could be re-presented. These are not differences from the substance of the ordinance. The ordinance is written to limit short-term rentals and historical sites, and that is the way it is going to remain. It is simply a question of proper wording, so that there is no misunderstanding.

MAYOR'S REPORT (Audio 14:40)

- **Mayor Hallum** reported the following:

- Good evening. On Monday, July 6, western Lake County experienced a flash flood when nearly three inches of rain fell in approximately one hour. This intense storm resulted in flooding across many areas of the city, including streets, homes, and businesses. Our fire station was one of the buildings that was flooded during this most recent event. This is the second significant weather event of this type to impact our area in just a couple of months.

- As I have reported previously, I am working with our neighboring communities to send a joint letter to our State Representative and Congressman requesting that they appropriate funds to ODOT for dredging the storm sewer ditches under their responsibility. We believe a portion of the flooding issues we are experiencing are a result of what appears to be, a need for those ditches to receive attention.

- Additionally, the City is proposing a project near Marcum that would improve drainage capacity, reduce road flooding, and prevent backup on the south side of White Road. Road Superintendent Grubiss has also begun discussing the addition of retention basins on Gatsby to help manage stormwater more effectively. I have asked the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council to consider requiring citywide smoke testing to ensure residential stormwater is not being diverted into the sanitary sewer system.

- After the flooding on Monday, I contacted Commissioner Beverage to request county assistance in identifying stormwater management issues and developing a comprehensive solution to significantly mitigate these events. I understand the frustration that residents feel when their homes and families are impacted, and I remain committed to finding a long-term solution. We are expecting a call from Jason Boyd from the County to schedule a meeting with their storm water management folks, as well as their engineer and our engineer.

- I also want to share that a potential new cell tower location has been preliminarily approved by one of the major carriers. At this time, we are uncertain what impact it may have on the east end of the City, but I will provide updates as the project progresses.

- Several community events are planned over the next couple of months. Outdoor Movie Night will be held on Wednesday, July 15 at Roemisch Fields. In partnership with the Willoughby-Eastlake Library, we will present "Field of Dreams." Concessions open at 7:30 PM, and the movie begins at dusk. Cops and Cones, in partnership with Foster's Homemade Ice Cream, will take place on July 31. Our next Community Garage Sale is scheduled for August 1.

- The City's America 250th weekend will kick off with the Police and Fire Department's second annual softball game on August 14 at 5:00 PM. Music Fest is scheduled for Saturday, August 15 from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

- Have a great weekend!

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- No Law Director's report.

FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Audio: 18:00)

- **Finance Director Scott** reported the following:

- The June financials have been completed and are on the website for your review. I wanted to give a quick revenue update. We are down from last year around $245,000.00 from income tax. We were expecting a decrease because of the cyclical nature of collections, but, all other revenue targets are within range. Other than that, I am open for questions.

CITY ENGINEER'S REPORT(Audio: 18:45)

- **City Engineer DiFranco** reported the following:

- Architects in my office have completed the schematic design phase of the Police and Service building projects. They will be making a presentation to Council this coming Monday at 6:00 p.m. here in Council Chambers. The public is welcome to attend. That concludes my report and I am open for questions.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz** asked how the Chardon Rd. project was coming along, and if it is still on schedule to be opened. **City Engineer DiFranco** responded saying this is still on schedule. They started laying the beams across I-271 this week. In addition to this, River Rd. is also complete, and they are hoping to open it tomorrow weather pending. Otherwise, it will be early next week.

- **Councilwoman Miller** asked if they are planning on striping tomorrow. **City Engineer DiFranco** responded that he was told they are planning to open for traffic tomorrow if it doesn't rain.

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS REPORTS / COMMITTEE REPORTS (Audio 20:00)

PC-ABR reported by Council Vice President Taylor Draper (Audio 20:05)

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper** reported on the Planning and Zoning Commission Architectural Board of Review. The group met last Thursday, July 2. During the Architectural Board of Review portion, the Commission approved:

- A new home at 3047 Andrews Ln – S/L 9 - Strano House

- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper** reported the following for the Planning Portion of the Meeting:

- During the Planning Portion of the meeting, the Classic Lexus auto group gave their revised site plan to the group. That was approved and will be moving to this body. That concludes my report, and I stand open for questions.

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: 21:15)

- No Unfinished Business.

CONSENT:

DISPOSITION OF THE JOURNAL
Approval of the June 25, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes
Approval of the June 25, 2026 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation Minutes

ORDINANCE 2026-038 – SECOND READING
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) PROJECT NO. 125062 PROVIDING FOR THE LAK-SR-091-00.00 MULTI MODAL PATH PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE 2026-043 – 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 2026-044 – FIRST READING
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE URBAN ENTITLEMENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM AND FOR THE UTILIZATION OF FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE BY THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974, AS AMENDED, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion made by **Councilwoman Miller,** seconded by **Council Vice President Taylor Draper,** to approve the items on the consent agenda.

