

THE VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD

COUNCIL MEETING

March 10, 2026

Council President- Eloise Hardin	Mayor- Erica L. Nikolic
President Pro Tempore- Norman Bliss	Law – James Climer/ Sam O’Leary
Ward 1 -Taunya Scruggs	Finance- Brian L. Thompson
Ward 2- Yvonne- Evans-Warren	Service- Tom Haba
Ward 3- Paggie Matlock	Fire- Dave Tapp
Ward 4-Mary Davis	Police -Mark Garratt
Ward 5-Malcolm Sims Jr.	Building- Roalnd Walker
	Engineer- Matt Jones
	Recreation- Karen Gaither

1.Meeting Called to order by Hardin at 7:00PM

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll call

4. No minutes or correspondence were reported or submitted for review.

5. Clerk Correspondence-Nothing to report

6. Departmental Reports

Finance Director’s Report-Thompson

Financial status for January reviewed: General fund began with approximately. Financial reports will be uploaded to the village website. Discussed clarification needed on accounting for an encumbrance of \$1.1M related to a company pending final filing, which must be properly recorded to avoid overstated available funds. Plans to process February’s closeout and upcoming reporting requests.

Service Department- Haba

Discussed longstanding practice of distributing flyers in mailboxes and on mailbox flags. Recent complaints and postal service warnings resulted in this practice being suspended to comply with federal regulations. Council acknowledged increased postage budget to accommodate alternative communications.

Engineer-Jones

Limited field activity due to winter season; preparations underway for construction season.

Presented analysis of proposed utility rate increases connected with a contract under third reading: Annual rate increases approximated at 4.07%. Budget impact discussed, with average increases explained. Addressed ongoing township roadwork at village border, with expected completion by May. Sewer pump station flow study in progress, focusing on identifying a significant unidentified flow loss, funded by county and sewer district. Clarified no flushing activities involved in the current study, though county conducted their own separate sewer flushing.

Council Discussions and Initiatives

Residential Street Repair Fund Proposal: Councilmember proposed creating a dedicated line item funded by a percentage of the general revenue for residential street repairs. Highlighted need for a sustainable, reliable funding source beyond reliance on grants. Finance Director and Law Director encouraged you to draft legislation mandating annual budget allocations for: Street repairs, Emergency (rainy day) funds. Future projects (e.g., multiplex). Council consensus reached on the necessity of binding legislation to ensure consistent funding.

Mayor's Report-Nikolic

Focus on aggressively pursuing grants to increase village revenues. Ongoing work with state representatives and senators to build relationships and secure funding, including applications for recreation and parks projects. Staff team-building initiatives planned, including upcoming ethics training. Transition to fully online camp registration anticipated for the future, with limited in-person assistance retained for seniors during the transition year. Implementation of a new phone system to automate and route incoming calls to departments, reducing staff workload and increasing efficiency. Review underway of Mayor's Court financial viability post-January 2024 closure: Court revenues analyzed for 2024-2025, Potential to reinstate if profitable, with proceeds possibly earmarked for municipal complex or other designated funds.

Council Economic Development Efforts

Council member with professional experience in economic development shared intent to develop a 90-day plan. Coordination with county planning department underway to explore available land for development. Cited prior village five-year plans and stressed need for updated economic development strategies.

Fire Chief-Tapp

Provided extensive 14-page annual report summary including calls, training, and equipment. Vehicle involved in recent accident repaired fully at no cost to the village.

Police Department-Garratt

Announcement of upcoming Citizens Academy in September-October, featuring interactive demos and ride-alongs to foster community engagement. Increased enforcement on traffic violations planned with improved weather, contributing to lower crime rates. Shared update on K9 unit—former K9 Argo has retired and is with the county sheriff's office.

Clarified traffic enforcement capabilities on highways and coordination with other agencies.

Recreation Department- Gaither

Programs well-attended; new fitness coach started. New partnership was formed to provide fresh produce and non-perishable food to residents monthly. Recapped recent successful trip to science center and announced sold-out Lion King event planned for August. Ongoing events like music sessions continue to engage community.

Law-Climer/O'Leary

Proposed ordinance banning signs in public rights-of-way including political and yard sale signs; emphasis on enforcement to avoid repeat election signage issues. Paladino property sale completed with funds received; efforts underway to finalize collections agreements through state authorities. Council deliberated on multiple ordinances: Fee schedules for community center rental were amended and adopted. Contract for engineering services approved despite ongoing budget discussions. Sign ordinance prohibiting unauthorized postings in right-of-way adopted. Condolence resolutions passed for community members.

7. Ward Reports

Ward 1: Delivered care packages to seniors and college students; upcoming potluck event scheduled.

