

**HR Committee Meeting**  
**January 9, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Berger, Council Member Bell, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

Berger called the meeting to order. He noted that the Mayor provided an agenda which contained a new resident orientation package and Berger did not know how that related to HR. The Mayor responded that he had no idea, had never done it, and probably puts it down every other year to see if it is something the Village should do. No one has ever asked for it. He put it on the agenda this year because he received no responses from his request for board volunteers that was made in the electronic newsletter. In previous years he would have gotten five or six responses. He did not know about the effectiveness of the Village's communication. The Mayor added that most people think the restaurants on E. Washington Street belong to Chagrin Falls. He verified that the Fiscal Officer does not receive many requests for information about South Russell, and she explained that years ago under the previous mayor, a welcome packet was created, but it did not take off. The Village has the website with pertinent information and Council will be considering going with TextMyGov to send information to residents. Berger thought the matter fell under community relations along with other communication going out to the community. Perhaps this needs to be a separate entity or part of something else. However, it does not appear to be an HR issue. The Mayor agreed.

The Fiscal Officer offered that this was a good example of the benefits to define the duties and responsibilities of the standing committees. Berger stated that there should be a mission statement for each committee. He acknowledged that there is overlap, but sometimes duties get assigned to the committees based on personalities of committee members which should not be the case. The committees should stay focused on their purpose.

Berger addressed the Mayor's agenda item about the day after Thanksgiving. It is not an employee holiday, and most employees take it as a personal day. He noted that there appeared to be employees working that day this year. The Mayor said that the Building Department Administrative Assistant worked. Berger said this becomes a safety issue. He referenced a two-man rule, and the Mayor thought it was a good idea. The alternative is to replace a holiday. The Fiscal Officer explained that previously, the Village had Columbus Day off, but this was changed to a second personal day. Berger suggested compelling employees to take it off to ensure the safety of the employees. The Fiscal Officer added that the Street Commissioner also worked that day. Berger thought this matter should be discussed by the Mayor with the DHs at the next meeting and feedback obtained from the staff. Bell asked if there should be a DH present at all times. The Fiscal Officer advised that under the last mayor, there had to one DH working. Berger said the alternative would be to close the campus on that day and change it from a personal day back to a holiday.

Berger noted discrimination/harassment training sessions on the Mayor's agenda. The Mayor referenced a session he attended with Todd Hicks of Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan, and Bonnie Troyer who both suggested that every six months to a year, there should be training. Troyer is booked into March, but Todd Hicks is available, and he suggested to the DHs that the training take place from 1:30 – 3:30 for hourly employees and 3:30 to 5:30 for salaried employees. He would discuss with the Chief

the best way to handle the training for the Police Department. The Mayor suggested having the officers come in two hours before their shifts for the training, but the Fiscal Officer advised that all police officers are salaried and eligible for overtime. She suggested that the Village's insurance, PEP, provides online training that could be done individually by employees. Bell thought the online option provided flexibility, but in person was most effective. The Mayor concurred. However, Berger addressed the logistics of doing the training every six months. The Mayor thought this was excessive. Berger thought that with the requirement to complete two hours of training per six months or per year, the online format is more effective. The training is interactive and includes quizzes. Bell asked who the contact would be for an employee with questions about the training. Berger said it would be the committee. He added that Council should also do the training. If the committee cannot answer the question, the Village has the legal resources of the Solicitor and Mansour Gavin. The Fiscal Officer offered to explore training provided by Mansour Gavin for the next meeting.

The Mayor listed evaluation processes on his agenda and Berger explained that one has been proposed. The Fiscal Officer stated that she and the Chief had a question about the proposed policy. Per discussion at the last HR meeting, she needed clarification as to whether the policy was stating that the evaluation would be prepared with the Mayor before it goes to the employee. Berger explained that he envisioned that the DH would prepare the evaluation and then submit it to the Mayor for comments. After the Mayor signed off on it, the DH would meet with the employee. The Fiscal Officer had never heard of it being done that way and made an inquiry with the area clerks. Of the 14 responses, 8 do evaluations, 3 are optional for the DH, and one only has evaluations for the Police Department. Of those, twelve have the DH/Supervisor doing the evaluation. With 3 of the 12, the Mayor reviews the evaluations after they are done. For 3 of those, the Mayor evaluates the DHs and 2 of them have Mayor and Council evaluating the DHs. There are 2 that have the DH and employee set the goals and with 2 of them, the DH sets the goals. Berger said that the proposed policy has the DH and employee setting the goals. The Fiscal Officer explained that the way the process has been done in the past is that the DH does the evaluations and then the Mayor reviews them after they are done, and he signs off on them. Berger explained that he was trying to head off any issues that might arise before it gets to the employee. Bell asked for clarification as to whether this meant the Mayor could share that with the DH and the DH could address it during the review. Berger provided an example of a DH that writes a review stating he/she does not like the way the employee ties his/her shoelaces. If that goes to the employee, there is clearly animosity between the two over a petty issue. All he was doing by suggesting someone else review the evaluation before it goes to the employee to allow for a conversation with the DH about rethinking the shoelace topic. Bell thought this made sense. Berger concluded it was a way to head off conflict before it gets to the employee level. The Mayor suggested getting all of the evaluations done by March 31<sup>st</sup> and then taking a look in April to see what works and does not work. Berger asked if the plan was to follow the procedure. The Mayor said there is no procedure, so they could do this. The Fiscal Officer advised that there is an evaluation process currently in place.

Berger further suggested that the Mayor's review of the DHs should come to the committee for checks and balances. These are the only ones the committee would see unless an employee had an issue with

the DH or vice versa. It could be brought to the Mayor or the HR Committee. The Fiscal Officer reminded the committee of the grievance procedure. Berger clarified that he also wanted to avoid an employee with a problem with his/her review wanting to meet with Council as a whole. That would be a nightmare situation having Council and the Mayor in Executive Session trying to resolve the matter. It should come to HR first to attempt to resolve the issue. This would enable the committee to provide a recommendation to Council on how to handle the matter. Bell concurred. Berger concluded that he did not want Council to become the HR manager. He further advised that the evaluations should be completed in the first quarter of the year and the proposed policy would be utilized for this evaluation cycle. It can be edited if there are issues. The Mayor asked if this policy was reviewed by Mansour Gavin, and Berger stated the Solicitor reviewed it. The Fiscal Officer added that the Solicitor had comments on it, and Berger responded that he addressed the comments with her. He further explained that the policies are motions, not legislation, and can be modified. The goal is to provide the employees a sense of the process and steps that would be taken for any grievances. The Mayor's suggestion is to operate for three months with this process and then determine whether it needs to be modified before formally adopting it in April. The Fiscal Officer informed the Committee that the Chief has the Police Department evaluations completed.

Berger continued to address the Mayor's agenda items. The Ohio Police & Fire pension contribution, according to the Mayor had not come out of committee yet. Right now, it is dead but might come around again. The committee discussed options for correcting the OP&F pension system.

Work from home guidelines were discussed. The Mayor explained that the Village has none and asked if they were needed. The Fiscal Officer referenced the discussion of this matter at the previous HR meeting and explained that typically employees do not work from home. If she is working from home, it is on a vacation day when there is still work to be done. During COVID, there was a brief time when Admin personnel were sick, under quarantine, and not allowed to come to work for a couple of weeks. Other than that, there was the recent snowstorm. Bell asked if there was a push to be able to work from home, and the Fiscal Officer said no. Berger said there was a situation a couple weeks ago where there was a snow day, and the campus was closed. Employees were told to work from home. The Service Department workers cannot work from home, nor can the patrol officers. Can the Chief and Lieutenant work from home? The Fiscal Officer explained that the Chief will also work from home on occasion when there is something that has to be done. Berger explained he would treat DHs differently than other employees. In reality, the Building Department Administrative Assistant, Administrative Assistant, and part-time Administrative Assistant are the issue. Berger questioned whether the Building Department Administrative Assistant is asked to bring her computer home, and the Mayor said no. Berger concluded that she would not have access to any of her files in that case. Regarding the Part-time Administrative Assistant, he felt that if the campus is closed, it is a snow day and there is nothing to be done. Bell asked if they would be paid, and Berger said no, but he would be fine if the employee wanted to make the hours up. He further explained that a part-time employee does not have access to a computer, nor should she be issued one to take home. Bell did not want to hurt someone's livelihood because it snowed and did not want them on the road if it is dangerous. He suggested paying the employee for the 8 hours. Berger reminded Bell that it is a part-time position and would not

be 8 hours. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Part-time Administrative Assistant averages about 28 hours per week but has a flexible schedule that enabled the Fiscal Officer to offer her more time another day. Berger asked if the Administrative Assistant had a computer at home, and the Fiscal Officer said no but that during the storm she came to Village Hall to get it. Moving forward, if the storm is predicted, admin could take their computers home. But then there is the question if it is not known, or someone forgets. The Mayor concluded that the Building Department Admin Assistant nor the Administrative Assistant worked the day of the snowstorm but were paid for it. Berger said yes in theory. The Fiscal Officer clarified that the Building Department Admin Assistant was off on pre-scheduled sick leave, and the Admin Assistant worked her 8 hours from home because she came to get her laptop. Berger added that the Service Department staff worked because they were plowing snow for at least 8 hours. The situation only applies to a couple of employees. He added another complication could be if the employees took laptops home but then did not have internet access. He questioned how often this happens, and the Fiscal Officer said it was the first time in 18 years the Village campus was closed. Bell and Berger concluded that it was not a big issue. However, if there were to be another pandemic, this could be a problem. The Fiscal Officer advised that even then, admin came in because they were considered essential workers. It was only when they had COVID and were quarantined that admin worked from home. Berger suggested that the policy state that issues are addressed as they arise since it is a rare occurrence. Berger further stated that if an employee were to express interest in working from home two days a week, this would not be permitted. The Fiscal Officer concurred. There was further discussion of current employment trends relative to working from home. The blizzard is a one-off situation and will be decided at the time. The Mayor thought it was tough that both someone plowing snow and someone sitting at home both got paid. Berger stated this was the nature of the job. Furthermore, if someone does not want to plow snow and wants to get paid for those days, then they should apply for a job in the office. The Mayor agreed. Berger continued to explain that it is part of the job, and he thought the Village fairly compensates its employees in the Service Department especially with the events where they have to work through snowstorms. The Fiscal Officer added that there are other times that they are getting paid the minimum 4 hours for a callout where they do not work the full four hours. Berger concluded that this issue then goes away.

Regarding the part-time Administrative Assistant, Berger asked for a check-in with her progress over the last two months she has been with the Village. The Fiscal Officer said she is doing well, and everybody likes working with her. She is doing a great job in the Police Department, where she is typically scheduled two days a week. She is also scheduled one day at the Building Department, and she is now trying to get her in the administrative office for some hours. Although the Fiscal Officer will ask the Street Commissioner what he needs, the part-time Administrative Assistant feels she needs more time with the Building Department. Berger asked about the status of her LEADS certification, and the Fiscal Officer said she would be meeting with the Chief and part-time Administrative Assistant to discuss her progress. Berger asked the Fiscal Officer if the part-time Administrative Assistant had experienced any problems or issues. The Fiscal Officer said as far as working in the department, no, but has had concerns about the chain of command. Per her job description, she reports to the Fiscal Officer and Chief, but on a couple of occasions, she has been directed by the Mayor to do something.

This was upsetting to her because she does not want to be disrespectful but does not know to whom she is supposed to answer. Berger indicated that this was addressed in the last HR meeting and asked the Mayor if there was anything from his perspective that was not getting done. The Mayor explained that there was one situation on the snow day that if the part-time Administrative Assistant wanted to work, she could work from home looking into America-250. Next Wednesday, he is taking her and Ruth Cavanagh to the America-250 meeting. Normally she was assigned to work with the Chief, and the Chief is going to take care of that. The Fiscal Officer stated that on neither of those occasions did the Mayor speak to the Chief or her. Instead, he went directly to the Part-time Administrative Assistant which was the issue. Berger suggested that if the Mayor is going to change the routine, he needs to speak to her supervisors. The Mayor said he sent an email to all three people at the same time saying he was going to grab her and take her for two hours in the afternoon. The Fiscal Officer said that when they are all emailed at the same time, this creates confusion for the part-time Administrative Assistant. It also creates confusion for the DHs in how to handle the situation. Bell acknowledged that it could be intimidating receiving direct instructions from the Mayor and give the impression the DHs do not have control of their employee. He did not think it was nefarious, but he understood. Berger thought there was agreement that overall, they like the work the part-time Administrative Assistant is doing, and it is beneficial to the Village. The Fiscal Officer concurred and said that because the employee has been upset about these situations is the reason the Fiscal Officer is addressing them. The Village would not want to lose this employee, she is a great addition to the team, but the Village has a history of losing people in the past because this has been an issue, and the employee does not want to be put in the middle. Likewise, the Fiscal Officer does not want to be put in the middle. If she is the supervisor, she should be respected as such and know what is going to happen. When there were similar issues with the former Building Department Administrative Assistant, the Fiscal Officer asked to be removed as supervisor. No one wants to lose the part-time Administrative Assistant, and the Fiscal Officer does not want her to feel uncomfortable. Berger asked that the Mayor talk to his DHs and felt that would solve the problem. The Mayor reiterated that he sent the email to the three people telling them what was happening. Berger noted that from their perspective, what if the DHs had the employee scheduled to do another project and now the Mayor walked into the middle of it and stopped it? Instead, he proposed that the Mayor explain why he wanted to take the part-time Administrative Assistant and ask if the DHs can clear her for that time and to communicate any problems. Berger added that it is a matter of communicating to make sure everyone is on the same page from a management standpoint. He asked the Fiscal Officer to convey that the HR Committee is thrilled and glad the part-time Administrative Assistant is with the Village and would like to see her continue. The Fiscal Officer said that the part-time Administrative Assistant seems to like what she is doing and enjoys the rotating departments. The Fiscal Officer was scheduling her in a manner to take things slowly so as not to overwhelm her since some were concerned that that may be an issue. It has not been an issue.

