



**City of Willowick**  
**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

Tuesday, September 01, 2026 at 6:30 PM  
City Council Chambers

**ADA NOTICE**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) during this meeting should notify the City of Willowick at 440-585-3700 at least three working days before the meeting.

**MINUTES**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE**

**INVOCATION**

**ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Motion to approve the Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting of August 18, 2026.

**MOTION: Mr. Malta motions to approve. Ms. Antosh second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**APPOINTMENTS, SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS & PROCLAMATIONS**

2. A Proclamation honoring Detective Gregory Spakes of the Willowick Police Department.

**Mayor Vanni reads the Proclamation honoring Detective Gregory Spakes for his work investigating a case regarding child abuse/neglect.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS**

**REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR/SAFETY DIRECTOR**

**Mayor Vanni introduces Adam, the Lake County General Health District Commissioner. He was the Finance and HR Director previously. Due to some conservative budgeting he was able to go to the Budget Commission and speak to them. The Health Department is going to lower the amount collected from the Cities by \$1 million. Willowick's share is a saving of roughly \$50,000 for 2027. There was COVID money and they did not give raises or buy unnecessary things. After speaking to the Auditor's office, the decision was that they were able to refund that back to the Cities. They do maintain the budget to the best of their abilities. They appreciate the support of the Cities. This is their way of giving back to everyone. This will be seen in the 2027 tax assessment and hopefully 2028 and 2029 as well.**

**Mayor Vanni refers to the significant rain event. There was a lot of widespread flooding. He wants to update on what we have done, what we are currently doing, and what we are looking at doing in the future. Since 2006 they have done significant work \$14 million plus, on sewer work. ARPA**

funding, grants, and some loans. They are going out to bid shortly on arguably one of the most important sewer projects in the City. The Larimar culvert. The funding is secured. It impacts about 80% of the City. We have been talking for a while as well and are turning out attention for an equalization tank that could maybe be combined with some road projects. This is a project in the 10s of millions. We hope by combining it with the resurfacing of Lakeshore Blvd. and the TLCI study that we had done in 2019 about possibly putting roundabouts in the area, that might tie it in. If we can combine those three projects, it would open up more grant opportunities hopefully. This project was first brought up about a year and a half ago.

We believe the equalization tank will help with these extreme rain events. They have been occurring much more frequently. There was an article on climate change and what it is doing to the housing industry. Extreme storms have over doubled yearly. We have to figure out what we can do. The Service Director and City Engineer will have more in their reports regarding this flood. The Mayor will post information on the website and facebook page as well.

Also on that day, a lightning strike hit a chimney on the building at Shoregate Towers. Thankfully no one was hurt. The departments all did a great job securing that. The management company came the next day. Sean went up on the building on Saturday and said what was left of it was secure. The management company did get the rest of that chimney down the next day.

He recognizes Julie Kless for her hard work for the car show.

September 12 is fill the cruiser. Petti's family restaurant and the police department host this. Non-perishable items and monetary donations. This benefits residents in Willowick and part of Eastlake.

Gold Star is postponing their dedication. It will not be September 27 now.

## **COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF THE MAYOR'S REPORT**

### **GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS – Directors & Officials**

**Service Director – Todd Shannon**

He submitted his report electronically. Circling back to August 22. We had a lot of flooding reported throughout the City. He got 68 basements called in. He guesses this number is actually double. It was mostly west side of the City. That is where we think the heaviest rain hit. The Operator of Record for the Sewer is here tonight as well, as required by Ohio EPA.

There was an open display for the Cities to go through. We got some neat Christmas decorations. It will touch on the history of the area in Cleveland.

**Recreation Director – Julie Kless**

**City Engineer – Tim McLaughlin**

Item 6 is a piece of legislation for consideration for approving OPWC applications. One for Vineyard Sewer Improvements between 300-305. The other is a slab repair program for a section of 305 and various portions of the City.

Currently the municipal lot has asphalt down. We are making progress.

