

Committee as a Whole Meeting Minutes July 9, 2026 6:31 PM

Attendance: Councilpersons Camara, Koss, Martin, Paessun, Pinter, Grant; Law Director Shamp, Fiscal Officer Wilcheck, Planning Director Fischer, Chief Delp

Meeting Overview

The Committee as a Whole met to review matters related to finance, public safety, and pending legislation. Major discussions focused on budget amendments, capital projects, the proposed pool house, recent public safety incidents, Fourth of July operations, and legislation scheduled for Council consideration.

Finance

June Financial Report

Fiscal Officer Jeff Wilcheck reported that June financial activity remained generally consistent with prior months. However, he expressed concern regarding income tax collections, noting that the Village's advance payment for June was approximately **\$40,000 lower than the same period in 2025**. While he indicated this could be due to timing differences and monthly fluctuations, he stated that collections would continue to be monitored throughout the remainder of the year.

Council noted that similar concerns had arisen during the previous year before revenues ultimately finished approximately 3.5–3.8% above prior-year levels.

Ordinance 2026-11 – Budget Amendments

Mr. Wilcheck reviewed the requested appropriations included in Ordinance 2026-11, including:

- **\$30,000 increase** to the Village Solicitor budget to cover anticipated legal expenses associated with the Charter Commission.
- Increase to the **Police CPT Reimbursement Fund** to accommodate additional Attorney General grant reimbursements for police training.
- **\$50,000 increase** to the MP-TIF Tax Equivalent Fund to offset growing County Auditor deductions for levies and related fees.
- Increase in the **Waterline Maintenance Fund** from \$150,000 to **\$200,000** to ensure adequate appropriations for the North Lake Court waterline replacement project, currently estimated at approximately **\$175,000** and out for bid.

Resolution 2026-15 – Sidewalk and Pathway Project

Council reviewed a resolution authorizing a **\$100,000 advance from the General Fund** to the Capital Projects Fund for sidewalks and pathways.

Mr. Wilcheck explained that reimbursement grants require project expenses to be paid before reimbursement can be requested. The advance will provide sufficient cash flow during construction and is expected to be repaid upon project completion, estimated in two to three years.

Pool House Project

A significant portion of the meeting focused on the proposed municipal pool house project.

Updated Design

Council reviewed revised architectural plans featuring:

- A central breezeway design
- Prefabricated roof trusses
- Asphalt shingles replacing the previously proposed metal roof
- Brick façade enhancements

Although substituting asphalt shingles reduced roofing costs by approximately **\$30,000**, increases in other construction materials kept the overall project estimate between **\$650,000 and \$655,000**.

Project Schedule

Mr. Wilcheck emphasized that maintaining the construction schedule is critical to opening the pool by late May 2027.

Key milestones include:

- Final design approval in July
- Bid advertisement by late July or early August
- Contract award by late August or early September
- Construction beginning in late September

Any significant delays could jeopardize completion before the 2027 pool season.

Utility Coordination

Council discussed the need to coordinate the pool project with the Valley Road waterline improvements to ensure adequate water service. Preliminary discussions indicate an eight-inch water line should satisfy future pool requirements, though final connection details remain under review.

Design Discussion

Council members generally reacted positively to the revised design while discussing several potential refinements.

Topics included:

- Comparing long-term maintenance costs of metal versus asphalt roofing.
- Including a metal roof as a bid alternate so Council can evaluate pricing before making a final decision.
- Additional storage opportunities within the concession area.
- Potential enlargement of the concession service window.
- Whether a larger sink should be incorporated into the concession area for operational convenience while maintaining the intended food service licensing level.

The committee requested additional pricing information regarding sink alternatives and applicable building code requirements.

Public Input

Several members expressed interest in obtaining additional public feedback before finalizing the design.

Council agreed to schedule a **public town hall meeting** the following Wednesday at **6:30 p.m.** to present the revised pool house plans and receive community input before selecting a final design.

Finance Committee Planning

Council discussed scheduling Finance Committee meetings during October and November to begin preparation of the 2027 appropriations budget.

Professional Services

Council discussed recurring payments to Clemans Nelson & Associates.