Berger stated that he received a voicemail from one of the members of the Service Department saying that a new policy was implemented, and they have questions about it and want to talk to him. The Fiscal Officer asked for clarification, and Berger said he had no idea what the issue is. He was not aware that they had implemented any new policies from a Street Department standpoint. Berger asked if the Mayor had a meeting with them about the 14-hour day. The Mayor said yes, but no it was not a

meeting. He told them they were going to meet with the HR Committee. This started in November, and it still hasn't happened. Berger conveyed that he felt a little uncomfortable that an employee decided that he would call Berger and ask the question when he should have run it up the chain of command. The Fiscal Officer explained that the other day, there was a problem with ADP and the Service Department employees could not access their timesheets. The Administrative Assistant went over to the Service Department, contacted ADP, and got them logged back in. During this time, one of the Service Department employees brought up that there is a new policy in place that if they come in for a callout and work four hours, they automatically get a paid break. The Administrative Assistant relayed that this is not the policy and further explained that there are multiple versions of proposed policies and HR is working on them, but nothing has been adopted yet. The Fiscal Officer explained that in the DH meeting, the Street Commissioner said that this is how the staff has been operating. She only sees the timesheets and they are not supposed to put when they went to lunch. It is time in and time out and it is signed off by the DH. She pays what the DH says they worked. She was unaware of the half hour break, but knew one of the employees was upset about it. The FO concluded that she did not know if this had to do with the new policy. Berger stated that there is no new policy, and he will have to clarify this with the Street Commissioner to see what he is thinking and run it back through him. Then he will report back to the committee. Berger concluded that people jumped the gun. The Mayor agreed and said that they had wanted to have a meeting with the Service Department staff, but it got busy. They thought this policy was complete and had been passed. He met with them an hour after the Administrative Assistant was there helping with the timesheets. They called him and asked him to come over because there was an issue. The Mayor told them that nothing had been done, nothing is official, and nothing has changed. Berger advised that the committee needed to determine how the Street Commissioner has been operating and whether he has implemented a change without prior approval. They need to close the loop and communicate that the matter is still being discussed. The committee has agreed that there will be a conversation with the Service Department staff relating to callouts and number of hours in a 24-hour period, etc., but the committee is not at that point yet. The Mayor reiterated that nothing has been done. He thought it boiled down to some lunch. They worked and then they went to lunch and were paid and then not paid or something. He did not want to get into that stuff. Berger replied that if there is a problem, the guy who signs off on their timesheets is the guy they must deal with. If he handled it two different ways, then it will need to be sorted out. It is not the Fiscal Officer's job to validate their timesheets. This is the DH's responsibility. The Fiscal Officer processes payroll based on the information given. The Fiscal Officer explained that her office audits the sheets to determine how the overtime will be taken, use of comp time, review for callouts etc. If the Street Commissioner signs off that they should be paid, then she pays them.

Something that was ultimately discovered was that the Service Department employees were logging into each other's timesheets. Bell commented that this is falsification of timesheets. The Fiscal Officer explained that this was discussed in the DH meeting and the Street Commissioner was instructed that the employees have to do it themselves. If they did not have access, they could have written it on paper or he as the DH could have put it in. Berger was concerned about this practice because in industry, this was the number one way to get fired. The Fiscal Officer did not know how long this had been going on but shared that the Police Chief offered to put their timesheets on their

phones so that only they can enter their time. Additionally, the timesheets have a version history that shows who signed in to the document. The Mayor had received complaints about the timesheets from the Police Department as well as the Service Department, and he was sure they had been putting in each other's time for years. The Street Commissioner and Police Chief both agreed that it was best for them to have it on their phones. Bell asked what system was being used to clock in and out. The Fiscal Officer said it is a SharePoint Drive Excel spreadsheet. The Street Commissioner told her that the Service Department employees wanted a timeclock rather than doing it on the computer. Bell asked about using PayChex for this, and the Fiscal Officer explained that the Village tried this, but because it is government and there is flex time, comp time, vacation time, different rules for all outs, sick time, etc. it was an absolute mess. Berger said there is the opportunity for abuse because it is a handwritten spreadsheet and not a timeclock. Bell concurred. The Fiscal Officer reiterated that the document has a version history. She explained that technically, each employee has an account and gains access with a Gatekeeper device. However, the Service Department staff were giving access to each other's Gatekeeper. Bell noted that this creates a problem with ADP as well. Bell explained that in his private sector experience, he would be writing them up and giving them a warning. Berger suggested having a training session with them and letting them know that they should no longer be doing each other's timesheet. He did not think it was done maliciously, but just the way they were handling it. The Mayor asked Berger if they could speak to the Service Department staff the following day at 3:00 p.m.

The regular committee meeting schedule was discussed. The Tuesday after the first Council meeting of the month at 7:30 a.m. was decided.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 8:34 a.m.

# **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** February 11, 2025

Attendees: Bell, Berger, FO, Police Chief

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Chairman Bell.

## **I. Discussion on Employee Education and Harassment Training**

- Review of employee education programs, specifically harassment training.
- Various options discussed:
  - In-person training led by Todd Hicks from Thrasher Dinsmore Dolan, cost ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000.
  - Online interactive training available through PEP insurance, free of charge.
  - HR Strategies Solutions (Bonnie Troyer) gave proposal but no cost
  - Mansour Gavin contacted, but SRV did not receive cost
- Concerns raised regarding employee morale and the effectiveness of online versus in-person training.
- Recommendation: Implement an in-person session initially, followed by an online training program for future sessions.
- Action: FO to coordinate with Bonnie to get cost and inform the Mayor of the committee's recommendation.

## **II. Issues Regarding Part-Time Administrative Assistant**

- Concerns regarding the oversight and involvement in administrative staff responsibilities.
- Specific issues highlighted:
  - Unclear communication, perceived micromanagement and lack of clarity on chain of command, staff feeling uncomfortable due to interactions.
- Recommendation: Clarify supervisory roles and maintain proper communication to ensure a professional work environment.

## **III. Review of HR Policies and Handbook Updates**

- Discussion on handbook updates, including:
  - Work hours policy for street department employees during peak seasons.
  - Use of village vehicles policy.
  - Employee recognition and travel/event attendance policies.
- Plan to present final policy drafts at the next council meeting.
- Action: Berger to compile and distribute final policy copies that are ready for council review to FO to be included in next packet.

## **IV. Employee Evaluations and Review Process**

- Employee evaluations have been completed or are currently in process to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Recommendation: Maintain accountability in the review process and ensure consistency in handling evaluations.

## **V. NIMS Training Update**

- Status update on NIMS training for employees and elected officials.
- Reminder that elected officials must complete the training.

## **VI. Executive Session**



- Motion made to enter executive session under RC 122(G)(1) for the purpose of discussing a complaint of a public official.
- Executive session commenced at 8:00 a.m.
- Executive session ended at 8:16 a.m.

#### **VII. Miscellaneous**

- FO informed the committee that the Mayor requested the committee prepare an agenda for their meetings and forward it to him at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- FO reported a couple employees expressed interest in hearing what is available through Colonial Life (services similar to AFLAC). FO set up a meeting with the Colonial representative and then will schedule a meeting for them to come out to present to employees.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 a.m.

## JOINT HUMAN RESOURCES / STREETS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Date:** March 24, 2025, 5:30 p.m. Village Hall

**Attendees:** Bell, Berger, Galicki, Cavanagh, Mayor, Street Commissioner, Police Chief, Fiscal Officer

**Visitor:** Todd Kruse

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Bell.

Street Commissioner (SC) said given the current circumstances his department is experiencing, he would like to look to add another full-time SD employee. The Village can grow that person into the role better and pass knowledge from the current guys who have been there a long time. He said two of the SD employees are looking at 8-10 years left of employment. Rather than kick the can down the road, something should be done now so that knowledge could be passed. This would also give him four guys to run two shifts and rotate the guys easily. Or if they are not available, he will have coverage.

Cavanagh said she and the Mayor felt the best solution would be to get a part-time person. She acknowledged the need for help, especially with plowing. The SC said that with the general ways the Village does business, he thought it was a better idea. When he first started, he noted that a lot of big projects got done like with ditching, but the maintenance and day-to-day operation suffered because there was not enough to go around. He supported hiring someone part-time and then moving them to full-time. Being that the CDL requirements are so difficult to obtain for a lot of people, the SC proposed setting it up as part-time until they achieve this, which creates a bigger pool from which to draw. Cavanagh asked why CDL's are more difficult to obtain now than in the past. The SC said that in the past, he could get his CDL within a week. This was in 2001-2002. Now, a temp must be obtained and then a school selected to provide the training which is around \$5,000 to \$6,000. There is class and driving time involved. It takes about 3 weeks of 8-hour school days to prepare for the state test and driving maneuverability test. Once this test is passed, a CDL can be obtained. He said the Village could pay for this, but the employee would have to sign with the Village. Then there would be a progressive step-down period where they would be responsible for some of those costs if they were to leave the Village within five years.

Berger asked for the status of the employee who is out on medical leave. SC said that prior to the surgery, the employee thought it would be six to eight weeks. Galicki asked if there was paperwork submitted by medical authority which talked about his anticipated return to duty. The SC said there was nothing and clarified that the accident took place at home. Berger thought the Village should have something from the doctor saying when the employee could return to work. The SC thought he should not return to work until he goes through a return to work physical. Both the employee's doctor and a Village doctor should say he is fit to duty. Berger agreed with Galicki that a note was needed stating the return date for planning purposes. This impacts the committee's decision on going forward with hiring another person for the department. Galicki shared that the standard practice is that there is documentation from a medical authority when the patient goes in and what the anticipated return is after. If that needs to be extended, there is generally additional paperwork addressing that. To Berger's point, Galicki agreed that the Village cannot effectively plan full-time or part-time equivalents without knowing the limitations of the current employee.

Bell raised the question of FMLA eligibility, and discussion followed to include paperwork regarding FMLA to be given to the employee as well as paperwork from the employee's doctor with an approximate return date, and a return to work physical. The FO said the Village has never dealt with FMLA before, but as a government agency, the Village is required to use it. Regarding requiring a physical examination of an employee to return to work, she stated past practice has been for any employee missing more than three days of work, they must bring

in a doctor's note stating they can return to work. If there is a question whether they could perform their duties, the doctor can be given the employee's job description and sign off that they can perform their duties.

Regarding hiring a part-time or full-time Street Department (SD) worker, there is currently only a job description for a FT worker, no PT worker. As such, there is no pay range for a PT worker. If the recommendation is to go with a PT worker, a job description would have to be drafted as well as a pay range. These would have to be approved by Council. Additionally, Council will need to approve running a help wanted ad.

The Mayor said the Village would need to justify adding another worker. The Village is four square miles, with 4,000 residents. He suggested getting survey results from OML on other comparable communities with generally the same size and make up and then go from there on what is needed. Galicki suggested engaging the Village's HR firm to determine if the Village is justified in hiring a part-time or full-time Service Department employee. This would remove opinion and hopefully have an experienced decision maker provide the Village with direction. He thought the Mayor had a good point. Berger asked the Streets Committee for their recommendation, and Cavanagh said it was an open discussion. The SC wants a full-time employee, but Cavanagh said she is good with part-time.

Galicki said he applauded the SC for forward-looking to say the Village has two employees that are probably here for only ten more years, but on the other side of that, although allowing for some time to get into the saddle is a great thing, he didn't think ten years was necessary to learn the job. A request for a full-time employee may be a little premature, and there was some work that needed to be done before arriving at a decision. Berger did not want to kick the can too far down the road since there is a need. SC said there is history that can be lost without training. It was discussed that work and issues should be documented in writing. There are three guys who take care of a little over a mile and a quarter each. To that point, Galicki offered that any kind of documentation that may be required in terms of work, issues, or problems should be documented in writing. Tribal knowledge, whether it is a business or a Village, is not the way to run the department. Although the SC agreed, he said that this was not the strongest point that he has seen so far. Galicki said that may be, but that may be the point where management takes on the documentation. The SC is taking on a fourth worker, whereas previously, the Village had a working Street Commissioner who ran the plows, etc. It seems like the SC is working himself out of that position so he can have port and starboard running guys on the street. It is not a bad idea, but if the SC is going to move himself out of the working Street Commissioner role, the administrative role could be taken on. The SC agreed and said that it is not so much a matter of him trying to remove himself as getting another line of defense to keep everything moving. The Mayor thought there was enough time before the next Council meeting to obtain the OML data. Galicki again proposed utilizing the HR firm, and the Mayor suggested doing both. Berger noted that there was expense involved with this and did not think it was an area of expertise of the HR attorney the Village had previously used. Galicki clarified that there might be somebody in the firm who can gather the data and make a recommendation. Berger thought three weeks was too long to wait and proposed having another HR meeting in 10 days so that the Village can start looking. Kicking it down the road three weeks may mean not having anybody for 6-8 weeks.

Bell and Cavanagh were interested in seeing the OML data. Bell also wanted to see an outline of the current team, their duties, where the stress points are, and how bringing in a fourth person justifies or solves these problems. Todd Kruse, 38 Ridgecrest Dr., added that other factors to include in the data of overall duties and things that Council asks for them. Kruse offered that he rode with the SC one night during snow plowing. He asked if any of the Council members had ridden with any of the guys while they were snow plowing and given that experience stated that Council needed to consider the quality of health into the expectations of the Street Department. He thought it was worth the money. Berger indicated that the OML information should be acquired and said the committees would try to move quicker and should call another meeting to discuss the findings. The Mayor thought the OML documentation could be obtained by the following day so that five or

ten comparable communities could be identified for comparison. A follow-up meeting date of April 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. was set for a joint Streets/HR Committee meeting.

Job descriptions were discussed, and Berger clarified that it was necessary to draft a part-time job description for the Street Department position as well as a pay range. This must be approved by Council. He proposed having this ready for the first meeting in April. Galicki asked where the funds would be coming from for this position. The FO explained that Council would need to approve the job description, set the pay range, and either amend the Street Department budget entailing giving up something for that position, or transfer money from the Income Tax Fund to the Street Fund.

Regarding Police Department business, the Chief discussed one full-time and potentially two part-time candidates for the open positions. He proposed having a joint HR/Safety Committee meeting and dates were discussed. April 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. was proposed. Berger requested the scheduling of an exit interview for the officer who resigned. The Chief stated that for the upcoming Council meeting, Council needed to acknowledge the resignation and ratify the ad for the newspaper. Berger added that either he or Bell would be present for the exit interview once scheduled. The anticipated resignation of another part-time officer was discussed. The availability of the School Safety Officer (SSO) for summer break was addressed as was the three-year contract for this position.

The status of the proposed policies for the employee handbook were discussed, and Berger said that for now they will just let them lie.

Bell asked about the harassment training for employees. The FO said the presenter from Thrasher, Dinsmore, & Dolan would cost \$1,000 to \$2,000, and the Village would be able to record the training for future use. Bonnie Troyer, HR Strategies, would be \$2,500 for three sessions, two for the general staff, and one for leadership. Mansour Gavin would charge \$1,160 for what had been assembled. There would be an additional fee to integrate other materials and cost per hour for the training. Cavanagh asked if the Village wanted to do this to be above board or because it was mandatory. The FO said it was not mandatory but recommended training every one to two years. Bell asked about the training offered by PEP, and the FO said it was all online and the employees would do it individually. The committee had discussed initially doing the training in person. Bell proposed providing the presentation options to Council at the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting and ask for their opinion. The Mayor thought the committee should just make a recommendation. Bell and Berger were not opposed to giving Council a chance to weigh in on it along with a recommendation.