He passed out a packet for review that is a summary of the rainfall. There is a rain gauge at the Service Department and another at Manry. Those are set strategically to be North and South of Vine. If you look at those two rain gauges, there is a difference. There were two events that day, the one we all know that happened around noon classified as a 30 year event. At that rate, the

system cannot even intake the flow so it is completely maxed out. Everything going through the downspouts. 4-5 hours before that we were hit with a one year storm which the system can usually handle. No pun intended, it was a perfect storm which is why we saw such a widespread effect. He included some radar events from local communities. Willowick just happened to be the central area with the most extreme rainfall along with some portions of Willoughby and Eastlake.

For comparison, there are a couple rain gauges. One at Lake County airport that only had  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". One in Willoughby with 1.6". As the Mayor said, we have had a long history of doing sewer projects and trying to optimize funding. The sewer fund has struggled to maintain funds for projects. We are at a point where we have completed the study to see what rehab does. In order to really be able to counteract some of these larger storms, the next steps would have to be like an equalization basin.

Mr. Phares asks if we know if it was mostly rainwater entering basements?

The residents yell sewer backup.

Tim says he does not know the specifics, but it is classified as a sewer related backup. It is good to know if it comes through a sanitary drain or through the wall. We don't really know if it's related to a lateral having roots in it or related to a system. They look for trends to see if complete streets are effected.

Ms. Antosh asks if any of these homes that called in, were you able to see when they last had their sewers checked?

Todd says we have history on some, but not all of them. We reached out and started calling asap.

Ms. Bisbee asks when we are talking about the eq basin, where it will be located, will that assist, since we saw this mostly on the west side, will that assist all of Willowick or just certain areas?

He says we have to be selective to where it is at or we have to do multiple smaller ones. Willowick of all the Cities around here is the most built out so it is limited. The areas we looked at, the most optimal spot is right here at City Hall. We also considered something under Lakeshore like a tunnel project. The one in Willoughby off Lakeshore is a traditional one you'll see. This will be cost-driven.

Ms. Antosh asks them to explain where the sewers, like 305 goes all the way to Lakeshore, then what about the ones that are on like Forestgrove? Can you explain roughly how the sewers work in Willowick?

Tim says there is Vine and everything North of that usually goes to Lakeshore. Basically from Eastlake to Euclid that is the main sewer. There is another section which is Bayridge which is Vine to E 305. That drains again into the same point to Lakeshore. Then 305 has a significant sewer that comes from Clairmont. That goes to West Willowick and then Forestgrove, Barjode, Oakdale, etc. Everything else in the City kind of goes in random directions. That is the general breakdown. The section you're referring to is the strangest area.

She says basically Lakeshore Blvd is the only way to get Euclid?

He says yes the original layout was optimal, but unfortunately there is no way to retrofit that now.

She asks when Willowick hooked up to Euclid? Her research shows the 1930s?

He says he believes that is correct. Before EPA in 1970 a lot of sewers just went directly to the lake.

**She says it has always gone to Euclid or the Lake?**

**He says yes. It was planned, designed, and built to always go to Euclid.**

**She says people are saying they didn't turn the switch on fast enough so where is the switch?**

**He says unfortunately the switch does not exist.**

**Finance Director – Goran Vrhovac**

**RITA item, this is on 3 readings for you. The process currently in place is that residents ask RITA for abatements and then they are requested to contact him. Once there are enough he contacts the tax committee and we meet roughly twice per year. This request would allow RITA to remove us out of the picture. They explained that they only abate if the resident is up to date on all taxes and have never had an abatement before. They wrote out the policy that is in place as well.**

**Last Thursday, we had a tax budget meeting with the County. We went over the tax budget, it all went smoothly. Essentially it's the starting point to be able to reassess what we are collecting and not collecting on taxes.**

**Hopefully we are closing our Financial and IT audit shortly from 2026.**

**Law Director – Mandy Gwartz**

**She mentions that the Metroparks resolution is because the lease agreement requires Council to approve any improvement over a certain dollar amount and the interior improvements exceed that but the City is not paying for that.**

**Police Chief – Rob Daubenmire**

**No formal report, open for questions.**

**Fire Chief – Bill Malovrh**

**No formal report, open for questions.**

**Chief Housing/Zoning Inspector – Sean Brennan**

**No formal report, but open for questions.**

## **WARD MATTERS**

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*a) Public statement (1 minute maximum)*

