

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

Special Meeting of Council Minutes of February 16, 2026

The Special Meeting of Council was called to order on Monday, February 16, 2026 at 5:47 p.m. in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 7:00 p.m. (0:02)

Cell Phone Reminder to Turn off Devices

Pledge of Allegiance (Audio: 0:17)

ROLL CALL (Audio: 0:37)

Members Present: Councilwoman Vicki Miller, Councilwoman Kathleen Sivo, Council Vice President Tanya Taylor Draper, Councilman Joe Jarmuszkiewicz, and Council President Michael Kline

Also Present: Mayor Christopher Hallum and Finance Director Bruce Scott

Absent: Councilman Dan Knecht and Councilwoman Julie A. Belich

Motion made by **Councilwoman Miller**, seconded by **Council Vice President Taylor Draper**, to excuse **Councilman Knecht** and **Councilwoman Belich** from tonight's meeting.

Discussion on the Motion:

No discussion.

Roll Call: **AYES:** Miller, Sivo, Taylor Draper, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline

NAYS: None

Vote: 5/0

Motion passes to excuse **Councilman Knecht** and **Councilwoman Belich** from tonight's meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION #1 (Audio: 1:55)

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

Public Portion #1 opened at 5:49 p.m.

No one spoke.

Public Portion #1 closed at 5:49 p.m.

LEGISLATION: (Audio 2:20)

ORDINANCE 2026-011-AMENDED-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION NO. 436 PERMITTING THE WILLOUGHBY HILLS SERVICE DIRECTOR THE SOLE DISCRETION TO GRANT TWO WEEKS OF VACATION TIME TO NEW HIRES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion by Council:

- **Councilman Jarmuszkwicz:** This MOU is in regard to a hire. The service department wants to hire a gentleman who has fifteen years of service somewhere else. By moving to Willoughby Hills, he loses all his benefits of seniority, per our contract. A memorandum was drawn up with the approval off the union that allows us to give him, at our discretion, two weeks of vacation time to start with. He will still start with all his regular holidays and benefits as per the contract. This was done before with the police department for lateral transfers.

- **Council President Kline:** This Special Meeting was called to deal with this ordinance because of the critical timing. The offer has been made to this respective employee and both the service superintendent and the administration doesn't want to wait on this and potentially lose the opportunity.

Motion made by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz, seconded by Councilwoman Miller, to wave the Three Reading Rule on Ordinance 2026-011-Amended.

Discussion on the Motion:

- **Councilman Jarmuszkwicz:** This MOU will give us the opportunity to hire qualified individuals to fill labor positions needed. It is very hard to find qualified people to do jobs. This will help our road superintendent get the people he needs into our department.

**Roll Call: AYES: Miller, Sivo, Taylor Draper, Jarmuszkiewicz, Kline
NAYS: None
Vote: 5/0**

Motion passed to wave the Three Reading Rule on Ordinance 2026-011-Amended.

Motion made by Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz, seconded by Council Vice President Taylor Draper, to adopt Ordinance 2026-011-Amended.

Discussion on the Motion:

- **Mayor Hallum:** We heard from Mr. Grubiss last Monday how he has been searching to find that perfect last person. We thought we had somebody, but unfortunately, we had to let them go. This gentleman has fifteen years of experience in a service department and knows the area. This is hard to find. Thank you for considering this ordinance.

Councilman Knecht and Councilwoman Belich arrived at the meeting at 5:54 P.M.

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

Ordinance 2026-011-Amended was adopted.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER/FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY (Audio 7:57)

- **Councilwoman Miller:** I was wondering if our Fire Chief could give us a brief update on the river conditions and what we can expect in the coming days.

- **Fire Chief Gandee:** We received a call from one of our residents about fifteen minutes ago advising that they thought they saw an ice jam starting to form just north down-stream by the Rodgers Road bridge. My shift officer, Lieutenant Planisek and myself did go down there. There is a minimal ice jam at this point. While we were investigating this, our Central Communications called to advise that a resident was seeing a minor ice jam, but no flooding at this time. We are actively staying in touch with our residents and keeping the mayor posted on what is going on. Everything is still favorable, but we have been trying to get out in the media because those conditions can change. We do have some low-lying areas and some sand bars that are of concern by the Milan Drive area that we are actively watching. I was at Rodgers Rd. around two hours ago and saw some pretty good stream movement. When we went back, pretty much the whole area was wide with some ice chunks headed northbound. I just notified our neighboring fire departments. Everything is still precarious, so we are actively watching it. Based on our communication with the National Weather Service, everything is consistent in showing a nice, slow thaw. Hopefully, our luck will continue and we won't have any other issues. The good thing is, we don't have any real precipitation behind it other than the snow melt. It is not a raging river at this point so hopefully this will persist and be another memory.

- **Councilwoman Miller:** Thank you Chief. The good news is that I heard that the Cuyahoga River has resolved itself. Hopefully, we will be seeing that with the Chagrin River shortly.

ADJOURNMENT (10:55)

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

APPROVED: Mar 12, 2026
Date


Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: Nick Aiello
Nicholas Aiello
Clerk of Council