

- 1. In Attendance:** Councilpersons, Pinter, Paessun, Martin, Koss, Grant & Camara; Mayor Southard, Fiscal Officer Wilcheck & Police Chief Delp
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2. Financial Management and Budget Planning

2.1 Financial reporting

The Fiscal Officer reported that the financial report had been distributed on the day of the meeting. Council members were invited to submit questions for clarification.

The discussion reflected ongoing budget planning and the need to ensure that appropriations, projected expenses, and revenue calculations accurately reflect the municipality's obligations.

2.2 Police compensation and staffing — proposed ordinance

Council discussed proposed legislation establishing police compensation and staffing levels for the next three years.

The proposed wage schedule provides:

- **2027:** 3.5% wage increase.
- **2028:** 3% wage increase.
- **2029:** 3% wage increase.

The proposed ordinance would also establish the police department positions intended to exist at the staffing level.

Administration explained that setting compensation in advance would help answer questions from prospective applicants and provide greater clarity about future pay. The ordinance could be amended if circumstances warranted a change.

A comparison of 2026 wages at surrounding police departments had also been distributed.

According to the meeting discussion, only two departments on the comparison list had lower wages than the municipality, while most were higher.

Council members requested access to a missing legislative document or attachment that was listed on the agenda but was not available through the meeting packet link. Copies were to be provided for review, and the missing link was to be corrected.

2.3 Supplemental appropriations

Administration presented a supplemental appropriation proposal covering several operational needs. The discussion specifically addressed the following areas.

Snow and ice removal

Blendon Township requested an increase of \$1,900 for snow and ice removal, primarily because of higher salt prices. The cost cited in the meeting increased from approximately \$73 per ton in the prior year to \$105 per ton.

The original appropriation for the relevant purpose was stated as \$20,000. The transcript contains an unclear statement regarding the proposed revised appropriation amount, so the exact amended total should be confirmed against the formal legislation.

Storm sewer maintenance

Additional appropriations were requested to accommodate CCTV inspection work scheduled for the storm sewer system.

Sewer maintenance

A corresponding increase was requested for the sewer maintenance fund to accommodate CCTV work on the sanitary sewer system.

The administration indicated that proposals had been received from VZ and that purchase orders could be authorized once the relevant appropriations were approved. The contractor's anticipated schedule was approximately three to four weeks, depending on weather conditions. The transcript refers to four separate appropriation needs but does not clearly identify all four as distinct line items in the discussion.

2.4 Blendon Township payments, TIF, and tax revenue verification

Council revisited the municipality's financial arrangement with Blendon Township for snow and ice removal.

Members recalled that the original arrangement was intended, at least in part, to offset revenue Blendon Township was losing because of the TIF arrangement. Concerns were raised that payments should not become an open-ended financial obligation without a clear understanding of the underlying tax revenue calculations.

Discussion included:

- Whether the municipality's payment was intended to replace revenue associated with the TIF.
- Whether the payment arrangement should explicitly state its purpose.
- Whether property tax or income tax calculations could establish an appropriate amount.
- Whether future increases could be handled without repeated legislative amendments.
- Whether county calculations could be obtained in time to inform the immediate decision.

Administration indicated that the county auditor's office could be contacted for relevant calculations, although delays associated with a software change could affect timing.

The discussion also identified the possibility of requesting an audit through Frost Brown Todd to verify TIF and county levy calculations and ensure that the municipality was not being charged or assessed more than appropriate.

Council expressed a preference for making the purpose of the resolution explicit, including clarifying its relationship to the revenue shortfall associated with the TIF arrangement.

2.5 Employee benefits and upcoming budget work

The next Finance Committee meeting was announced for **October 13 at 8:00 a.m.**

Discussion was expected to focus particularly on wages and employee benefits. Preliminary information suggested a potential increase of approximately 7%–10% in benefits, with administration expressing hope that the increase would be closer to 7%.

Additional information was still outstanding.

3. Employee Handbook and Employment Legislation

3.1 Ordinance 2026-18 — Employee Handbook Revisions

Council reviewed proposed handbook revisions intended to address the police department's return to 10-hour shifts.

The existing handbook language addressed holiday pay based on eight-hour shifts. Under that arrangement, employees working 10-hour shifts could be required to use two hours of vacation to cover the difference.

The proposed revision would address the discrepancy so that eligible full-time employees working 10-hour shifts would receive the appropriate 10 hours of holiday pay. The language was also intended to account for other full-time employees with different schedules, rather than applying a rule exclusively to police officers.

