

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Thompson

7:00 PM

Village Representatives in Attendance

Mayor Thompson
Councilwoman Heather Phillips
Councilman Dan Wimmers
Councilwoman Wendy Greeley
Clerk/Treasurer Mark Mockensturm

Councilwoman Dana Dunbar
Village Administrator April McDonald

Citizen Attendees

Nasrin Afjeh
Adam Smidi

Troy Dowling

Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Dunbar and seconded by Ms. Phillips to approve the minutes, as amended from the June 2, 2025, Council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Wimmers to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2025, Council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments

No Comments

Finance & Future Planning – Mr. Lewis

Ms. McDonald shared that we are currently at 63.14% of our revenue goal for income tax. On July 1st, we received a deposit of \$352,000, and she feels that we are in a strong position regarding income tax at this stage. Due to her absence last week, Ms. McDonald will be sending out a financial summary via email later this week.

Human Resources – Ms. Phillips

Ms. Phillips shared that while there was no formal meeting, Mrs. Holdren has been updating the resident handbook, which is now posted on the website for residents to access. Printed copies will be prepared for distribution to new residents and for the upcoming Sled Hill event.

Ms. Phillips inquired about the status of the employee handbook. Ms. McDonald responded that a few HR Committee working sessions would likely be necessary. She plans to send out a Doodle poll to schedule an initial meeting, which will help determine whether the review should be broken into sections.

Mr. Wimmers asked if there was any response from the consulting company regarding reducing the size of the handbook. Ms. McDonald shared that the company is awaiting guidance on which sections we want to eliminate, several of which may no longer be needed. There will be no additional cost moving forward.

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

Mr. Shimborske asked if we are at an impasse. Ms. McDonald clarified that although there is no refund available, she believes we should at least utilize the company's services. Mayor Thompson agreed, stating that we should take advantage of any additional services they can provide.

Ms. Phillips asked about the return of Music at the Point this year. Ms. McDonald said she would follow up with Mrs. Hauck, who organized the event last year, as no date has been confirmed yet.

Safety – Mrs. Dunbar

Ms. McDonald shared that she received an email from the president of the Exmoor HOA requesting that a Safety Committee meeting be scheduled to discuss the potential change of speed limit or other ways to slow traffic in the neighborhood. The HOA president would like the opportunity to present their concerns and suggest additional safety measures.

Mrs. Greeley added that she recently drove through Exmoor and observed many children walking, biking, and playing in the street, which may be contributing to safety concerns. The HOA president contacted the police department last week to request that the speed sign be placed within Exmoor.

Mayor Thompson suggested reaching out to TMACOG to see if a speed counter can be installed in the Exmoor area. This device provides both traffic volume and speed data, which would allow the Village to make informed decisions based on objective information rather than perception.

Mayor Thompson clarified that the concern appears to be focused specifically on the horseshoe portion of Exmoor, not the section off Central Avenue. He noted that since Exmoor is not a typical cut-through street, if speeding is occurring, it is likely coming from residents within the neighborhood.

Mrs. Dunbar raised a question about the posted speed limit, asking whether it needs to be 25 mph, and suggested we consider low-cost solutions to address the issue. Mayor Thompson agreed, emphasizing that while the area has not previously been identified as a trouble spot, it's important to be responsive to the concerns being raised now.

Ms. McDonald shared that she will reach back out to the Exmoor HOA president and let her know that the Village is looking into conducting a speed study. While TMACOG has had staffing issues recently, Ms. McDonald heard that they currently have several interns, which may allow them to assist with the request.

Mr. Shimborske asked whether the Exmoor HOA might be interested in purchasing their own digital speed sign. Mrs. Dunbar agreed that this could be a good idea, and Mr. Shimborske suggested it might be something the HOA could fundraise for independently.

Services & Environment – Mrs. Greeley

Mrs. Greeley reported that there has been no formal meeting, but noted that the Sledding Hill Ribbon Cutting has been rescheduled to July 16th at 6:00 PM.

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

Ms. Phillips extended thanks to Ms. McDonald and Mrs. Holdren for their hard work in organizing the event on short notice, only to have it postponed due to rain, requiring them to re-coordinate everything again this month. Ms. McDonald mentioned that they were fortunate to still have food trucks available, as the event falls on a Wednesday, which helped with availability. Mr. Wimmers and Mayor Thompson both shared that they will not be able to attend the rescheduled event.

Ms. Phillips inquired whether TNC had addressed the area where rocks had previously washed away. Ms. McDonald responded that there is still funding remaining from the grant, which may be used for additional site work.

