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Vice President of Council
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Council Clerk
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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 March 10, 2025

The Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation was called to order on March 10, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. **Council President Kline** presided.

Call to Order 6:00 p.m. (0:08)

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, Councilwoman Belich, and Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz

Also Present: Mayor Hallum, Law Director Michael C. Lucas, and City Engineer DiFranco

Absent: Finance Director Bruce Scott

- **Council President Kline:** We were supposed to have with us, this evening, Jessie Styles from Northstar Towers. This is a cell tower company. He called me this afternoon and told me he is down with the flu and won't be able to make it this evening. We will reschedule that and bring him in. What we wanted to do was have him give us an explanation of the current state of the cell tower industry from a construction and safety standpoint and see how that matches up on our current ordinances on cell towers. We want to see if some of our requirements and regulations we have are outdated. We will have him back in as soon as we can.
- **Mayor Hallum:** Because the Law Director was not present at the last meeting, he was not here on his fifth year anniversary, so I presented him with his five-year-coin last week. I wanted you all to be aware that he has been with us for five years.

BEGINNING DISPOSITION: (Audio 2:20)

ORDINANCE 2025-009-SECOND READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PART 3-TRAFFIC CODE OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, CHAPTER 339 CAPTIONED "COMMERCIAL AND HEAVY VEHICLES," SPECIFICALLY, SECTION 339.02 TITLED "USE OF LOCAL STREETS; LOCAL PERMIT AND CONDITIONS," AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** What are we actually amending? The weight limits of the trucks

allowed on Bishop Road?

- **Law Director Lucas:** This came up during our Administration meeting and the Chief felt that we did not need that weight-bearing regulation anymore on Bishop Road. As a result, that was actually modified out of this chapter (the requirement regarding the weight bearing at Bishop Road). Part of that was based on infrastructure improvement that was going to make it more palatable for that type of trucking.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I have been contacted by some residents who are concerned with the safety of now enabling semi-trucks to travel down that road. The upgrades and improvements are one thing, but have we considered the safety factor? There are a lot of residents whose properties are very close to the street. If we go down that street there are quite a few. The concern is if I am outside, washing my car or mowing my lawn, given they are already concerned about the speed of vehicles going up and down Bishop Road, would that compound the problem? I think that is something we need to consider or talk about, coming from residents.
- **Councilwoman Miller:** My concern is what kind of increase in traffic we are going to see for those residents. I wanted to get an idea of how many trucks actually have to bypass that on a regular basis. Has there been any thought about the increased amount of traffic?
- **Council President Kline:** During the construction of the bridge, do we know the route the trucks were taking since they could not stay on Bishop Road.
- **Mayor Hallum:** They weren't because they weren't allowed. They are using the same route now that they were using then, which is going South on Bishop to Wilson Mills.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I know that is true for the most part, but every now and then we have people who don't abide by the rules and have been making it possible to just travel down that road when/if the residents call, they can't get the name of the truck or the license plate number. By the time the truck has gone through, it has happened.
- **Mayor Hallum:** There's no way you are going to catch every single person. For every law there is, there's going to be a person that's going to break it. One person at least. I am not saying that every truck does, I am just saying that is the route they are supposed to go, and most of them do, to my knowledge. There are certainly going to be exceptions. The likelihood that we will catch them is not great. It is similar to the complaints about Amazon drivers parking anywhere on the road. There is not anything we can do about it because by the time they call and we get dispatch out there, they are gone. If we haven't observed it, there is nothing we can do about it. That is the basic answer to your question.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** A while ago, we had a resident that was concerned about the narrowing of 6 onto Bishop to a single lane. Will this exacerbate this fear with bigger trucks and more trucks going down that way, as well as merging with cars and cars trying to get around them?
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** For clarification, they wait at the light at 6 and Chardon and there are two lanes. These combine into one near the gas station by the CVS area. They race to see who could make it to that lane first. That was the concern about safety. Someone could lose control of their vehicle and end up on somebody's property. That was one of the concerns with the traffic and the speed.
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** My concern would be with UPS trucks. Currently they are not allowed

to come on to bishop. If we remove the weight restriction, they would be able to come on Bishop with a lot of extra semi-trucks.

- **Mayor Hallum:** Just for clarity, you are not talking about delivery trucks, you are talking about semi-trucks correct?
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** Yeah. So besides speed and safety, it is a lot of wear and tear on the pavement.

ORDINANCE 2025-010-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO SECURE THE PURCHASE OF A NEW 2026 MACK GRANITE GR42FR TRUCK CAB AND CHASSIS THROUGH SOURCEWELL, A COOPERATIVE PURCHASING COMPANY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** These are the vehicles that the Road Superintendent mentioned that were going to be figured in the budget already. They are already accounted for in this year's budget.
- **Council President Kline:** Yes. There are two. The first is in the budget.
- **Mayor Hallum:** Just so all of you are aware, this is in the budget in the 420 account under services where you will find that there is \$230,000 line item which was not only for the purchase of the cab and chassis but also the upfitting. The Road Superintendent has voiced his concerns about waiting too much longer to order this because of more tariffs potentially on the horizon and the costs going up. It has already gone up about 8 percent. He feels he can find ways to either absorb that in other ways to keep it within budget. He is concerned that if we wait too much longer, additional tariffs can jack it up even higher and then we would have to look for funds elsewhere or potentially get lesser truck than what we know really works around here.

