

**VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
WORK SESSION MINUTES
2025-9-9**

ATTENDANCE

Erica Nikolic, President
Johnnie Warren, President Pro Tem
Taunya Scruggs, Ward 1
Paggie Matlock, Ward 3*
Mary Davis, Ward 4
Candace Hill, Ward 5

ABSENT

Matt Jones, Village Engineer	Eloise Hardin, Ward 2
James Climer, Law Director	Ross Cirincione, Prosecutor
Gary V Gottschalk, Mayor	Tom Haba, Service Director
Mark Garratt, Police Department	Dave Tapp, Fire Department
Brian Thompson, Finance Director	Roland Walker, Chief Bldg. Official
Sam O'Leary, Assistant Law Director	Karen Gaither – Recreation Director

** Arrived after roll call*

Meeting opened at 6:41pm by Nikolic
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call taken

2024-WS-43	AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH CEP RENEWABLES OH, LLC FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF CERTAIN PROPERTY IN THE VILLAGE AS A SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT WITH ATTENDANT RECREATIONAL USES
2024-WS-45	AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRCT WITH CREtelligent AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY
2025-WS-16	A PAY ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EMPLOYMENT OF AN EMPLOYEE AND SETTING FORTH THE DUTIES AND COMPENSATION FOR THEIR POSITION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Nikolic: Was this for Tom? This was for Tom, I believe. **Scruggs:** Finance Clerk is what the title is inside... **Davis:** May I ask a question? Do we know if he's been paid all this time? He's still being paid, correct? **Warren:** You'd have to contact Brian. **Nikolic:** Okay, so we right now it's at the section three says the paper hour is at \$18. I believe there was discussion of this being changed. Council Clerk or Law Director, were you instructed of any change in this pay rate to amend this legislation? **Climer:** I have not received any instructions from the administration are, I will raise that discussion with them. **Nikolic:** Okay, Councilperson Scruggs, you said the Finance Clerk. **Scruggs:** I was just looking at the title, and I know we had some discussion about the title as it relates to what the actual jobs descriptions were, and job duties. I did read through the job descriptions again, and it looks like, you know, it has been modified. But still the title, in my opinion, it's still questionable. Because the job description or the duties kind of fall more in