Mayor Thompson asked for clarification regarding Village financial contributions to the sledding hill. Ms. McDonald confirmed that the Village has not contributed any funds toward the reconstruction of the sledding hill; the only expenses incurred have been for routine mowing.

Streets & Bridges – Mr. Shimborske

Mr. Shimborske shared that there is an ordinance on the agenda for passage today concerning the application for OPWC funding for the Evergreen Bridge Project.

Mayor Thompson explained that this application pertains to construction planned for 2027. He noted that 90% of the construction costs are expected to be funded through another source. The OPWC application is intended to secure additional funding, ideally covering the remaining balance, which is anticipated to be minimal.

Utilities, Equipment, Buildings & Grounds – Mr. Wimmers

No report

Solicitors Report – Mrs. Tharp

No report

Administrator's Report

Ms. Phillips inquired about the start date for the walk path construction. Ms. McDonald explained that construction will begin once the fencing arrives, which has a 4–6 week lead time. Ms. Phillips also asked about the sequence of work. Ms. McDonald clarified that the fencing installation and stump removal will occur first, followed by the sidewalks and lighting, which will be completed at the end of the project.

Ms. Phillips asked if the lighting at Wicklow had been repaired. Ms. McDonald confirmed that it has been fixed, although there was one complaint about it not appearing even. She noted that due to trenching limitations, the light was placed in the only available location.

Mr. Wimmers asked about a light being located within a bush. Mayor Thompson confirmed that there is one light that has been trimmed around the bush, and it will come down to a decision about whether to keep the light and remove the bush, or leave it as is.

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

Mayor Thompson asked for a status update on the tennis court repairs. Ms. McDonald reported that the milling equipment broke, and after that was fixed, another part broke. The replacement part is being shipped from Germany. The contractor was originally scheduled to begin work last Thursday, but has not started. Ms. McDonald emphasized the goal is to have the courts ready by early August.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Thompson brought up two items, the first being short-term rentals, and asked Mrs. Greeley to address the topic.

Mrs. Greeley explained that, in light of the ongoing zoning code updates and a recent incident on Lincolnshire, she believes the Village should consider whether to allow or regulate Airbnb-style rentals. She noted that she has heard concerns about properties being rented for a single night and used to host large parties, which can be disruptive.

Mrs. Greeley also mentioned that there are a couple of Airbnb properties already operating in the Village. Mayor Thompson confirmed he had recently heard the same and had done some research. He noted that while larger cities in Ohio have already enacted legislation to regulate short-term rentals, a statewide effort failed to pass. This leaves local governments with flexibility to create their own rules. He added that there are sample ordinances available the Village can review and tailor to its needs. He fully agrees this issue should be addressed in the zoning code update. Ms. Phillips suggested the Village might need a registry system, stating that we can't regulate it if we don't know it exists.

Mrs. Greeley added that one way some platforms and communities are reducing issues is by requiring multiple-night minimum stays, which tends to reduce party-related rentals. Mrs. Tharp proposed considering a minimum rental period of a week or even a month, noting that the Village isn't close to any concert venues or event hubs that would justify frequent overnight rentals. The only exception, she added, might be family members visiting to help students move into the University.

Mayor Thompson concluded by saying that, from his perspective, he does not want to encourage short-term rentals. He emphasized that the Village's primary role is to protect the integrity and quality of life for residents. He stated that this topic should move to the top of the list for zoning code revisions, which will go to the Zoning Commission for review and recommendations, and then return to Council for potential adoption into legislation.

Mayor Thompson introduced Stroll Magazine as his second item. Mrs. Greeley noted that the magazine's recent statement was not a true apology. Ms. McDonald added that the Village has asked Stroll multiple times for clarification on where they obtained certain data with no answer.

Mayor Thompson shared that he has emailed and called the publication several times, but their responses have been inadequate. The most recent response appeared in the magazine and was viewed as a non-apology, again implying the Village was the source of incorrect data.

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

While Mayor Thompson acknowledged that Stroll Magazine reaches every home in the Village and serves as a communication tool, he expressed that he is more disappointed in their lack of transparency and accountability than the original mistake.

Ms. McDonald shared that Stroll recently asked her to review calendar events for publication, but she declined, stating they are not Village events, she doesn't have the capacity, and does not want to be involved in editing.

Mr. Shimborske asked whether Stroll is a franchise and if there is a local base. Mayor Thompson responded that the local franchisee, Tom Pounds, the editor, left about a year ago, and now it appears the magazine is being assembled without local oversight. Mayor Thompson emphasized that while mistakes happen, the real issue is the lack of explanation or plan to prevent future errors.

Ms. Phillips raised a concern that residents may mistakenly believe the magazine is produced by the Village and expressed unease about continuing an association that could mislead the public. She also noted that producing similar communications independently would be costly.

