

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

Call to Order – Mayor Thompson

7:00 PM

Village Representatives in Attendance

Mayor Thompson
Councilwoman Wendy Greeley
Councilman Mark Mockensturm
Councilman Darren Moore
Councilwoman Heather Phillips

Councilman Edward Shimborske III
Councilman Dan Wimmers
Village Administrator April McDonald
Solicitor Kati Tharp

Citizen Attendees

Nasrin Afjeh
Elena Stelmaszak
Phillip Runyan

Yarko Kuk
Jason Stelmaszak
Yasmeen Moore

Swearing In of Council Members

Judge Puffenberger swore in Councilwoman Heather Phillips, Councilwoman Wendy Greeley, Councilman Mark Mockensturm, Councilman Darren Moore, and Councilman Edward Shimborske III.

Acting Clerk

A motion was made by Mr. Shimborske and seconded by Ms. Phillips to appoint Ms. McDonald as acting clerk for the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Shimborske to approve the minutes from December 1, 2025, Council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizen Comments

Mrs. Afjeh expressed that Ms. Phillips was not impartial in the past and expressed hope she would remain impartial in the future. Mrs. Afjeh also noted that she asked Mayor Thompson to resign at the previous meeting and stated that she hopes he will do so.

Mr. Runyan welcomed and congratulated Mr. Moore on his appointment. He reminded council that they represent the community as a whole and encouraged members to consider the impact of their decisions on neighbors, emphasizing the importance of due diligence even when difficult. He again welcomed Mr. Moore and noted his interest in future discussions should a position become available.

Mrs. Stelmaszak noted that council's effort to include citizen comments at the beginning and end of meetings is a positive step toward incorporating resident perspectives. She stated that following the defeat of Issue 2, 2026 should focus on optimizing spending and cost allocation. She referenced resolutions submitted by the Ottawa Hills Civic Excellence Collaborative regarding rescinding the bucket truck purchase and improving due diligence in capital spending,

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

emphasizing the importance of considering long-term impacts rather than short-term considerations. She noted upcoming financial pressures, including a potential school levy in 2027, and urged prudent spending given the village's tax constraints.

Mrs. Stelmaszak suggested adhering to the three required readings for legislation to allow time for discussion and evaluation. She expressed concern about the consolidation of financial responsibilities including the Finance Director, Village Administrator, and Clerk-Treasurer roles highlighting the importance of checks and balances, particularly given past audit issues. She encouraged council to consider whether additional oversight or support is needed.

Mayoral and Council Action

A motion was made by Mr. Mockensturm and seconded by Mrs. Greeley to nominate Mr. Shimborske as Vice Mayor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Thompson reported that a draft of the Rules of Council had been distributed to Council members, noting that the review typically occurs every two years with the start of a new council, though amendments may be made at any time. Ms. McDonald explained that the proposed changes, shown in blue, were drafted by Solicitor Tharp. She reviewed proposed revisions to the order of business, including the addition of a second citizen comment period at the end of each regular council meeting. Ms. Phillips expressed support for the change, and Mr. Mockensturm stated it would provide residents the opportunity to comment after council discussion. Ms. McDonald also reviewed minor spelling corrections and clarifications, including those related to special meeting agendas.

Ms. McDonald then reviewed a new section titled Hearing of the Public, which would establish two designated citizen comment periods at each regular council meeting, with comments limited to three minutes per speaker per period unless extended by the Mayor or Council. A new speaker registration process was discussed, requiring speakers to sign in at the beginning of the meeting with their name, affiliated organization, and intended subject. Mr. Wimmers supported listing a subject for recordkeeping purposes, and Solicitor Tharp clarified that listing a subject would not restrict a speaker to that topic. Mayor Thompson stated the subject field should be optional, and Council agreed. Ms. Phillips also requested that a summary of the citizen comment rules be included on meeting agendas, which Solicitor Tharp confirmed could be done.

Ms. McDonald reviewed proposed decorum language for council meetings, including requirements that comments be addressed to the public body as a whole, prohibitions on personal attacks and disruptive or disorderly conduct, and a request that cell phones be silenced during meetings. Ms. Phillips stated she supported the language and suggested signage be posted at the meeting entrance.

