

**VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
2025-5-19**

ATTENDANCE

Erica Nikolic, President
Taunya Scruggs, Ward 1
Eloise Hardin, Ward 2
Paggie Matlock, Ward 3*
Mary Davis, Ward 4
Candace Hill, Ward 5

Brian Thompson, Finance Director
Dave Tapp, Fire Department

ABSENT

Ross Cirincione, Prosecutor
Matt Jones, Village Engineer
Daniel Marinucci, Chief Bldg. Official
Carlean Perez – Recreation Director
Mark Garratt, Police Department
Johnnie Warren, President Pro Tem

James Climer, Law Director
Sam O’Leary, Assistant Law Director
Gary V Gottschalk, Mayor
Tom Haba, Service Director

** Arrived after roll call*

Meeting opened at 6:30am by Nikolic
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call taken

2025-26

A RESOLUTION OF CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF ROBERT C. TOWNSEND II

Introduced 5-19-25
By the Mayor and
Council as a whole
1st read 5-19-25

Motion to suspend 2025-26 made by Hardin seconded by Davis

YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Davis, Hill

MOTION PASSED

Motion to adopt 2025-26 made by Davis seconded by Hardin

YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Davis, Hill

MOTION PASSED

2025-28

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING REVISED FEE SCHEDULES FOR BUILDING
DEPARTMENT PERMIT FEES AND PLAN REVIEWS AND DECLARING AN
EMERGENCY**

Introduced 5-13-25
By the Mayor and
Council as a whole
1st read 5-13-25
2nd read 5-19-25

Motion to suspend 2025-28 made by Hardin seconded by Davis

YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill

MOTION PASSED

Motion to adopt 2025-28 made by Warren seconded by Davis
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill
MOTION PASSED

2025-30

Introduced 5-13-25

By the Mayor and
Council as a whole

1st read 5-13-25

2nd read 5-19-25

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF NOT TO EXCEED \$1,335,000 OF NOTES, IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF (i) IMPROVING STREETS AND ROADS IN THE VILLAGE BY RECONSTRUCTING, RESURFACING, GRADING, DRAINING, CURBING, PAVING, CONSTRUCTING STORM SEWERS AND RELATED FACILITIES AND MAKING OTHER IMPROVEMENTS AS DESIGNATED IN THE PLANS APPROVED OR TO BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL, (ii) ACQUIRING, REMODELING, RENOVATING, FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING A BUILDING TO HOUSE VILLAGE SERVICE DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS AND IMPROVING ITS SITE, (iii) REMODELING, RENOVATING, INSTALLING LIGHTING AND OTHERWISE IMPROVING THE VILLAGE'S COMMUNITY CENTER, (iv) ACQUIRING REAL ESTATE FOR VILLAGE PURPOSES, (v) ACQUIRING SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTAINERS FOR USE IN REFUSE COLLECTION AND (vi) RESURFACING FORBES ROAD FROM NORTHFIELD ROAD TO BROADWAY AVENUE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PLANS APPROVED OR TO BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Hardin: For the record, we have the bond Counsel here. And I don't know if everybody was here when, if I'm not mistaken, he made the statement. How much has to be paid per year over the next five years to meet our obligations? How much? Just a question. I can ask the Finance Director, or you. **Stuczynski:** So good evening, Matt Stuczynski, I serve as the city, as the Village's municipal advisor. Good to see you all again, thanks for meeting this evening at the special Council meeting. And I may have hesitated last week when you asked that question. Only as much as I think Council should now have a list of all the improvements. They go back to 2009, 2010, 2011, as I mentioned previously. Ohio allows you to roll notes for no more than 20 years. Those notes issued in 2009, 10, and 11, which for the most part were street programs. Need to be paid off in 20 years which would presume 2028, 2029, 2030. And that's about a million one of the total notes outstanding. So, I mentioned that we need to pay off those. There's a small component of the outstanding loan, about two, \$300,000, that was issued in 2018, 2019, and 2020. That can stay outstanding a little bit longer. But it doesn't make sense because those projects, again, should be, were never intended to be financed over 10 years. They were intended to be finance over four, five, or six years, not 10, or 20. So, I said it would be ideal to have these all paid off in the next five years. Applying about a million, about \$250,000 a year for the next 5 years to try to redeem all these notes. I think that's a good goal, it's not mandatory. But you'll need to do no less than \$200,000 per year for the next 5 years. And a little bit more than that, at a minimum, just to get rid of the ones that were issued in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, because those are most certainly going to be rolled through on, and we can't go beyond 20 years of it. So, \$250,000 is optimal, no less than \$200,000, or \$225,000 a year for the next five years. **Davis:** On our papers, the earliest date is not there. I don't see no 2008, do you have a 2008? **Stuczynski:** I do. **Davis:** There's 2009. **Stuczynski:** I'm sorry if I mistakenly said 2008, 2009 was the first one. There was street program 2009, 2010, 2011, you're correct. I was looking at 2018 for some reason. **Nikolic:** So, if we could get a little bit more detail on the specifics of the programs. Because as we go down the list. We don't have to do it now, just when you resubmit. Recycling improvement, real estate improvements, street programs. Now we're looking at which streets we want to do. It would be nice to know if they were any residential streets in there, or not. But just so we have more clarity on what's been done and what we're paying for currently. Just a little more details. The community center improvements, that would all be helpful, because I just don't know. **Hill:** So, for the record, all of the legislative numbers are in there. You can ask the Clerk