The timing was important because Veterans Day on November 11 was identified as the first upcoming holiday affected by the issue, with additional holidays occurring in November. Council discussed whether the legislation should be advanced immediately or handled at the next meeting through an emergency procedure. The transcript does not conclusively document the final procedural outcome.

3.2 Compensation legislation for other employees

Council also discussed the need for separate legislation addressing wage increases for employees outside the police department.

Additional compensation and health care legislation would depend on receiving the necessary information.

Administration and council intended to review the remaining legislative items to ensure that nothing was omitted and that sufficient time remained for readings and enactment before year-end.

3.3 Proposed village administrator position — Ordinance 2026-16

Administration acknowledged that Ordinance 2026-16, establishing the village administrator position, had not been included in the meeting packet because of an administrative oversight. Council discussed amending the agenda to add the ordinance for a first reading. The stated objective was to introduce the measure and make it available for consideration at subsequent meetings, giving council members time to review the proposal and ask questions.

4. Snow and Ice Removal Resolution — Resolution 2026-22

Resolution 2026-22 addresses the snow and ice removal arrangement with Blendon Township. The existing resolution reportedly contained a “not to exceed \$20,000” limitation, which required an amendment when the amount needed to be increased.

The proposed revision would change the language to permit certain future increases or requests to be approved without returning to council, provided they remained under the applicable bidding threshold.

Council members also requested clearer language explaining the purpose of the arrangement and its connection to replacing revenue associated with the TIF.

Key considerations:

- Ensure that the resolution clearly documents the underlying financial purpose.
- Confirm the limits of administrative approval authority.
- Verify the applicable bidding threshold and related requirements.
- Review the financial calculations supporting the payment arrangement.

The meeting established the need to revisit the resolution language, but the transcript does not establish final adoption.

5. Budget Commission Resolution — Resolution 2026-23

Resolution 2026-23 concerns acceptance of the amounts and rates determined by the County Budget Commission.

Administration explained that the resolution had been delayed because the county was behind schedule, reportedly by approximately 30 days on various items, due to a software transition. The resolution was due back to the county by the end of October. Administration therefore requested that council consider passing it at the meeting rather than following the originally contemplated schedule.

The discussion also addressed the readings shown in the resolution and whether the document could be amended to accommodate the requested timing.

6. Public Safety and Police Department Update

6.1 Upcoming Safety Committee meeting

A Safety Committee meeting was scheduled for **October 14 at 6:00 p.m.** at the municipal building.

The meeting was expected to address:

- Road striping on Ponderosa.
- Community questions concerning Flock technology.
- An opportunity for the Police Chief to speak directly to residents about public safety and police operations.
- Any additional resident concerns submitted before the meeting.

The discussion noted that the school year had begun with few reported incidents and that the Police Chief's monthly report was positive.

6.2 Police staffing and recruitment

The Police Chief reported that a newer officer had completed the relevant MOTO program and had been released to patrol duties. The officer was reportedly performing well.

The Chief also referenced an upcoming executive session to discuss additional offers and indicated that efforts were underway to advance the rebuild as quickly as possible. The transcript does not fully define the scope of that rebuild.

7. Infrastructure and Public Works

7.1 Strawser waterline and road restoration project

The Strawser project was expected to begin around **November 2** and be completed by approximately **December 11**, according to the meeting discussion. The start had been delayed from the following week.

The project includes waterline replacement and related road restoration work.

Planned activities include:

- Abandoning the existing waterline.
- Excavating trenches at several locations throughout the cul-de-sac.

- Installing a new waterline and connecting it to homes.
- Connecting North Lake Court to the main running along Kerwood and East Shore.
- Milling and repaving affected roadway sections after the work is completed.
- Removing the island in the cul-de-sac because the trench will cross it and its presence complicates vehicle maneuvering.

The objective is to restore the affected roads and preserve pavement life while improving access for vehicles and larger equipment.

7.2 Crack sealing and roadway maintenance

Several areas between Minerva Lake Road and Maplewood were identified as needing crack sealing.

Administration had contacted A.J. Asphalt to obtain an estimate, with a response expected within the next several days. The contractor indicated that work would need to be completed before the end of October to fit its schedule.

The municipality had not yet confirmed whether additional appropriations would be necessary. For comparison, a prior project cost approximately \$21,000, although that work included pothole repairs and other work in addition to crack sealing. The current project was not expected to be as expensive, but a final estimate was outstanding.