line with a receptionist. But also, there have been some things that are added in there that could potentially fall underneath receptionist and potentially clerk as well. But finance clerk, I'm not sure if I agree, finance clerk is the best title for the duties that are listed. It's more like an office assistant, or receptionist, or administrative assistant type of job description that's listed below. And maybe my understanding of finance, when I'm thinking of finance I'm thinking more, you know, numerical things that are dealing with, you know the actual duties that relate to that whole department. And that's where I'm having a little bit of questions in the back. **Nikolic:** I think we mentioned that we would need to update our ordinance to include receptionist. Does Council recall if we have a receptionist title in the ordinance? **Climer:** I don't believe so, there are a number of Individual ordinances that have been passed. And once the dust has settled, my intent is to go back and conform the overall pay ordinance to that. **Nikolic:** Okay, is it the opinion of counsel to add a receptionist position? **Davis:** I would not have that as a finance clerk, because he's not doing anything with finance. The whole job description doesn't say anything about finances. Just sorting mail, answering phones, things like that. So, he's doing the office, or the whole village, like an Administrative Clerk. So, this total title is wrong for him, for what he's doing and what we're paying him to do. This has nothing to do with it. **Warren:** We could just call it Administrative Clerk, what do you think? **Nikolic:** Sounds good to me. **Scruggs:** I don't have an issue with the job description. But I'm just wondering in as far as the title, I do agree that the title does need to change it doesn't fit. But um and I think the last time let me make sure that we're talking about what we talked about in general session. We want to make sure that the finance department is not holding spaces with bodies that are not able to support the duties of the finance department if that makes sense. So, if Mr. Thompson, our Finance Director, needs a body and he actually needs a clerk, it'll be filled with someone that's not able support because the job description doesn't really support finance. **Warren:** So, would you be agreeable with what we just said, Administrative Clerk? **Scruggs:** I'm okay with that but are we making the job description to fit a person? Or do we need this position and we're filling? That's what I'm trying to put my head around. Like do like is this a position that's needed and we need to fill it or are we just saying we just really want to keep this person so let's just make a and create a job for them? That's where my mind is kind of torn. **Climer:** I will say at one point in time it was very difficult at one point in time to reach people in the daytime through the main number. **Davis:** The reasoning is to also think about, we just hired two part-time people to answer phones for the building department. They're going to be learning permits and things like that, but right now they're mostly just answering phones. It is two part time, morning, and afternoon shift. So, we have coverage, and we had lots of applicants for those positions, so I was wondering. Because the finance clerk does not fit for this job that he's doing. And we don't want to make another job just for this person. To make up a new title just for somebody who's not doing finance work. Because we only have room for the finance clerk and that's not what he's doing. **Nikolic:** So, do we want to request the administration to clarify if they need to fill the finance clerk position? **Scruggs:** I would like to hear from Mr. Thompson about this. **Nikolic:** If they are going to fill their position because it was Hillary's job to be administrative clerk. Excuse me, we're in work session, excuse me, thank you. So, it was essentially Hillary's job to be finance clerk and also answer the phone. So, I don't know if that was too much for her. But like you said, we can hear from the Finance Director. If he wants to fill that position, then we fill that position and leave this as is or add in a receptionist. **Warren:** We'll see when he gets here. **Nikolic:** But as it stands, this legislation, even if it went forward, we had mentioned that we wanted to change the hourly rate and the position. So, we'll leave it here until we have the discussions with the Finance

Director. **Matlock:** Sorry, I was late, so, this job description that they have right now as a finance clerk is a vacancy? So, is this in addition to Tom's job that's up front? **Nikolic:** That's the question we want to pose to the Finance Director. If he wants to have two or similar to what Hillary did a combined position. **Matlock:** Because I think we already went over this and stated that a finance clerk, this is not the right job description for a finance clerk. **Nikolic:** Right, before you came in, Councilperson Scruggs pointed out that that was more, and also Councilperson Warren pointed out that it is more along the lines of an administrative clerk receptionist position. So, we don't fall into the habit of changing a job to fit a person. We want to hear from the Finance Director if he intends to fill this role. Because if he does, then we can have them change the job description and present the paperwork for that. Councilperson Hill, do you have something to say? **Hill:** Their department is full, he is fully staffed, and he said he is fully staffed. And our agreement was that we would only pay the woman that has the background of being the auditor, the rate that we will pay her because he was bringing on no additional people to that department. So, his department is fully, to balance the budget, that was what we were doing. **Matlock:** Exactly, when Tom took that job, we informed him that that job was a finance clerk. That he was still in that position as a finance clerk, and he said the Mayor had him put Tom in that position. But that position that Tom received in there was not what he was doing. That was not a finance clerk position just to answer the phones teller. And he stated he was fully staffed and that's when we said that we would review it and go back through it. **Warren:** I don't think there's nothing else to say. If that's what we agreed on already, why are we belaboring it? We could just confirm with him. But what we can do is just vote, to remove it from the agenda, and keep it moving. **Nikolic:** Would we remove it, or would we still need a receptionist there? You're going to have to change it and change the pay. So, amend this to change the title. **Hill:** We wouldn't amend this to change the title. What we need to do is, what we said the last meeting was, and I don't know why we're going back over this. We need review the compensation schedule to see what positions we have in there. To see if there's something that would fit the job that actually needs to be done. And if not, then we need make a decision about what we would amend to include the title. That's what we've said when we last discussed this. **Nikolic:** Yeah, if that's what we said, was there anyone taking the lead on that? Or how is that going to happen? Councilperson Hill, what would you suggest is the next steps so we can move this forward? **Hill:** Our discussion was we will review the compensation schedule, so we just need to review it. If we need to present it at the next work session, then that's what we'll need to do. **Nikolic:** So, Law Director Climer mentioned that you wanted to wait until the dust settled before you looked at the ordinance again. What were you saying? **Climer:** No, what I was saying was we, in quick succession, passed a number of hires. And I think that some of them may differ from the overall pay ordinance. I want to go back and get the overall paid ordinance coordinated with those ordinances in the past. **Nikolic:** Okay, so what do you think your turn around for that is? Because we'll wait until that's done before we start changing it again. **Climer:** I'll volunteer to take a look at this, put the pay ordinance in respect to Tom's position, see if there's anything that fits. Discuss it with Brian and the Mayor and report back. **Hill:** Yeah but we also agreed on a rate. So, we were going to discuss that rate with them last meeting and they get back to us on that rate. So, we just need some movement on a response. **Nikolic:** Okay, so Law Director you were going to... **Climer:** I will address this with Brian and the Mayor.