The committee discussed finance and payroll software research. The FO described the Village's previous experience using Paychex for timekeeping as well as payroll. It was problematic on a number of levels. What the Village is currently doing works, but she will continue to explore other options. Berger asked how payroll taxes are currently done, and the FO said it is done by Paychex. He clarified that the Village reports employee hours and pay rates, and Paychex calculates the taxes, and then pays the employees. The FO concurred. Berger said that whatever system the Village decides to go with should continue this. The FO said finance software vendors will not take on this responsibility due to the liability. It is a real benefit of using Paychex because of the penalties for missing tax payments. Bell asked for clarification, and the FO explained that some of the financial software programs she has explored also have payroll and will do the accounting but will not pay the taxes. Bell inquired about the past problems with Paychex with timekeeping, and the FO and Chief explained problems with the system dealing with comp time and overtime variables. The committee further discussed the details of how payroll is currently done with Paychex. Berger explained that he was looking for a way to automate the portions of the process that are currently manually done. The Chief offered that the current system provides for two levels of checks and balances and has worked well. The FO advised that her priority is the financial software since her current system will no longer be supported as of December of next year.

Considering this, payroll is at the bottom of her list of priorities given the need for financial software. She hopes to have an answer about the financial software by April.

The FO addressed items the Mayor had for discussion which included back to work physicals, which were previously discussed, and NIMS training. She explained that the NIMS training is required if the Village would want to apply for preparedness grants but may not be required to get disaster money. Bell asked about the required frequency of training, and the FO said it is required just one time. Berger reviewed the levels of training and concluded that it is important to be aware of the layers of the response, whether it is local, state, or federal, and who is in charge. The FO added that it clarifies the terminology as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

## **Joint HR/Streets Committee Meeting Minutes**

**April 7, 2025, 4:30 p.m. Village Hall**

**Present:** Chris Berger, Chris Bell, Dennis Galicki, Ruth Cavanagh, Mayor, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Chief Rizzo, Street Commissioner Young

Bell called the meeting to order.

Cavanagh asked the Street Commissioner (SC) to explain what he felt he needed in terms of staffing. The SC said he wanted one guy to provide coverage for everything. Bell clarified that it would be a full-time position, and the SC concurred. Berger verified it would be one full-time person and that there was a job description. FO said that the discussion at the March 24<sup>th</sup> joint HR/Streets meeting was that the Mayor was going to reach out to OML to find out about comparable communities and their staffing. FO forwarded survey information she had from a couple of years ago as well. The Village's current salary schedule for a full-time laborer who is just starting out, it is \$25.87 per hour, which is \$53,800 per year.

Cavanagh asked if there were any interest in starting the person as part-time and moving the employee up to full-time and asked the length of time the probationary period is. FO said probation is 6 months. A full-time employee would start 5% below the approved rate for the probationary period. If they successfully pass probation, then they move up to the \$25.87 per hour. Berger asked if the SC had reviewed the job description to verify that everything he wanted was in it. The SC said it looked fine. Berger clarified that it includes CDL, etc. The SC said that maybe it should be worded to say that the candidate either has to have or obtain the CDL. Cavanagh then asked if that meant the Village would pay for the person's CDL. Berger asked what the current practice is, and the FO explained that the position requires the CDL. Berger verified it is the requirement of the job, and the SC said the laws have recently changed and it is something they should think about. The FO pointed out this would cost another \$5,000 to \$6,000. Berger was confused and asked if the job description was going to indicate the person is willing to get a CDL, and the SC said he would change the wording to state, "have or obtain a CDL," and put a time on it. Berger asked at whose expense this would be, and the SC said that some places say the employee must get it on their own, and others offer to pay for it but stipulate the employee must stay in the job or they have to pay it back. Cavanagh offered this is what she would suggest saying. Berger asked specifically how long it took to get a CDL, and the SC said it is 40 hours of class driving time. Berger asked if this meant the Village would be paying for the individual to be in school for two weeks. The SC said that when they come out of the school, they are 100%. Cavanagh verified that the Village would include a stipulation that if the Village pays, and the SC interjected that it could be paid over the course of five years, and every year it deletes down. He could get the verbiage from Independence. Berger asked if it was that difficult to find someone with a CDL, and the SC said that now it is because there is a group of people who are retiring, and it is becoming a problem. No one wants to get it because it costs money. Bell added that during the pandemic there was a shortage of hazardous materials truck drivers because of all the retirements. Berger asked the Chief about the Police Department's requirements for candidates, and he responded that they must have Police Academy Training. Berger verified that they do not have a CDL, but they have an equivalent certification. This is a baseline for the Police Department and is a different standard than what is being discussed. Berger continued to say that the Village's standard has always been for the candidate to already have a CDL before applying, but he was hearing the SC say that the Village would not be getting very many candidates.

Galicki suggested not making too many assumptions before casting the net. Berger said he was not ready to say that the Village would spend \$6,000 to get someone a CDL if the Village does not have to do so. The Village can start with the job description as it is and see what the Village gets. If they do not get any satisfactory candidates, then they can consider changing the requirements. The Chief suggested the verbiage, "CDL preferred" so as not to discourage someone without one from applying. Berger agreed and said Council could then decide whether it wants to offer compensation if they need to get a CDL. Bell said that if it is necessary for the Village to provide the CDL, he would prefer to wait until after the probationary period to make sure that an investment is not being made in someone who will not work out. Galicki agreed. If the Village were to opt to pay for a CDL, he would suggest including verbiage to say that the individual is expected to reimburse the Village in full for the costs. The SC explained that he had seen this arrangement where the amount would be prorated. After five-years, there was no further requirement. Berger observed that it would put the burden on the Village to chase the money.

The FO said that the payrates are based on the individual already having the CDL. If they are talking about training someone with no experience, Berger felt it should be a lower pay rate. Berger asked if the pay rate is provided with the job advertisement, and the FO said the pay range is. Berger advised that if a lower rate of pay were to be considered, Council would need to approve this. The FO added that the job description would also have to be approved. She suggested running the ad as is and seeing what responses were received. Berger stated that step one would be to run the ad with the CDL requirement and see what response is received. The SC said what the Chief said was great. Berger explained that if the Village uses this verbiage, it will be another week because a change of the job description would require Council's approval. Bell agreed that this made sense. Berger said that in the meantime, the committee should present and ask for Council's approval of an alternative job description without the CDL and at a lower rate so that if it is needed, the Village can advertise an alternative.

The FO clarified that the committee wanted her to run an ad this week for a full-time employee, which would mean Council would have to ratify the approval of the ad. Berger noted that another full-time employee is not in the budget, so the budget must be amended. Cavanagh asked about the status of the injured employee and was surprised to know that FMLA runs concurrent with sick leave. From personal experience, she was able to use her sick leave and then the FMLA started. She asked for an explanation. Bell said that a lot of times, the employee has to use the remaining paid time off (PTO) before using FMLA. Some places ask that the FMLA run concurrently with PTO, which is common. Cavanagh observed that the time would then run out. Bell agreed. The FO added that if the employee still had sick and vacation time on the books, it could still be taken but once this runs out, there would be no FMLA to hold the job. Berger offered that at the end of the 12 weeks, the employee should be in a position to decide whether they can continue in the job. That was the theory behind it.

Berger raised the question of the pay range for someone who needed to obtain a CDL, and wondered if it should be 20% less. Galicki asked the FO if in her research she found any municipalities that did not require CDL for the position. The FO did not ask for that data since it is typically required for the job. Berger noted that without a CDL, the person could not operate a snowplow or one of the big trucks and wondered if it was needed for the backhoe and loader. The SC said it was for vehicles over 26,100 pounds but said that in the event of ice and/or snow, they could drive the truck. Cavanagh pointed out that the Village would not want to hire anybody who is green because they would not be able to run any of the equipment. Berger asked what percentage of the job

related to the CDL. The SC said it is mainly snowplowing. Berger again asked what percentage of the job this would be. They would not want to go too low with the pay range. Cavanagh said they would not want to go under \$20. Berger thought \$20 per hour is the minimum. The SC thought it should be a dollar or two less than the starting pay. Berger explained that they would start 5% less as probationary employees. There also needs to be a pay incentive for the employee to get to the CDL. Bell stated that his only insight is that general warehouse labor is \$18 to \$21 per hour starting. Berger proposed \$22 per hour without the CDL. Once they have obtained the CDL, they get bumped to the starting level after the probationary period. \$22 per hour would be the range because the Village would not start higher if the individual did not have a CDL. He concluded that the ad would be run and retroactively approved at the April 14<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Council would also be given an alternative job description for a probationary employee without a CDL at \$22 per hour with a requirement that they get a CDL after the six-month probationary period. Berger added that there will be a requirement that if the employee leaves before a five-year period, it is prorated.

There was discussion about whether the Village would be paying for the CDL. The SC thought the Village should pay for it and then prorate it down to keep the employee. Berger said it would be reduced by \$1,200 per year over the course of five years. The SC added that if the employee does not work out, they would have to pay it back in the five years. Galicki reiterated that this would involve chasing the money. The SC said it was a risk but said that the availability of drivers with a CDL is shrinking fast. Galicki said that if there is an arrangement to pay for the training and then the employee leaves, there would need to be an employee contract that stipulates that. Otherwise, there are no teeth in getting the individual to pay anything back. Berger said that even with a contract, it would have to go to court and the Village would incur costs. Additionally, what if the person is judgement proof and has no money. The SC thought that part of the interview process is judging the character of the candidate, but Galicki said unfortunately, in an hour interview, they are not going to figure out someone's character. Berger advised that the Village would not want a contract but remain an at will employer. Having the stipulation in the job description gives the Village something to fight about. Galicki offered that the final paycheck could be held to recoup some of the money. Berger thought this was the cost of having employees.

The FO verified that the ad will be submitted with what the Village currently has. Berger agreed and said the revised job description will be prepared for Council so that if they need to go to the next step, they can do it without having a Special Council meeting. Cavanagh asked if it would go on Indeed.com and the FO said it would along with the newspaper and NOSDA, surrounding municipalities, etc.

Regarding uniforms, the FO said that the Village's current policy does not address the matter. However the policy was adopted by Council, so she would need clarification. Bell asked the SC to explain the new uniform program. The SC said they are down to Arborwear and outfitting the guys with seven shirts and seven pants, and that is their uniform. Next year, they can get another pair or two of pants if they need them, and if not, every other year they would re-uniform. It would save the Village money instead of using Cintas. Bell noted that the policy currently states that shirts with the Village Logo are occasionally purchased for employees at the Department Head's discretion. The FO explained this was for other employees and for Service Department Employees the policy states that uniforms are supplied and should be worn unless permission is obtained by the Department Head. The FO asked if there was a dollar amount. The Police Department has a uniform allowance, and surrounding communities have a dollar amount per year. The SC stated this was for a clothing allowance, but that is not what is being discussed. Uniforms are different. Galicki advised that it is a clothing



allowance. The SC stated that clothing allowances and uniforms are very different because clothing allowances are paid to the employee for buying a jacket or new boots, for example. A uniform is what the employee wears to work every day. Right now, Cintas provides the uniform, and the Village pays for it. Instead of paying Cintas, they are going to take that money and just buy the uniforms outright. Galicki asked how this was different from the Police Department. The SC did not know how the Police Department works, and said the Village is not giving them cash. Their sizes will be taken, and they will be given their uniforms. Galicki asked what the dollar amount would be. The SC said the current quote would be about \$2,900, \$780 per man every other year. \$3,000 to \$4,000 vs. \$5,000 to \$6,000 with Cintas every year.

Berger clarified that under the new proposal, the employee is responsible for keeping the uniform clean and in good repair. The SC concurred. If they rip their pants, the Village will buy them a new pair of pants. They will have the option to launder them in the Service Department. Previously, they did not have Cintas wash their uniforms. A new policy was discussed. Berger thought it should state that uniforms will be provided as needed, with no more than \$1,000 every two years per employee. The SC did not want to be backed into a corner if the prices went up. Berger explained that policies can be amended, but he wanted to make the amount the Village expects to pay clear. The Village will decide what uniform items they get. The SC said that once Cintas signs the new agreement, they will pull back all the uniforms. Berger said that the Village will need to move forward to get the uniforms from Arborwear. Cavanagh asked if the Village logo will be on the uniforms, and the SC said that Arborwear can print the Village logo on the back of the shirt, but he is also looking at another shirt supplier for the cost for the safety yellow shirts with the logo on the back. Developing a policy was discussed and Berger confirmed that the uniform change needs to move forward.

Berger made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing compensation of a public employee pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and invite the Fiscal Officer, Mayor, Galicki, and the Chief to join, seconded by Bell. Roll call, ayes all. Motion carried.

The meeting reconvened at 5:22 p.m.

Berger made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing matters that are required to be kept confidential by federal or state law pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(5) of the Ohio Revised Code and invited the Fiscal Officer, Mayor and Galicki to join, seconded by Bell. Roll call, ayes all. Motion carried.

The meeting reconvened at 5:22 p.m.

Being there was no further business, Galicki made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 p.m., seconded by Bell. All in favor. Motion carried.

## **JOINT HUMAN RESOURCES / STREET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** May 27, 2025

**Attendees:** Cavanagh, Galicki, Bell, Berger, Street Commissioner, FO

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Streets Chair member Cavanagh

### **I. Service Department Laborer applicants**

- Both committees, Mayor and Street Commissioner were previously given copies of applications and resumes from 19 candidates for the SD Laborer position.
- After review, the joint committees will conduct interviews on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup> and potentially Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup> with five of the candidates.
- All but one of the candidates have their CDL.
- If the applicant without a CDL is chosen to be hired, a new job description would need to be drafted and adopted by Council.
- Cavanagh will contact candidates to set up the interviews and let the FO know if an amendment needs to be made to the Sunshine notice. The interviews will be conducted by having a joint HR & Streets Committee meeting to go into Executive Session for the purpose of conducting job interviews for the Laborer position.

### **II. Uniform Policy**

- Street Commissioner distributed copies of a proposed uniform policy he drafted with the Mayor. They used the Police Department's policy as a template.
- There was discussion on whether sample policies from surrounding communities were obtained or the previously drafted policy prepared by Berger were used as a reference since service departments and police departments are not necessarily an equal comparison.
- The HR Committee and Streets Committee members will review the proposed policy and hope to have a recommendation to Council soon.

### **III. Miscellaneous**

- Street Commissioner reported the loader broke down at the end of the day.
- The employee that is out on medical leave will return to work on Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup> to perform light duty work of operating lawnmowers and driving vehicles. When there is no such work for him to perform, he will leave work and utilize his accrued time off.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

**HR Committee Meeting**  
**May 13, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

**Present:** Chairman Bell, Council Member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Mayor Koons

Bell noted that the vehicle policy, the employee recognition policy, and insurance were on the agenda.