Council discussed meeting schedule language. Council generally agreed to continue meeting monthly, with flexibility to schedule additional meetings when necessary, while remaining mindful of staff workload.

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

Ms. Phillips identified several technical corrections to the draft. Mayor Thompson concluded that the draft Rules of Council would be revised based on Council feedback and returned for consideration and adoption at the next council meeting, and Council members were asked to submit any additional comments to Ms. McDonald for compilation and review by Solicitor Tharp.

A motion was made by Mr. Shimborske and seconded by Mr. Wimmers to table the adoption or re-adoption of Council rules. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Thompson stated that the Zoning Commission is established by separate ordinance and consists of five members. One member is appointed from Council, a position currently held by Ms. Phillips, with the remaining members being village residents. He noted that the Zoning Commission meets approximately every six weeks and that Ms. Phillips has served on the Commission for the past two years. Mayor Thompson further stated that Ms. Phillips' appointment to the Zoning Commission expired when her prior council term ended, and a motion is required to appoint a council member to fill the position.

A motion was made by Mr. Shimborske and seconded by Mrs. Greeley to nominate Ms. Phillips as Zoning Commission member. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Thompson stated that, similar to the Zoning Commission, the Joint Recreation Board consists of seven members, with appointments made by both the Village Council and the Board of Education. The Board includes one Council member and one Board of Education member, with the remaining members appointed by the respective bodies. He noted that Mr. Lewis previously held the Council-appointed seat and that the position is now vacant. Mayor Thompson stated that the Joint Recreation Board meets quarterly and that one of the six Council members needs to be appointed to fill the vacancy.

Ms. Phillips stated that she believes the Joint Recreation Board would benefit from a reassessment, noting that she has spoken with members of the Board of Education who have also expressed interest in reviewing and updating the Board's structure and operations to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community.

Ms. Phillips stated she would be willing to serve on the Joint Recreation Board but noted that she is already serving on the Zoning Commission and would defer if another Council member wished to serve. Mr. Wimmers suggested Mr. Moore due to his involvement with the school district. A motion was made by Ms. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Mockensturm to nominate Mr. Moore as board member for the Joint Recreation Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McDonald stated that each elected official is required to complete public records training and that a designee may be appointed to complete the training on behalf of the official. She explained that Mrs. Holdren has historically served as the designee and will be taking the approximately three-hour training course in February. Ms. McDonald noted that elected officials must either complete the training themselves or designate a representative. Mayor Thompson stated that those beginning a new term are required to comply with this requirement. Ms. McDonald added that Mrs. Holdren, who handles the majority of public records requests in the administrative office, and

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

Mrs. Chester, who handles police-related public records requests, both complete the training annually.

Solicitor Tharp recommended that any officials unfamiliar with Ohio Sunshine Laws take the training themselves or, at minimum, review the materials available on the Ohio Attorney General's website, emphasizing the importance of understanding open meetings requirements. Mayor Thompson stated that Council members may either complete the training and obtain certification or designate Mrs. Holdren to do so on their behalf. He recommended designating Mrs. Holdren while also encouraging all Council members to take the training to better familiarize themselves with the requirements.

A motion was made by Mr. Shimborske and seconded by Mr. Moore to appoint Mrs. Holdren as designee for newly elected officials public records training. The motion passed unanimously

Finance & Future Planning – Mr. Mockensturm

Ms. McDonald stated that year-end reports are currently in process and that January is a particularly demanding month due to the preparation of W-2s, the annual audit, and completion of the Certificate of Resources. She noted that once all items are finalized, the information will be distributed to Council. Ms. McDonald reported that income tax revenue is currently over projections. As of the prior Friday, operating expenditure was 73% of the operating budget and 66% of the overall budget. She explained that while the overall percentage appears favorable, the Village recently received a \$200,000 invoice for a road project that has been encumbered for 2025 and will be expended in 2026, with purchase orders carrying over accordingly. Ms. McDonald also noted that the evening's legislation includes engineering services for the Fishbeck project planned for 2027, which will be discussed further.

Human Resources – Ms. Phillips

Ms. Phillips stated that the committee has not yet met and that work will be undertaken to update the Employee Handbook, with the goal of moving the update forward and completing it during the current year.

Safety – Mr. Moore

Mr. Moore shared there is nothing to report and he will be getting together with Ms. McDonald to determine what the major safety items are for the village.

