

**Village of Waynesville
Council Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2026 at 7:00 pm**

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

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

CLERK’S NOTE- This is a summary of the Village Council Meeting held on Tuesday, February 17, 2026.

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Mayor Isaacs called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Roll Call – 7 present

Mayor Acknowledgements

Mayor Isaacs expressed he was happy to see the snow gone. He complimented the Street Department on the great job they did keeping the streets clear.

Disposition of Previous Minutes

Mrs. Miller made a motion to approve the minutes for the Council meeting on February 2, 2026 as written, and Mr. Nation seconded the motion.

Motion – Miller
Second – Nation

Roll Call – 7 yeas

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Public Recognition/Visitors Comments

Major Arrasmith from the Warren County Drug Task Force presented the Council with the 2025 Annual Report. He explained that the Warren County Drug Task Force has been an initiative of HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) since 2004. The DTF includes the city of

Wilmington, along with multiple local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as multijurisdictional units have proven to be the most effective. Major Arrasmith was pleased to say that the DEA and FBI are back on the DTF staff as of 2026. He noted that drug trafficking has significantly changed over the past several years. Since Warren County is located between Cincinnati and Dayton, two source cities, there is a lot of drug trafficking passing through. Major Arrasmith stated that the Warren County Drug Task Force ranked 9th out of 243 counties for methamphetamine seizures, 4th highest for fentanyl seizures, and 10th highest in the state for cocaine seizures. He was happy to report that overdose deaths continued to decline in 2025. He explained that the Drug Task Force in 2025 consisted of 19 law enforcement and support personnel. The Task Force is overseen by a Policy Board made up of local law enforcement, which provides oversight and input on all operations. The DTF is funded through various methods, including local funding. Major Arrasmith mentioned that he believes the current funding method is somewhat flawed because it relies heavily on grants, which fluctuate greatly year to year. He said that there has been a local contribution established in 2004 to charge local municipalities \$1 per person, based on the census. He added that this contribution is updated only every 10 years. He expressed his gratitude for the Village of Waynesville's increased contribution.

Mr. Lauffer asked if there had been any changes with the new sheriff. Major Arrasmith responded that he feels things are moving in a positive direction, and Sheriff Riley is being proactive and continues to support DTF.

Mr. Lauffer stated that the Village contributed \$3.21 per person and asked how the DTF can get other municipalities to support DTF more. Major Arrasmith stated that there are several options. The DTF provides municipalities with two options each year: the standard option 1 with \$1 per person, and option 2 with an increased contribution. He also said that some municipalities contribute a full-time officer.

Mr. Lauffer asked if the DTF still benefits from asset forfeiture. Major Arrasmith stated that it has changed proportionally. The laws have changed, and the value of the seized drugs must balance out the asset. He also mentioned that drug traffickers are getting smarter and no longer use their own vehicles; they are either borrowing or renting vehicles.

Mr. Colvin asked if Major Arrasmith has seen a trend toward cryptocurrency in drug trafficking. Major Arrasmith stated that it is still a cash business. Maybe at higher levels, but not with what Warren County is dealing with.

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Old Business

None

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Reports

Finance

The Finance Committee met this evening and reviewed the reports provided by the Finance Director; everything looks good. The committee also discussed the cyber policy that is due in July, as required by HB 96. The Committee will meet again on March 16th at 6:00 p.m.

Public Works Report

The Public Works Committee will meet on March 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend.

Special Committee Reports

The MOMS Committee met this evening with representatives from Bricker Grayden and Wyatt Law Office to discuss creating a Special Improvement District (SID) on Main Street to help fund planned improvements. It was discussed that they would assist in establishing the SID, but there would be upfront fees that could be reimbursed from the SID. Mr. Colvin asked whether the Council would be okay with the Village fronting the funds to create this district and being reimbursed once the SID is established. He also inquired about Mr. Forbes's opinion of the law firm providing this service. Mr. Forbes responded that Bricker Grayden and Wyatt are well known for this type of work, and he has worked with them in other municipalities. Mr. Gallagher asked about the cost of this. Mr. Nation explained that there will be three steps in the process, each costing between \$5,000 and \$7,500. The Council agreed to move forward with the project. Mr. Lauffer stated that the first step would be to outline the SID area and ensure that 60% of the property in the area is willing to participate.

Mr. Colvin stated that MOMS also discussed the University of Cincinnati's plan to develop an economic strategy to help secure grants. Mr. Nation added that the Main Street Program is also an option and is somewhat less expensive.

Village Manager Report

None

Police Report

None

Financial Director Report

- Ms. Morley said that 2025 has been closed. The Village's financials have been uploaded to Open Checkbook and should be accessible within the next 10 business days. She also provided the year-end notes for review.
- The employees meet with Mr. Hough from Wade Insurance to discuss insurance plans and benefits. Most employees preferred

an HSA plan over the HRA plan that the Village currently offers.