The Fiscal Officer explained regarding Colonial Life there are two employees who expressed interest in hearing about the coverage, but the representative requested doing one-on-one individual interviews of all employees. It would be an annual renewal much like with healthcare, and it is up to each employee as to whether they would want it. There are incentives to meet with the representative such as cybersecurity protection, insurance bonus coverage, etc. She suggested that perhaps the representative could come to an HR meeting to further discuss the matter. Berger verified that the program would not cost the Village anything and would be totally employee pay, and the Fiscal Officer concurred. However, it costs the Village in terms of administrative time but also offers services the Village does not offer like dental and life insurance, other than the \$25,000 provided by Medical Mutual. There was discussion about the benefit of the program for those employees who had recently experienced injuries. One of these employees felt she would not have used it and would not consider purchasing it. The Fiscal Officer explained that the benefit the employee would receive depended on the coverage they selected, and ultimately, the payments are designed to offset the employee's costs whether it is for an injury, cancer, etc. Rates were discussed. The Mayor suggested presenting the idea at the upcoming harassment training, and the Fiscal Officer reiterated it is the representative's preference to meet one on one with the employees. She questioned the fairness of making all employees sit through the sales pitch yearly for one or two interested parties, but this would be the company's requirement. The appropriateness of having the presentation at the training session was discussed, and the committee settled on providing the employees with the information and providing feedback to the representative.

Regarding the vehicle policy, the Fiscal Officer explained that the auditor felt the Village should have a vehicle policy and provided samples from other communities. Berger advised that he based his draft policy on that of four surrounding communities but that a policy is only worthwhile if it is going to be followed. If it is ignored, having a policy is worse than having no policy at all. It becomes a matter of having a policy that the Village does not enforce which means it is intentionally negligent. Berger concluded that he did not care which policy was used, but it was only good if it is enforced. The Mayor clarified that the auditor said the Village needs a policy on the use of vehicles. The Fiscal Officer stated that the auditor was suggesting a policy for the use of vehicles. The Mayor further inquired about the reason, and the Fiscal Officer surmised it was for liability purposes. The Mayor asked if there was anything wrong with Berger's version, and Berger explained it had been a while since they discussed it. In reading through the sample policies, Bell noted that they were very specific about passengers in government vehicles. The Fiscal Officer agreed, citing a recent issue in the City of Cleveland where an employee was in an accident and her kids were in the government vehicle. What was their policy? Fiscal Officer stated to avoid any potential issues, perhaps rather than the policy generically stating employees must follow Ohio law, perhaps it should be more clearly defined and added that seat belts must be worn. Berger asked what the penalty would be if an employee failed to properly use a seat belt and was involved in a car accident. Would there be disciplinary action for failing to follow the policy? He reiterated that he was supportive of having a policy unless the intention was not to follow it.

The Fiscal Officer concurred and provided the example of the Village will be 'dinged' on the audit for not having signed time-off sheets for employees. One was for the Building Department and there were multiple instances from the Service Department. The Fiscal Officer concluded that the audits are very thorough and said that it is necessary to have policies and stick to them. The Mayor said the committee had been bogged down with Berger's policy because #5 needed to be eliminated, which involved the Street Commissioner driving in a car with the Engineer. The Fiscal Officer recalled that it was determined he could because they are doing Village business. The Mayor noted an issue with #6 on the policy and questioned what would happen if one of the guys got in an accident and was not wearing a seatbelt. Berger replied that it becomes a question of whether they are subject to disciplinary action. Berger offered to clean up the proposed policy and distribute it to Council. The Mayor said he would check with the Street Commissioner and check the trucks to address the seatbelt issue. Berger and Bell added that if there is an issue, there needs to be training.

Bell addressed the employee recognition policy. The Fiscal Officer advised that the last item requested by the auditor was all payments for the last two years that were made related to purchasing food. It was a 'ding' on a previous audit, so they examine it more closely. The Mayor clarified that the auditor was pulling the bills but not saying it was right or wrong. The Fiscal Officer said that at present, they are auditing them. The Mayor asked what other communities do. The Fiscal Officer said that when she went to Columbus to the State Auditor's conference, her colleagues were appalled that the Village spends money on food. Other municipalities/entities have an employee potluck for their Holiday Luncheon. The Fall Festival is different because it is a public event. But for appreciation, etc., fellow finance attendees of the conference were shocked. The Mayor said he had other people saying they set aside \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year. The Fiscal Officer said that previously, \$5,000 was budgeted for the holiday and appreciation events, etc. However, the Village stopped doing the appreciation event. Berger asked how the state would respond to the policy if he wrote it was for \$5,000 for events. Would these be prohibited, or allowed because the Village has a policy? Bell questioned the issue of including spouses/non-residents who do not live or work in the Village. The Mayor thought there should be money set aside to recognize employees, like the administrative assistants who filled in at the Building Department. Berger asked if they were recognized in April with Admin Appreciation Day, and the Fiscal Officer explained that she personally recognizes the admin staff whom she feels gets overlooked. She further explained that previously, the Village held the Holiday Luncheon for employees and an Employee Appreciation event for employees and spouses. It was a nicer event, but employees did not like it because they would have to come in on a Sunday when they would rather be home. Then, the event changed to a picnic on a Friday with an early release from work. That was appreciated, but then a few years ago, it stopped. Berger explained that his policy made sure that everyone was recognized at least once a year. He asked what the auditor would say if the Village put \$5,000 in the budget for employee recognition. The Fiscal Officer said she will need to see what the feedback is from what the auditor requested. The Village has legislation but keeps adding more and more events that authorize food. Berger stated that this ordinance is the policy statement and is in the Village's ordinances. No laws have been violated. Berger would refer to the ordinance in drafting a policy. The Mayor said he delayed recognition of admin until the Building Department Administrative Assistant returned to work. Berger advised that Government Workers' day was the first week in May and a First Responders event was coming up. The Mayor said this is all the Chief wanted in the way of recognition. The Fiscal Officer said that it will be necessary to add the Senior Citizens event to the legislation because the Chief buys coffee and donuts. The Mayor asked if the normal coffee and donuts were part of the policy. The Fiscal

Officer explained that the only one who provides donuts for the committee meetings is the Chief and he pays for them himself.

The Fiscal Officer addressed the Uniform Policy and said that the Streets Committee and HR Committee are working on this. Berger said he has been involved a little in the Uniform Policy and is totally confused by what the Street Commissioner wants. Until he can explain it to Berger appropriately, Berger will not be making an effort to write the policy. Berger explained that he wrote a policy and was told that it was not what the Street Commissioner intended. He thought the Street Commissioner should write one and the committee can review it. The Mayor verified that the Street Commissioner had not provided anything to counter Berger's policy, and Berger said no. Berger tried to make it inclusive, and was told certain items were separate and handled differently. The Mayor said the Police have a policy that is understandable, and Berger concurred. The Fiscal Officer added that the Street Commissioner keeps asking her to cut a purchase order, but there is no policy.

The Mayor said he would tell the Street Commissioner that something is needed in writing as well as addressing the seat belt matter. The Fiscal Officer asked if the Mayor could help with a communication issue regarding the cemetery as well. There is a potential burial on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, and the Administrative Assistant reached out to the Street Commissioner on Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, but received no response. It is now Tuesday, and the family is trying to make plans. Berger said there needed to be a conversation because if employees cannot talk to each other, it will not go well.

Berger noted that the committee would need to change its November 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The Fiscal Officer advised that the Village received a lot of applicants for the Street Department position, and the applications were forwarded to the Streets and HR Committees and the Mayor. Many had CDL's, but she reminded the committee of the potential for a work around for this training by having an existing employee train the new employee. This would save the Village \$6,000. The committee discussed the quantity of applications. Berger thought the model used by the Police Department in the hiring process should be used. The Safety Committee and the Chief/LT go through the applications and make the first cut. Then it goes to HR for a recommendation. The Fiscal Officer explained that the process is listed in the Employee Handbook. It is up to the Department Head to take the applications and narrow them and interview 5-7 applicants. Then recommendations are made to the committee. Berger did not think it was helpful to have both Streets and HR go through all the applications. The Mayor said the Streets Committee will narrow it down to 5 for interviews and then give him the two finalists and he will make a decision.

The Fiscal Officer discussed employees who are on extended leave. The Police Officer will be out until August 1<sup>st</sup>, and the potential for modified duty will need to be determined with upcoming medical appointments. Berger thought the Village should be firm about the potential for light duty because even with a shoulder injury, computer work is possible. The Fiscal Officer conveyed that the Chief and LT have been following up with the officer weekly. However, she did not know for the Service Department who the point of contact was for following up with that employee. She thought he had been in contact with the Street Commissioner, but the Street Commissioner told her that he had not spoken to the employee since before his surgery. She was willing to be the contact, but the committee agreed it should be the Street Commissioner contacting the employee on a regular basis to keep him engaged. The last doctor's note from the employee was dated April 17<sup>th</sup>, and his next appointment is June 17<sup>th</sup>, which is when he is expecting to return. With the question of the employee's side work as a driver, the Fiscal Officer tried to change the time off to use sick time first, then comp time, and lastly

20 hours vacation time. He would be allowed to perform his other job during comp and vacation time. The Mayor asked if the employee should be asked to come in for the harassment training, and Bell and Berger agreed that he could watch the recording when he returned.

Regarding the employee's side job, Berger said he could not understand how the Village had the right to tell the employee what he can do when it has said there is no light duty work the employee can do and it does not want the employee back until he can do all of his job. The Fiscal Officer asked if she could call the employee to explain how she changed around the use of his sick/comp/vacation time. The Mayor said no that the Street Commissioner should do this. The Fiscal Officer said she would have to explain the timekeeping issue to him. The Mayor said he would have the employee come in this week to sit down and talk. Berger thought an explanation should be given from an administrative position about the use of the employee's time.

The Fiscal Officer summarized that she would contact the Colonial Life representative to ask for a one-page summary to provide to the employees. Berger will clean up the Vehicle Policy. The Fiscal Officer will email him the food and drink policy legislation. The Senior Citizens' event will be added to the Food and Drink policy for the next Council meeting. The Fiscal Officer will continue to push light duty with BWC, and the employee will watch the video for the harassment training on his return.

The Mayor summarized that he would reach out to the Service Department employee, address the Cemetery burial May 17<sup>th</sup>, seat belts, and uniform policy.

The Mayor added that the part-time Administrative Assistant is making \$21.67 per hour and thought it was low. Berger asked compared to what. The Mayor said compared to the amount and quality of work she does and the job market that is out there. The Fiscal Officer asked if she complained, and the Mayor said no and that she is happy, and the Village is happy with her. He thought she deserved a little recognition after being here 8 months. Bell asked about the range, and the Fiscal Officer explained there is no range, just an amount since it is part-time. Berger wanted to see comparables in the marketplace. Bell asked if she had been working more than part-time, and the Fiscal Officer stated that she had been kept under 40 hours and added she is flexible and a good worker. Berger reiterated that he would like some documentation to back up the Mayor's request. Bell asked if she was nearing the threshold of benefits, and the Fiscal Officer advised that the employee is retired, had not asked for benefits, and did not want the strings of being tied to full-time. Furthermore, she has not complained about needing hours. The Fiscal Officer was up front with the employee from the beginning that the position is flexible and as needed. She has been great about stepping up, and the Building Department Administrative Assistant was happy to be back and amazed at what the two administrative assistants did, enabling her to just walk back in and feel caught up. This summer, the part-time administrative assistant will begin to cross train with the full-time administrative assistant.

Bell adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

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**From:** Cavanagh, Ruth  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 11:35 AM  
**To:** SRV adminassist; SRV fiscalofficer  
**Subject:** Minutes 5/29 , 5/30

1. A Sunshined HR and Streets meeting was called to order at 3pm on May 29, 2025. Attendees were Councilmen Berger, Bell, Galicki and Cavanagh. Chris Berger moved Dennis Galicki seconded, to go into Executive Session for the purpose of hiring personnel, Ayes all.

Chris Bell moved, Chris Berger seconded to come out of Executive Session at 4:50 pm, Ayes all. Chris Berger moved, Ruth Cavanagh seconded, to adjourn meeting at 4:53 pm, Ayes all.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Cavanagh

2-A sunshined HR/Streets meeting was called to order at 3:30pm on May 30, 2025, attendees were Dennis Galicki, Chris Berger, Chris Bell and Ruth Cavanagh. Chris Berger moved and Chris Bell seconded to go into Executive Session for the purpose of hiring personnel, Ayes all.

Chris Berger moved, Ruth Cavanagh seconded to come out of Executive Session at 4:40pm, Ayes all. Dennis Galicki moved, Chris Berger seconded to adjourn meeting at 4:50pm, Ayes all.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Cavanagh

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**HR Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**June 5, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, Council Member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Mayor Koons

The committee discussed the two final candidates for the Service Department position. The Mayor still needed to check references, but the Mayor thought he would be making a recommendation to Council at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. Bell noted that they were both good candidates, and asked if the Street Commissioner had a preference, and the Mayor said yes. The Fiscal Officer reminded the committee that the candidate would have to pass a drug test, and it would be necessary to determine where the individual would fall on the salary chart. Bell asked about the background check, and the Fiscal Officer explained that typically the Police do a general background check when the candidate pool is narrowed down, so it should be done now before the offer. At 7:36 a.m. Berger made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the employment of a public employee pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code inviting into the executive session the Fiscal Officer and Mayor, seconded by Bell. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried. Berger made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the compensation of a public employee pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code inviting into the executive session the Fiscal Officer and Mayor, seconded by Bell. Roll call – ayes, all. Motion carried.

The committee reconvened at 7:46 a.m. Bell addressed the proposed uniform policy. He noted the \$500 annual allowance for boots, and Berger thought this amount was excessive. The Fiscal Officer stated that currently, the Village pays \$200 once per year. The Fiscal Officer provided comparable data from the Police Department. The Police Officers get \$1,200 which includes everything (shoes, boots, belts, holsters, coats, etc.) Walton Hills provides the Service Department staff \$300 for clothing. Mayfield Village gives \$1,000 for all clothing including shoes. Russell Township gives \$1,200 including shoes. It does not appear that Newbury gives anything, but the uniforms are to be worn to work only. Bell asked if the Village would cut the employees a check and they would buy their own. The Fiscal Officer did not know how the proposed policy would work. The Police Department uniforms, per IRS, could be tax exempt, but keeping track of this for the Village's police force was cumbersome and it was decided to cut the officers a check once a year which is taxed. It is the individual officers' responsibilities to buy/replace their uniforms. The Fiscal Officer noted that the proposed policy stated that the allowance would be tax free, but it is not per IRS rules. In order to be tax free, it must be a condition of employment whereby if they are not wearing their uniform, they cannot work. They must also be prohibited from wearing the uniform off duty, have a distinguishable logo, and cannot be suitable for taking the place of regular clothing. Arborwear clothing can easily be worn elsewhere, even with the logo. Therefore, it is taxable. The internal policy of the Police Department is that the uniforms are put on when the officer reports for duty and taken off when they leave. They are not permitted to wear it for side jobs. Berger added that the Service Department employees have other jobs they work, and they go straight from working for the Village to another job wearing the Village's 'uniform.' Is the Village subsidizing the employees' clothing for outside jobs? Technically it is.