to pull them so you can review what legislation was passed in connection with those bonds and notes. **Nikolic:** Okay, it's more detailed in there besides just the note and the bond. **Stuczynski:** It will describe it similarly to the way it's described in this piece of legislation. You wanted to see the actual streets that were improved. **Nikolic:** Are the streets in the legislation? **Stuczynski:** The streets are not in the legislation. You would have to go back and look at what was bid and what was completed for each of those note issues. And align the appropriation, the purchase orders, and invoices. For how those dollars were spent going back to those individual years. That's not in the legislation; the legislation is broadly crafted to give you authority and flexibility. But there's generally a list of streets that frames the scope of the project. But sometimes it can go a little bit beyond that if there's extra money. For example, if you intended to do five residential streets. And for whatever reason the bids came in less. You likely could do six residential, the legislation doesn't list a specific street. That's intentional by design by bond counsel who prepares this legislation to give you flexibility to extend the program. As long as it's similar in nature. You can't go use road program proceeds to build a community center. Or you can't use a community center to buy equipment. It's designed to be flexible enough within the confines of the legislation. But the details of that would you have to research each of those individual expenditures throughout those years. Sometimes it crosses over two years as well. So, if you were to bid something and start the program in 2009, it may not be finished until 2010. **Nikolic:** Okay, I'll research with the Finance Director and the Engineer at a later date. Any other questions or comments for Mr. Stuczynski? **Davis:** The 2009, 2010, 2011, you said we had to pay, what is the minimum we have to pay? **Stuczynski:** You should have no less than \$200,000. And ideally \$250,000 should be paid each year for the next five years to try to retire this note in its entirety. Keep in mind, we'll have a million three outstanding at this year. \$250k plus interest, we're trying to cover \$1,250, we're close to... Being done in the next five years if we pay \$250,000 a year. It might be a little small leftover but those would be likely the notes that were issued in 2018, 2019, and 2020. And you have some little bit of flexibility to retire them entirely or let them extend maybe another year. **Davis:** The other question I have is if we retire them with \$250,000, or whatever. What savings do it save us? I mean, what is our interest that we would be saving? **Stuczynski:** Yeah, so generally speaking, in the current interest rate environment. These notes are being sold at about 4%. So, on a million dollars that's \$40,000 worth of interest that you're paying. Plus, there's fees involved in this, and that's why we get down to a small number of a note. \$250,000 or even a half a million, there's costs involved in it that don't make sense. If we have the wherewithal to retire it earlier than five years, we're not going to issue it. And I'm not going stand and say you should issue a note for \$75,000. And incur \$25,000 worth of fees, no sense to that. So, if we can, we are going to try to push this and accelerate the note retirement. So, we can eliminate some of these notes earlier and not have these small note issues outstanding. Does that make sense? **Davis:** Mr. Thompson, do we have the money in our funds to pay the \$250,000, or \$200,000? **Thompson:** Yes, we do, and I scheduled an ad for this year to make the payment. **Davis:** For the next five years or just for this year? **Thompson:** Not the next five years, but it's in its appropriation, but we'll have it. **Davis:** For the \$250,000, or the 200,000, which one? **Thompson:** \$250,000. **Matlock:** This maybe a redundant question. How much was the actual monthly or the yearly fee charged a year? How much is the actual cost? **Stuczynski:** Cost for issuance last year was about \$20,000. **Matlock:** Okay, so for each year with like \$20,000. **Stuczynski:** Correct. **Matlock:** Okay, so now we're going to go up \$230,000 additional? **Stuczynski:** So, last year you paid off \$160,000 on this note. I'm suggesting that we try to elevate that to \$250,000. **Matlock:** That's what I was saying. So, it was basically \$160,000 a year, plus interest. But we're going to elevate it up to \$250,000 a year, the minimum is like at least \$225,000, or \$200,000. **Stuczynski:** Correct, we need to pay that much off. And we may

