

VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD

COUNCIL MEETING

June 23, 2026

ATTENDED:

Council President -Eloise Hardin	Mayor -Erica L Nikolic
President Pro Tem -Norman Bliss	Law -J Montello
Ward 1 Council -Taunya Scruggs	Finance -Karen Howse
Ward 2 Council -Yvonne Evans-Warren	Service -Tom Haba
Ward 3 Council -Paggie Matlock	Fire -Dave Tapp (Brian was in his place)
Ward 4 Council -Mary Davis	Police- John Freeman
Ward 5 Council -Malcolm Sims, Jr.	Building -Rodney (New)
	Engineer -Matt Jones
	Recreation -Karen Gaither

1. Call meeting to order (Meeting called to order by Hardin at 7:08PM)
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll call
4. Minutes
5. Correspondence -Clerks Office
6. Departmental Reports
7. Ward and Committee Reports
8. Open Floor comments from the Village Residents
9. Legislation
10. Adjournment

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve June 9, 2026 meeting minutes

Motion made by Davis and seconded by Sims.

Vote: ☒ PASSED (Unanimous)

Davis: Yes Hardin: Yes Matlock: Yes Sims: Yes Evans-Warne: Yes Scruggs: Yes Bliss:

Yes

CORRESPONDENCE

Clerk Training Announcement:

New clerks have completed official training period

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

MAYOR

Nikolic

Master Plan Application:

Application submitted to county

Awaiting approval for technical assistance

Important baseline for village initiatives

State Funding:

Did not receive capital budget funding this round

Will continue applying (happens every two years)

Each application is a learning opportunity

Goal: Become more competitive applicants

Grant Strategy:

Focus on bringing in grant dollars, not just cutting expenses

"It's not only about cutting, it's about bringing dollars in"

Summer Camp:

52 kids enrolled

Added female counselor (positive community response)

Excited about the program

Town Hall - Data Centers:

Tomorrow's town hall topic: Data centers and sustainability

Educational approach (not pro or con)

Village has potential plots of land

Need to understand if data centers are right for Oakwood

School Bus Transportation:

Becker Schools contract fell through due to indemnity clause

Insurance company flagged problematic language

Using alternative bus company (cheaper)

Negotiations ongoing with Becker Schools

Kids still have field trips (Wednesdays and Fridays)

Community Garden Grant:

NOPEC dollars awarded

Legislation to pass

Office Renovation:

Cost: ~\$1,500

Includes: Painting, new baseboards, new light switch/outlet plates

ATTORNEY/LAW DIRECTOR REPORT

Montello

Demolitions:

24815 Broadway: Burned house across the street

Owner cooperated

Demolition permit pulled

Should be completed within next month

Needs clean hole inspection before backfilling

Property Issues:

22904 Kirkland: Owned by trust, owner's daughter trying to sell

Discussing non-conforming zoning status

Realtor involved

Determining if new home can be built

Violations:

25229 Stephen: Violations being addressed

26307 Tyrone: Priority on building official's list

73-08-3: Recently transferred to new corporation, notices being sent

Gray Brothers Used Car Lot:

4-year ongoing issue

Cannot operate without conditional use permit

Operating as used car lot without proper license

Trying to piggyback on license from another city

Building official making it priority

Goal: Get compliance (not court action)

Difficulty: Out-of-state corporation (Texas-based)

Other Issues:

Grading at north end of Northam (appeal received)

DCOMM property: Fence permit installed

Land bank properties: 5 parcels, no response yet

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Freeman

Summer Events:

Citizens Academy:

Starting September

Only 4-5 people signed up so far

Need more participants

Sign up on Facebook or get flyers

Basketball Tournament:

August 2nd (Sunday)

3-6 PM at Booker Avenue playground

Usually ~40 people

Police vs. kids/teenagers

Police are "the champs"

Coffee with Cops:

Starting July 16th

Monthly casual conversations

Location: Duncan, McDonald's, or Starbucks

Officers won't respond to calls

All officers participate (2-3 per month)