Berger thought that the \$1,200 is on the high side and thought it should be \$1,000 as a startup, \$250 annually for the boots, and \$300 annually to replace worn or no longer functioning attire. The policy should also include that when the employees arrive for work, they put on a clean uniform daily. When they are on Cemetery duty, they should be wearing the polo shirts the Village previously purchased, and the pants should be clean to be respectful. As with the Police, the uniforms should be in appropriate condition for the job that is being done. Bell asked if the Street Commissioner also wore South Russell apparel. The Fiscal Officer said no. The committee discussed whether the Street Commissioner should be included in the policy, and Bell stated that the Street Commissioner is representing the Village on the roads and at people's homes and thought he should be included. Berger asked if the former Street Commissioner submitted for boots, and the Fiscal Officer said historically, they have all submitted for shoe reimbursement. Berger concluded that if they are in for part of the policy, they should be in for all of it.

The Fiscal Officer asked if it would be a check to the employee or a check to Arborwear, and would the uniform items be designated? Berger said this was requested of the Street Commissioner, but the committee had yet to see the list. The Mayor said there was one now, and Berger clarified that it contained the model number, color, etc. The Mayor did not know that it was that detailed yet. Bell said he would prefer that the Village establish an account with Arborwear and just pay them directly. Berger concluded that the \$1,000 would be a one-time allowance, the employee would select the uniform items, and the bill would come to the Village. The Fiscal Officer asked who would track the uniforms purchased. Berger said it would be the responsibility of the Street Commissioner to manage the uniform policy in his department and to stay within the budget, like the Police Chief who is responsible for the Police Uniform Policy.

The Mayor said he would find out why \$1,200 was selected and \$500 for boots. Berger thought the response may be that one pair of boots does not last a year, to which he would argue that this is due to wearing them for outside work. A \$250 pair of boots should last a year barring a catastrophic event. The committee discussed the possible need for identifying specific footwear specifications. The Mayor explained that the issue was that you do not wear the same pair of shoes everyday all year long, that you have two pairs. The committee discussed that the steel toed boots were a requirement of the job and other shoes may be worn during nonworking hours. There was discussion about the boot policy being a reimbursement.

The Fiscal Officer addressed the changes that would need to be made to the Employee Handbook with the new policy. The Mayor said this was provided with the proposed policy.

The Mayor referenced the section of the proposed policy that discussed full-time and part-time employees in the Service Department receiving \$300 annually. The Fiscal Officer stated that the Village does not have part-time Service Department employees. The Police Department does, and the uniform policy specifically explains how the allowance is paid based on the number of hours worked. He suggested that the policy be changed to read that full-time employees will receive \$300 annually, and part-time will receive \$150 annually. Berger added that the term allowance should be included so that there is no confusion that the employee is getting the money. It is an allowance to

replace worn uniforms, as decided by the Street Commissioner. Berger added that since the uniforms are taxable, there should be no references to non-taxable in the policy. The Mayor suggested revising the boot allowance section to read, “startup boots shall not exceed \$250 annually.” The tax issue was discussed, and the Fiscal Officer suggested, “the Service Department employees will receive an annual amount not to exceed \$250 reimbursement for safety boots.” It was clarified that the employees will not be taxed on the boots, but will, however, be paying sales tax on the purchase. The employees submit a receipt and are reimbursed for the actual cost of the boots, not to exceed \$250.

The Mayor asked if the employees are not subject to taxation, and Berger said they are. If the Village provides the uniform to them, it is a benefit to them and subject to an employment tax. The Mayor said that he just took what the Police were doing and copied it. Is the Village paying the same thing for the Police? Berger explained that the Police are different because the uniform is specific to them, and they have limitations on when they can wear it. However, the Fiscal Officer said that despite this, they pay tax on the uniforms due to the complexity of tracking. The committee discussed the specified quantities of clothing items, and it was agreed that the committee will not get involved in this. The Fiscal Officer verified that they would be required to wear the uniforms, and Berger concurred, and added it included the Street Commissioner. She further clarified that the Village would be providing the \$1,000 for each employee this year for the startup and then after that it would be \$300 for uniforms and up to \$250 for boot allowance. This would be for the budget, but the \$300 would be theoretical based on the employees physically turning in worn articles of clothing and requesting replacements. The Mayor proposed taking this through the Streets Committee and sitting down with the guys. He did not know where the \$1,200 came from and maybe that is not enough or is excessive. He also wanted to talk to them about the boots which are an emotional issue.

The Fiscal Officer asked for clarification about the allowance for part-time Service Department employees, will it be based on hours worked? What if they only work 20 hours and in year? The Mayor said to take the part-timers out and address this if and when it happens.

The Mayor reviewed what the committee discussed and then added that they need to look at the Police Department internal Uniform Policy because it needs some revision. The policy states one thing and the handbook another.

The Mayor asked why the Village hired Todd Hicks to do the employee harassment training. He did not understand why he was chosen over Bonnie Troyer. Bell said his proposal was stronger and less expensive. The Fiscal Officer asked if he was unhappy with the training, and the Mayor explained that the Village got an hour and a half for \$2,000 and Troyer would have been four hours for \$2,500 for two sessions. The Fiscal Officer reminded the group that Hicks allowed the Village to record the meeting for future training.

The Fiscal Officer reported that Dustbuster will be unavailable for a couple of weeks over the summer to provide cleaning services, which can be covered by the departments. In December, the

owner will be having surgery and will be out for a while. The Mayor had suggested hiring an outside source, but there are indications the gentleman may be scaling back. Is it time to try to find a new service or with an additional Service Department employee being hired, would the Service Department be able to cover this? Bell recommended having a conversation with Dustbuster about his plans since he has been with the Village for so long. Berger asked if there was a list of the work Dustbuster does because it would be necessary in order to get quotes for the job. Even if it is delegated to the Service Department, they will need to know what is done. The Mayor suggested having the Department Heads submit what Dustbuster does for each department. Berger proposed coming up with a job description and then decide whether the Service Department has time to do it, and whether the Village would want them to do it or get a quote from an outside contractor. He charges \$580 per month and cleans all the buildings weekly. There are extra charges for special work like windows, etc. The Fiscal Officer added that the Police Department handles some of the cleaning themselves. Berger suggested asking the Department Heads what gets done, what they would like to see done, what are weekly, monthly, and semiannual tasks that need to be done, etc. A thorough schedule is needed if considering a new service. The Fiscal Officer inquired about which committee to provide the results to, and Bell suggested the Properties Committee. Berger said that Properties has no responsibilities for the buildings, only the land, according to what he was told. The Mayor concurred. The Fiscal Officer said she would provide it to HR. For June and July, the Fiscal Officer advised that each department would handle the Dustbuster's absence. However, by December, something will need to be in place. Berger said that once the information is received from the Department Heads about the scope of cleaning work, the next step would be to determine the Service Department's ability or willingness to handle.

The Fiscal Officer reported that a representative from the Public Entity Pool (PEP) insurance met with her and the Chief on Monday for the insurance for the buildings. PEP comes out yearly to see what is new at the Village like the drone garage, park restroom, etc. Two recommendations were that the Village Officials formally acknowledge that they have reviewed the Employee Handbook or have their own written code of ethics. She thought the Council members acknowledged review of the Employee Handbook, but she would need to check. Bell thought they did. The other item mentioned by the representative is that every year, the mulch at the park must be a certain depth. She would inform the Street Commissioner of this. The Mayor asked why the Police Chief was involved in this process and the Street Commissioner was not. The Fiscal Officer explained that the Street Commissioner had been informed of the meeting but did not show up. The Mayor thought the Chief had better things to do, but the Fiscal Officer said the Chief is plugged into the insurance. The Mayor verified that the Street Commissioner knew about the meeting and did not show up. The Fiscal Officer verified he was forwarded the information about the meeting.

Bell adjourned the meeting at 8:28 a.m.

**Human Resources Committee Meeting**  
**July 15, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, Council member Berger, Mayor Koons, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

Bell verified that each department provided feedback related to the cleaning services each receives from the Dustbuster. The Fiscal Officer concurred, but did not know what the next step in the process would be. The Dustbuster will be off in December for an extended period. Berger clarified that it is temporary, and Tim Sustar would like to keep the Village and the Valley Lutheran Church as clients. Sustar did not provide a suggestion for a temporary replacement. Berger thought more details were required for a timeline. The Dustbuster fee was discussed as being \$580 per month. Berger offered to reach out to some part-time janitorial providers to determine interest in filling in for a couple of months. It was discussed that it would not be necessary to go out to bid for this temporary service. Berger asked about the necessary requirements like being bonded and going through a security check for the temporary service. The Fiscal Officer said she forwarded the Dustbuster's service information to the committee. The Mayor said he would talk with a guy who owns Paul Davis to get his advice. Berger wondered if vendors would be willing to set up the process with the Village if it would only be for a short time and not a lot of money. Bell noted that it does not entail a lot of work and is only once per week.

At 7:37 a.m., Bell made a motion to enter into executive session considering employment of a public employee pursuant to Section 121.22 (G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and inviting into executive session the Mayor, Fiscal Officer, and committee, seconded by Berger. The committee reconvened at 7:59 a.m.

Regarding salary comparisons for the part-time Administrative Assistants position, comparable rates were gathered, and it was determined that the Village is in line with surrounding communities. Berger offered that when the part-time Administrative Assistant was hired, it was to fill in where and as needed. She did a great job in the Building Department and has been a wonderful employee. There is no need to upset the apple cart at this point. The end of the year is the time to look at pay bands.

Fiscal Officer reported that she looked at the paperwork from PEP insurance about the officials Ethics training and Code of Conduct concern as well as the playground mulch issue. She believes the Newly Elected Officials Handbook may address their concerns with elected officials, and she will review that. As far as the mulch is concerned, PEP's indication was that the mulch depth should be 9-inches. They also offer a \$1,000 safety grant which the mulch would qualify for. The Fiscal Officer explained that it would be purchased by the Village and then once it was done, she would send a copy of the bill, photos and an explanation that the issue was addressed. Berger concluded that with the requirement being 9-inches, it would only be necessary to add 2-inches of material and questioned whether it would be better to have it blown in or dumped and hand spread. He will speak with the Street Commissioner to ensure it gets done. Regarding the safety grant, it is provided once per year and is rotated between the departments.

The Fiscal Officer noted that the part-time Administrative Assistant is actually retired. She had a full career, and her desire is to only work part-time. On the topic of having her work in the Street Department, although she embraces the spirit of teamwork, she is starting to feel some pressure. The Mayor approached her about working in the Street Department, and she shared with the Fiscal Officer that she only has so much band width. Her desire was to remain part-time, and the Fiscal Officer did not want to push her into something she did not want. She is a good fit for the Village, and feels it is important to be in the Police and Building Departments a

couple of shifts each week so that she does not lose the technical/system knowledge she has learned. She has had limited time in Admin since she started, since she was working in the Building Department while the Building Department Administrative Assistant was out. Currently, she is working on the TextMyGov geofencing system project which will be very beneficial to the residents. Bell verified that the part-time Administrative Assistant reports to the Fiscal Officer, and the Fiscal Officer clarified that she reports to the FO and to the Chief.

The Fiscal Officer elaborated that the Mayor had suggested to the part-time Administrative Assistant that she work in the Building Inspector's office when she was engaged in Service Department business. This space is used by the Building Department, and the preference is for it to remain that way. The Fiscal Officer advised she has reached out to the Street Commissioner at least twice to ascertain what his administrative needs were so that she can determine how to best address them. If it involves purchase orders, having the part-time Administrative Assistant there once a week will not help that problem. It might mean having her there an hour every day to get the purchase orders done. But until the Fiscal Officer knows what the Street Commissioner needs, she cannot develop a plan. Berger stated that the Street Commissioner still needs to be able to do the purchase order process on his own regardless of whether he is being assisted with the paperwork by the Administrative Assistant. She could be away, and he would need to know how to handle the process. The Fiscal Officer added that according to the job description, it states that this is a responsibility of the job, and the Street Commissioner needs to understand the process in order to manage it. Berger concurred, and did not want to see it delegated.

The Fiscal Officer stated that the part-time Administrative Assistant position was to be at least 20 hours per week, and the current employee is doing about 32. She is comfortable with this but reminded the Fiscal Officer that she only wants to be part-time. Berger thought it was important to be respectful of the employees. Bell understood that the part-time Administrative Assistant wanted to be a team player, but did not sign up for this.

The Fiscal Officer agreed and added that all the while the injured Service Department employee was off work, no time sheets were filled out by the employee or Department Head, so she has spent a lot of time in the past two days trying to figure out the employee's sick time/vacation time because it was not tracked. Berger commented that this is another example of administrative issues and needs to be discussed. Additionally, the Fiscal Officer advised that although the state audit is not complete, one of the findings brought to her attention was missing time-off request sheets for the Service Department employees. She reached out twice through email asking for these forms to be submitted to her each month so that they can be matched with the timesheets to show the time off was authorized. However, she has yet to receive those.

Bell asked if the Fiscal Officer was having difficulty with Department Heads submitting payroll. The Fiscal Officer explained that she was experiencing difficulty with one department tracking it. Supposedly, the employees were having issues with ADP and could not gain access to their timesheets, but that has been resolved. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to review timesheets to verify accuracy and to enter sick, vacation, and comp time on the department's spreadsheet. However, this had not been done since February, and the employee who was out injured wanted to know his balances. Bell verified that the timecards had not been administered since February, and it is now July. The Fiscal Officer concurred and said she had to go through them to figure it all out for the one employee. Bell stated that for the record, taxpayers are paying for the Street Commissioner to do this job, which he has not done since February. He fully expects the Street Commissioner to do his job, or the taxpayers will not be paying him. Berger concurred. Bell noted that this is

unacceptable, and this is the second time in 24 hours he has used that term regarding the Street Commissioner. He is irritated on behalf of the residents.

