

THE VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD

FINANCE COMMITTEE

March 3rd, 2026

ATTENDED

Council President- Eloise Hardin	Mayor- Erica Nikolic
Ward 1- Taunya Scruggs	Finance- Brian L. Thompson
Ward 2- Yvonne Evans-Warren	
Ward 4- Mary Davis (Chairperson for Finance Committee)	
Ward 5- Malcolm Sims Jr.	

1. Meeting called to order by Hardin at 6:00PM.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

Main Agenda - 2026 Budget Review:

The bulk of the meeting focused on reviewing and discussing the mayor's proposed 2026 budget, covering:

Mayor's Office Budget: Department wages and salary discussions FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) contract negotiations affecting salary structures. Mayor's assistant position (\$65,000 salary). Printing and reproduction costs (increased to \$10,000). Professional dues and conference attendance. Social media assistance and communications contractor (\$5,000). Travel and transportation expenses and equipment purchases.

Family Enrichment Programs: Thanksgiving dinner distribution (expanded from \$8,000 to \$12,540). Breakfast with Santa event. Halloween bash (successful event with 100+ families). Friendsgiving at Stolen Club Apartments. New Academic Achievement Program - a tutoring initiative for early learning students (pre-K through 6th grade) in partnership with the Teaching Academy at the high school. Community gardens and concerts

Recreation Department Budget: Summer camp operations (\$83,000+) Youth programs and engagement throughout the year. Community activities and events by month (January

through December). Special events coordinator position (\$3,500). Family enrichment activities Community center and park rental fees.

Major Discussion Points:

Academic Achievement Program debate: Significant discussion about whether to implement a new tutoring program for struggling students, with concerns raised about: Targeting the right demographics. Transportation logistics and duplication with existing services. Pre/post-testing to measure effectiveness. Parental engagement challenges.

Budget increases: Multiple line items showed significant increases, with council members questioning the rationale (e.g., gasoline from \$300 to \$3,000, printing from \$0 to \$10,000). Conference and professional development costs: Discussion about the Mayor's attendance at various conferences and networking events, including the National League of Cities (NLC) and Cleveland Leadership Center. Community events: Planning for various 2026 events including concerts, festivals, and a community day in September that would honor former Mayor Gary Gottschalk.

Recreation facility rentals: Discussion about establishing rental rates for the community center and park pavilion, including security requirements

Notable Issues Raised:

- Concerns about the Mayor's vehicle use and repair costs
- Question about the mold issue with a previous vehicle
- Discussion of the NLC conference cancellation and potential reimbursement issues
- Debate over whether certain programs duplicate existing services
- Concerns about parental participation in youth programs
- Discussion of school district performance and the village's role in supporting education

Administrative Actions: Multiple exhibits and detailed breakdowns were referenced for various budget categories. Council members requested additional documentation and clarification on spending. Plans made to move forward with legislation on community center rental policies. **Executive session called at the end to discuss personnel matters (clerk position).**

Key Themes:

She emphasized being a new mayor needing education and networking

She advocated investing in youth and academics (the tutoring program)

She promoted community engagement and better communication with residents

She discussed modernizing village services (digital newsletters, social media, etc.)

The mayor was generally focused on expanding programs, improving communications, and supporting education while justifying increased spending in various areas.

The executive session was called at approximately 10:05 PM

According to the transcript:

"I got the form to go into executive sessions? Yes, please. Madam Chair, you can call for an executive session. I call for executive session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, emotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. Second. So, you got Davis first, and Hardin second at 10:05."

The executive session was called to discuss personnel matters related to the clerk's position, as the council needed to review candidates and potentially start the interview process for hiring a new clerk (since the current clerk would be leaving in about a week).

Davis made the motion to adjourn meeting and Scruggs seconded. The meeting then **adjourned at 10:43 PM** after coming out of 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