need to do more if we want to avoid some of these fees that are associated with the note issue. We'll have to see, we'll have measure that. The good news is by way of the fact that this is issued as a one-year note. We get to revisit it every year and make a decision on how much to retire. But it has to be no less than \$200,000 and opt to meet closer to \$250,000. **Hardin:** Brian, do you recall several years ago I asked for and received every year the spreadsheet. Do you remember? We used to get that. **Thompson:** The amortization schedule, yes. **Hardin:** Did we get it this year? **Thompson:** Oh yeah, we'll get it, we'll update it when we make this payment. **Hardin:** I encourage my counterparts to make certain every year that you look at that spreadsheet. And keep these notes in mind what the explanation you just received. And Brian, I suggest... A footnote be on that spreadsheet. Reminding future council people of this conversation. It would be very helpful, especially someone new coming into Council. To understand where we are and what we need to do at least over the next five years. That would be helpful. **Thompson:** Yes, I agree, and will add to the spreadsheet. **Hill:** I'm going ask that you return and provide another session where we can go deeper into bonds and notes. So, we have a better understanding than just trying to get the legislation through. But also, as we have new Councilmembers, if we could ask you to come back and just... You know, we get the spreadsheet, and you see the number that has to be paid. What's not said is what has to pay by when and why. And so that will be helpful because we have to have an outlook on our finances over future years and not just in the moment. **Stuczynski:** 100% reasonable, happy to do it. **Hill:** Thank you. **Nikolic:** Anything else for Mr. Stuczynski?

Motion to suspend 2025-30 made by Warren seconded by Scruggs

YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill

MOTION PASSED

Motion to adopt 2025-30 made by Warren seconded by Matlock

YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill

MOTION PASSED

2025-31

Introduced 5-19-25

By the Mayor and

Council as a whole

1st read 5-19-25

**AN EMERGENCY SALARY ORDINANCE SETTING FORTH CERTAIN POSITIONS OF
EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION AND BENEFIT SCHEDULES THEREFORE FOR
THE VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Hardin: Is there any reason why we have to pass this tonight? **Hill:** Yes, well no, unless you just don't want... The only change that was made to this. And I think we did talk about making an additional change. And I can't remember where, but the change that I was told about was for the certified. So, previously our housing inspector was not certified. So, when we passed this legislation originally. We passed it for a housing inspector that was not certified. That was also the range that we used for compensation. We are talking about being a certified housing inspector now. So, we added the word certified so that we could have a certified or not certified one. And also increase the range to cover a not certified building inspector or a certified one. And made it comparable with, you know, just our village size and what they're paying in rates across other municipalities. **Hardin:** For the record, I understand where we are with compensation. But I'd also like to go on record with asking this Council at the next meeting to arrange for an executive session. There are a couple things, especially as it relates to how we advertise, the interviewing methodology that's used, is there anything that documents that? So, my point is this, there's one area of employment that I am concerned about. So, I will go on

record, I will vote for this tonight based on the research I've done. But there is one area that I think we need to look at again. So, at the next meeting, can I ask for an executive session? All right, so be it. **Davis:** I have a question on one of the sections. I did not see this until tonight because I was absent last Tuesday. And I would like to go to executive session to talk about it before we vote. Because it thrown my whole vote off by seeing this one position whatever, and why couldn't we do the executive... If you're going to vote on this, why would you not want the executive session before we vote on it? **Hardin:** Because at this point, it's a procedure...

Warren: We've discussed it over and over again. And everyone has had an opportunity to read each item. If there is something that has to be amended, it can be amended in the near future. But at this point we are holding up to all of the item sets on that. **Davis:** There's only one that I have an issue with, completely and because this is more... We're starting it more than we ever paid somebody before. So why would we, I mean, how did we get to be the amount that we set it at?