Lastly, the Fiscal Officer explained that since the Service Department employees are CDL drivers, they are subject to random testing by the County. The Fiscal Officer is the Designated Employer Representative (DER) since the Street Commissioner is in the pool. The Street Commissioner is the emergency back-up. It is July, and the Street Commissioner has not gotten his certification. He was notified this had to be done shortly after he started with the Village. She was aware that there was some problem in that county office, but she reminded the Street Commissioner of the requirement as late as last month. Once he has completed it, there is a certificate to put in his file as a DER.

Regarding documentation for employee files, the committee told the FO to request the Goals sheets the Mayor had prepared for Department Heads to put in their files as an evaluation of sorts.

Regarding the Mayor's statement that the Admin staff should walk over and speak to the Street Commissioner in person about Cemetery matters, Berger said that the operating procedure for the Cemetery had not been changed, and this would not be necessary.

Berger forwarded the State Employees' Wage Settlement 2024 document to Bell in anticipation of the committee considering increases for 2026. Berger explained that the committee has also looked at medical coverage increases as part of the total package and not just salary. The Fiscal Officer said that starting in September, the employees will do their insurance survey updates. The new health insurance rates should be available by October-November. The renewal date is December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Berger adjourned the meeting at 8:24 a.m.

**Human Resources Committee Meeting**  
**August 12, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, Council member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo, Mayor Koons (arrived 8:18 a.m.)

- The timecard issue previously discussed has been resolved as far as the FO and Chief were aware. FO got the new SD employee his login credentials and access fob and the department was in contact with ADP to get everything set up.
- Regarding the Designated Employer Representative (DER) training for the Street Commissioner, Bell was going to follow up with the Street Commissioner to find out the status of his certification.
- The question was raised as to whether SRV is notified if employees or officials do not complete their required IT training from ADP. FO said she is not notified, and that everything is handled through ADP directly. FO was instructed to contact ADP to find out if the Village can be notified if anyone is outstanding in terms of training.
- Discussion was held regarding salary compensation of an administrative staff member as requested by the Mayor previously. The committee was of the opinion that the salary compensation from surrounding communities was reviewed, and the Village is in line with current rates and there is no need to proceed further with the issue.
- Bell made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:10 a.m. to discuss personnel matters related to the employment of a former employee per Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and invited the FO and Chief, seconded by Berger. Roll call, ayes- all. Motion carried.

Committee reconvened at 8:18 a.m.

- Bell made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:25 a.m. to discuss personnel matters related to compensation of an employee per Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and invited the FO and Mayor, seconded by Berger. Roll call, ayes – all. Motion carried.

Committee reconvened at 8:37 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 a.m.

**Human Resources Committee Meeting  
September 9, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, Council member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski

**1. Street Department Overtime & Timesheet Practices**

- Issue raised regarding employees submitting 1 hour and 15 minutes on timesheets to pick up park trash on Saturday when actual on-site work was only 30 minutes.
- FO requested actual hours worked be logged on their timesheets to document actual presence for liability purposes (injuries, etc.) as well as State audit issues.
- Employees justified the 1 hour and 15 minutes based on a past informal agreement with the former Street Commissioner, treating it as fair compensation for Saturday work.
- Discussion included potential to adjust schedules (e.g., leave early Friday, come in on Saturday) to avoid overtime, comparison with other situations in other departments (night meetings).
- Committee agreed that:
  - Current practice is not supported by policy.
  - Any minimum pay agreement must be reviewed by the Streets Committee and approved by Council.
- **Action Items:**
  - Streets Committee to draft a written policy on minimum call-in pay.
  - FO to pay for actual time worked until a formal policy is approved by Council.

**2. Employee Scheduling & Precedent Concerns**

- Debate on whether unpaid time off sets a precedent for others requesting the same flexibility.
- Concern raised: allowing this could lead to other employees demanding similar arrangements.
- Committee discussed the need for policy language specifying when exceptions are one-time approvals rather than general practice.
- **Action Item:**
  - Draft a policy statement clarifying that exceptions do not set precedent.

**3. Vehicle Use & Safety Policy**

- The Vehicle Use Policy previously prepared by Berger was discussed and reviewed. A few highlights include:
  - Use for Village business.
  - Police Chief as designated Safety Officer would enforce the policy and schedule the use.
  - Not to be used for transportation to and from work unless pre-approved by the Chief to meet valid situations (on call, training, etc.).
  - No alcohol or drug use when operating vehicles/equipment.
  - Seatbelts shall be used.
- Committee agreed this remains a liability and compliance issue.
- **Action Item:**
  - Present Vehicle Policy to Council at the next meeting.



#### 4. Miscellaneous

- As a follow up to the last committee meeting, FO contacted ADP to inquire whether she can be updated if any village employees or elected officials have missed training. She was told they could do that, however, has not received the information yet.
- Cybersecurity policy review has been assigned to the Safety Committee.
- In preparation for the 2026 budget process, FO to obtain salary comparable for all positions with surrounding communities for the October 7<sup>th</sup> HR Committee meeting.
- FO met with met with Street Commissioner three times (~2.5 hours) to go over budget and line items to offer guidance, samples, and information on Council's expectations in preparing for the 2026 budget.
- Employees are working on completing their Form Fire questionnaires for the 2026 health insurance renewal process and given a deadline date of September 10, 2025, for completion.
- FO will miss the October 13<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, and the Administrative Assistant will attend the meeting in her absence.
- The next HR meeting was previously rescheduled to October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Bell made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:11 a.m. to discuss personnel matters related to a complaint against a public official per Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and invited the FO and Police Chief, seconded by Berger. Roll call, ayes – all. Motion carried.

Committee reconvened at 8:23 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 a.m.

**Joint HR and Streets Committee Meeting**  
**October 7, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

**Present: HR Chairman Bell, Council Member Berger, Streets Chairman Cavanagh, Council Member Galicki, Mayor (arrived approximately 8:15 am), Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo, Street Commissioner Young, Solicitor Matheney**

Bell called the meeting to order. The first item addressed was the 1.25 hour of overtime and callout policy. As background, the Street Commissioner explained that when he started, there was a policy that when the Service Department employees came in to do the park, they would get 1.25 hours overtime. The employees told him that this was an agreed upon thing. The Fiscal Officer explained that she was never aware of this policy. The former Street Commissioner used to empty the trash at the park so there was not typically overtime on Saturdays. When there was, the employee timesheets reflected the hours worked as 1.25 hours. However, the new Service Department employee initially documented that he was being paid for 1.25 hours without entering any time for the date worked. The Fiscal Officer stated that it is necessary to know when the employees are physically here in the event they get injured on the job. In response, the employee entered that he was working for a half hour but being paid for 1.25 hours of overtime. She spoke to the Street Commissioner who told her the department came up with a 1.25-hour rule prior to his employment, and the Fiscal Officer advised she needed a policy for the auditors. Cavanagh reiterated that previously, the former Street Commissioner took care of the trash and asked when the Service Department started to do the trash at 1.25 hours. The Fiscal Officer said it was late 2023 to 2024. Bell recalled the former Street Commissioner discussing this rule for garbage duty and understood why the employees would think it was the policy.

The Solicitor asked what a call in was, and whether it was expected that the employees would come in on Saturday or whether it was handled with a phone call. The Street Commissioner said that the Building Department Administrative Assistant posts a schedule for the reservations for the park pavilion. The Service Department employees come in to change out that trash for 1.25 hours. The Solicitor asked if this is something that is discussed the Friday before the event. The Street Commissioner said the schedule is provided a month ahead. The Solicitor verified it is not handled with a phone call to the employee on a Saturday morning, but something the employees already know. The Street Commissioner concurred. Bell verified that in the two instances in question, the Street Commissioner did not call the employee in and the Street Commissioner said that was correct. Bell stated that there are two issues; who is calling in the employees and what is the policy for time. The Street Commissioner said that this is correct. Galicki clarified that there is the 1.25-hour issue and the Mayor's emergency callout.

Bell asked for the timing of the background for the two days in question. The Street Commissioner said the department members have the pavilion rental information, and the routine is for the guys to come in and empty the trash for each event. If there is a morning event, they come in and empty the trash and then come back and take care of the trash if there is an afternoon event. When they figured out that the 1.25 hour compensation was not an official policy, the Street Commissioner explained that the Mayor called the employee and told him there was trash and asked him to come and get it. He said

the Mayor called the employee directly, he did not. Galicki asked if the reservation was on the list, and the Street Commissioner acknowledged it was. Galicki verified that someone would have been assigned to be there to empty garbage. The Street Commissioner agreed but explained that when he conveyed to his employees that the 1.25-hour policy was not official and that they would only be paid for the time they were there, the employee said he did not want to come in for a half hour. The Street Commissioner decided they would deal with the repercussions on Monday. Bell noted it was a conscious decision not to respond to the scheduled pavilion event. Cavanagh stated that the employee came in, and the Street Commissioner said that the Mayor called him. Galicki clarified that he was not going to come in because the employees did not think it was worth his time to come in for 15-20 minutes, and the Street Commissioner agreed. Galicki asked who told him to stop the informal policy. The Street Commissioner discussed the matter with the Fiscal Officer and because there was no official policy, it was not permissible to pay them as such. The Fiscal Officer explained that they could only document time they actually worked until a policy was put in place. Then it would be Council's decision whether to adopt a policy perhaps ratify it backwards. Galicki asked which days the Mayor called the employee in, and the Fiscal Officer said it was both Saturday and Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>. She further explained that per the Employee Handbook, when it is a planned event, compensation is for the actual time worked. When an employee is called in for an emergency callout, it is from the time the call is received. The Solicitor surmised that the employee has not been with the Village long enough to have been on a callout. The Street Commissioner said he had not and was just going with what he was told or what was requested of him. The Fiscal Officer advised that for a half hour, the employee would get \$16.56. With an hour and a quarter minimum, he would get \$62.25. For the four-hour callout, he would receive \$198.67 for each day so it would be a total of about \$400 for the two days. The Street Commissioner added that from what the guys had told him, the 1.25 was agreed upon before for this reason. They did not feel it was fair for four hours to empty trash cans, so it was a compromise.

Galicki thought it would be beneficial to have a policy but wondered if it should apply to all Village employees. The Building Department Administrative Assistant comes in for board meetings, and sometimes the meetings may only last 15 minutes. She gets paid for 15 minutes even though it is in the evening and she may have had to come in from where she lives. If there is a policy for the Service Department employees, it should be an inclusive policy. Berger thought policy statements could be written to address different issues. He did not think one blanket policy could describe how every callout would be handled. The Fiscal Officer explained there was already one policy for callouts, which is the four-hour minimum. She further explained that the Building Department Administrative Assistant accepted this dynamic as part of her job and the Fiscal Officer questioned whether the Service Department employees were not aware that they would have to empty trash. She did not understand why it could not be a single policy. Is it a matter of it being outside the normal working hours or of not knowing something is part of your job? Berger responded that it had to do with the type of callout. The Solicitor advised that it was not a callout because it was an expected job. The Street Commissioner proposed differentiating between callout and emergency callout in the policy. The Police Chief explained that the emergency is the 4-hour callout and what is needed is to develop a policy for a scheduled event. The Fiscal Officer provided the example of a scheduled burial on a

weekend. Galicki reiterated that the policy should be for all employees, and Berger thought that all the issues should be addressed.

Cavanagh offered that she thought the Building Department Administrative Assistant worked less than 40 hours a week to accommodate the board meetings. The Fiscal Officer said she works 40 hours a week since the office is open. Berger countered that on Fridays, she can leave at noon when the office closes if she has had board meetings during the week which would go towards her 40 hours. The Fiscal Officer clarified that Berger was saying that the Building Department Administrative Assistant's time is restricted to the week because that is not how it has been handled. The extra four hours on Friday have been used for administrative work. Berger thought that the original arrangement was that if she had her 40 hours in as of noon on Friday, then she would go home at noon. The Fiscal Officer clarified that this meant that the Building Department Administrative Assistant's 40 hours should stay within the week and that although she was inconvenienced in having to come in for an evening meeting that lasted 15 minutes, she has to go home at noon on Friday. In contrast, the message is that the Service Department employees' time is more valuable when they come in outside of normal working hours and will be paid at least 1.25 hours even though they only work a half hour. Berger acknowledged that this is inconsistent, and Council wants to create consistency. Cavanagh pointed out that when the Service Department has to come in on the weekend to clean up trash, it means they are working six or seven days in row. Galicki asked if the trash is emptied on Fridays before the staff leaves for the day, and the Street Commissioner said they do. Cavanagh concluded that if there are no scheduled events, then no one comes in. The Solicitor verified this would include not coming in to clean the bathroom, and the Street Commissioner concurred and said that everything is washed clean and serviced Friday late afternoon and then everything is checked on Monday. The Solicitor asked about late weekday events at the park like the cross country meets, and the Street Commissioner said there is usually no garbage to empty.

Berger inquired about how many times in a year there is a need to empty trash in the park after working hours. The Street Commissioner said that last year it did not seem like there were many but this year it has been every weekend and at times the pavilion is double booked on Saturday and Sunday. Berger concluded that it was more than 20 times in a year, and the Street Commissioner agreed and added that there are times when they have to empty trash from events that were not scheduled for the pavilion. Berger proposed that Streets or Parks Committee investigate the potential of having patrons clean up after themselves and dispose of their own garbage. Galicki added that this is a policy of many of the Geauga Parks.

Berger provided the committees with a draft policy. He acknowledged that it would not be a callout but a park maintenance issue that involved after-hours work that is scheduled at 1.25 hours. If the work exceeds 1.25 hours, it would just be the actual time worked with a minimum of 1.25 hours. Cavanagh questioned whether this was straight time and the Street Commissioner and Fiscal Officer explained that it would be overtime if they had put in their 40 hours for the week.

There was further discussion about making the policy applicable for all employees and also about the Building Department Administrative Assistant's work and meeting schedule. Terminology relating to call ins, callouts, and scheduled outside working hours were also considered.

The Solicitor discussed modifications to verbiage in the policy. She recommended it simply state a "minimum of 1.25 hours" with an explanation of time over that amount. The Solicitor also re-worded the sentences pertaining to supporting documentation, and Berger suggested moving forward with the policy as amended by the Solicitor. The Fiscal Officer asked that it be made retroactive to January 1, 2025.