Roll Call: **AYES: Sivo, Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller**
NAYS: None
Vote: 7/0

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

LEGISLATION:

ORDINANCE 2026-039-AMENDED – SECOND READING
AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING CHAPTER 1381 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS TO REGULATE HISTORIC PROPERTIES AS SHORT-TERM RENTAL FACILITIES.

- Ordinance 2026-039-Amended remains on Second Reading.

ORDINANCE 2026-045 – FIRST READING
AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO SECURE THE PURCHASE OF A 2024 MTECH AXION LIFT AT4313I ALUMINUM BODY TRUCK FOR THE CITY SERVICE DEPARTMENT FROM MTECH COMPANY FOR THE PURCHASE PRICE OF $169,900.00 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion made by **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz,** seconded by **Councilman Knecht,** to waive the Three Readings on Ordinance 2026-045.

Discussion of motion:
No discussion.

Roll Call: **AYES: Sivo, Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller**
NAYS: None
Vote: 7/0

Motion carries to waive Three Readings on Ordinance 2026-045.

Motion made by **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz,** seconded by **Councilman Knecht,** to adopt Ordinance 2026-045.

Discussion of motion:

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz** stated that this truck will be a useful tool for the Service Department and even though it wasn't planned originally, it is his opinion that this was a deal Council couldn't pass up, especially since there is a need to replace the one the City currently has.

- **Councilwoman Miller** believes this is a good investment and a good price for a truck that is going to last the City quite a few years.

Roll Call: **AYES: Sivo, Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller**
NAYS: None
Vote: 7/0

Ordinance 2026-045 has been adopted.

NEW BUSINESS (Audio 26:55)

- **No new business.**

PUBLIC PORTION #2 (Audio 27:10)

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

Public Portion #2 opened at 7:10 p.m.

- **Jenna Bing 36951 Beech Hills Drive** stated that Council should not yell at people and denigrate them for speaking out of the goodness of their heart. She clarified that she believes Mr. Grubiss does a fine job. She stated that based on what she has seen through the years she did not believe the Service Department brought things forward from a planning standpoint.
- *Jenna Bing played a portion of the audio from the preceding Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation where Council President Kline stated,* "The Commission had some questions and recommendations that they would like to see in it. Nothing of substance. Nothing changing the principles involved. It's just including some additional information in the ordinance so that there is no room or any questions as to the fact that this is being limited to historical properties. "
- Jenna Bing believes the desired change to this ordinance pertaining to historical properties is substantial. She emphasized that she comes forward and wants to help the City. She stated the Councilmembers need to get thick skin, and she urged the Council to take what she is saying seriously rather than yell at her. She concluded saying that she hoped Council did not treat the residents the way she was treated.
- **Jen Varro 2890 SOM Center Road** stated the following:
- I would like to address the preliminary approval of the proposed Classic Auto Group reconditioning building. My primary concern is the excessive amount of parking being proposed. For a reconditioning facility, nearly 300 parking spaces is unreasonable and creates an unnecessary and intrusive impact on the residential properties immediately to the South. If this is truly a reconditioning building, I believe the number of parking spaces should be significantly reduced. In my opinion, no more than 100 spaces should be permitted, and even that is generous for this type of use. While reducing 18 spaces to buffer I-271, I question why the buffer is not to the south for the residential home that will reside and continue having people live there.
- I am also confused by the approval process. Based on the City's flowchart, why is this proposal coming before the City Council before obtaining the necessary approvals from the Board of Zoning Appeals? As proposed, the property does not meet the minimum acreage and frontage requirements for the requested zoning, requiring variances. If vehicles are also intended to be stored on this site, that would require an additional variance because vehicle storage is not permitted in Zone E. It would seem that those issues should be resolved before Council is asked to consider this proposal.
- Finally, I would like an update regarding the continued storage of Serpentini Chevrolet trucks at the Loehmann's Plaza. I raised the issue at the last meeting and was told it has been addressed. However,

the trucks do remain there. Since vehicle storage is not permitted at that location, why are they still there? When the dealership was owned by O'Brian Chevrolet, this was never an issue, demonstrating that the business can operate without using Loehmann's Plaza as a storage lot. I respectfully request answers to these questions and ask that Council carefully consider whether this scale of the Classic proposal is appropriate and consistent with the City's zoning regulations.

- Jen Varro asked Mayor Hallum if he could elaborate on the cell tower that he had discussed initially that was going to face I-271.

