

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 5, 2025 7:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Thompson

7:00 PM

Village Representatives in Attendance

Mayor Thompson  
Councilwoman Heather Phillips  
Councilman Dan Wimmers  
Solicitor Kati Tharp  
Clerk/Treasurer Mark Mockensturm

Councilman Edward Shimborske III  
Councilman John Lewis  
Councilwoman Dana Dunbar  
Councilwoman Wendy Greeley  
Village Administrator April McDonald

Citizen Attendees

Nasrin Afjeh  
Jennifer Shimborske  
Monti Sisk  
Renaë Sisk  
Officer Jared Largent  
Officer Larry Shirey  
Officer Sarah Motter

Yarko Kuk  
Larry Nameche  
Logan Sisk  
Delaney Davis  
Interim Chief of Police Gregg Estok  
Detective Jeff Kozak  
Officer Mya Suarez

Swearing In

Chief Estok introduced Officer Sisk and his family and Mayor Thompson swore in Officer Sisk.

Larry Nameche expressed his gratitude to the police department after his car stalled at the intersection of Indian and Bancroft. A police officer promptly arrived on the scene and helped push his vehicle around the corner to prevent traffic obstruction. Mr. Nameche thanked the department for their timely assistance.

Mayor Thompson noted that this incident reflects the high standard of service upheld by the police department, adding that we are all proud of our officers. Their dedication to service is truly valued and appreciated in our community.

Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Wimmers to approve the minutes from the April 7, 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 April 14, 2025, Special Council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

After Prom Donation

Mayor Thompson informed the Council of a request for a donation to support the annual After-Prom event. In previous years, the Village has received similar requests to contribute to this community-supported initiative.

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Mrs. Shimborske, a parent of a current junior at Ottawa Hills, spoke about the event, noting that traditionally, junior class parents organize After-Prom. This year, the event will take place at a new venue, the Toledo Pickle Club, in downtown Toledo. To ensure student safety, charter buses will be used to transport students to and from the venue. Planned activities include pickleball tournaments, arcade games, rock climbing, and various refreshments, including food, drinks, and a coffee truck.

Mrs. Shimborske explained that fundraising began with the Back-to-School 5K, which generated a significant amount of support. Additional funds are raised through sponsorships and community donations. She attended the meeting to respectfully request that the Council consider contributing any amount they feel comfortable with to help support this safe and memorable event for the students.

Mr. Lewis inquired about the budget for the After-Prom event. Mrs. Shimborske shared that the budget is approximately \$20,000, which is slightly lower than in past years due to the change in venue. Traditionally, the event was held at the high school and required significant expenses for decorations and equipment rentals. This year, hosting the event at the Toledo Pickle Club has reduced some of those costs.

Mr. Lewis also asked about prizes, noting that in prior years a substantial amount was spent in that area. Mrs. Shimborske responded that they have scaled back the prizes, each student will receive a pickleball racket, and a few grand prizes will be awarded to the pickleball tournament champions. Additionally, about five small community-donated prizes, such as yoga sessions and ice cream gift cards, will be given out.

Mrs. Greeley asked about the purpose and timing of After-Prom, specifically whether ending the event at 1:30a.m. might leave students with too much free time afterward. Mrs. Shimborske explained that students likely won't return home until around 2:00 a.m., and that the event has gradually ended earlier in recent years due to difficulty in finding parent volunteers willing to supervise into the early morning hours.

Mayor Thompson noted that the village has contributed in some years and not in others, and that more recently, contributions have been tied to student community service. Mrs. Shimborske expressed full support for this idea and confirmed that they could organize student volunteers for any service projects needed, such as weeding or other tasks around the village.