Berger addressed the 4-hour minimum for callouts. The Mayor called out one of the employees to deal with the trash issue. Bell asked if this was directly, and Berger said yes. Galicki asked if it was on one or two occasions, and the Street Commissioner said it was twice on the same weekend, Saturday and Sunday. Berger questioned what constituted an emergency. The Solicitor stated that it is not really defined in the policy, but it describes it as when an employee is called to come to work unexpectedly, such as storm damage, snow plowing, or a public disturbance that is determined by the department head to be an emergency for public health and safety. Galicki noted that it said, "determined by the department head," and asked if the Street Commissioner was aware of the employee being called by the Mayor. The Street Commissioner said he became aware when the employee did his time sheets. Berger clarified that it was not concurrent with the event and the Mayor did not call him about a problem that needed to be taken care of. The Street Commissioner said that was correct. Bell asked if it involved trash again and questioned whether this was a public emergency. Galicki asked if the action by the Mayor was in response to the 1.25 policy being in question. Bell asked what the dates were, and the Fiscal Officer said September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Berger explained that he researched "emergency," and found that an emergency can be declared for a natural disaster, civil disturbance, human cause disasters such as explosions, fires, sabotage, or other events that threaten life and property and threats to essential services. One of the key requirements is that it must be a formal written declaration of an emergency that is publicized. The Chief thought this would be along the lines of a natural disaster where the Emergency Management Association would be called for a tornado, hurricane, etc. Berger said that at the very least, it should be disseminated to Council and Department Heads that there is an emergency with a description of how it is being handled. He was uncertain that trash would rise to the level of emergency although it might be a public nuisance. The Fiscal Officer explained that typically a callout would be when the SWAT team is brought in or when there is snowplowing or flooding. Should Council be notified of these events? The Solicitor thought Council was informed. The Chief explained that he typically keeps Council informed unless it has to do with the department being dispatched to another community outside the Village. The Fiscal Officer said that the most prevalent emergency callouts are for snowplowing and the Solicitor added that this is a separate codified ordinance. The Mayor, Police Chief, and Street Commissioner are the only ones who can declare the snow events.

Regarding the callouts, the Chief asked if the Mayor could call one of the patrol officers in for an emergency without notifying the Chief. The Street Commissioner was not notified in this case. It should be the department head. Galicki would have expected the Mayor to contact the department

head and then at the department head's discretion, dispatch one of his employees. It is unusual that the Mayor would go directly to an employee. The Solicitor said this would be the best practice and the policy could specify that the Mayor notify the department head. However, she felt the Mayor had some authority to call out an employee for an emergency, but it is a question of what an emergency is. Berger acknowledged that it would have been best for the Mayor to contact the department head to ask how the department head wanted to handle the situation. However, he also thought that the Mayor should have latitude to do what needs to be done in a time of crisis. The Street Commissioner concurred and added that a phone call even after the fact to the department head would suffice. The Chief did not want to beat a dead horse but thought the chain of command should be included in the policy. It should not be a direct call to a low-ranking patrol officer. Berger agreed with the chain of command but thought there could be circumstances where it would not be followed and allowances must be made. Berger thought the department heads should be informed as soon as practicable.

Cavanagh asked if the Solicitor was rewriting the four-hour callout policy, and the Solicitor said she was not but advised that the identification of who can make a call out is not clear in the policy. The definition of emergency is another issue. Currently, it states "for a public disturbance that is determined by the department head to be an emergency for public health and safety." She did not feel this was specific enough. Berger concluded that there should be a catch-all phrase stating that other such circumstances as may be determined. People are paid to use their best judgement and if the worst thing that happens is that an employee comes in and gets paid 4 hours of overtime for a situation that was not an emergency, then you have a conversation afterwards. The Solicitor advised that Council should approve what is paid because the Village just had a lawsuit over time. Approval is needed because it does not fit a callout, and the employee put down four hours on his timesheet. It is necessary to make note of this by Council. Bell clarified that Council needed to approve the four-hour emergency callouts not the 1.25 hour working off hours. The Solicitor explained that Council would need to approve the four-hour callout as far as paying it because it was not a callout by definition. Berger noted that HR would make the motion to approve the payments. The Solicitor also stated that this should not be a precedent setting event. It was two days at 4 hours each, not one day or one instance. Additionally, it was not unexpected work. It does not fit the definition of a callout.

Berger advised that the Village has the right to schedule employees to deal with issues like emptying the trash as part of their jobs. Once the policy is in place, it should no longer be an issue. The Solicitor stated that Council could also just approve 1.25 hours for each of the days instead of the four hours since it was not a callout. Berger asked what the employee's expectation was. The Solicitor did not know. The Fiscal Officer said it was the four-hour callout as shown on his timesheet. Berger did not want to penalize an employee for doing what he was told to do. It is not a failure of the employee but of management in that the situation was not managed correctly. Berger concluded that the employee would get paid and then move on. The Fiscal Officer reiterated that she needed it documented by Council for the auditors.

There was further discussion of the definition of an emergency. Berger thought the four categories of natural disaster, civil disturbance, human caused disasters, and threats to essential functions were all encompassing. The Solicitor pointed out that currently, this is as determined by the department head.

The Mayor asked if the proposed policy had flexibility if a guy is coming into do trash and finds a water leak. Would it be changed from a call in to an emergency? The Solicitor said in terms of the policy, she did not think so. The Street Commissioner said that this would fall into the category of getting the 1.25 hour minimum and the other hours worked. The policy is guaranteeing the employees 1.25 hour pay to empty trash, which should not take any longer than that. The Mayor asked if this was regular time, and Berger said that if they have their 40 hours in, it would be overtime. The Mayor asked if Sunday was different or holidays. The Fiscal Officer said holidays are only the listed holidays. In the Mayor's example, the person who came in to empty trash and found the water leak would be paid the 1.25 hour minimum, but if someone else were called in for the water leak it would be a 4-hour emergency callout.

Berger revisited the topic of who declares an emergency and wondered if anyone objected to the department heads having this power. Cavanagh asked if the Mayor should as well. Berger said that ultimately, he does. Cavanagh also clarified that in the event of snow, a patrol officer could call the Street Commissioner to report the need for plowing and the Chief concurred. Berger concluded that it is appropriate for the department heads to make this decision and should keep Mayor and Council in the loop.

Bell stated that they still needed a definition of emergency. The Solicitor suggested that it could read, "for a public service that is determined by the department head or the Mayor to be an emergency for public health and safety." Berger agreed that this would be the catch all. He thought that in the event of an emergency callout, there would be a discussion afterwards as to why and what happened, the circumstances, and if it is necessary to modify the policy going forward.

The Solicitor asked what the emergency was for the callout for the Service Department employee on September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. The Mayor said there was no emergency. They met Friday afternoon, and he said he was going to come in on Saturday. He told the employee he would check the garbage cans since he was there and let him know what time the employee would be needed. He came in and did the garbage cans and cleaned the bathrooms, etc. He thought cleaning the bathroom was the employee's idea of an emergency. He did not know. The Solicitor asked if the Mayor told him to put down four hours as a callout. The Mayor said he did not think so. Galicki said that there was then a new issue. Berger agreed it was different, and Galicki said it was fraud. The Solicitor said they did not know if the employee expected the four hours. She did not think it met the callout definition. They need to be careful having just come from a lawsuit regarding time. Council should really reconsider moving with two four-hour timesheet entries. The Mayor explained that the employee was coming in to do trashcans and asked if they normally clean the bathroom. The Street Commissioner said they will if needed. The Mayor asked if a dirty bathroom constituted an emergency and said that's his decision. The Solicitor stated it would not be the employee's decision. The policy states that it is the department head who determines the emergency. Bell asked who directed the employee to come in over the weekend since the Street Commissioner said there was a schedule. The Street Commissioner said there are scheduled events, but with the 1.25 overtime question and only getting paid for the actual time spent, the individual would not come in. The Mayor then reached out to him and brought him in. The Mayor explained that what happened was on Friday afternoon, September 19<sup>th</sup> around 3:00 p.m.,

they were all talking about what was going to happen. What was decided was that the Mayor would check the trashcans on Saturday. However, he forgot. At 7:42 a.m. Sunday morning, he texted the employee, "Mayor Koons apologizes for not communicating better. The trashcans are full with two events on Sunday, 10-12 and 1-6. I can get them this morning if you can do this afternoon and evening. Off to church til 10." The Mayor said this was on Sunday. The employee responded, "Good morning. I came in last night at 6:00, got all of the garbage cans at the pavilion, playground, and bathrooms. Also did a sweep through the Village for roadkill. Thank you." This was Sunday morning at about 8:00 a.m. Galicki verified that at 7:42 a.m., the Mayor saw trash that the employee just said he picked up on Saturday. The Mayor said no that he talked to the employee on Friday. He said he saw the trash cans on Saturday that were full at 4:00 p.m. when he went to church. Then he did not respond to the employee. So, he responded Sunday morning that he apologized for not communicating better. "Trashcans are full with two events on Sunday, 10-12, 1-6. I can get them this morning (Sunday morning) if you can do this afternoon and evening. Off to church." The employee responded, "good morning. I came in last night at 6:00 p.m. (Saturday night). Got all the garbage cans for the pavilion, playground, and playground. Also did a sweep for the Village for roadkill." The Mayor knew he was supposed to come in on Saturday. Galicki verified that Mayor knew the employee was supposed to come in, so it was not an emergency, but the Mayor declared it was an emergency. Earlier, the Street Commissioner said there was a decision made because they were not getting 1.25 hour minimum that no one would come in. But the Mayor was saying that the employee was going to come in, and Galicki was confused. If he was scheduled to come in, he should not be getting the four hours, but then that opens the door to why he claimed four hours?

The Mayor said in his opinion, the employee came in on Saturday and saw that the bathrooms were a mess and decided to stay and clean them, that was above and beyond what he was expected to do, which was to empty trashcans. Galicki said that according to the Street Commissioner, he was not expected to come in. The Mayor thought he was just coming in on Saturday. The Street Commissioner stated that there were Saturday and Sunday scheduled times, but then with the thought of not getting the 1.25 hour, he said he would not come in and the Street Commissioner said they would deal with it on Monday. Cavanagh added that the employee did come in, and the Mayor agreed. The Solicitor verified it was without a phone call, and the Mayor said yes. The Mayor said the employee came in because he thought someone needed to do it and he was scheduled. So he did it. The Solicitor said in her view, that is not a 4-hour callout. Berger concurred and said it would 1.25 hour minimum or actual time depending on how much time he spent. He thought the Street Commissioner needed to have that conversation with his employee. He did not think the situation rose to the level of malfeasance at this point. There needs to be clarification. The Mayor stated that an employee came in on a Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and on his own cleaned the bathrooms. The Solicitor said she thought the Mayor said the employee was scheduled. The Mayor said he was going to come in. He was not scheduled to clean the bathroom. He decided on his own to clean the bathrooms, and the committees was going to reward him with 1.25 hour? Berger said it would be that or whatever his actual time was over 1.25, like 2 hours. The Mayor thought he probably spent more than that. Berger offered that the employee needed to tell them that. Galicki said the other side of this is that in corporate America, the employee does not decide whether he/she will come in on a weekend and get overtime.



Galicki was confused with the conflicting details. Perhaps it is time to find out what really occurred. The Mayor said Galicki was getting what really occurred.

Galicki asked the Mayor to explain what happened on Friday with the discussion of employees refusing to respond due to an overtime policy issue. What was the agreement the Mayor reached with the Street Department employees at that time. The Mayor said that the agreement he understood was that the employee was coming in on Saturday and he would let the employee know what time because he was going to check and see how much trash was there. Galicki said there was a difference in what the Street Commissioner was saying which was that no one was scheduled to come in and the Mayor said that the employee was coming in. The Mayor asked the Street Commissioner whether the employee was scheduled. The Street Commissioner said that the employee was not going to come in for the half hour and he said they would deal with it on Monday. The Mayor continued to say that the employee came in on Saturday. Galicki asked if there was an agreement between the Mayor and the employee when he left on Friday that he was coming in. The Mayor said it was his understanding that the employee was coming in on Saturday. Galicki clarified that the Mayor's understanding was that the employee was scheduled to come in and not that the Mayor directed him to come in. The Mayor said no, he does not do that. The employee was scheduled to come in on Saturday and the Mayor was supposed to call him but forgot to call him. The employee came in on his own and did the work, and the Mayor reiterated the information about contacting the employee Sunday. Sunday morning, the employee answered that he came in and did the work and then was coming in on Sunday because there were two events.

The Solicitor verified that the employee wrote "Mayor call in" on his timesheet and the Fiscal Officer confirmed he did so for both days. The Solicitor asked the Mayor if this was accurate, and the Mayor said as a call in, he did not call and say hey we want you at this particular time. He just knew he was coming in that night, which he did. Cavanagh concluded that all the committees were trying to do at this point was to make clear the way things should be done. The Mayor responded that going forward, it needs to be made clear, but it should also look at the point of view of the employee who is coming in to do trash. Since he is not there to do bathrooms, he is not going to clean the bathrooms. He is going to come in and do the minimum. Eventually, they will all be unavailable if they are tied down to 15-20 minutes of trash picking. The committees have the chance to say thank you to this guy who decided on Saturday night to clean the bathrooms on his own. And this is how they are treating him? Bell did not think they were trying to treat him poorly at all, but rather to figure out what he is owed and how he was called in. Bell asked if it was possible that he was scheduled to come in, and decided not to come in, but the Mayor did not get that part of the story that he decided not to come in and went forward assuming he was coming. Cavanagh thought that was exactly what happened. The Mayor thought it was very possible, but he did not stick around on Friday. The Street Commissioner was under the impression that they were not going to go in until the overtime issue was sorted out. The Mayor said he was under the impression the employee was coming in. With the emotions Friday afternoon, when he left, he thought the employee was coming in. This is why he apologized for not calling him. He went by the park Saturday afternoon to check the trash cans, and they were full. The Street Commissioner did not think this was a question of whether the employee was right or wrong for doing what he did,

but how much to pay him for what he did. Cavanagh agreed. The Street Commissioner explained that the employees are not the type of group to say they are only paid to empty the trashcans and that is all they are going to do. They will stay 15 minutes after work and then never put it on their timesheet. The Fiscal Officer clarified that if they are being paid for 1.25 hours, and if there is work to be done, is that not their responsibility to do it? It is the same for the callout. The Street Commissioner said the responsibility is to empty the trash. The Fiscal Officer asked then if other departments can empty the trash for 1.25 hour minimum if they can come in for 15 minutes and get paid for 1.25 hours overtime to build up their comp bank. The only requirement would be to empty the trash. The Street Commissioner responded that it would depend on their job description. Galicki offered that the job descriptions say, 'and other duties as assigned.'

The Street Commissioner thought if the employee came in on Saturday and there was a question, he will be told he gets 1.25 hours and then on Sunday, he will get paid for a 4-hour callout, but moving forward it will be 1.25 hours. Bell acknowledged there was confusion but did not want to punish the employee for doing his job. Moving forward there will be the policy for a 1.25 hour minimum or hours worked. The Street Commissioner asked if they wanted him to have this conversation with the employee about getting 1.25 on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 4-hour callout on the 21<sup>st</sup>?