Purpose: Get to know officers, discuss concerns

Boat Removal:

Successfully removed boat from Swanee

Dangerous situation resolved

Police and service department worked together

Complicated process (requires Department of Wildlife approval)

Chief Status:

Currently on sick leave

Car parked at station

Other Boats Identified:

Boat on Milburn (in back cul-de-sac) - years old

Boat on front yard (on Oakwood property)

Both need removal

RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Gaither

Activities:

Recreation "thriving"

Activities going well

Day Trips:

Lion King trip in August

Already sold out

Walking Clubs:

New walking club with Sophia

Thursdays at 9 AM and 6 PM

Starts at pruning center

Recent Event:

21 signed up, 19 attended

Chartered bus used

Cost: (to be determined)

Summer Camp:

5 days per week

Senior Meals:

Wednesday meals: \$500/week

4 different vendors

Same price paid to each vendor

ENGINEER REPORT

Jones

Good News:

Broadway-Oakleaf project 100% funded

County 50-50 program + OPWC funding

Will be completed in 2027 with no village money

Broadway-Oakleaf Project Details:

Intersection and Broadway from Oakleaf toward Circle K

Stopping short of Forbes Road

"The part that rattles your teeth right now"

Can't cross Forbes Road (mostly in Benford)

Grant Applications (Work Session Items):

2026-WS-55 (Nature Works): Proceeding as presented

2026-WS-53 & 54 (CDBG/CDSG): Contingency plan for roads if council directs

Road Options:

If special grant approved: Apply for Rock Lane and Kirkland

If special grant denied: Apply for Blackburn and Weber Park

Haven't heard back on special grant yet (expected soon)

Gene Street Question:

Residents claim promised finalization after homes built

Engineer doesn't recall such agreement

Says "extremely unusual" - never heard of in other communities

Will investigate with previous engineer

Broadway/Macedonia Intersection:

Nearly complete

Still has punch list items

Payment status: Unclear (typically bill comes after completion)

SERVICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Haba

Veteran Banners:

20 poles identified on Broadway

First Energy reviewing

Mediator helping with process

Bucket truck fixed

Community Garden:

~100% complete

Fence installed

Chicken wire added (to prevent small animals)

Picnic table with umbrella

Two rain barrels for residents

Mural: Still needs painting (touch-up work remaining)

Water Issues:

Bedford Heights tank: 2 million gallon overflow tank

Prevents rainwater/sewage mix

Protects creeks

Ward 1 Water Issues:

Cambridge/Robert Dale/Hawthorne Valley area

Work done behind two yards last fall

Possible solution being explored

Harris Property:

Letter from December regarding property

Building department researching files

Exploring TIF money for backyard improvements

Trying to resolve long-standing issue

BUILDING DEPARTMENT REPORT

Rodney

Demolitions:

24815 Broadway: Demolished, needs inspections

25823 Tyrone: Three violations issued

Owner starting to comply

Building official following up

Terminology Clarification:

Violations issued (not citations)

Citations require law department involvement

Citations lead to court summons

Property Concerns:

Adjacent property with purple dumpster

Debris not cleaned up properly

Owner building on both properties

Need to investigate ownership

WARD REPORTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Sims read a letter from the former building inspector before he was advised to stop:

Sims: [02:06:47] So I have a letter from Roland Walker, our previous building code inspector. It states to all council village of Oakwood and village of oakwood residents, I was wrongfully terminated on May 29th, 2026 by Mayor Erica L Nikolic. But was informed by the mayor of my termination on June 1st due to her not having time to do so the past week before my arrival to work The mayor stated her reasoning for my terminations that was quoted I needed to have a relationship with her and not so much of a relationship with council She went on to say that she did not appreciate Councilman Sims inquiring the grievance that I had in regards to retaining the second building department vehicle for the new hire. Let it be known that I never submitted a grievance regarding the matter. I simply sent out an email explaining the importance of having the second vehicle replaced due to the new part-time inspector. Mayor Hawson stated. That she did not like Councilman Sam's question heard to why the two job positions were still posted on the website.