Mr. Wimmers asked about past contributions. Ms. McDonald reported the following donation history:

- 2019: \$1,000
- 2020: \$2,000
- 2021: \$2,000
- 2022 & 2023: No contribution made

Ms. Phillips asked whether the charter bus costs are included in the overall event budget, and Mrs. Shimborske confirmed they are. Mayor Thompson suggested that, at minimum, the village could

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consider a \$1,000 donation, contingent on receiving some student assistance with community service efforts. A motion was made by Mr. Lewis and seconded by Ms. Phillips to approve the after-prom donation in the amount \$1,000. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments

Mrs. Afjeh inquired about Resolution 2025-11, specifically how the \$75 per hour fee was determined and how long requests are expected to take. Mrs. Tharp explained that the \$75/hour rate was established by a newly passed state statute. The estimated time required for redacting video will be determined by the Police Chief in consultation with the Village Administrator, based on the typical time needed for such tasks.

Mrs. Afjeh asked how a requester would know how much to pay in advance. Mrs. Tharp clarified that after a request is submitted, the requester will receive a quote based on the estimated redaction time. The requester would then pay the quoted amount to receive the copy of the record.

Mrs. Afjeh then asked whether she could simply view the video instead of obtaining a copy. Mrs. Tharp stated that video records must be redacted before viewing, and as such, a public records request is still required, along with the applicable fee. Mrs. Afjeh pointed out that other types of reports can typically be reviewed in person without cost. Mrs. Tharp responded that video recordings are different due to the required redactions.

Finance & Future Planning – Mr. Lewis

Mr. Lewis reported that a joint meeting of the Streets and Finance Committees was held on April 8th to gather more information and begin projecting the long-term costs of road maintenance and reconstruction. While progress was made, he noted that they are not yet able to put together a formal proposal to present to residents regarding a potential income or property tax increase.

A follow-up meeting with both committees is scheduled for tomorrow at 8:30a.m. Mr. Lewis mentioned that preliminary information is included in the current council packet, with more detailed updates to follow.

Mr. Shimborske added that the committees were unable to reach conclusions using previous criteria due to varying assumptions about affordability and the intended use of funds. He explained that the committees are now moving forward with a new approach based on updated assessments of what needs to be done and the actual associated costs.

Mr. Lewis emphasized the need for specific information about which roads will require more extensive work than standard "mill and fill," such as curbs, drainage, and sewer upgrades, which significantly increase project costs. He noted that this level of detail was missing from earlier evaluations and is essential for accurate planning and budgeting.

Human Resources – Ms. Phillips

Ms. Phillips shared that she recently met with Ms. McDonald to discuss ideas for future community events, noting that budget constraints will need to be considered. Some potential activities discussed included hosting a monthly food truck day at various locations such as the

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administration offices, Arrowhead Point, or the elementary school. The upcoming Bike Rodeo is already scheduled, and additional information will be shared with residents to explain the event in more detail. Ms. McDonald will also be reaching out to the Nature Conservancy in hopes of scheduling additional educational classes. Another idea discussed was offering the Council chambers once a month for a community coffee event with residents. Ms. Phillips also mentioned that Mrs. Holdren has been distributing the resident handbook, which includes a schedule of upcoming village events. Additionally, the HR committee will be returning to the task of updating the employee handbook.

Mr. Shimborske inquired whether funding had previously been allocated for the employee handbook. Ms. McDonald confirmed that \$9,000 had been budgeted, and a draft had been received. However, the draft was extensive and not fully tailored to the village's specific needs. Mr. Wenzlick reviewed the document and found that substantial revisions would be necessary. Ms. Phillips added that the draft includes numerous items not applicable to the village. When Mr. Shimborske asked whether customization was supposed to be included, Ms. McDonald responded that Mr. Wenzlick had provided the vendor with clear instructions and a list of updates requested. Unfortunately, the draft appears less comprehensive than the current handbook. Ms. McDonald agreed to share the draft with the rest of the council for review. Mr. Shimborske expressed concern about the cost, stating that it was a significant amount to spend on a product that may not meet expectations. Mayor Thompson questioned whether the village received appropriate value for the expenditure and suggested requesting a partial refund if the product remains unsatisfactory. Mrs. Greeley asked whether the vendor would still be willing to make updates, and Ms. McDonald stated she would follow up via email to request either continued work or a refund. Mrs. Tharp offered to draft a formal letter if necessary, and Mayor Thompson recommended starting with an email before escalating the request. Ms. Phillips also expressed interest in reviewing what instructions were originally provided to the vendor by Mr. Wenzlick.

