

THE VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 24, 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. Minutes-No minutes discussed.
5. Clerk Correspondence- Nothing to report.

6. Department reports

Law Director - Requested an Executive Session for discussions on a special forum

Finance Department - Reported on working on financials and closing out the current budget; normal departmental duties

Service Director -Haba - Had no formal report but was available for questions

Engineering Department -Jones- Provided updates on:

- a. Arbutus Road project (restarting late April)
- b. Garden Road project (going to bid in April)
- c. OPWC legislation for Alexander project

Fire Department (Chief Kevin) - Reported on: Receipt of \$38,000 grant for education tools. New Facebook page for job applications and event updates

Building Department- Walker - Reported on: New hires (part-time material and building inspectors). Property demolition initiative for spring/summer. Land bank grant process

Recreation-Gaither - Announced Easter egg hunt and other community programs.

Police Department- Garratt - Brief report on speed trainers, vehicle issues, and Citizens' Academy

Mayor-Nikolic

Town Hall Announcement: Tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. at the community center. Guest speaker: Cuyahoga County Board of Health: Topics: infant mortality, healthy brain initiatives, bed bugs, and other services. Mayor will distribute surveys about recreation center renovation and sidewalk needs

State Capital Budget Application

- o Applied for funding to expand main community park
- o Worked with Senator Sorino and state rep Robinson
- o Goal to continue applying for grants and funding

Compliance Training

- o Completed ethics training for entire staff (FPO and non-FPO)
- o Covered accepting gifts and compliance matters
- o Additional required trainings: fraud, abuse, sexual harassment

Summer Camp Registration

- o Going online this year
- o Financial assistance available for families
- o Computer class on Wednesdays for seniors needing help with online registration

Community Partnerships

- o Four of a Kind Resource Center collaboration
- o Drop-off donations on second and fourth Fridays at community center
- o Soul food cooking classes for seniors

National League of Cities Conference Report (detailed presentation)

- o Attended congressional city conference with 2,800+ officials
- o Focused on federal funding, housing, economic development, grants
- o Identified opportunities for City Hall renovation, police department, and sidewalk grants
- o Emphasized networking and learning best practices

8. Ward Reports- Councilwoman Scruggs - Gave a detailed report that included:

- o Announcement of YouTube channel for council meetings (need 50 subscribers to start streaming)
- o Response to Ward 5 controversy/appointment issue (read a lengthy letter addressing legal procedures and concerns)
- o Discussion of veteran memorial banners for Broadway
- o Information about Form 180 for obtaining veteran photos from National Archives

The summary of the letter read by Councilwoman Scruggs is summarized below:

The letter read about Ward 5 was a detailed response addressing the Ward 5 council appointment controversy. Here's a summary of its key points:

Main Issues Addressed:

Legal Process Question

Questioned whether the appointment process followed proper legal procedures

Asked what the actual legal issue is that the Mayor and Mr. Bliss believe exists

Noted that the Law Director presented five options but questioned why a sixth option wasn't included

The Sixth Option

Proposed that "Council has followed the Law Directors guidance and selected their appointment" with "no further action required"

Argued this option should have been presented

Charter Compliance

Reviewed the village charter (Section 7.07) regarding council vacancies

Stated that the charter does not require swearing in or legislation for a majority vote appointment

Claimed the appointment was properly made by majority vote on February 4th

Noted that swearing in and legislation are "formalities" that followed the majority decision

Timeline of Events

Council selected appointee by majority on February 4th

Council informed of selection on February 5th

Legislation passed February 14th

All dates before the alleged dates of February 18-19

Financial Concerns

Questioned use of \$14,000 in taxpayer money for legal matters

Argued the Mayor wants to use village resources to sue the village

Raised ethics concerns about using village resources for personal matters

Comparison of Other Appointments

Asked if the process was different from previous appointments (Council President Hardin, Mr. Bliss, others)

Implied consistency in appointment procedures

9. Public Input

- Residents raised concerns about street conditions, sidewalk costs, and property taxes
- Appreciation expressed for police and building department responsiveness
- Questions about emergency reserves and future financial planning

10. Legislation

- Five ordinances voted on and approved (2026-23, 2026-25, 2026-26, and others)
- Budget appropriations for 2026 approved
- Police department agreement through 2028 approved

Ordinance 2026-23 (Budget Appropriations):

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

Result: All Yes - Motion Passed

Ordinance 2026-25 (Compensation Position):

Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: No, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: No.

- **Result: Motion Passed (with 2 No votes)**

Ordinance 2026-26 (Alexander Project/State Reimbursement):

- **Council President Hardin: Yes, Councilman Bliss: Yes, Councilwoman Scruggs: Yes, Councilwoman Evans: Yes, Councilwoman Matlock: Yes, Councilwoman Davis: Yes, Councilman Sims: Yes.**
- **Result: All Yes - Motion Passed**

11. Adjournment- The meeting was adjourned at 8:50PM. Motion made by Matlock and seconded by Bliss.

September 22nd 2026

Approved (date)

Eloise Hardin

Council President, Eloise Hardin

September 23rd 2026

Posted (date)

Nina Curry

Assistant Clerk of Council, Nina Curry