Mrs. Greeley asked for an update on the status of the Exmoor Road painting. Mr. Moore stated that, as of October, residents on Exmoor had requested the painting. He noted that concerns from neighbors appear to have subsided somewhat, possibly due to the winter season.

Services & Environment – Mrs. Greeley

Mrs. Greeley provided an update on the deer cull, noting that the Village had originally approved a cull of 30 deer and that the season ends on February 1st. She reported that, unlike last year when 15 deer were culled within about two weeks, this season has been more spread out. To date, 29 deer have been culled, including six bucks, and six deer have been donated. She noted there are three weeks remaining to cull one more deer.

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

Streets & Bridges – Mr. Shimborske

Mr. Shimborske asked for an update on Indian Road. Ms. McDonald stated that she received an email on Friday indicating that Lucas County is still reviewing purchase orders and quotes related to the project. Mayor Thompson added that he has contacted county officials and that Ms. McDonald has been in communication with them. He noted that a sewer issue exists at the site.

Ms. McDonald shared an example at Talmadge and Central, where the Police and Service Departments were notified only 20 minutes before a street closure due to a watermain leak coordinated with the City of Toledo, leaving limited time to post information on social media. She stated that she will do her best to provide timely updates if a similar situation occurs on Indian Road. Mr. Mockensturm confirmed that the Talmadge incident involved a watermain leak, which Ms. McDonald affirmed. Mayor Thompson explained that the Village's sanitary sewer system is managed by the County and the water system by the City of Toledo, which has both advantages and disadvantages, particularly regarding responsiveness.

Ms. Phillips suggested that the Village explore additional communication methods, such as a text alert system, to quickly notify residents of emergencies like watermain breaks.

Equipment, Utilities, Building & Grounds – Mr. Wimmers

Ms. McDonald provided an update on White Field, stating that Verdantas completed soil sampling on Friday. Ms. McDonald will schedule a Building & Grounds meeting and invite Verdantas once they complete their finding and issue a report.

Solicitors Report – Mrs. Tharp

No Report

Administrator's Report

Ms. McDonald reported that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) had reached out regarding a Tree of Heaven removal grant and noted that Mrs. Stelmaszak had also tagged the Village about the opportunity. She stated that TNC is willing to prepare the grant application on behalf of the Village at no additional cost. The grant would provide up to \$15,000 with a required 10 percent in-kind match and would fund the removal and treatment of problematic Tree of Heaven locations, including areas near the sled hill and behind the administration building. Mr. Wimmers asked how many trees would be addressed, and Ms. McDonald responded that the grant is capped by dollar amount rather than a specific number of trees. She noted that Tree of Heaven is closely associated with the spotted lanternfly, which has been a significant issue, and that the grant would cover removal, treatment to prevent resprouting, and chemical or pesticide applications. Ms. McDonald stated the grant application is due January 31 and that she will be meeting next week with TNC, Mr. Pelland, and herself to discuss the application.

Ms. McDonald also shared that on January 19, the Toledo Zoo and the school will again partner for a bamboo harvest at Epworth Church. She described the event as an educational experience in which students harvest bamboo with zoo staff, transport it to the zoo, and observe the red pandas consuming what was harvested.

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

Regarding road projects, Ms. McDonald stated she spoke with Mr. Drummond of Fishbeck and noted that Council will need to consider a motion at either the next meeting or in March to authorize bidding for the 2026 Edgevale Road project. She explained that the Village is coordinating with Lucas County on underground work and is hopeful construction can begin shortly after the Glass City Marathon at the end of April. She stated additional details regarding bidding and the anticipated start date should be available in the coming weeks, noting that the contractor will determine the actual start date but must meet a required completion deadline. Ms. Phillips asked whether a finish date had been determined, and Ms. McDonald stated it had not. Mayor Thompson clarified that the project includes the reconstruction of Edgevale Road from Secor to Bancroft, along with installation of a new water line. He noted the road is approximately 100 years old and in poor condition, that the County will cover the water line portion, and that the Village has secured an OPWC grant to offset costs, making it a significant project.

