

**Village of Waynesville
Council Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2026 at 7:00 pm**

Present: Mr. Chris Colvin
Mr. Zack Gallagher
Mayor Earl Isaacs
Mr. Troy Lauffer
Mrs. Connie Miller
Mr. David Nation
Absent: Mr. Adam Powell

Village Staff Present: Jeffery Forbes, Law Director; Chief Gary Copeland, Village Manager and Safety Director; Jamie Morley, Finance Director and Clerk of Council

***CLERK’S NOTE-** This is a summary of the Village Council Meeting held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026.*

.....

Mayor Isaacs called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Roll Call – 6 present

Mrs. Miller moved to excuse Mr. Powell from tonight’s meeting, and Mr. Gallagher seconded the motion.

Motion – Miller
Second – Gallagher

Roll Call – 6 yeas

Mayor Acknowledgements

Mayor Isaacs announced that the OPWC Fourth Street Project is in progress. He encouraged everyone to stay healthy and warm through the remaining winter season.

Disposition of Previous Minutes

Mr. Colvin made a motion to approve the minutes for the Council meeting on January 5, 2026, as written, and Mrs. Miller seconded the motion.

Motion – Colvin
Second – Miller

Roll Call – 6 yeas

.....

Public Recognition/Visitors Comments

None

.....

Old Business

None

.....

Reports

Finance

The Finance Committee met this evening and reviewed reports, and everything looks good. Mr. Colvin mentioned that the Committee discussed hiring a part-time code enforcement officer and the Committee decided that the funds are available to hire someone for up to 20 hours a week. He said the next step would be to develop a job description, include the position in the rates and ranges, and consider purchasing a vehicle.

Chief Copeland stated that he does not believe the job would require 20 hours of work each week. He thinks it would involve about 10 hours a week. Mr. Nation said that the Committee believed there would be a learning curve, and then the hours would decrease, but the position should be listed as Chief Copeland believes it should be advertised. Chief Copeland also mentioned that the new hire would shadow Sgt. Denlinger to help train them quickly.

Mr. Colvin asked about the status of the auditor’s report on the Village’s IT. Chief Copeland stated that he will look into Brent addressing the Council on those concerns. He also said he received an email from someone to work with Brent to meet the requirements under HB 96.

Public Works Report

The Public Works Committee will meet on February 2nd at 6:00 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend to learn more about ongoing and future infrastructure projects.

Special Committee Reports

The MOMS Committee met tonight and discussed various topics. There were talks about creating a Special Improvement District and possible funding from the Ohio Main Street Project. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17th, at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Hice will invite Ben Yoder to discuss the creation of a Special Improvement District.

Village Manager Report

- The company responsible for boring under the Mill Race to connect Well 10 will be out on January 26th.
- SmithCorp has started the OPWC Fourth Street Project.
- Mr. Alexander is scheduled for sentencing at the Mayor's Court on February 9th concerning his code violations for the Hammel House property. The magistrate gave Mr. Alexander until then to show progress in addressing the code violations. His proposed solution was to tear down the kitchen part of Hammel House. Mr. Forbes told Mr. Alexander that he would need to obtain a demolition permit and follow the required procedures. Since the property is in the Historic Preservation District, he must adhere to this process and appear before the board.
- Photographs of the swearing-in ceremony for the new and returning Council Members have been provided for review.
- 2025 well draws have been provided and show that the wells are evenly distributing the workload.
- Greg Heinke from Hylant Insurance provided a risk assessment report. He requested that the question about felonies be removed from the Village's job application, as required by ORC. This has been done to ensure compliance with the law.
- Photographs of the Water Department replacing a leaking hydrant have been provided.
- The Street Department has removed and stored all the Christmas decorations. It looks like these will need to be replaced next year.

Police Report

- December 2025 Calls for Service and Mayor's Court Month-End reports have been provided for review.
- The Village received a check from the Attorney General for \$13,960 to reimburse for Police CPT (Continuing Professional Training) hours.

Mr. Gallagher asked where in the ORC it states that an employer cannot inquire about prior felonies on a job application. Chief Copeland responded that this applies only to the public sector, but he isn't sure which specific ORC.