2025-WS-28

**AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE AMENDING THE REBATE PROGRAM FOR
RECREATION FACILITY MEMBERSHIP FEES ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE NO.
2011-05**

2025-WS-42

**AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A PURCHASE
AGREEMENT WITH MONTROSE FORD, INC., FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO POLICE
PATROL VEHICLES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Davis: Question, didn't we order them and pay and do that last year? Or this is two new ones besides the two that we ordered last year? Because we had put in front of us two of them last year, and they were going to be delivered this year. So, is this to pay for those two that they ordered last year? **Warren:** No, that's for, this is probably for another two for next year. **Davis:** So, that's what we need to know. I need to know that for sure because it doesn't say. **Matlock:** I feel we should put it to the side right now; we need a discussion. **Davis:** Okay, and I would like to bring some items to the executive session if possible about these things about the police department. **Warren:** One thing I suggest is that we can right now sit tight on any ordinances that are requiring additional funding until we see where we are with the auditors. The auditors should be completed in a couple of weeks. I didn't report to you guys, but I may have mentioned that I was brought down to the auditors two weeks ago. And so, and it was the week before they came. They had anticipated that they would be done in about three weeks. I think that we ought to see what the findings of the auditors are. I'm still uncomfortable with the special audit too. But at least we'll see where the auditors see the black and white as far as what's been presented to them. **Matlock:** I agree. That sounds fair. Okay, so any questions that people can address to the chief during his report relating to that.

2025-WS-45

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE OAKWOOD COMMUNITY GARDEN AND
DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

Nikolic: This is a first look at legislation that the director proposed for the garden. **Climer:** I don't believe it was my proposal, but I did draft it. **Nikolic:** Well, I meant to say, when I said if there would be ordinance for a garden, what would it look like? So, I did request it, but this was what you came up with, with what the legislation should look like. **Climer:** Per your request. **Nikolic:** Yes, yes, it was per my request, I think that's very clear. I'm not saying that you're suggesting it, but this legislation is establishing the garden. The most important section of this legislation, I'm assuming, is section three. Which says the community garden shall be funded by grants, rentals, and donations. Which rentals and donations shall be maintained by the Finance Director in a fund designated for the purpose and set funds are hereby appropriated for purposes set forth in this ordinance. So, what this means and what the Law Director explained is that this is essentially saying that when you get the payment from the rentals it will go into the line item. Any donations will go into the line item, any grants, rentals, or donations, it could be specific to the garden, the money wouldn't go into the general fund. So, this also has, if you look on the back, the community garden registration, waiver, and release. We had several discussions about this, there was a lot of confusion. Right now, the only thing the village will provide is sunlight and water. This right here has all the different types of the access to the garden. The gardener's needs, they'll bring everything, we're not providing any of it. And this has the expectations of the gardeners. Gardeners may begin planting around Mother's Day, everything that they're expected and a release. So, this form that's attached to the legislation is exactly what the gardener will fill