Mr. Colvin asked Ms. Morley to explain the differences between the HSA and HRA insurance plans. Ms. Morley stated that the Village currently offers an HRA plan. The plan includes copays and deductibles. The Village will pay the first \$3,000 (single) or \$6,000 (family) toward the employee's deductible – the Village only pays for claims made to the HRA. With an HSA, there are no copays; the employee is responsible for paying the entire deductible until it is met, after which the insurance begins paying. With the HSA, the Village will contribute X dollars to each employee's HSA account. These are for the employees to keep and use for medical expenses, and they can be rolled over each year. HRA plans tend to be less expensive because they put the responsibility on the employee to meet the deductible before insurance begins to pay. Ms. Morley said that Mr. Hough will attend the next Finance Committee meeting to discuss options and present quotes to the committee.

Law Report

None

New Business

Mr. Forbes has drafted legislation on vacant buildings that would require them to be registered with the Village. Mr. Forbes explained that this provides a tool to work in conjunction with the current codes. He explained that vacant buildings have a greater impact on the health and safety of the Village, and this ordinance would provide a list to ensure that these buildings do not deteriorate. Mr. Forbes stated he has received feedback and tweaked the current legislation, including adding heightened requirements in the Historic Preservation District. He will send out the draft before the next Council meeting.

Mrs. Miller inquired about a building unexpectedly becoming vacant, such as due to death. Mr. Forbes mentioned that he had just added a hardship exemption to the legislation. Mr. Gallagher added that this would be helpful for police officers to have a point of contact for vacant buildings. Mrs. Miller asked how the public would be informed about this requirement. Mr. Forbes stated there will be an education component, and the new Code Enforcement Officer would be a good starting point.

Mr. Forbes stated that the vacant building legislation is a separate piece of legislation from Ordinance 2026-006, as it would require a demolition permit from the Village for the Historic Preservation District. He explained that an issue was discovered between communication with the Warren County Code Enforcement Office and the Village of Waynesville: The Village's code states that any building within the Historic Preservation District must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness before demolition. The Village uses Warren County as its Building Code Enforcer, and Warren County issues demolition permits. This Ordinance will ensure that anyone wanting to demolish a building in the Historic District must present a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Warren County Building Inspection Office before the County can issue the permit.

Mr. Nation asked what happens if someone already has a Warren County demolition permit for a building in the Historic District. Mr. Forbes stated that the Village's code requires them to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness before demolishing any building in the Historic District. Therefore, they will still need to appear before the Historic Preservation Board before demolition. This ordinance guarantees that procedures are followed correctly.

Mr. Gallagher inquired about buildings outside the Historic Preservation District. Mr. Forbes replied that the Village lacks a building code department, so that responsibility falls solely to Warren County. He clarified that the Historic District provides an additional layer of regulations for this area.

Legislation

First Reading of Ordinances and Resolutions

Ordinance No. 2026-004

Authorizing Participation in the Greater Warren County Drug Task Force and Authorizing the Village Manager to Execute the Related Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Forbes explained that this is mainly a housekeeping issue and will not change anything within the Village. He clarified that since the inception of the Warren County Drug Task Force in 2004, it was a Council of Governments (COG) that made it subject to audit requirements and Sunshine Laws. Due to the nature of DTF and the need for confidentiality and privacy, this legislation would dissolve the COG and govern the group under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Mrs. Miller motioned to have the first-reading of Ordinance 2026-004, and Mr. Gallagher seconded the motion.

Motion – Miller
Second – Gallagher

Roll Call – 7 yeas

Ordinance No. 2026 - 005

Authorizing the Village Manager to Award Property and Liability Insurance Coverage for the Village of Waynesville and Declaring an Emergency

Mr. Lauffer motioned to waive the two-reading rule for Ordinance 2026-005, and Mr. Colvin seconded the motion.

Motion – Lauffer
Second – Colvin

**Roll Call – 6 yeas (Gallagher, Isaacs, Lauffer, Miller, Powell, Colvin)
1 nay (Nation)**

Mr. Nation explained that he voted nay because he did not understand why it had to be an emergency when staff knew the policy was expiring. Mr. Forbes explained that the policy expired March 12 and the emergency was to ensure that the Village's insurance did not lapse.

He also stated that the insurance companies usually do not provide quotes until the policy is near expired.

Mr. Lauffer motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-0005 as an emergency, and Mr. Gallagher seconded the motion.

Motion – Lauffer
Second – Gallagher

Roll Call – 7 yeas

Ordinance No. 2026-0006

An Ordinance Enacting Codified Ordinances Section 150.021 Requiring Prior Village Historic District Approval Before Application for Any County Demolition Permit, and Declaring an Emergency.

Mr. Gallagher motioned to waive the two-reading rule for Ordinance 2026-0006, and Mrs. Miller seconded the motion.

Motion – Gallagher
Second – Miller

Roll Call – 7 yeas

Mr. Gallagher motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-0006 as an emergency, and Mrs. Miller seconded the motion.

Motion – Gallagher
Second – Miller

Roll Call – 7 yeas

Second Reading of Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Tabled Ordinances and Resolutions

None

Executive Session

None

All were in favor of adjourning at 8:18 p.m.

Date: _____

Jamie Morley, Clerk of Council