Ward 3: Planning social engagement events including a block party and veteran banner program to honor local military personnel.

Ward 4: Focused on resident requests, active budget review process, and ongoing finance committee meetings.

8. Staffing and Administrative Updates

Recruitment underway for full-time and part-time clerks. Efforts to ensure stable hiring with some temporary employee coverage.

9. Public Comment Highlights

Residents raised concerns about: Lawn debris and grass clippings being left in streets causing safety hazards. Loud vehicle noise disturbances in neighborhoods. Garbage collection issues with overflowing bins, causing frustration with residents and collectors. Police encouraged residents to report violations; first offenses typically result in warnings. Offers made by residents to support community events financially and with resources.

10. Votes for Legislation During This Meeting

Ordinances 2026-37 through 2026-42 — Property-related Legislation (Mentioned but not yet acted upon)

Description: These relate to property matters and are "all on the table not yet ready for action."

Discussion: Pending further conversations and review. Need to know property details and prices.

Outcome: No formal vote or actions taken at this meeting.

Ordinance 2026-10- which establishes a new rental fee schedule for the community center and declares an emergency. This ordinance was discussed as a second amended version. A motion was made to suspend the rules to expedite the ordinance, and a roll call vote followed with unanimous approval from all council members present:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes. The motion to suspend the rules passed.

Subsequently, a motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-10 (Second Amended) was made and seconded. The roll call vote for adoption also passed unanimously with all “yes” votes by the seven council members:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

This confirmed the adoption of the amended ordinance.

Following this, the council dealt with the first amended version of Ordinance 2026-10, which was on the table. A motion to remove this first amended ordinance from the table and from the agenda was made and seconded. During the roll call for removing, it from the table and agenda, all members unanimously voted “yes”, effectively discarding the earlier amendment:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Attention shifted to **Ordinance 2026-15**, described as an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into a contract with Chagrin Valley Engineering LPD and setting the compensation and functions of the engineer and his firm. There was some discussion concerning the timing of passing this ordinance given incomplete budget work, but the Finance Chair reassured that the increase requested (4.07% annually) had been accounted for in prior discussions. A motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-15 was made and seconded. The roll call vote demonstrated unanimous approval without objection:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Ordinance 2026-15 was passed by a unanimous vote.

Ordinance 2026-16- enacts Oakwood codified ordinance section 1185.10 prohibiting posting of signs, handbills, and other devices in public rights of way and certain private property, also declaring an emergency.

There was a question from a citizen about whether the ordinance specifies a timeframe for removal of signs. The answer was that this legislation prohibits posting signs in those areas altogether with no timeframe for removal stated within.

A motion to suspend the rules to expedite the passage of **Ordinance 2026-16** was made and seconded. The roll call vote passed unanimously:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Following suspension, a motion to adopt **Ordinance 2026-16** was also made and seconded. The roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

The ordinance was passed.

Resolution 2026-18- a resolution of condolences to the family of Philip Alexander Compton. The council made a motion to suspend the rules for fast tracking the resolution, which passed unanimously:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Thereafter, a motion to adopt **Resolution 2026-18** was made and seconded. The roll call vote yielded unanimous approval from all council members:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Resolution 2026-9- a resolution of condolences for Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Senior. Similar to the previous resolution, the council motioned to suspend the rules, which passed unanimously:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Then a motion to adopt **Resolution 2026-9** was made and seconded. The roll call vote again showed unanimous consent from every council member:

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.

Contextual Notes on Legislative Items

Ordinance 2026-10 involved revising rental fees for the community center; there was clarification that the fees for a community park would be addressed separately. The council ultimately adopted the second amended ordinance and discarded the prior amendment.

Ordinance 2026-15 set terms and compensation for an engineering contract with Chagrin Valley Engineering LPD. Despite some initial budget timing concerns, the council agreed unanimously to adopt it.

Ordinance 2026-16 addressed restrictions on signage in public rights of way, including political and yard sale signs, aiming to prevent clutter along roadways and to address prior issues during elections.

Resolutions 2026-18 and **2026-9** were ceremonial resolutions expressing condolences for community members.

11. Meeting Conclusion

The meeting concluded with thanks directed toward a departing employee and a motion carried for executive session to discuss litigation and employment matters, but no further legislation votes occurred after those points.

Public meeting adjourned at 8:22PM then went to executive session. It was a unanimous vote to go into executive session.

September 22nd 2026

Approved (date)

Eloise Hardin

Council President, Eloise Hardin

September 23rd 2026

Posted (date)

Nina Curry

Assistant Clerk of Council, Nina Curry