Ms. McDonald then provided background on the Evergreen Road Bridge project, noting it is another major undertaking. She explained that in July 2024, Fishbeck was contracted to prepare an ODOT Municipal Bridge Program grant application, which was approved by Resolution 2024-14. In September 2024, she and Mr. Drummond presented the proposal in Columbus, and in October 2024 the Village was selected for funding for fiscal year 2027. The maximum ODOT grant award is \$2.5 million, with the Village's share estimated at \$542,000. She added that the former Finance Director also submitted an OPWC grant and loan application totaling \$122,000, and Ms. McDonald recently followed up to determine whether awards were finalized, with an update expected soon. Ms. McDonald explained that the engineering contract, that was received last Friday is placed on the agenda for discussion. Mayor Thompson clarified that the project is scheduled for 2027 construction, with engineering work occurring this year and bidding expected next year. Ms. McDonald noted that significant preparatory work is required, including surveying, right-of-way coordination, and environmental considerations, and emphasized that ODOT requires frequent progress updates to avoid delays or loss of funding. Ms. Phillips noted the compressed timeline due to habitat life cycles associated with the bridge area, and Ms. McDonald confirmed that ODOT closely monitors project progress to ensure compliance with grant requirements.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Thompson reported that a march took place on Saturday at the elementary school, noting that the Village became aware of the event on Friday. He stated the march was peaceful, with approximately 75 to 100 participants, including both residents and non-residents. Mayor Thompson attended to ensure the event proceeded smoothly and noted that he recognized several attendees and participated in the march. Mr. Mockensturm asked what the march was regarding, and Mayor Thompson explained it was related to ICE-related events in Minneapolis. Mr. Moore asked whether it was connected to another march near Central Avenue; Ms. Phillips clarified that the Central Avenue march occurred later the same day and that this event took place within the Village. It was also noted that Representative Michele Grim attended the march.

Mayor Thompson then stated that Mr. Mockensturm had submitted his resignation from the position of Clerk-Treasurer, resulting in a vacancy. He explained that, pursuant to the Ohio

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
January 13, 2026 7:00 PM**

Revised Code, Council has 30 days to appoint a replacement, and if Council does not act within that timeframe, he is authorized to make the appointment.

Mayor Thompson also addressed the previously discussed action related to the purchase of a bucket truck. He stated that no contracts have been executed and that, following further discussion, he would like to pause and review the matter. He asked Mr. Mockensturm to lead the review, either through the Finance Committee or with involvement from other Council members as he sees fit. Mayor Thompson noted there is no immediate urgency, as the purchase would be made through a state purchasing program that utilizes state bidding processes, and there is no required bid deadline for making the decision.

Old Business

Ms. Phillips stated that the running projects list has been posted on the Village website and that community members are now able to view the list and follow the progress of ongoing projects.

New Business

A motion was made by Mr. Mockensturm and seconded by Mr. Shimborske to approve the payments to Kati Tharp in the amount of \$2,646 for the period of November 2025, and \$3,045 for the period December 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Ordinances & Resolutions

Mayor Thompson stated that the bridge had been identified as an issue prior to July 2024, which led to the Village applying for the ODOT grant. He noted that construction is anticipated to occur in 2027, with engineering work to begin in the near future. Mr. Shimborske asked whether additional authorization was required given the existing contract with Fishbeck. Ms. McDonald explained that while the Village has a five-year contract authorizing Fishbeck to serve as the Village engineer, the cost of this project exceeds her authorization limit and therefore requires Council approval.

Mayor Thompson read Resolution 2026-1:

Resolution 2026-1:

Authorizing a contract with Fishbeck for engineering services related to the 2027 replacement of the Evergreen Road Bridge.

Motion to waive three readings:

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

Motion to adopt legislation:

Motion –	Mr. Shimborske
Second –	Ms. Phillips

Yeas (6) – Mrs. Greeley, Mr. Mockensturm

**OTTAWA HILLS VILLAGE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

January 13, 2026 7:00 PM

Mr. Moore, Ms. Phillips,
Mr. Shimborske, Mr. Wimmers

Nays (0) –

Executive Session

At 8:25 PM Mr. Shimborske made a motion to move into an executive session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee. Mr. Mockensturm seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

At 9:09 PM Mr. Mockensturm made a motion to return to regular session and Ms. Phillips seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Date

February 2, 2026

Adjournment

9:09 PM



Mayor Thompson