7.3 Manhole cover replacement

The meeting reviewed the condition of deteriorated manhole covers and the potential cost of replacing them.

The contractor advised that custom-branded covers featuring the Village of Minerva Park would involve:

- A lead time of approximately 10–12 weeks.
- A significantly higher cost.
- A high minimum order quantity.

The discussion cited a potential design cost of approximately \$16,000 for custom covers and a preliminary estimate of roughly \$5,000 per cover for basic units. These figures were not presented as a finalized project estimate.

Administration favored addressing the deteriorated covers proactively rather than waiting for further deterioration or potential vehicle damage.

7.4 CCTV inspections and outstanding sewer repairs

The municipality planned to conduct CCTV inspections of storm and sanitary sewer sections to identify current conditions.

Council was reminded, however, that repairs identified in earlier CCTV work from approximately 2020–2021 had not been completed because funding was unavailable at the time.

The discussion suggested that outstanding repairs could represent a substantial future project, preliminarily estimated at approximately **\$200,000–\$400,000**. This was an early planning estimate rather than a confirmed project budget.

Important distinctions were made between:

- Current CCTV inspections, which identify and document infrastructure conditions.

- Repairs previously recommended following earlier inspections, which remain outstanding.

The earlier deficiencies had not been described as immediate failures, but participants expressed concern that conditions may have deteriorated over the intervening years.

The discussion anticipated a potentially significant storm and sanitary sewer repair program in 2027.

Residents were also advised to be mindful of their toilets and plumbing during upcoming CCTV work, based on recollections of prior inspection or lining activities. This was a precautionary suggestion rather than a formally documented instruction from the contractor.

8. Legislative Calendar and Rules of Council

Council discussed the need to review the annual meeting calendar, committee assignments, and potential changes to the Rules of Council.

Topics included:

- Whether to change the regular meeting day of the week.
- Potential adjustments to the second July meeting.
- Whether to schedule a second meeting in March on March 18 or March 25, or omit it.
- Potential scheduling conflicts involving spring break and Halloween.
- Verification of committee assignments.
- Whether members wished to change committees.
- The need to review the calendar carefully before its adoption.

The discussion noted that the municipality has two meetings in November but only one in December. This makes timely scheduling important for ordinances requiring multiple readings or a waiting period before taking effect.

Council also discussed advancing outstanding compensation legislation and other year-end measures as soon as sufficient information became available.

10. Principal Risks and Management Considerations

Financial exposure

Rising salt costs, employee benefits, police compensation, and deferred sewer repairs could place additional pressure on municipal budgets. Reliable cost estimates and revenue calculations will be necessary to avoid making commitments without a clear funding plan.

Revenue accuracy and intergovernmental payments

The discussion about Blendon Township and TIF-related revenues highlights the importance of validating tax calculations and documenting the purpose of intergovernmental payment arrangements. Delays at the county level may complicate the timing of decisions.

Deferred infrastructure maintenance

Previously identified sewer repairs remain outstanding. Updated inspections and estimates should help determine whether the preliminary \$200,000–\$400,000 range remains appropriate and how repairs should be prioritized.

Legislative timing

Several items depend on timely readings, approvals, signatures, or submission to outside agencies. Employee handbook changes, Budget Commission requirements, and year-end compensation legislation are especially sensitive to scheduling.

Construction coordination and resident communications

Roadwork, waterline installation, crack sealing, manhole cover replacement, and sewer inspections may affect residents and motorists. Clear scheduling and practical advance notice can reduce confusion and disruption.

11. Conclusion

The meeting highlighted the municipality's need to balance immediate operational requirements with long-term financial and infrastructure responsibilities. Police staffing and compensation, employee benefit costs, winter maintenance, and legislative deadlines require near-term attention. At the same time, deferred sewer repairs, deteriorated manhole covers, and roadway maintenance present longer-term capital planning challenges.

The most consequential follow-up areas are verifying tax revenue and payment calculations, securing accurate project estimates, advancing time-sensitive legislation, and developing a realistic funding plan for outstanding infrastructure work.

A coordinated approach among council, administration, the Fiscal Officer, public safety leadership, and public works will be important to ensure that decisions are financially supported, properly documented, and implemented on schedule.

Jeffrey Wilcheck, Fiscal Officer

Tiffany Southard, Mayor