ORDINANCE 2025-011-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO SECURE THE PURCHASE OF A NEW 2025 CAT BACKHOE 420 XE THROUGH SOURCEWELL, A COOPERATIVE PURCHASING COMPANY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

- **Council President Kline:** One comment I would like to make on this piece of equipment was that the actual cost is coming in on budget. It is about \$100 off from the budget and considering the cost involved, that is really on budget.

ORDINANCE 2025-012-FIRST READING

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PART NINE – STREETS, UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE, TITLE THREE – UTILITIES, CHAPTER 925 – SEWERAGE SYSTEM REGULATIONS, SECTION 925.06 – FEES, SUB-SECTION (C) OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS, OHIO AND REPEALING ANY AND ALL CONFLICTING LEGISLATION.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** Who actually sets the new rates for those different chemicals or hazardous waste?
- **Law Director Lucas:** It is done on an annual basis by the waste manager, Jack Gorka of the City of Willoughby. The rates are based on usage. Sometimes you will see the rates going up and sometimes you will see the rates going down. It's an annual amendment made every year. The waste treatment plan is owned by the City of Willoughby. There is an agreement and memorandum of understanding with the

City of Eastlake as well that actually goes back to 1955. They make the annual adjustment each year because it is being monitored by the Ohio EPA actually.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** Doesn't our waste go through Euclid?
- **Law Director Lucas:** This is different. Euclid is a waste treatment plant. This is the use of waste that is being disgorged and treated at the Willoughby Treatment plant for dispensing it out at the County dumpsite. It's two different things.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I was just curious because I noticed that some of them went up a few cents and some of them went up quite a bit, maybe 30-40%.
- **Law Director Lucas:** It is all based on the quantity used, because the quantity dictates the treatment cost which is why sometimes you will see a specific line item as in this case. It went down just a little bit, around one cent. There was a greater use over this last annual period which is why some of the rates went up.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** Is this dispersed over the whole County or each individual City?
- **Law Director Lucas:** It is dispersed over the cities that take part in the Willoughby Eastlake waste treatment plant which includes Wickliffe, Willowick, Willoughby Hills, Eastlake, and Willoughby itself.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** Where does that sewage come from?
- **Law Director Lucas:** From the communities I just named.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** If we use the Euclid treatment plan for the waste sewage, how does it get calculated in Willoughby?
- **Mayor Hallum:** Part of our City goes to Euclid. A small portion actually goes to Willoughby Eastlake. It is two separate things.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I didn't understand how we were getting tied into that.
- **Mayor Hallum:** The people that are going to Euclid are charged with the recently passed sewer rates for Euclid. The few households that go to Willoughby Eastlake would be affected by this one. It's not crossing over.
- **Law Director Lucas:** There is no duplicative billing.
- **Mayor Hallum:** You are only sending your stuff to one place.
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** The only parcel that goes to Willoughby are on S.O.M. Center North of the freeway by the two gas stations.
- **Council Vice President:** There is no change in the practices or procedures correct? This is just a price adjustment?
- **Law Director Lucas:** It is actually an annual adjustment that's made every single year by Willoughby, Eastlake, and it should be made by Willoughby Hills and Willowick as well. They send out a certified copy once the legislation for the new rate passes, which you will see in Ordinance 2025-026 was the Ordinance. This is sent out to the communities that take part in the

usage of the treatment plant in Willoughby with the understanding that the legislating bodies for each of the communities that are involved in that will take part then in making the rate adjustments which is what we are doing here.

- **Councilwoman Belich:** Can we just confirm that there is or is not impact on any individual residents and the bills that they receive?
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** That is correct. There is not.
- **Councilwoman Belich:** So, everybody's individual bill will not be impacted by this change?
- **City Engineer DiFranco:** Correct.
- **Vice President Taylor Draper:** Is there a need to have this go three readings? Is there an urgency?
- **Law Director Lucas:** There is no urgency, the rates are going to be in effect set by the treatment facility through the City of Willoughby in that. You will see that Ordinance 2025-026 from Willoughby isn't on an emergency basis either.
- **Council President Kline:** The last time Willoughby Hills passed this Ordinance was in 2021. This came from Willoughby and had a copy of their ordinance. Also attached to it was a notification that we needed to update ours. I wanted to double check with Finance Director Scott. I'm sure with Willoughby updating the billing rates each year, that we have been billed the current rates each year. The fact that we haven't updated ours in four years doesn't impact what we have been paying for those four years. We have been paying, I assume, the correct rates.
- **Mayor Hallum:** We haven't been paying anything, but the two businesses that are in there have been. We the City have not been paying anything because we don't go there. It's the two businesses. They are paying the correct rates because I'm sure they have to notify the actual end user of the updated rates.

RESOLUTION 2025-005-AMENDED FIRST READING

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF EMERALD GLEN TITLE AGENCY IN THE CITY OF WILLOUGHBY HILLS.