Hill: Yeah, we did, I know you were out last week, and we did have an executive session, and we did go through those. I do believe you're talking about the three that came before us. We did that in executive session before, we can schedule another one, but we did. **Hardin:** That's why I'm comfortable with doing it tonight Mary. **Davis:** Okay. **Nikolic:** Councilwoman Hill, can you restate why we need to pass it tonight before we have the executive session for them to discuss the other issues? **Hardin:** For me, can I speak for myself? What I'm concerned about will not impact this legislation. **Nikolic:** Okay. **Hardin:** So, don't hold it up because I just want to make sure that we revisit some procedures as it relates to employment. **Nikolic:** Okay, I just heard Councilperson Hill said it must be passed tonight. I was just clarifying why. **Hill:** I think I said that already, it does not have to be passed tonight. The goal is to try to continue to hire in our Building Department our own employees. The questions that they have outstanding are not about this particular position. They're about positions that we discussed in the last executive session.

Nikolic: My question is, I know I saw the ad for the assistant Council Clerk. I think we should include that position as well. There was no rate of pay in that ad. **Thompson:** I went back and amended it. When I first put it in, it had something to do with the job, and it compares markets that it was not comparable. But I went in and updated it, long story short, put the \$18.50 in there. But quite a few resumes have been coming out. **Hill:** We already decided those amounts for that, and the amounts were in that, what you were saying. Also, this is a special meeting, so we're kind of out of bounds with the legislation we have before us. **Nikolic:** No, this is relevant to this legislation. Is there a reason why we wouldn't want to put the assistant clerk in this legislation? Because even though we may not want it to be a permanent position. It would be good to have that documented, the position and the pay rate. **Hill:** The assistant Council Clerk is for an hourly as needed employee. It's a temporary position, I don't believe we're covering temporary positions in this. **Nikolic:** Okay. **Hardin:** That was the mindset. **Hill:** You can (inaudible) and ask him that. **Nikolic:** Okay, well, I mean, it's fine, it's something that could always be added. **Hill:** Right.

Nikolic: I see the Fire Chief. Did you want to discuss the legislation? **Tapp:** Yeah, if I could, I got the notice with this pay ordinance, and the ranges are completely off. I don't know where these ranges were from. They're from a couple years back. And we made a bunch of changes to it ourselves. I can hand these out to you now. The way these are it probably should not be voted on tonight. It looked like the wages were pulled from a few years ago and not based off of last year's wages. **Matlock:** Well, the wages were pulled from the wage of the year before, correct? The wages were the previous wage that they had that they pulled. **Nikolic:** This is a pretty expansive outline **Tapp:** I would be happy to send it out on the email form as well, but I figured I could come to the meeting. I just finished this earlier today, so... **Hardin:** Chief, I know we keep kicking the can and kicking the can, but would it be acceptable... Because I think, as you heard from Councilperson Davis and myself. I received something, too, that we have to talk about. And