out when they bring their \$25 in. And there will be certain prohibitions. There will be no pesticides that they're allowed to put on their gardens. Everyone's supposed to keep their space neat and clean. Before there was a proposition that they could store things there, none of that is allowed. They have to go and come with what they have. And essentially, it'll be a fence with garden plots. So, this is a first look at that legislation, were there any questions? **Scruggs:** I know when you do rental agreements, sometimes when the year changes over, you find that maybe there were some additional costs that maybe you have to increase your rental agreements. So maybe the first year, \$25 works, but is there any wiggle room where you can say, if needed, the rental agreement per year might be subject to change. Because what if there is an additional fee that you might need or if it's electricity or I don't know, just making it up. But so that you're not bound to that \$25 in 2027 if you need more. Just to maintain, I don't know what that looks like on a contract wise, but I know that... **Matlock:** Do we have to move this over tonight? I would just recommend that we have a weatherman on this. And we go over everything that is supposed to be for this garden. Potential cost, how big the plots are going to be. We'll look over the plans that Beachwood has that you have right now, contracts, whatever they are. We need to adapt those into an Oakwood contract. **Nikolic:** What you see before you is the Oakwood contract. **Matlock:** What I'm saying is now, we don't have to vote on this right now. Because a garden right now, we're about to go into winter anyway. But we can have it ready before next year 2025 and have the whole packet. Everything that we decide on will go out on that garden, okay, to make sure. **Nikolic:** No, agree, this is an introduction of the legislation. I'm not saying we need to move it tonight. Of course, the planting of the garden would be Mother's Day. But I wanted to begin discussion now so I can get you everything you need so we can move forward. **Matlock:** We should come up with everything we need collectively as a group, not just one person. But my thing is just let's just move it right now if you want to. I mean, we don't have to vote on it or anything because it is right now going to a cold season. So, we have time to plan it, get with you, do a group, get it right, put it out. And have everything ready by next year. But you said you want the deadline of them actually planning by Mother's Day. So, we want to make sure we have it ready for them to go by at least January, February, whatever, that gives them time for Mother's day. So, we can really look at this and really get it into tune on what they need to do. **Nikolic:** Well, even though the residents wouldn't take ownership of the plots. We would still need to till the lots, put down some cover crops to start to build. We did the soil test; there are some nutrient deficiencies. So, just tilling the land, maybe putting down some cover crops to try and get the soil more nutrient-rich. So, those are some pre-things that would just need to be done. They wouldn't cost the residents anything, but it's just some things that we would need to do to ensure. Putting down manure, tilling it in, some old leaves, just something. **Gottschalk:** Just simply putting in a manure from the track and then grading that into the soil. **Hill:** I obviously don't have any questions on this, but I will just make a comment. We need to be mindful when we're saying we're not using any resources. I think the Service Department is going to have to do this work. I wanted to point out it's 7:06pm, I did want us to circle back to 2025-WS-43 because that's the charter, and it's a charter review year. And that is, in my opinion, very important in terms of what we do in the village. **Nikolic:** Absolutely, so are there any other questions on this? Okay, thank you for your comment.