- **Patrick Gallagher 2937 Gatsby Lane** expressed concerns over flooding. He stated the following:

  This time around, I was one inch of water away from losing my furnace. I am actually hesitant to file claims with the insurance company anymore for fear of being dropped from coverage because I have had a whole bunch of flooding claims. As a real-estate expert, you know that I could never sell my house with the problem that I am having now. I have flooded probably 16 times in the last 15 years, 6 times, with considerable damage. We are going to consult with engineers, but I am asking that you push that process hard because I can't do this anymore. I could never sell my house; it is a beautiful home and it needs to be taken care of. I truly ask that you push this issue very hard. Thank you.

- **Lisa Ingram 2921 Gatsby Lane** presented Council with photos showing the flooding damage to her property. She described the flooding as a "raging river" and stated that this was not a small problem, but a large problem. She stated that her pool was filled with stormwater, and that sewage has come into her basement through her basement shower. She stated the following:

- "We bought this house to accommodate my aging parents. Certain emergency crews could not get to them if they had an emergency. My parents just had the paramedics there on July 3."

- **Wayne Ingram 2921 Gatsby Lane** stated that they have been dealing with this flooding for a while now. He expressed his desire to be helpful in proposing a solution to this issue. They bought their house 11 years ago, and worked with Mayor Weger at the time who agreed to help alleviate the street drainage. It worked about 95% of the time.

- He stated that this seems to be becoming a more common issue, and everything is heading towards their two homes and right to the creek. Wayne Ingram recognized that this issue is bigger than Willoughby Hills. While Willoughby Hills has first responsibility, second would be the County Stormwater Management.

- He emphasized to the Mayor and Council that they need a proposed plan with a timeline. While he appreciates the Mayor's efforts with the County, he is concerned, from a health standpoint, with the sewage component. He stated that because Willougby Hills borders Highland Heights and Richmond Heights, they get runoff from them too down Rockefeller and White Rd. He emphasized that he wouldn't have a problem getting a bigger culvert, but this would just kick the water down the street to Rockefeller and the creeks through Richmond Heights. He concluded saying that this is a big problem in need of a big solution.

Public Portion #2 closed at 7:45 p.m.

- **Mayor Hallum** thanked the residents for coming and speaking at Public Portion regarding the flooding damage to their homes, and emphasized that this issue is very important to him. He assured them that he is working with the County for a solution. He stated that the flooding seems to occur more frequently now, and emphasized that he is trying to get this resolved. He thanked the residents for their continued patience.

- **City Engineer DiFranco** responded to Jen Varro, and stated that he has contacted the Shoppes of Willoughby Hills about the Serpentini vehicles being parked there. He will follow up with them. While they are not causing harm parking the vehicles there, he emphasized that this is still a code violation.

- **City Engineer DiFranco** stated that Jen Varro brought up a good point about the overnight storage for the Classic Auto Group project. He stated that this would be another variance that they would need from BZA if Council approves the use change.

- **Mayor Hallum** stated the buffer is not just around the south side, rather it is a huge buffer all along the south edge. This is going to be a 3 ft. mound with trees on top that will be blocking the view. He stated it is his opinion that if this is what they want, and they can make it where it is not intrusive to anyone else while also getting the variances they need, the City should be supportive of the business. He concluded saying that this complies with the Master Plan, and he believes that they will be a good neighbor and a good project for the City.

- **Mayor Hallum** also stated that he does not have anything further on the cell tower at this time.

- **Council President Kline** responded to Jenna Bing, stating that everyone at the Planning Commission meeting the week prior agreed that the changes being made to the short-term rentals ordinance are not substantial.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER/FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY (Audio 44:33)

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz** offered condolences to the Seline family. Mary Ann Seline passed away last week. She and her husband were very involved with the Boy's League and the sports programs for years in the City.

- **Mayor Hallum** thanked the Beautification Committee for continuously and consistently going above and beyond on their own time to make sure that City Hall looks nice. He expressed his appreciation for their partnership, and praised the America 250 banners as looking great.

- **Council President Kline** stated that he has received calls regarding the second half 2025 real estate tax bills. He read the following from the Lake County Treasurer's website:

- "The Lake County Treasurer's Office announces that due to recent passed legislation by the State of Ohio, the due date for the second half 2025 real property and 2026 manufactured home tax bills have been extended to August 5th, 2026. Printed bills are at the printer and will be mailed no later than July 16, 2026."

ADJOURNMENT (Audio 47:10)

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

Roll Call: **AYES: Sivo, Taylor Draper, Belich, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline, Knecht, Miller**
NAYS: None
Vote: 7/0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

APPROVED: July 23, 2026
Date

Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: Nick Aiello
Nicholas Aiello
Clerk of Council