

Minerva Park Council Work Session: March 5, 2026

Purpose: Discussion of financial transfers, infrastructure projects, engineering planning, grants, and upcoming governance matters.

1. Financial Actions and Budget Planning

Planned Fund Transfers

The Fiscal Officer announced upcoming legislation to authorize **\$1.5 million in transfers from the General Fund:**

- **\$1,000,000** → **Pool Improvement Fund**
 - Brings total available pool project funds to approximately **\$3 million**, the amount estimated for reconstruction.
- **\$400,000** → **Street Improvement Fund**
- **\$100,000** → **Storm Improvement Fund**

Additional appropriations will be required because only **\$900,000 is currently appropriated** for these transfers.

Grant Funding Administration

- A **new fund will be created** for one of the incoming grants.
- Appropriations must be updated to properly allocate forthcoming grant funds.

Financial Audit Status

- The annual audit fieldwork has been completed unusually quickly (one day plus a partial day).
 - The audit report is expected **by the end of March**.
 - Minor potential issues are known internally but no formal findings yet.
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2. Major Capital Project: Community Pool

The pool project dominated discussion due to its **financial scale and impact on other infrastructure projects**.

Current Situation

The village is evaluating whether to:

1. **Reconstruct the pool**, or
2. **Attempt to repair the existing pool**

The facility is approximately **60 years old** and shows multiple structural and operational issues:

- Structural cracks and leaks
- Rusting walls
- Aging filtration system
- Frequent mechanical failures during seasonal openings
- Annual repair and maintenance expenses increasing

Council acknowledged that repeated repairs may only provide short-term fixes.

Engineering Proposal

- Engineering design proposal from **Brandstetter Carroll**
- Estimated cost: **\$259,000**
- Represents about **8.5% of estimated construction cost**, which is typical or slightly favorable for engineering services.

Engineering would include:

- Design plans

- Bid documentation
- Construction oversight

Key Concerns Raised

Council members raised several concerns before committing to engineering:

- Desire for **clear cost comparison: repair vs. replacement**
- Risk of spending **\$259K on plans that may not be used**
- Hidden infrastructure costs (sewer capacity, stormwater, utilities)
- Grant restrictions requiring projects to proceed if grant money is used

Infrastructure Dependencies

The pool decision directly affects several infrastructure projects:

- Valley Road reconstruction
- Water line replacement
- Sewer capacity and backwash handling
- Stormwater management for parking areas

Engineers cannot finalize these projects without knowing the **final pool design and infrastructure demands**.

Sanitary Sewer Capacity Issue

Current infrastructure includes a **6-inch sanitary sewer line**, which may not be adequate for a modern pool system. Options discussed include:

- Upgrading to an **8-inch line**
- Installing **holding tanks for filter backwash discharge**

These decisions could significantly impact downstream infrastructure costs.

Potential Next Step

Council discussed requesting the engineer to **break the contract into phases** so the village can:

1. Conduct initial assessment and concept planning
 2. Evaluate repair vs. rebuild costs
 3. Proceed to full design only if warranted
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3. Road and Infrastructure Planning

Road Engineering Transition

The village will need to **hire a new engineering firm** for future road projects.

Reasons:

- Current engineer (Jacobs) will no longer continue due to project scale and profitability.
- Larger firms prioritize larger projects.

A new RFQ process will be required.

Road Project Timeline

Because of the engineer transition and planning requirements:

- **Major road construction likely delayed ~3 years**
- Pavement condition report will be **delayed one year** since current report remains usable for about five years.

Valley Road Project

Valley Road reconstruction is now estimated for **Spring 2027 at the earliest**.

Reasons for delay:

- Pool infrastructure decisions unresolved
 - Water, sewer, and storm lines tied to pool project
 - Engineering planning cannot proceed without those answers
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4. Sewer Infrastructure Issues

Council discussed emerging issues with **aging sewer lateral connections**.

Observed Problem

Old clay pipes connecting homes to sewer mains are collapsing at the tap point under roadways.

Implications:

- These sections fall under **village responsibility**
- Failures require emergency repairs

Recent Example

- Latest repair: **~\$16,000**
- Previous failure occurred within the past 6–7 months.

This suggests a potential **pattern of aging infrastructure failures**.

Strategic Concern

Repeated emergency repairs may become more expensive than implementing:

- A larger **planned sewer rehabilitation project**
- Repairs identified during past **CCTV inspections**

Council plans to review prior sewer condition reports and evaluate whether to proceed with previously planned repairs.

5. Grants and External Funding

ODNR Grant

The village received a **\$250,000 ODNR grant agreement**.

Next steps:

1. Council approval and waiver of readings
2. Return signed agreement to ODNR
3. Begin engineer selection via RFQ process

The grant technically requires funds to be spent by **June 30**, but:

- An extension is expected to be granted if needed.

Additional Grant Application

The village has applied for a **\$500,000 grant toward the pool project**, with a decision expected **May–June 2026**.

6. Utility Coordination

Columbia Gas Project

Council discussed concerns about Columbia Gas installing a **larger gas main (4" → 6")**.

Outcome of discussion with the company:

- Gas line may be installed **outside the roadway**, avoiding tearing up newly reconstructed roads.

- Early exploratory work may begin **Q3 2027**, with full project around **2028**.
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7. Governance and Community Engagement

Charter Commission Public Meeting

Council plans a **Charter Town Hall** to educate residents prior to the charter vote.

- Tentative date: **March 19 at 7 PM**
- Format: informational session with Q&A
- Purpose: explain risks, benefits, and structure of charter governance

Planning & Zoning

Next meeting scheduled for **March 18** to finalize policy discussions.

8. Additional Administrative Matters

Noise Ordinance Review

Council discussed revising the village noise ordinance to:

- Include measurable decibel standards
- Allow enforcement flexibility
- Balance nuisance complaints with reasonable residential use

Legal counsel will prepare a memo outlining potential ordinance revisions.

9. Key Strategic Issues Moving Forward

The meeting highlighted several major decisions that will shape the village's capital planning:

Immediate Decisions

- Whether to proceed with **pool engineering design**
- Structuring engineering contracts into phases
- Approving upcoming financial transfers and appropriations

Near-Term Planning

- Hiring a **new engineering firm for road projects**
- Reviewing sewer condition reports and potential repair program
- Finalizing ODNR grant execution

Long-Term Infrastructure

- Pool reconstruction or repair
 - Valley Road reconstruction (2027+)
 - Sewer system upgrades
 - Stormwater improvements
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☑ Overall Takeaway

The village is entering a **major infrastructure planning phase**, with the pool project serving as the central decision point affecting road reconstruction, sewer capacity, and long-term capital spending. Council is balancing fiscal caution with the need to address aging infrastructure and rising construction costs.

Jeffrey Wilcheck, Fiscal Officer

Tiffany Southard, Mayor