*b) Council response to the public*

*c) Public clarification (30 seconds to 1 minute for the purpose of restating or rearticulating an original question, concern, suggestion or idea)*

**Janice Johnson, 31417 Wellner Rd., comes to speak about the flooding. When this first started in 2006/2007, she was one of the first houses. There was a lot of talk about plans at the time that never came to fruition. She was fortunate enough to get funding from a state program for siding and windows. There is a program that can help us, she approached one of her contacts at the County. As a City we have to approach the County Commissioner's office. This would help individual homes. It helps with sewer back up and other water issues. Lake County does not take the money, other surrounding Counties do have it. Lake County is an entitlement county. This would protect our homes. Backflow preventers failed during this storm. She is hoping that Council would be willing to look at this and see if it is possible to use this to help us. The funds are**

available through the state. It takes municipalities and the Counties together. Chips Program, it was clarified.

Ms. Koudela asks her to give her phone number to Todd to see if there's an issue at that address that the City can address.

Gail Bencina, 30125 Barjode, the part that always floods, the middle section closest to 302. We always get it the worst. She has had in 2006, the basement flooded to the 3<sup>rd</sup> step. In 2007 she had the back wall rebuilt and waterproofed. There was only one wall not waterproofed. In 2013, 2014, it has been sewer back up every single time. In 2014 she had to get a new T pipe that cost \$6,000 and a backflow preventer put in. Then her basement flooded again up to a foot. She is doing what she is supposed to be doing. She just called her insurance company, when you file a claim in less than 5 years, they can cancel your insurance policy. It's not her fault. She has to get a letter from the City and the insurance might deny and cancel her. We are fed up. She asks a question. Her sewer gets a lot of weeds and things but she never sees anyone from the City cleaning it. Be honest with her, how often does the City come out and clean the sewers on the streets. It would help someone. This should be done anyways. Last year, she had the City Service Department come check the sewer line and it was backed up. She was about to do that this year. It was backed up again after the flood. Someone is not doing their job.

David Susnjara, 30100 Thomas, is one of the 68 that called and spoke to Todd. He is surprised by that number. He spoke to his immediate neighbors and in that vicinity there were 5 of them. He thinks there were way more than 68 homes that flooded. Maybe people didn't call because they were frustrated. The really big flood was 2013. He has had to file multiple claims. They were unfortunately in Florida on vacation. When they came home, the basement was still wet. He is unsure how much got in. It was sewage water. The neighbor across the street had over 1' and he saw a bunch of sewage. Thomas Street definitely got hit with a sewage backup. He hopes something exists to help this. FEMA or some other program. Even with his insurance company, he has filed multiple claims in the 18 years he has been here, the inspector is coming 2 weeks after the fact. He is worried about what will be said on Saturday. He hopes he gets his X amount of dollars that he pays for for water back up. He spent a bunch of money on foundation repair a few years ago. The ground is still soft and they still get flooding. He is hoping we can get some assistance or help.

Rebecca Gumm, 30112 Forestgrove, the stuff that was pumped into the sewers on their road this summer, what was the point? Was this to help prevent backups like this?

Lisa Lewins, 448 Mentor Ave Painesville, is running for County Commissioner. When she saw the flooding, she had flashbacks. Her family lived in Willowick for many years. In 1997 they had so much water in the backyard that they put in drainage tile. The first thing that happens with water is that it ruins your property. She wants us to work together as a County. Part of the County's responsibility is roads, sewers, utilities. We have to use the grants and work together to solve this problem. This is her goal as County Commissioner. It sounds like everyone has done as much as they can on their own.

Mary Mink, 573 E 315, in addition to the sewer, she had a couple questions about what is being done regarding rats and deer. She is also interested in the minutes to safety and other committee meetings. Where can we find those?

Allan Riddle, 30002 Oakdale, is not a Willowick historian but he has been here since 1983. In the old days, we had a retention basin on the other side of Lakeland Blvd and what he wants to know

is what happened to that? The first 100 year rain we had they said they were going to dig it out and make it so much better. 40 years later it's still not working right. The "switch" Ms. Antosh is talking about is the gate to the retention pond. We have gone through this probably 20 times. He is wondering about a retention basin. If we have one on Lakeland let's use it. We had water, but we have done it so many times, it's just not even worth calling the City. His was clean water though.