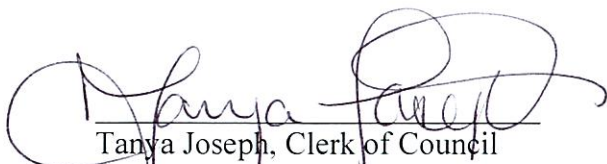
AN ORDINANCE TO SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS OF THE VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
THE QUESTION OF ADOPTING A PROPOSED AMENDED CHARTER FOR THE
VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Nikolic: Law Director, were you able to follow up on some of the questions that we had regarding to whether or not we could combine some of the issues into one as opposed to it being individual issues? **Climer:** It can be done, the question is how it appears on the ballot and whether it's confusing. Because, again, it's a chicken or an egg thing. If we decide we want to go that way, I would present it to the Board of Elections and ask them to give it their thumbs up or thumbs down. **Hill:** Is it possible that you could give us what a draft could look like? That you feel would because I hear you saying it could be confusing. Can we see what a draft would look like so we can decide if it would confusing. **Climer:** Yeah, my suggestion would be that we maybe group the changes that have to do with just changing the pronouns as one group. And then the substantive things maybe go up individually if that is the way Council would like. **Hill:** So, that was what we requested and you're saying they verified that that would be okay? **Climer:** I think it can be done. If you want me to draft it up, I haven't spent the money to do that yet. But I can do that so Council can see what it'll look like, and if it's something you like, then we can run it by the Board of Elections. **Hill:** Yeah, can you just draft that one set that would include all the revisions for the pronouns? And then in addition to this, Council in and of itself needs to have an entire work session about the try to review amendments, which we haven't scheduled. **Climer:** Okay. **Hill:** So, that is on us as a Council body to do. **Davis:** Does it cost differently for us, as a village, for every line we put into a section? **Climer:** I'm talking about the fees you pay me. I didn't want to go along on a tangent and incur a bunch of fees for the village until I knew you were entertaining going that direction. I will combine the pronoun changes and show you what it looks like. **Davis:** But does it cost more, not just for you, but I'm talking about for the Board of Elections? **Climer:** I don't believe so. **Davis:** It's the same cost? **Hill:** It's just part of; we pay for the election. **Davis:** Ok. Thank you. **Hill:** So, the other, and just to Council, usually our Council president takes lead on charter review, scheduling work sessions and making sure we get that through and onto the legislation and approve and then onto the ballot. If you don't want to take lead, I can, I don't mind doing the charter review stuff. I did the educational session, so that's okay. But we need a full work session to review those amendments. We're just sitting on it, all the work has been done. The commission did what they were supposed to do, we need to move. **Nikolic:** Absolutely, so, this is the first time hearing that it's my duty, but I will gladly take that on. We have a work session that we could do before our next meeting. Would that be conducive to timelines? **Hill:** No. **Warren:** I think that you're going to need more time. You're going to need a special meeting. **Nikolic:** A special meeting? Okay, we can set up a time towards the end. **Hill:** We don't have to go with a special meeting; we could go to work session. **Warren:** It would have to be started earlier. **Hill:** Of course, it doesn't have to be on this day either. We could announce it at the Council meeting. As long as we announce at the meeting that we're going to have it, then it will be okay. We could do a Saturday, and it could be four hours if we wanted. So, we're not bound to just before the Council meeting. **Warren:** Right, but that's what I was saying, a special meeting, that would be, if it was on a Saturday, a special work session then, because this would be typical. **Hill:** Yeah, it'll just be work session. **Nikolic:** So, I guess her point is that we could schedule the work session whenever and it doesn't have to be a special meeting. **Warren:** I think that the Law Director, any time we have a meeting, if we have work sessions and it's per charter and the charter clearly identifies all meetings and work sessions every other second and fourth Tuesday, that's a charter amendment. And if we any special

meetings or any work session, it has to be announced it would be a special work session. Because of the fact that it's not typical of the work session right after a meeting. **Hill:** Well, a special meeting and a work session are different, you're combining the two. **Warren:** I'm just saying special work session, I thought it is special no matter what, it's not typical. **Climer:** It requires a notice and an agenda. **Warren:** Yeah, that's what I'm saying, that's what the special meeting does, it requires a special notice and the agenda. **Nikolic:** It's a public meeting that requires notice. Okay, if there's nothing else, we can work after the conclusion of general meeting to schedule that with our schedules so we can move into general session. Is there anything else?

Motion to adjourn made by Davis seconded by Warren
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Matlock, Davis, Hill
MOTION PASSED
Adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Approved 10.14.2025


Tanya Joseph, Clerk of Council


Johnnie Warren, President of Council