Mrs. Miller asked Chief Copeland to contact the Chamber of Commerce because the electric panels from the Sauerkraut Festival are still up. She said the meters were taken out a couple of weeks after the Festival, but the panels are still there.

Mrs. Miller expressed concern about Mr. Alexander's lack of movement because the fire suppression system is not functioning, raising concerns for the attached buildings. She worries that the Magistrate might give him more time to fix the violations. Chief Copeland stated he

wants to charge him with more code violations. However, the Magistrate and Prosecutor prefer to close out these current cases before pursuing additional charges. Mr. Gallagher asked about the maximum possible sentence for Mr. Alexander. Chief Copeland said he could face up to 180 days in jail. Mr. Colvin inquired whether the Historic Preservation Board can get involved. Chief Copeland explained that the demolition permit will not go before the Board until it is applied for. Mr. Nation asked whether, if Mr. Alexander did nothing, the building could be condemned, allowing the Village to take over and manage it. Mr. Forbes clarified that these are currently criminal charges. What Mr. Nation refers to is a civil issue, which would need to be filed with the Common Pleas Court and involve the Health Department. He has seen success with this approach in other communities, but it's a lengthy process. Mr. Gallagher asked how to move forward and if Council can take any action. Mr. Forbes said the Village must wait until the criminal case concludes. He added he can prepare a civil suit with all the reports and files, seeking Council's approval before filing. He emphasized that this is not a quick process. Mrs. Miller asked what could be done to strengthen the codes to prevent this from happening again. Mr. Forbes explained that the codes are adequate, but the process is slow. He said there is a long history of case law protecting property ownership as a fundamental right, making it difficult for the government to override those rights. Mr. Nation asked about tightening occupancy codes in the Historic District. Mr. Forbes said the Village can expand regulations in the Historic District and review vacant building ordinances, such as requiring owners to maintain vacant properties. He said he will look into this.

Mr. Nation asked how the purchase of Christmas decorations is funded. Chief Copeland stated it comes out of the general fund. Mayor Isaacs thanked Mr. Colvin and his family for volunteering every year to decorate Main Street. Mr. Nation volunteered to look into purchasing new decorations.

Financial Director Report

- Ms. Morley stated that she is in the process of closing out 2025.
- Ms. Morley reminded Council to let her know if any members want to attend the Elected Official Seminar hosted by the Ohio Municipal League.

Mrs. Miller stated that there was a correction to the committee appointments. She said Mr. Blankenship told her he wanted to remain on the Historic Preservation Board.

Mrs. Miller moved to correct the committee assignments and remove Mr. Colvin and add Mr. Blankenship to the Historical Preservation Board, and Mr. Lauffer seconded the motion.

Motion – Miller
Second – Lauffer

Roll Call – 6 yeas

Mayor Isaacs motioned to appoint Adam Powell as a Council Representative to the Chamber of Commerce, and Mrs. Miller seconded the motion.

Motion – Isaacs

Second – Miller

**Roll Call – 5 yeas (Miller, Nation, Colvin, Gallagher, Isaacs)
1 Nay (Lauffer)**

Mr. Lauffer asked Mr. Forbes if it was a conflict of interest if Mr. Powell represented the Council during Chamber meetings because Mr. Powell's wife was on the Chamber Board. Mr. Forbes stated that it would not be a conflict of interest for the Village, as it does not involve Village operations. Mr. Nation volunteered to be an alternate if Mr. Powell is unable to attend.

Law Report

- Mr. Forbes stated that ORC 9.73 states that an application for a public employee cannot ask about criminal background, but an employer can investigate this during the application process.

New Business

None

Legislation

First Reading of Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance No. 2026-001

Authorizing Additional Bonus Compensation for Ashley Richardson and Jamie Morley and Declaring an Emergency

Mr. Lauffer motioned to waive the two-reading rule for Ordinance 2026-001, and Mr. Gallagher seconded the motion.

Motion – Lauffer

Second – Gallagher

Roll Call – 6 yeas

Mrs. Miller motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-001 as an emergency, and Mr. Gallagher seconded the motion.

Motion – Miller

Second – Gallagher

Roll Call – 6 yeas

Ordinance No. 2025-038

Second Reading of Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Tabled Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Executive Session

None

All were in favor of adjourning at 7:57 p.m.

Date: _____

Jamie Morley, Clerk of Council