Angelique Campbell, 30308 Parkplace, did call the City. This is her 3<sup>rd</sup> flood in 4 years. We have a be dry system, a sup pump, one directional flaps on the floor drains, it was like a geyser. Her daughter lives in the basement and everything is ruined. It ruined the hot water tank despite being elevated. Deep freezer, washing machine, dryer, etc it went to 3<sup>rd</sup> step on the basement stairs. 2 weeks ago we had a storm with 2 days of no power. We were going to sell the house when we got married. We recently had the POS inspection and have done all the repairs and have new storm and sanitary pipes in our yard. They don't know what to expect from the insurance inspection, it is this week. Her husband is disabled and he has been carrying boxes of wet things so the basement doesn't smell moldy and musty while we wait to see what they do. Her son is a plumber. We know what we have to do for a normal basement to not flood and we have done all of that. We have a secondary pump. Theirs was storm water not sewage thank god.

Christine Babos, 30300 Gebhart, they moved in in 2017 and were told there was never a flood there. We have had since 2017, in that house, every other August there is a flood. Their son lives in the basement and dreads his August birthday. The water in their backyard, the drainage from the yards behind them, it's like a river in their backyard. The gutters are pointing to drain down into theirs. He called to ask if we were allowed to build their yard up. What we noticed is that when the water gets closer and closer that's when we hear gurgling in the pipes and then it comes through the wall. The backflow is not working. When the water tries to go out it is pushing everything back in to them. She was at work at the time of this flood. She had the drains checked last year and they were fine. She is now trying to sell the house. Since it has been 10 years, does she have to do that downspout thing again? It's not helping. She does not understand the process of everything and what it is helping, seems like it is making it worse.

Andy Smith, 396 Clarmont, moved here just shy of a year ago. What he is hearing and has seen from the day he moved in, he has not had flooding so he feels bad for the residents. The people come up and talk about the devastation and City Council has just stoic faces. He does not know how Mayor Vanni has been re-elected this many times with a problem this large across the City. He cannot even fathom and Council seems like oh shucks can't do anything. At what point do you decide that you're going to improve something? You were elected. Find a way and the money to fix this, it's changing people's lives. If you don't he is embarrassed for you and your legacy.

Tammy Priggins, 300 E 308 St, she has had many floods since she moved in. Every time it rains a lot, she gets backed up water. It is clean. Last year the City came out and sewer tested. The guy was kind of rude and he said the City didn't build the house. Then he told her that her pipes went a different direction than everyone else's. He said to put a backflow preventer in there for \$2000 but no guarantees. She is always cleaning but it always smells like mildew in her basement. She is always using the humidifier. She doesn't know what to do. She's not buying a backflow preventer if it's not going to work. If there is a solution it would be nice for it to be followed through. She will be here 30 years this month. Between that and the rats, it makes you want to move.

Ms. Koudela says they will look into the Chips Program.

Todd says the catch basins on Barjode were cleaned last year. We have over 1000 and it takes us 3 years to clean all of them. In 2023 when we had issues over there we actually put down black

matting in the catch basins for silt control and slowing the water flow into the sewers. People when they see flooded roads think that means flooded basements. Flooded roads are actually good. It is designed that way to try to keep the water out of the basements. We also street sweep 4 times per year. We had two running in the City same time today because the County was here.

The retention basin on Lakeland flows down. He understands the theory, but it unfortunately doesn't take care of the water in this part of Willowick.

Tim says the work on Forestgrove was in response to extend the life of the sewer on that street. It essentially creates a new pipe within a pipe for the main line. Outside of that we did also do the laterals within the right of way. We did that for all of them.

Ms. Koudela asks about the POS being done 10 years ago does it need redone?

Sean says the City requires the dye test when the seller transfers which is to make sure there is no infiltration of the sanitary sewer which goes to Euclid. We pay Euclid to treat. When we do the dye tests and they're making repairs, there are problems in both sewers. When the sewers were built they won't last forever. When someone does a dye test, it is good for 2 years. If they get a new house, new build, it's a 10 year.