we can't make that change without going to executive session. So, is it acceptable to you and your associate that we do it at the next special meeting or at the Council meeting? **Tapp:** Yeah, after you guys do what we have there, for sure. We're happy to have a discussion before then, too, if we're going to handle it before then. **Hardin:** Okay, but I want you to feel comfortable. It's not going to be ignored. Okay, we will deal with it. **Hill:** Let me clarify before we move on, please. Are these, I'm not understanding the way you have these numbers here in the red, so let me just clarify. **(Unknown from Fire Department):** So the numbers in red... **Hill:** You don't have to explain to me. I'm just going to ask them questions. The hundred seven thousand that you have here is this an estimate or is this an actual number? **Tapp:** That's what we budgeted for this year. **Hill:** That's what you budgeted for, that's what you would like to request? **Tapp:** correct. **Hill:** Okay, thank you, the \$88,024 salary, is that the number you're pulling from last year? Am I understanding that correctly? **Tapp:** That was the number that I was paid last year. **Hill:** Okay, thank you when I see it says Fire Chief, this position doesn't exist. **Tapp:** It says part-time in that part of that. And then it says it's only administrative jobs. So, we're not sure if it's for a Fire Chief's Administrative Assistant?... We don't have one, but it's listed under part- time. **Hill:** Yes, so we just duplicated, so previously it had the Fire Chief or some positions under full-time and part-time. So, we left that and then made sure the numbers were comparable to what we had as full- time in case that situation happens. But we're clear we don't have someone as a part- time Fire Chief. You're just saying that's something that's not happening currently? **Tapp:** That's correct. **Hill:** Okay. **Tapp:** Years ago, we did have an administrative assistant. And that's why I didn't know if that was going to play. **Hill:** And then what I'm looking at on the third page, I think it is, or fourth, fourth page. The first set of numbers that I see in the row is the 2024 wages that were paid. The differential rate that I see is for those 2024 wages. Okay, and then what are the 2% and 7%? And 3% that you have under the numbers in black, what does that mean? **(Unknown from Fire Department):** That's the change from our 2024 wages. So, \$35.09 an hour in that range is a 2% raise on top of the \$34.42 we had for our 2024 hourly wage. So, if you look at the rate for cap, it was \$31.29 in 2024 for the range set for 2025 in this legislation. The bottom end of that range \$30.38, which is actually a negative 3% adjustment for 2025 is a 3% reduction in wages. I didn't think that that was likely intentional, but... **Hill:** And then you're saying that 31.9 is a 2%? **(Unknown from Fire Department):** Correct. **Tapp:** We do not de-price our wage. **(Unknown from Fire Department):** There was no ranges. **Tapp:** If you're a Firefighter or Paramedic, you get a certain wage. There's no range in between there when we pay people. So, we don't have two guys doing the same job, making a different amount. **Hill:** Okay, and then, so let me make this clear. The range is not that you all have positions that are paid differently. The range for if into the next year we want to do an increase. We don't automatically have to go back and adjust this compensation schedule. We can move within that range. But what you're saying is that the ranges we have, they don't fit into what you all are paying right now. So, we need to adjust our range overall. **(Unknown from Fire Department):** Correct, the ranges are between a negative three percent and an additional three percent. **Hill:** So, you know that's not what the range is. It's not so you all can move within the ranges. It's just so that if there's an increase that's asked for and we actually approve it. The range is already there, and we don't have to go back to this. **Tapp:** So, if you don't want to go above that range it doesn't have to be adjusted. What are you saying? **Hill:** If we want to go above the range yes we have to come back as a Council and adjust the compensation schedule. **Warren:** But I guess if you look at the maximum of the \$34.42, that the maximum over here the regular is \$34.42 where it should start at. But you could go up to \$36.84 is what she's saying. So we do have latitude, it falls within that range anyway. But we can make the adjustment in the schedule and vote on it at the next Council meeting. **Hill:** And then the last column you have is the budget of 8% increase. That is what you

are requesting for this year, correct? **Tapp:** That is correct, the first quarter of this year, on the payroll with the budget that was passed. First quarter, we came in at 11% under budget. So, we've got re than (inaudible) still be 3% on the budget. **Nikolic:** With this significant amount of discussion to be had. I think we could wait until it gets an executive session next Tuesday to adjust this. **Hill:** We can adjust it again, yeah we have Building Department and personnel issues we need to fix there that we need to move on this board. We can come back and adjust now that we have that information. Have an executive session and figure out numbers and do it again. **Nikolic:** Okay, fair enough.

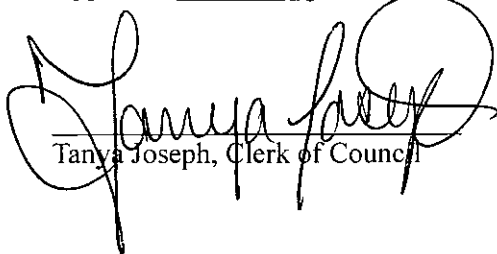
Motion to suspend 2025-31 made by Hill seconded by Scruggs
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill
MOTION PASSED

Motion to adopt 2025-31 made by Hardin seconded by Scruggs
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill
MOTION PASSED

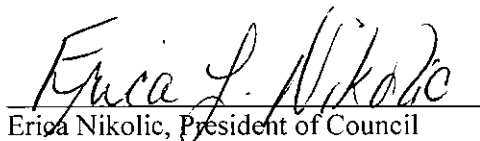
Motion to adjourn made by Warren seconded by Hardin
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Hill
MOTION PASSED
Adjourned at 7:07p.m.

Approved

6.10.25



Tanya Joseph, Clerk of Council



Erica L. Nikolic, President of Council