Safety – Mrs. Dunbar  
No report

Services & Environment – Mrs. Greeley

Mrs. Greeley mentioned that while there wasn't a recent meeting, she has observed a growing number of properties with poorly maintained lawns, including missing grass and excessive weeds. She noted that this is not limited to just a few homes. In response, Ms. McDonald stated that Officer Nelson, who oversees property maintenance, was prepared to issue warning letters two weeks ago but was asked to hold off to give residents a chance to address their lawns during the first weekend of good weather. Officer Nelson is expected to finalize her inspection list this week, and a number of letters will be sent out. Ms. McDonald explained that residents are given one week to respond to the initial notice. Officer Nelson tracks each case in the software system, including delivery dates and follow-up notes. If the issue is resolved, the case is closed; and typically, a second notice is not needed. Mayor Thompson recalled past instances where the village had to mow properties due to noncompliance and clarified that notices are only sent when a property is clearly in violation, with reasonable time allowed for the issue to be corrected. He also stated that only one notice is issued per property per calendar year. Mrs. Greeley added that some concerns are less about overgrown grass and more about areas where grass is missing altogether.

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Mayor Thompson commended Officer Nelson's diligence and emphasized the village's support for her enforcement efforts, acknowledging that some residents may not always respond cooperatively.

Streets & Bridges – Mr. Shimborske

No report

Utilities, Equipment, Buildings & Grounds – Mr. Wimmers

No report

Solicitors Report – Mrs. Tharp

No report

Administrator's Report

Ms. McDonald reported that efforts are being made to increase the Village's presence on Facebook by sharing more information about community events, such as the Touch-A-Truck event, which includes participation from the police and service departments with their vehicles on display. Additionally, the Village website is being improved to enhance user experience. Updates include moving the email subscription feature to the top of the homepage and adjusting the news section for better visibility on mobile devices, though the desktop version currently offers a more user-friendly layout. Ms. McDonald also noted that the office is working on creating informational postcards for residents, updating the resident handbook, and pursuing options to digitize it for easier access.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Thompson shared that the Glass City Marathon took place the previous Sunday and, to his knowledge, the event went smoothly. As in past years, a few residents expressed concern about being unable to leave their homes during the race, which is a recurring issue. He invited Council members to share any concerns they may have so they may be communicated to the marathon organizers, who are typically very responsive. Ms. Phillips inquired whether there had been any complaints about trash left behind. Ms. McDonald responded that she had not received any trash-related complaints. In total, she received three calls: two from residents seeking guidance on how to navigate around the village during the event, and one from a resident who was unaware the marathon was taking place. She added that the only incident of concern occurred at the train tracks, where a driver attempted to cross during the race but was stopped by a TPD officer. Mrs. Dunbar, who was present throughout the event, commented that it was a great experience overall. Ms. McDonald also noted that the marathon organizers followed up within 48 hours to arrange reimbursement for labor costs related to police and service staff, as well as any rental equipment such as signage. Reimbursements are typically processed within two weeks.

Old Business

Ms. Phillips emphasized the importance of considering additional capital projects beyond road repairs during ongoing discussions about finances, long-term planning, and the possibility of pursuing a levy. She noted smaller, yet still significant projects such as the Ridgewood pedestrian bridge, Bancroft Corridor improvements, and the addition of a storage shed for the tennis courts.

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She asked whether these items are being factored into future budgets and sought input from the council on how to prioritize them. Mr. Lewis agreed that these projects need to be incorporated into the budgeting process but acknowledged that the Bancroft Corridor project is a much larger undertaking and should be considered separately due to its scale. Ms. Phillips stressed the need to keep these various projects in mind and suggested a gradual, prioritized approach. Mr. Lewis responded that determining a clear direction for the Village should come first, after which the smaller projects can be addressed. Mayor Thompson added that the scope of a potential levy could be influenced by this discussion, whether it should be narrowly focused on roads or more broadly to include other infrastructure needs. He agreed that recognizing the full list of projects is essential for shaping those future discussions.