Todd speaks about the deer. He went to an ODNR workshop in the spring. We ask that you call in if you have deer. They are everywhere. Please call into the shop so we can get hard number to ODNR. There is birth control and culling. Birth control is very very expensive and culling is not politically correct to a lot of people. Wickliffe just released a survey and he is going to meet with them. There is a program through the US Department of Agriculture. It would be on the City to find someone to take the meat so it does not go to waste.

Sean says earlier this year the service department had an exterminator come and there were 19 areas in the City that we had rat problems before. The population has gone down. He does get complaints regarding to rats and when he investigates you see that there are gardens and fruit trees with people not picking up as well as dog feces. There is a guideline on the City website in regards to maintaining your property. When the sewers discharge they are coming out too also.

Ms. Koudela says who do you call if there is a rat issue?

Sean says Building.

That helps them determine where to bait to be most effective.

Mayor Vanni says we definitely understand the frustration. He was out all Saturday afternoon and Sunday with the service director. We need results. We are working as hard as we can and we know we need to try to find a solution for this. We know we need to explore this equalization tank.

Ms. Koudela reminds everyone to please always call. The service department will go out and investigate and try to determine what the issue is.

Mayor Vanni says when this happened we said we wanted the calls. He wants everyone who called to get a call back and we will come out and video to try to determine where this is. It's a weird storm because not everyone got sewage. Every time we get an event like this... you're right the last 4 August have been incessant. We continue to reevaluate. The one thing it seems to be is whether you believe in climate change or not, there is definitely an increase in these kind of storms... they're coming more frequently. It's not an excuse but we have to try to find a way to combat it. He spoke with a number of residents this weekend and he can't imagine bringing all your stuff out like that.

**Law Director Gwartz says she will make sure that the sewer study gets up online. It shows every project that the City has done. The minutes can be found online on the website. The Mayor's office can help get a paper copy if needed.**

#### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Finance** – Bisbee, Mohorcic, Antosh

**There is a meeting scheduled for September 15 at 5:30 joint with Finance and Streets, Sidewalks, and Sewers.**

**Safety** – Phares, Malta, McFarland

**Service, Utilities & Public Lands** – Malta, Phares, McFarland

**Streets, Sidewalks & Sewers** – Mohorcic, Bisbee, Malta

**There was a meeting tonight and the Committee agreed to dedicate the basketball court. Mandy can tell us what we have to do to get that done. Great presentation from Tony Newman.**

**Tax Compliance** – McFarland, Antosh, Phares

**Moral Claims** – Antosh, Phares, Koudela

**There will be two moral claims and she will get with the committee to figure out when they can meet.**

**Budget** – Mohorcic, Koudela, Bisbee

#### **LIAISON REPORTS**

**Planning** – Phares/Alternate Antosh

**Board of Zoning Appeals** – McFarland/Alternate Koudela

**Volunteer Fire Fighters' Dependents Fund Board** – Antosh, Phares

**Recreation Board** – Bisbee/Alternate Phares

**Ms. Bisbee says September 20 is the butterfly garden dedication at 2:00 p.m. at Manry. It's a beautiful presentation. It was put together for any child, grandchild, family member, of a young one that has passed away. Their names are put up there. It's beautiful and they keep it up really nicely. There is a new telephone there to call up to the sky as well. It's beautiful.**

**Mr. Malta says get Kathy Gibson's name in the minutes for the marvelous job she does with this. He was told there is nothing like this from here to Oklahoma City.**

**Plan Review Board** – Antosh

#### **FUND TRANSFERS & BID AUTHORIZATIONS**

#### **CONTRACT APPROVALS**

3. Motion to allow the Mayor to enter into a contract with Control Concepts of Ohio for the upgrade and replacement of HVAC dampers and controls at the City hall complex.