Mayor Thompson shared that he and Ms. McDonald had discussed whether to continue working with Stroll, citing concerns about the publication's credibility. He added that while Stroll provides a communication channel, the Village would need to find an alternative before stepping away completely.

Mr. Shimborske asked if the publication appears to be on its last leg locally. Mayor Thompson replied that while it may not be struggling nationally, locally it seems they may be winding down, he suspects they have advertising contracts in place for the next six months and may be riding it out.

Old Business

No report

New Business

Ms. Phillips noted that Village Life events have been disappearing from the calendar after the event is complete. Ms. McDonald stated she will follow up with Mrs. Hauck to get clarification.

Ms. Phillips reported that there are large branches hanging over the road or driveways on Brookside. Ms. McDonald asked her to email specific locations, so she can request Blanchard Tree Service to evaluate the situation.

Ms. Phillips revisited a prior discussion about creating a running action item list to track ongoing, upcoming, and deferred items by committee responsibility. She has compiled a draft list from previous meeting notes, organized it by committee, and plans to share it for review and input on status (e.g., in progress, on hold).

Ms. McDonald praised the document as a well-organized and editable Google Doc. She proposed either emailing it out, including it in Council packets, or sharing access directly to the document

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

with all members. Mayor Thompson supported the idea, suggesting it could help with committee meeting agendas, especially for topics that have been discussed but are not yet actionable.

Mrs. Dunbar shared that a resident had asked her about the policy on clotheslines. Ms. McDonald stated that there is nothing in the Village ordinances prohibiting clotheslines and added that the Village asks residents not to use right-of-way trees for them.

Mayor Thompson noted there may be deed restrictions in some areas, such as Hasty Plat, which does not have an HOA. Ms. McDonald also mentioned that HOA regulations, where applicable, might restrict clotheslines. Mayor Thompson clarified that the Village does not enforce deed restrictions, as those are private covenants.

Mrs. Dunbar said the resident was inquiry-based, not opposing the clothesline, and she would let them know that zoning does not restrict them, but deed restrictions may apply. Mrs. Tharp added that deed restrictions must be enforced by those subject to them, not the Village.

A motion was made by Mr. Shimborske and seconded by Mr. Wimmers to approve the payment to Kati Tharp in the amount of \$3,534, for the period of May 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Ordinances & Resolutions

Mayor Thompson read Ordinance 2025-3:

Ordinance 2025-3

To assess a special tax for planting, maintenance, and removal of shade trees on and along the streets, public right-of-way of the Village of Ottawa Hills in accordance with section 727.011 of the Ohio Revised code, for the year ending December 31, 2025.

Motion to waive three readings:

Motion –	Mr. Shimborske
Second –	Mr. Wimmers
	Unanimous Approval

Motion to adopt legislation:

Motion –	Mr. Shimborske
Second –	Mr. Wimmers
Yeas (5) –	Mr. Wimmers, Ms. Phillips, Mr. Shimborske, Mrs. Dunbar, Mrs. Greeley
Nays (0) –	

Mayor Thompson read Ordinance 2025-4:

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

Ordinance 2025-4: To assess a special tax to pay the cost and expense of lighting the streets and public ways of the Village of Ottawa Hills, for the year ending December 31, 2025.

Motion to waive three readings:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske
Second – Mr. Wimmers
Unanimous Approval

Motion to adopt legislation:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske
Second – Mr. Wimmers

Yeas (5) – Mr. Wimmers, Ms. Phillips,
 Mr. Shimborske, Mrs. Dunbar,
 Mrs. Greeley

Nays (0) –

Mayor Thompson read Resolution 2025-14:

Resolution 2025-14: Authorizing the Mayor to submit one or more applications for funding through the Ohio Public Works Commission, and authorizing the Mayor to enter into agreements as they may be necessary and appropriate for obtaining financial assistance.

Motion to waive three readings:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske
Second – Mr. Wimmers
Unanimous Approval

Motion to adopt legislation:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske
Second – Mr. Wimmers

Yeas (5) – Mr. Wimmers, Ms. Phillips,
 Mr. Shimborske, Mrs. Dunbar,
 Mrs. Greeley

Nays (0) –

Executive Session

At 7:39 PM, Mr. Shimborske made a motion to move into executive session for the purpose of conferring with the Village solicitor regarding pending or imminent court action, discussing the

OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
July 7, 2025 7:00 PM

potential purchase or sale of real property, and considering the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee. Mr. Wimmers seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 8:20 PM Council returned to regular session.

Next Meeting Date
August 4, 2025

Adjournment
8:21 PM

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mr. J. Thompson", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor Thompson