Cavanagh clarified that the former Street Commissioner had this 1.25-hour minimum policy and the Street Commissioner said the employees told him they did. The Fiscal Officer explained that in reviewing the timesheets, the practice started in 2024 or the end of 2023. Cavanagh observed that if the employees are not scheduled or they do not want the emergency callout, it sounds like it comes back to the Street Commissioner to come do it. Galicki said that the employees are scheduled for the event and wondered if it was the same person for the entire weekend or if it was assigned by the day. The Street Commissioner said he leaves it up to the guys to decide how to cover the event and it varies. In this case, it was the same employee since he was the new guy. Cavanagh verified that this is primarily a summer issue of three to four months and the Street Commissioner agreed.

Bell asked if there was any further discussion, and the Fiscal Officer stated she would need a motion at the Council meeting. The Street Commissioner asked if the motion would be for two four-hour callouts, 1.25 hours on both days or 1.25 hours one day and 4 hour call out the next. The Chief stated that before all this happened, the employee was fully aware that there was a scheduled clean up of trash on both days. The Street Commissioner said this was correct. The Mayor asked the Chief how many times his guys did trash on their own at the park. The Chief did not think there was a situation where they picked up trash. If they were on duty, though, they would not be coming from home to pick it up. The Mayor said the guys in uniform have picked up trash on the weekend.

The Solicitor indicated that direction was still needed. As stated earlier, Bell explained that the employee would not be punished. Berger said to pay him the 8 hours of overtime as a onetime event and not a precedent setting event. A motion will be required at the October 13<sup>th</sup> Council meeting. The Street Commissioner said he would make it clear to the employee that this is a one-time event.

Bell addressed the Vehicle Policy, and Berger said he made the one change requested by the Mayor at the last Council meeting. Bell thought the policy looked good. The Solicitor said she had a few

changes in verbiage that would be ready for the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Mayor made a change to Items 3 and 4 because he wanted it written down that we don't want cars going home daily but from time-to-time it is very convenient for people to take the Village car home at night to go to their event and come back the next day versus driving to the Village campus to get the car. In the case of the Street Commissioner, he lives east and should take the car home when he goes to Warren and comes back here and drops the car off and gets his car. The same thing was done for a police officer going south to Columbus with taking the car home at night. The Mayor wanted this in the policy. The Solicitor suggested just leaving it with the Police Chief giving pre-approval. The Mayor did not think the Police Chief should have anything to do with it. In the case of the Fiscal Officer using the car for an out-of-town conference, she is a department head and is equal. The Solicitor explained that the Police Chief is enforcing the policy. The Solicitor asked Berger if he understood what the Mayor was asking, and Berger confirmed he did but totally disagreed. The Solicitor advised that this is Council's policy. The Police Chief is the one enforcing the policy and getting the notice of who is using the car. The Fiscal Officer felt it was beneficial to have the Chief in charge in part to coordinate the reservation of the car. The Mayor thought the department heads should be treated equally, and no one should have to go to the Chief to get permission. The Solicitor reiterated that the whole thing is about the Chief being in charge of the policy since the approval goes through the Chief and the Chief is the one who is aware of who has the cars. Galicki saw the issue as being a struggle over someone having control or no one having control, which is the way it currently is. His point, however, was that he did not think there was any reason to have a domicile-to-duty policy at all. The Village is close enough that if a government car is needed, the individual can drive in, leave their car, and pick up the government car without significant inconvenience. He agreed with Berger in that the proposed revisions only serve to allow people to willy nilly use a government vehicle. Cavanagh and the Fiscal Officer noted that having the car the night before a trip saves time and often saves the Village another night's hotel charge. There was further discussion of coordination of the Village vehicles and someone being in charge to know where the cars are. The Solicitor asked if Item 3 could be changed to not include the words "to be on 24-hour call". Berger agreed. The Solicitor further advised to end it after the words "Police Chief."

The Streets Committee, Street Commissioner, Mayor, and Solicitor left the meeting.

The Fiscal Officer shared that regarding health insurance, Medical Mutual was offering a .01 decrease. Anthem is a little cheaper, but the deductibles are higher and on a calendar year which would mean paying the deductible twice. Bell suggested that the Village should stay with Medical Mutual, addressing the difficulty in changing health plans for the employees. The Fiscal Officer requested a motion for health insurance at the next Council meeting.

Regarding the budget, the Fiscal Officer is preparing a comparison for Council of the different possible percentage increases for employee pay. She also provided the committee with a salary comparison for all Village positions in comparison with surrounding communities. She suggested the committee could discuss this further in preparation for a recommendation for the budget.

The committee discussed the Cintas first aid box expenses. The Village had been getting away from using the service, but the Street Commissioner wanted to keep it. Cintas would not agree to come quarterly and advised at the very least, it would come every other month and there would be a service charge regardless of whether anything was provided. Many times, they come and no one is available at the Service or Police Departments to let them in or say what is needed. The Fiscal Officer asked for a schedule from Cintas, but they did not get back to her. The Chief added that Cintas mandates that certain items be maintained in the cabinet, but the items seem to have abbreviated expiration dates. There are other companies that provide the service, and he suggested having it requested. The Fiscal Officer explained that this is in the Street Commissioner's job description, and it should be communicated to him that they want him to get quotes for this service. The committee agreed.

The meeting was adjourned.

**Human Resources Committee Meeting**  
**November 18, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, committee member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo, Mayor Koons (arrived approximately 8:10 am)

**Salary Increase Discussion for 2026**

- The Fiscal Officer explained that the draft budget traditionally assumes a 3.5% raise because that is what Council members receive per ordinance. This provides a baseline placeholder for salary increases in the budget draft while the HR Committee finalizes recommendations.
- Discussion:
  - Healthcare costs: 0% increase for the coming year.
  - Pension-related increases (OPERS, OP&F): No finalized changes, although OP&F contributions might increase in future years.
  - Federal COLA metrics exclude food and fuel—two categories that have sharply risen. Committee members agreed these exclusions distort the real cost pressures employees face.
- Projected payroll increase calculations:
  - 3.5% raise → approx. \$2,046,000 total annual payroll.
  - 4.0% raise → approx. \$2,055,000.
  - Difference: roughly \$9,000.
- Committee members discussed this difference at length and agreed the increase is relatively small in the context of the total budget. Employees are not responsible for increased capital expenses the Village may face and should not absorb the impact through lower raises. Morale and fairness strongly favor a full 4%.
- Committee will introduce legislation at the 11/24/25 Council meeting to consider a 4% increase for 2026. FO will update the Salary Schedule and draft the legislation for Council's consideration.

**Veterans Breakfast -**

- Committee members expressed concern that the Veterans Breakfast—although a Village-sponsored event—is not organized by the Village's administrative office and invoices and event details are not routed through typical administrative channels. This lack of oversight creates procedural and ethical risks.
- There was meaningful discussion about one department's attendance at the event and confusion and discomfort among employees who were excluded. Committee members agreed that inconsistent invitations create the appearance of favoritism.
- In referring to Ohio Ethics Law, supervisors may provide small tokens of appreciation, but not compensation for performing job duties. Attending a catered breakfast during paid working hours could be viewed as supplemental compensation. If one department is excused to attend, others may lawfully need to be included as well.
- All departments and employees have responsibilities, but singling out one group for additional benefits is not permissible.
- The Veterans Breakfast is meant to honor veterans, not Village employees. The event has drifted from its original purpose. The committee agreed this has created confusion and undermines the event's integrity.

- Additional discussion was held regarding early dismissal from work for one department over others.
- Council member Bell will make a motion on 11/24/25 that in the event employees are permitted to leave work early, they use their comp or flex time bank for their early release.
- The committee's recommendation is that beginning in January, the new Administration Committee should establish documented rules (who is invited, staff roles, vendor procedures), clarify employee attendance and eliminate inconsistencies.

### **250th Celebration -**

- Discussion included concerns about a proposed January 1st event for the Village's 250th anniversary to include police and service staff who would require triple-time compensation for holiday work. Additionally, attendance would likely be poor due to family obligations.
- Committee members emphasized practicality and fiscal responsibility.
- A more workable date of perhaps July 5<sup>th</sup> was discussed by the Park Committee. It avoids holiday pay, is easier for community attendance, and offers more flexibility for staffing.
- These upcoming milestone celebrations should fall under the new Administration Committee rather than the Parks Committee or individual Council members.

### **Chain of Command and Department Oversight**

- Discussion was held on the chain of command when a Department Head (DH) was out.
- Fellow DHs understand the Village's internal policies and procedures and can guide staff on how to properly proceed. Examples given of recent situation and the other DHs stepped in to assist without issue.
- Staff work well as a team and communicate effectively about absences.
- Committee members recognized that the team already functions with an informal but effective structure, but it needs to be codified.
- Recommendation is to draft a proposed written policy for Council's consideration to include:
  - A clear chain-of-command document should specify that if a DH is absent, authority is delegated to another DH, then the FO and then if no administrators are reachable, the PD chain of command.
  - Temporary delegation by the Mayor only when appropriate
- Councilman Berger will draft a policy for council approval.

### **Hiring Process Issues**

- A candidate who ultimately withdrew his application had a reference contacted before reaching the agreed stage of the process.
- Concerns were discussed including the risk to the candidate's relationship with his/her current employer, violating the spirit of the Village's hiring sequence, and potentially damaging the Village's reputation and discouraging applicants.
- PD current hiring workflow:
  - Initial "surface-level" background review by a detective.
  - First interview with police leadership.
  - Committee interview.
  - Deeper background investigations only after committee approval.
- Because of these additional steps (voice stress test, records checks, personnel file reviews), the Police Department requires its own checklist.

- The committee agreed:
  - References (distinct from background checks) should be contacted only after the committee, Mayor, and DH agree to move the candidate forward.
  - Two checklists should be created: Police-specific and General Village employees.
- The Employee Handbook will need updates.

### **Probationary Period Length**

- Discussion was held regarding extending the length of the probationary period for employees. In the PD, officers with significant prior experience may finish field training quickly and officers with less experience may still be in Phase 2 at six months.
- Some performance issues don't surface until later, once the officer feels independent.
- Surrounding agencies often use 12–18 months.
- Committee members agreed the Village should have enough time to evaluate employees fairly but thoroughly.
- Discussion was held on how probationary pay would be handled and whether the Village would maintain the current 5% probation difference for six months but keep probation open for one year, or split the raise: 2.5% at six months, and 2.5% at a year.
- The Fiscal Officer confirmed both options are administratively manageable.
- The committee agreed that the changes should apply to new hires starting after January 1, 2026 and current probationary employees must remain under the policy in place at their hire date.
- The committee will need to draft an amendment to the Employee Handbook.

### **Workers' Compensation Updates**

- Injured worker is still on modified duty. Hopefully he will return to full duty soon.

The meeting adjourned at **8:25 AM**.

**Human Resources Committee Meeting  
December 9, 2025, 7:30 a.m. Village Hall**

Present: Chairman Bell, committee member Berger, Fiscal Officer Romanowski, Police Chief Rizzo

Chairman Bell called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Sunshine Law, Ethics, and Process Concerns**

Committee members expressed concern regarding ongoing deviations from Ohio Sunshine Law, Ethics Law, and internal Village processes. Members agreed that Council must remain diligent and strictly compliant with statutory requirements to preserve transparency and functional governance.

**Administrative Office Staffing**

The Fiscal Officer explained there will likely be staffing hour changes between the current administrative team in 2026. The part-time Administrative Assistant has been concentrating more time on cross-training on the fiscal office administrative tasks, including year-end processes which will be beneficial when scheduling changes occur. Both employees are performing well and are good departmental fits. The team is currently exploring AI to reduce the time required for minute preparation and assist in completing other administrative tasks. The hope is that using AI will reduce the time required to complete some administrative tasks which will allow more time for tasks that require a hands-on approach to complete. The Village does not have a work-from-home policy and the committee is not interested in pursuing one.

While the current part-time Administrative Assistant has provided backup coverage in the Building Department in the Building Department Administrative Assistant's absence, with upcoming changes in the fiscal office, her availability will be limited. Therefore, this may be a good time to prepare and develop a backup /potential succession plan for the Building Department. Having a plan and staff in place would allow the Village to be prepared in the event there was an unexpected leave of absence or staffing changes. Given Village officials have agreed they would like to have a full-service Building Department, they need to ensure they are properly prepared to provide those services if staffing changes occur.

**Chain-of-Command**

Committee reviewed how authority flows when department heads are absent. Currently departments already work cooperatively. When one department head is out, others cover operational needs. Employees know to contact the Fiscal Officer when department leadership is unavailable. For the Police Department, the general chain of command order is the Chief, Lieutenant, Sergeant(s). If no administrators are reachable, authority defaults to the Police Department leadership chain. Committee agreed this system functions well but needs formal written documentation. Council member Berger will draft a formal chain-of-command policy.

**Drug Testing and Safety Officer Procedures**

A recent accident involving a Service Department employee highlighted confusion about the drug-testing protocol. The Village's current drug-testing vendor is going out of business at the end of the year. The Fiscal Officer will research other vendors. The Drug Free Safety Policy should be reviewed and potentially updated next year.

**Hiring Process Revisions**

Committee reviewed problems in a recent hiring cycle where references were contacted too early. There are currently two hiring policies in place, one for the Police Department and one for the remainder of the employees. Given the police require a more thorough background search and the pension board requires a more thorough physical, etc. it was decided there will be revisions to the handbook where there will be one checklist with an additional section of the advanced requirements of the Police Department.



Reference requests should be on a separate page of the application, and reference checks are to be conducted only after the preliminary department interview and before a joint committee/mayor interview. The checks are to be done by the Department Head or HR (Fiscal Officer), not elected officials. All interviews must take place on Village property. The Police Department will continue to conduct surface-level and advanced background investigations.

### **Physical and Psychological Evaluations**

Committee agreed to reinstating uniform pre-employment testing for all departments to include physical and psychological testing. Police Department candidates will have advanced physical exams as required by OP&F. The FO and the Police Chief will research available providers and draft a unified policy covering physical and psychological testing and bring it back to HR.

### **Probationary Period Policy**

Committee discussed extending the probationary period from 6 months to 12 months. The committee agreed on the following approach:

- Employees continue to receive the 5% pay increase after 6 months upon satisfactory review.
- Performance probation continues through one full year.
- Applies to employees hired on or after Jan. 1, 2026.

A formal amendment to the Employee Handbook will be drafted.

### **Other Business**

- Chief Rizzo intends to recommend a Lieutenant promotion in January.
- An incident involving a dog bite was briefly discussed for workers' compensation context.
- FO to send out a request to Council for them to contact her with the committees they wish to serve on in 2026 in order of their priority choice.
- The committee would like to schedule a training session for early 2026 to review:
  - Sunshine Law & Ethics training and why the training is important for elected officials to take.
  - Budget and government accounting workshop.
- Council should schedule a strategic planning review (including facility & capital forecasting) in 2026.