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. McFarland second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**INTRODUCTION & CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATION****4. ORDINANCE NO. 2026- 30:**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2026- 6 TO PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS FROM The General Fund (101); The Police & Fire Cap. Levy Fund (207); Street Improvement Levy Fund (213); NOPEC Grant Fund (277); Municipal Tax Increment Equiv. Fund (302); Donations & Bequests Fund (803); FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF WILLOWICK, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE CALENDAR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2026, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**MOTION: Mr. Malta motions to waive the three readings. Ms. Antosh second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Phares second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**5. RESOLUTION NO. 2026-36:**

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE LAKE METROPARKS DISTRICT'S PROPOSED INTERIOR RENOVATIONS TO THE LAKEFRONT LODGE LOCATED AT LAKEFRONT PARK, PURSUANT TO THE LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WILLOWICK AND THE LAKE METROPARKS DISTRICT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to waive the three readings. Ms. Bisbee second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Ms. Bisbee second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**6. RESOLUTION NO. 2026-37:**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WILLOWICK TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND/OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS, TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to waive the three readings. Ms. Bisbee second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Malta second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**7. RESOLUTION NO. 2026- 38:**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE REGIONAL INCOME TAX AGENCY TO REVIEW AND DETERMINE CERTAIN REQUESTS FOR ABATEMENT OF MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX PENALTIES AND INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAW, AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF RITA'S MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX PENALTY AND INTEREST ABATEMENT AUTHORIZATION.

**First Reading.**

**8. RESOLUTION NO. 2026- 39:**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF ONE UNPAID STUDENT INTERN POSITION WITHIN THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF WILLOWICK

**First Reading.**

**Mr. Malta says he thinks this is a great idea.**

**Mr. McFarland says he agrees that an intern is a great idea, but he has an issue with it being an unpaid internship. He feels if someone is working for the City that they deserve pay. Also if you keep it unpaid then you limit the candidates you will get. He feels that we can find it in the budget to pay this person.**

**Mr. Phares agrees with Devon that we should discuss this going forward.**

**Ms. Antosh asks about the time frame?**

**Goran says we are trying to hire at the beginning of next summer. If this gets approved he will contact the local colleges pertaining to the program. It will be very flexible. It's just summer time. Depends who we hire and when their classes start up again. It will be tailored to who the person is.**

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- 9. Motion to approve a purchase order to A&A Safety for an RRFB System for the intersection of Bayridge and Royalview in the amount of \$12,097.00**

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Malta second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

- 10. Motion to approve a purchase order for \$69,280.00 to Control Concepts of Ohio for HVAC damper and control upgrades.**

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Phares second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**Ms. Bisbee says it says we are responsible for any necessary network jobs and IP addresses?**

**Todd says yes in house.**

**She says the network group will provide all the necessary IP addresses.**

11. Motion to authorize the expenditure of \$12,500.00 to Great Lakes Telcom & Electric, LLC for an Electrical Thermographic Inspection of City facilities.

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Malta second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**Ms. Bisbee asks what this will provide to the City?**

**Chief Malovrh says they come through with a thermal imager. He is concerned about the electrical panels. It is a pre-emptive exam to see if we have any small problems so we don't have a big problem.**

**Mr. McFarland says this is to make sure the fire department doesn't burn down?**

**Chief says yes.**

**Mayor says Chief came to him a couple weeks ago and told him that Tom had some concerns so we are trying to get ahead of it.**

12. Motion to authorize the expenditure of \$1,750.00 to All American Fire Equipment for the purchase of structural firefighting boots for the Willowick Fire Department.

**MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Phares second.**

**ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.**

**Ms. Bisbee says the paperwork says the total is \$1670, but we have \$1750 on here.**

**Law Director Gwartz goes to see if it is a typo.**

**Chief says we received a donation from Willoughby Elks in the amount of \$1750. Maybe Goran can answer this.**

**Goran says he is appropriating \$1750 for the boots. There will be a little extra in there.**

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*a) Public statement (1 minute maximum)*

*b) Council response to the public*

*c) Public clarification (30 seconds to 1 minute for the purpose of restating or rearticulating an original question, concern, suggestion or idea)*

**Gail Bencina, 30125 Barjode, Barjode is one of the streets that floods the worst. What are you going to do with the sewers on Barjode? Are you doing anything like you are on the other streets? Also maybe focus on the area that you know floods the worst. We are the ones that are suffering the most out of anyone. If you can't get something large going, at least focus on that area. In 2023, you put something in the sewers? If that was 2023, why don't you do that every year? Whatever**

you can do to help this not happen would be great. Lastly, sewer rates went up sky high. Can you speak with the Mayor of Wickliffe to get them reduced like they did? He negotiated with them and got them lowered.