Ms. Phillips also reminded council that Mrs. Ford, the Village's representative on the TARTA board, will be distributing summer transit passes to students. Plans are underway to create materials that inform students about destinations accessible from local TARTA stops. In response to a question from Mr. Shimborske about whether the current building is included in the Bancroft Corridor plans, Ms. Phillips confirmed that it is shown in the project renderings. Mayor Thompson noted that a pedestrian crossing at Bancroft could be a key part of connecting residents to these facilities. Ms. Phillips added that even partial improvements, such as installing crosswalks along Bancroft, were among the options considered if the full project isn't feasible at once. Mrs. Dunbar pointed out that infrastructure elements like these could be eligible for grant funding.

Ms. Phillips expressed the importance of maintaining a running list of projects to ensure that none of the smaller initiatives are overlooked. Mr. Wimmers suggested creating a "to-do" list that not only outlines the tasks but also designates who will take the lead on each item and tracks follow-up actions. Mayor Thompson agreed and added that the list could also reflect what progress has already been made and identify the next steps for each project.

New Business

A motion was made by Mr. Shimborske and seconded by Mr. Wimmers to approve the payment to Kati Tharp in the amount of \$1,008, for the period of March 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Thompson stated that the Zoning Code update remains a key item on the Village's to-do list. A total of \$39,000 has been allocated in the 2024–2025 budget to contract a zoning code rewrite. While two consulting firms presented proposals several months ago, follow-up discussions led to the conclusion that much of the initial work could be done in-house. He noted that staff and local volunteers have a solid understanding of the zoning code and are well-positioned to identify key areas of focus. Despite no progress being made at the most recent Zoning Commission meeting, there is now a renewed commitment to move the project forward before the next meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Lewis regarding who would be responsible for the work, Mayor Thompson confirmed that the Zoning Commission, along with two or three community volunteers, will lead the effort. He explained that the current Zoning code, last updated in 2008, includes outdated restrictions, particularly on allowable materials. Since then, many new materials have

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become available that are not currently addressed in the code. Engaging knowledgeable community members will be crucial in identifying necessary updates.

Mayor Thompson emphasized the importance of addressing zoning challenges unique to specific areas of the Village, such as Plat 3, where lot sizes differ significantly from other parts of the community. For example, fencing regulations must be adopted to account for differences between large lots (e.g., five acres) and much smaller or corner lots. He expressed concern that hiring consultants could slow progress, as they would require significant background information before work could begin. Mr. Mockensturm suggested exploring the use of AI tools to assist with the rewrite.

Ms. Phillips inquired whether the Zoning Commission would begin with updates drawn from the Village's to-do list, then present recommendations to Council and eventually to the public. Mayor Thompson confirmed that any Zoning code changes would need to be adopted as ordinances, with public comment opportunities prior to Council consideration. He anticipated the process would include three readings to ensure sufficient time for community input. Ms. McDonald recommended starting with a public working session to gather feedback early in the process. Mr. Shimborske added that the existing Zoning code provides a solid foundation on which to build.

Ordinances & Resolutions

Mayor Thompson read Resolution 2025-11:

Resolution 2025-11

Amending the Public Records Policy of the Village of  
Ottawa Hills, and declaring an emergency.

Motion to waive three readings:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske  
Second – Ms. Phillips  
Unanimous Approval

Motion to declare an emergency:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske  
Second – Ms. Phillips  
Unanimous Approval

Motion to adopt legislation:

Motion – Mr. Shimborske  
Second – Ms. Phillips  
  
Yeas (6) – Mr. Wimmers, Ms. Phillips,  
Mr. Lewis, Mr. Shimborske,  
Mrs. Dunbar, Mrs. Greeley  
  
Nays (0) –

Executive Session

At 7:54 PM Ms. Phillips made a motion to move into an executive session for the purpose of conferring with the Village solicitor in regard to pending or imminent court action and for the

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second purpose of considering the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee Mr. Shimborske seconded the motion, which passed unanimously

At 9:08 PM Council returned to regular session.

Next Meeting Date  
June 2, 2025

Adjournment  
9:09 PM

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

Mayor Thompson