[02:08:04][77.0]

Hardin: [02:08:05] The council person, Sam's advice to the council has been asked to stop.

[02:08:12][7.7]

Speaker 9: [02:08:16] If it's going to be discussed any further, we'd better do an executive session. Just to touch on liability, somebody's going say something. [02:08:23][6.8]

VETERAN BANNERS PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Presented by: Councilwoman Matlock and Councilwoman Mary Davis (Finance Committee)

Purpose: Honor and recognize veterans in Oakwood Village on Broadway

Year: 2026 (250-year anniversary of United States)

BANNER DETAILS

Design & Appearance

What's Included:

- Veteran's photo
- Name
- Military service information
- Professional banner display

Location: Broadway (along the street)

Display: Between flags

Quantity: 20 banners (from applicants)

COST & FUNDING

Original Plan

- Cost per banner: \$100
- Veterans to pay

NEW PLAN - VETERAN COMMISSION PAYS

- Veteran Commission will pay for ALL banners
- Veterans who have already paid \$100 will be REFUNDED
- No cost to veterans

Quote: "The veteran commission is going to pay for all of the veteran banners to go down Broadway."

APPLICATION PROCESS

Current Year (2026)

Requirements:

- DD214 (military discharge document)
- Application form
- Photo (must be signed by July 7th)

Applicants: 20 veterans applied

Status: Some veterans didn't want to participate (that's okay - still have opportunity next year)

Next Year (2027) & Beyond

Changes:

- No \$100 fee
 - Will add food to applications
 - Easier process (lessons learned from 2026)
 - Banners will be displayed next year
-

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Missing Veteran Banner

Veteran: Still missing from WWII and Korean War

Status: Body not found

Special Placement: Banner will be placed in front of government building

Significance: "It's something that we should do, and his body should be placed in front of a government building"

Purpose: Honor and remember those who gave their lives

PUBLIC COMMENT SECTION

Roland Walker - Former Building Inspector

Complaint: Claims wrongful termination (May 29, 2026)

Informed June 1st (after not being told for a week)

Mayor's stated reason: "Needed relationship with her, not council"

Objected to Councilman Sims inquiring about grievance

Objected to Sims asking why job positions are still posted

Walker's Response: Never submitted formal grievance

Only sent email about vehicle replacement

Family receiving calls from residents asking why he was terminated

Believed residents have right to know, has spoken with lawyer, considering legal action

Council Response:

Suggested formal complaint process

Will share termination letter with council

Not appropriate forum for discussion

May need executive session if pursued further

Boat Trailer Question

Resident Question: What happens to boat trailers?

Response:

Current trailer from Swanee is broken, being scrapped

Boat has engines (need to pay to dispose)

Welding expert may help fix

Will provide information on other trailers

LEGISLATION VOTED ON

2026-50 : AN ORDINANCE REORGANIZING THE CLERK OF COURTS OFFICE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY -**Treated as second reading (emergency provision removed, making it effective 30 days after passage).**

LEGISLATION DETAILS

EMERGENCY PROVISION ISSUE

Original Status

- Legislation included **emergency provision**
- Would be effective immediately upon passage

Problem Identified

- Emergency provision was **REMOVED** during meeting
- Changed to standard 30-day effective date

Quote from Council: "There was also a question regarding the fact that it's on an emergency, you removed the emergency, so it will be in effect how many days after it's passed? 30 days."

TIMING CONFLICT DISCOVERED

The Issue

If passed with 30-day effective date:

- Effective date would be: ~August 1st
- BUT council is out of session: **July 15 - August 25**
- This creates a gap

Council Member Concern: "If we suspend today and pass it, it will be through. Three days from today, instead of waiting until two or three or four weeks. It will be before August 3rd."

The Solution

Change needed: Effective date must be changed from **August 1st to September 1st**

Reason: To account for summer recess

Quote: "We need to change the legislation then, instead of August 1st, it needs to be September 1st. That would be a good idea."