The Lake County Commissioner letter that was sent out about increasing costs? Have you met with the other Cities about this? She hasn't seen anything from Willowick yet, Wickliffe has been very vocal.

Phil Detering, 469 Bayridge, did call the Mayor's office and he did get some water as well as his neighbors. Change it to 3 houses for his call. Does any water from other cities flow through the water lines in Willowick? Water from other cities goes into the catch basin and then goes out? Through our lines or their own dedicated lines? Second, did any of Council get water?

Ms. Bisbee says yes.

If they dye test and there is a failure, aren't the lines from the house to the street for sanitary and storm both replaced completely? Or can you just put in a patch on one of the lines for 3'? Can't imagine that, but maybe. Did we allocate any money in this year's budget for this particular issue? Over and above what we had in prior years? He knows we put half a million aside from now on for fire. Did we set any money aside for storm water and sewer water backup? Last, when you say the pledge of allegiance, one nation under god does not have a comma in it, those four words are said together.

Andy Smith, tells Tim he does not envy him at all. His one request is that he would like to know if we can get a report on the homes that have had a POS inspection cross-referenced with those that called for the flooding. This might help determine if this works or not.

David, 30100 Thomas Street, adds that the dye test... he has spoken to many crews over the years because he has seen so many homes for sale. When people get flooded 6-7 times they have had enough. He bought his home in December 2007. His home failed the test. The responsibility was to the seller. They dug up the yard. It seems like that is the going away present when you do sell your home in Willowick. He has heard \$10-50,000 when you sell your home. To hear that the repair work is only guaranteed for two years is insane. That's nothing. You could buy the home two years from now and it could fail again and then you pay for the next person. If we pay water and sewer bills we should pay for what we are using. The complete pipe system should be the responsibility of the government. Maybe something should be changed. They should do the job right. One more question, have you asked the federal government for the price for this basin? Has anyone even approached it. We keep hearing the country has all this money. Make a phone call. They have money for wars and everything else.

Tim comments on plans for Barjode sewer repairs. It is in the plans. The way it worked out, we try to do everything at once. Forestgrove was the worst street on the sewer analysis and the flooding standpoint. We are doing sewer improvements before we resurface the street. That is a bad section statistically, but that is not the only section. We do have to address multiple areas in the City. About 280,000 feet of sewer. If we spend \$1 million we are only about to do sewer improvements for 1% of the system.

Ms. Koudela says the report he gave goes back to 2008. At that time, the 320s area was redone and it proved to be successful, it was one of the worst at the time. As you mentioned, we try to group projects together. ODOT decided to repave 305 this year. If it were up to us, we might have put that money towards a different project, but since ODOT chose that as the focus we had to put

money there. It's slow and costly. There is a lot of sewer and only so much we can address at one time.

Tim says POS has improved in percentage of failures going down. In 2000 it was like 50% or so. Now it's down to 20-30%. It is showing that there is an effect. As the building inspector had said, it is small bits, but it's important because it removes infiltration which then goes to Euclid and residents have to pay that through increased sewer rates. It is trying to reduce cross contamination.

Tim will provide the cross reference for the Streets, Sidewalks, Sewers meeting on September 15.

Sean says typically in a POS process there are testing points, Ts are a testing point. For the service department to do a test is to check from the house to the observation Ts and then to the main. The City makes the repairs on the right of way, if there's a problem on the property side, then they are responsible.

Todd says yes Euclid Ave water flows, water flows in the back side of the basin from Willoughby and Eastlake as well. It flows out under Rt. 2. The "gate" valve there is raised and lowered and that lets the amount of water out. It flows under the freeway out to Ronald and then 305 and out through Willowick. We do not take the sanitary water from other Cities.

Tim says in terms of actual surface run off, it's about 15,000 acres of land that goes directly through Willowick.