- **Councilwoman Miller:** I was just wondering if there was a timeframe on this Resolution and when it was going to be presented.
- **Mayor Hallum:** The event is April 1, so we'd like to get this done so that we can put it with the proclamation and present it to them at the event.

PUBLIC PORTION: (Audio 20:30)

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

- Public Portion opened at 6:20 p.m.
 - **Mark Belich: 37200 Chardon Road:** My concern is Ordinance 2025-009. I am not positive, but I am assuming taxpayer money was used to replace the bridge and bring it up to weight

standards. I'm sure we didn't build a bridge there that doesn't support weight standards. So, applying weight limitations to a bridge that possibly used Federal Highway excise tax dollars and placing a limit on it doesn't make sense. The bridge is either weighted for that weight or not. If it's not, it becomes a safety issue on the road. But you can't say there's a weight limit on the bridge if we've used our tax dollars to make it proper. If we put a weight limit on the bridge because it couldn't support the weight, then fine. But if I were to drive over the bridge with my truck and get a ticket for driving over a bridge paid for with tax dollars, and the bridge does support the weight, I'd have to have an argument with the prosecutor.

- **Benjamin Joseph Matlock 5886 Bishop Road:** I am bringing my concerns about Ordinance 2025-009. I have been living over there for 2 years now, and frankly, the traffic and the violations are out of control. On a daily basis, I see, just when my kids go to school, people run past school buses and run past stop signs. The other day, a little girl down the street almost got hit. My concern is, if you put semi-trucks there, how are you going to regulate them and bring them to the law when you can't even do that with regular traffic. As we speak, there is fierce competition between people trying to get into that lane, and I wonder how safe is that when you now have people trying to come off Chardon or come off Bishop Road and then they fight for the lane to get to the narrow one-lane with each other. How is that going to be safe when now you add a semitruck to the mix? All the neighbors I have talked to about this issue agree this is a concern. There are over 40 residential houses there plus a church. It is already very difficult to pull in and out of the driveway, and now we are going to have semitrucks speeding, because everyone speeds all hours of the day and night. I sent an email considering my concerns and got nothing back. It's just non-stop. Those are my concerns with the Ordinance letting semitrucks and tractor trailers down the road.
- Public Portion closed at 6:24 p.m.
- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** I believe we had Chief Naegele in here in regard to the same situation with traffic and breaking of laws and going through stop signs on White Road. He said he was going to have that patrolled more. Has that ever happened? Do they actually focus more on that area to see and enforce the traffic laws a little better?
- **Mayor Hallum:** I would have to check with the Chief to see if that is still happening. I know that at some point it was happening. I don't know that it still is. The problem really is that they certainly go slow when they see a police car sitting in the area, so it is hard to catch people in the act. But yes, I know he was doing it, I don't know if they are still doing it to not, but we can certainly check.
- **Council Vice President Taylor Draper:** I would like to thank you for coming out. I know that ever since I have been elected for 5 years now, that is the one issue I get the most complaints about, is the traffic on Bishop Road. This is not a new situation. People complain about that all the time. I tell them to please call the police and make your problem known even though they say to me "by the time I complain the car is gone." True, but it is important to get your complaint and concern on record. Even if you think it's not going to do any good, please call and let someone know so that they understand there is a problem. That is the best that I can tell you.
- **Mayor Hallum:** I should mention that when we were talking about this a few weeks back, I did call Wickliffe too, because as you all know, the bridge over the highway is Wickliffe. I have seen their officers sitting there a few times now too. It happens, as Mr. Matlock mentioned. It is continuous and it's not just where you live but it is all that area because they just came off the highway doing probably 75 mph and they continue doing a ridiculous amount of speed. So, Wickliffe is starting to help out with engaging as well on that end. I will follow up with Police Chief and make sure we are still periodically going over there to try and get people to slow down. We have a very proactive police force, and they want to get people to slow down. The problem is, they are speeding. As you mentioned, it's not just on Bishop, it's everywhere. We've got people doing 120 mph on the highway in a 60. And we have people going down Route 91 at over 100 mph at times. It is happening everywhere, and it is very difficult to be everywhere at one time, but they do their best to try and spread out amongst the places. The other thing we can talk to them about doing, now that the spring

is coming back, we can put the speed limit signs out that tells people how fast they are going. We don't put those out in the winter because they don't do very well with salt. They will be coming back out and we can talk about putting them down towards your area to make people aware of how fast they are going when they are coming down through there. It does slow people down when they see the signs flashing their speed. We will see about doing that as well for you.

- **Councilman Jarmuszkiewicz:** They should also put a little sign under the speed sign that says "smile." Even if it's not a speed sign it gives you a second thought to slow down.

LEGISLATION: (Audio 28:48)

- No comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT: (Audio 29:30)

- **Motion** made by **Councilwoman Belich**, seconded by **Councilwoman Miller** to adjourn the March 10, 2025 Working Committee of Council and Rules & Legislation.

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

The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVED: March 27, 2025
Date


Michael Kline
President of Council

ATTEST: Nick Aiello
Nicholas Aiello
Clerk of Council