2026-51: Law Director Retention (FAILED) AN ORDINANCE RETAINING JAMES A. CLIMER AND PROVIDING COMPENSATION FOR SERVICES IN TRANSITIONING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE LAW DEPARTMENT TO PERSONS APPOINTED AS THE INTERIM LAW DIRECTOR AND/OR REPLACEMENT DIRECTOR AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Debate:

Issue: \$15,000 cap - per month or total?

Law Director interpretation: \$15,000 per month cap

\$189/hour rate

No time limit specified

Mayor: Intends to find replacement within month or so

Council concerns: Could be \$180,000/year if full year

Suggestion: Put 2-month limit

Law Director: Won't vote for time limit (need legal support)

Suspend: First -Bliss and Second- Scruggs

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Abstained: Evans-Warren

Motion passed.

Adopt: First-Bliss and Second- Matlock

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Matlock

Vote NO: Evans-Warren, Davis, Sims

Motion did not pass.

2026-52: Tax Budget (PASSED) A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ACCEPTING THE PROPOSED 2027 TAX BUDGET FOR THE YEAR JANUARY 1, 2027, TO DECEMBER 31, 2027, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Details: Approves 2026 tax budget for 2027

Does NOT appropriate funds

Shows need for current tax levies

Three funds at 2.9 millage

Deadlines: July 15 (pass), July 20 (submit to county)

Suspend: First- Davis and Second- Matlock

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Motion passed.

Adopt: First- Davis and Second- Sims

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Motion passed.

2026-53: CDSG Grant - AMENDED (PASSED) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND ENGINEER TO MAKE APPLICATION TO THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENTAL GRANT PROGRAM FOR 2027, AND AUTHORIZING THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT THERETO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Original: Park improvements at Gloria Wainwright Park

Amendment: Changed to road improvements (removed park name)

\$50,000 grant

Application deadline: July 13

Engineer will apply for Blackburn/Weber Park roads (if special grant denied) or Rock Lane/Kirkland (if special grant approved)

Suspend: First- Davis and Second- Hardin

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Motion passed.

Adopt: First- Davis and Second- Sims

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Motion passed.

2026-54: CDBG Grant - AMENDED (PASSED) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND VILLAGE ENGINEER TO MAKE APPLICATION TO CUYAHOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG) FOR 2027, AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT THERETO, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Original: Park improvements at Gloria Wainwright Park

\$150,000 grant

Application deadline: July 13

Same road options as 2026-53

Amendment: Changed to road improvements (removed park name)

Suspend: First- Davis and Second- Hardin

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Motion passed.

Adopt: First- Davis and Second- Hardin

Vote YES: Hardin, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Vote NO: Bliss.

Motion passed.

Motion to Approve (with amendments): ☒ PASSED

2026-55: Nature Works Grant (FIRST READING) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR FUNDING UNDER THE NATUREWORKS PROGRAM FOR THE GLORIA WAINWRIGHT PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Details:

Nature Works grant for Gloria Wainwright Park

Requires 25% local match

Application deadline: July 15

Can use in-kind services and other grant money for match

2026-50: Clerk of Courts Office Reorganization (SECOND READING)

Issue: Emergency provision removed, but effective date needs adjustment

Original Effective Date: August 1st

Problem: Council out of session July 15-August 25

Solution: Change effective date to September 1st

Status: Needs amendment before final passage

Suspend: First- Bliss and Second- Scruggs

Vote YES: Hardin, Bliss, Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Davis, Sims

Motion passed.

Adopt: First- Bliss and Second- Scruggs

Vote YES: Scruggs, Evans-Warren, Matlock, Bliss.

Vote NO: Sims, Hardin, Davis.

Motion did not pass.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn made by Davis and seconded by Sims

Davis: Yes Hardin: Yes Matlock: Yes Sims: Yes Evans-Warne: Yes Scruggs: Yes Bliss: Yes

Meeting adjourned at 8:53PM.

July 14th 2026

Approved (date)

Eloise Hardin

Council President, Eloise Hardin

July 15th 2026

Posted (date)

Nina Curry

Assistant Clerk of Council, Nina Curry