Ms. Koudela says the sewer rates are based on multiple things. Part of it is what Euclid charges to treat our sewage, plus sewer repairs and our service department. Part of the reason the rates have gone up is that the cost of repairs has gone up and also Euclid's rates went up.

Mayor Vanni thanks everyone for coming out and handling things in person at the meeting tonight face to face. He is good friends with the Mayor of Wickliffe, they did not re-negotiate. What they did in the past. We have our sewer fund which is self-sufficient. They take care of the sewer fund out of the general fund. They also have Lubrizol which takes a large portion. We are a bedroom community. He can 1000% tell you they did not re-negotiate. When the first rate came out in December of 2022 all three Cities went to Euclid and had a great conversation. It was late in the game, we were already in budget. We were concerned about the rates and wanted to know earlier. We all know the EPA mandate that was set from the big storm in 2006. We got that squared away. We get a plan from Euclid every year. The rates were like 14-15%. We went to two of their meetings and asked them could you please go back and try to spread out that increase. Not re-negotiate. We really cannot. Re-distribute. We understand what the EPA is doing. They actually went back and took that and over the last three years, they went roughly 9%. Not tooting our horn, but it's a sore subject when people say we don't fight for the sewer rates, we do.

Ms. Koudela says Wickliffe residents are not paying the same rates as us but it's coming from their property taxes.

Mayor says Wickliffe has a bigger general fund because of Lubrizol. He thanks everyone for coming out, September 15 two weeks from tonight 5:30 p.m. we are going to talk about next year's rate. We went 10 years without raising sewer rates and then we had to subsidize with the general fund. We have to show the ability to pay the grants. It's a long-winded way of going... we were the only City that went to those meetings in Euclid. We did everything we could, but we cannot re-negotiate. Come to that meeting in two weeks and more input.

Todd says maybe he misspoke but it was within the past 3 years. An article that he read from Chicago, it's a way to try to mitigate.

Mayor Vanni says we negotiated with the County for Rt. 2. There's another meeting scheduled this week he hopes we are close to a deal. The meetings have been productive but there is no final deal yet. When we do reach a tentative agreement we have to all come back to Council for approval. It's been very productive. It will also include the lights getting fixed. Still negotiating.

It is clarified also that they wrote letters to local, state, and federal officials about the sewer rates. What they found out... there's no money available to help residents pay treatment costs, but when they tell you that you have to build a plant or do projects, that's where you get the money. Before you go to them, you need to be almost shovel ready. We do intend to go hopefully for the opportunity for this equalization tank. We are going to need federal money for that. Tim does a great job finding funding for these projects. We are going to go federal and state and look everywhere we can. Just like we did for the culvert. All that money has been secured. There was a large grant.

Mr. McFarland says the contract that is currently in place started in the 70s and it worked for the past 50 years. The County is now attempting to get more money from the Cities. That should not be happening. They have already taken revenue sources from us. Money we could be using to repair roads and sewer issues. We continuously do more with less and they are asking for more and more while they continue to do less. The lights have been out for years and the roads have not been maintained properly. The only thing they do is snow plow and it is not enough. They are not living up to the current contract and that is not okay. He would never support a contract that is asking for more money from the residents. The county needs to do their part and do their fair share. He encourages Council to have that same position where we are not approving a contract asking for more. He encourages other Cities to do the same. It is not okay.

Phil asks if any of Council had water.

Ms. Bisbee and Mr. Phares said yes. Mr. Mohorcic said he put \$6k into his house and this is the first time he didn't flood. Ms. Koudela says she is not sure because she has a crawl space

Mr. Malta thanks Mayor Vanni for attending the Rich Regovich golf outing. Secondly, Eastlake North football team only has four home games. September 4, 11, October 2, October 16. They are working hard. He would like to offer condolences to the Miller family.

~~CLOSE EXECUTIVE SESSION~~

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Antosh motions to approve. Mr. Malta second.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Phares, yea. Mr. Malta, yea. Mr. McFarland, yea. Ms. Koudela, yea. Ms. Antosh, yea. Mr. Mohorcic, yea. Ms. Bisbee, yea.

Adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

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Clerk of Council

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Council President

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Date