Mr. Wilcheck explained that the firm continues to provide specialized human resources guidance and employment-related consulting services and remains a cost-effective resource for the Village.

Public Safety

Safety Committee Report

Councilperson Paessun summarized the July 6 Safety Committee meeting.

Basketball Court Investigation

Chief Delk reported that although police investigated a reported firearm incident at the basketball courts, **no confirmed evidence of a firearm was found.**

A confrontation did occur, and based upon overall public safety concerns, committee members generally supported keeping the basketball hoops removed at this time while continuing to monitor conditions.

Chief Delk noted that juvenile crime and repeat offenders remain a regional challenge affecting many surrounding communities.

The Village's Flock camera system proved valuable during the investigation.

Vehicle Break-In Investigation

Council received additional information regarding a recent series of vehicle break-ins.

Key points included:

- Nine victims were targeted within approximately nine minutes.
- The incidents are believed to be connected to an organized group operating throughout Franklin County and neighboring jurisdictions.
- Suspects typically operate between **5:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.**, using stolen vehicles before abandoning them elsewhere.
- Investigators reported that firearms have been stolen from several vehicles during these crimes, increasing public safety concerns.

Chief Delk encouraged residents to avoid leaving valuables, particularly firearms, inside unattended vehicles.

Phantom Fireworks Review

Council discussed preliminary observations from the 2026 Fourth of July Phantom Fireworks operations.

Overall, police reported the event was manageable, although several operational improvements were identified.

Discussion included:

- Insufficient parking capacity creating traffic congestion.
- Vehicles parking in prohibited areas.
- Difficulty exiting nearby businesses and residential driveways.
- Heavy traffic circulating while searching for parking.
- Potential need for improved "No Parking" signage.
- Interest in assigning officers specifically to traffic management.
- Consideration of using outside law enforcement agencies that possess authority to direct traffic on Cleveland Avenue.

Council also learned that Phantom experienced record customer volume across all locations due to America 250 celebrations.

Additional observations and recommendations will be discussed during the Village's annual post-event meeting with Phantom Fireworks representatives.

Traffic Safety Improvements

Council discussed installation of additional flashing stop signs.

Based on recommendations from Chief Delk, the next proposed installation would be at the **northbound and southbound approaches of Farview Avenue and Minerva Lake Road.**

Estimated costs range from **\$1,000 to \$2,200 per sign**, with staff to determine the final purchasing process.

Police Recruitment

Council discussed a potential police recruitment strategy involving sponsorship of academy candidates.

The concept would provide salary support while recruits attend the police academy in exchange for a contractual commitment to remain employed with the Village for a specified period following graduation.

Chief Delk noted that academy training now lasts approximately six months and that funding constraints have previously limited the Village's ability to pursue this option.

Council agreed to gather additional information for future consideration.

Legislation

Council reviewed legislation scheduled for formal consideration, including:

- Ordinance repealing and reinstating provisions of a prior ordinance.

- Ordinance approving budget amendments.
- Third reading of the rubbish collection ordinance.
- Resolution approving the 2027 Tax Budget.
- Resolution authorizing the General Fund advance for sidewalks and pathways.
- First reading of revisions to the Village fee schedule, including increased right-of-way permit fees to better recover utility locating costs.

Council also received a working draft of the proposed **Good Neighbor Omnibus Legislation**, addressing potential revisions to noise and parking regulations. Members were asked to review the draft before discussion at an upcoming work session and not to conduct deliberations by email.

Meeting Conclusion

Following completion of committee reports and legislative review, Council adjourned the Committee as a Whole meeting by unanimous voice vote.

Key Takeaways

- Budget amendments were recommended to address legal expenses, infrastructure projects, and grant reimbursements.
- The pool house project remains on a compressed schedule, with a public town hall planned before final design approval.
- Income tax collections warrant continued monitoring despite historical fluctuations.
- Organized vehicle break-ins remain a significant regional public safety concern.
- Council identified several operational improvements for future Phantom Fireworks events.
- Additional traffic safety improvements and police recruitment initiatives remain under evaluation.
- Multiple ordinances and resolutions are prepared for Council action during the regular meeting.

Jeffrey Wilcheck, Fiscal Officer

Tiffany Southard, Mayor