

HR Committee Meeting
March 9, 2026, 7:00 a.m. Village Hall

The Human Resources Committee meeting was convened with Council Members Bell, Rensel, and Berger as well as the Chief of Police, and the Fiscal Officer.

The first item discussed was the possibility of scheduling a council retreat and training session for elected officials. The committee revisited a prior idea to hold a Saturday morning training session led by the Village Solicitor and the Fiscal Officer. The goal of the session would be to review how the Village government operates, the responsibilities of council, the budgeting process, and the management of Village funds. Members acknowledged that although council is already several months into the year, such a session would still be beneficial both for newer members and for experienced officials who could benefit from a refresher on procedures and financial processes.

The Fiscal Officer reported that she had begun reviewing possible dates and intended to coordinate with the solicitor regarding availability. During the discussion, the possibility of inviting resident Scott Allen, a former John Carroll University professor who now operates a consulting business specializing in leadership, professionalism, and team-building retreats, was raised. It was noted that Allen has presented regionally and nationally, including work with the Cleveland Clinic. Members noted that he could potentially contribute a focused one-hour session as part of a larger training morning.

Committee members recalled that Allen had previously been invited to facilitate a strategic planning session for the Village. However, the discussion at that time deviated from the intended agenda, resulting in the session being less productive than anticipated. Members reflected that the concept of “strategic planning” had not been clearly understood at the time and that the conversation quickly moved into operational details rather than maintaining a high-level strategic focus. Because of that experience, members emphasized that if Allen were invited again, the agenda should be clearly defined and followed. The committee agreed that a shorter, structured presentation—perhaps one hour within a broader three-hour training session—might be most effective.

Members discussed the possibility of structuring a Saturday work session from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., potentially dividing the time among several presenters, such as the Fiscal Officer, the Solicitor, and an outside speaker like Allen. The idea of periodic continuing education sessions for council members was also suggested if the initial session proved valuable.

The committee then moved to staffing matters. The Fiscal Officer reported that she received a good response to the Building Department Administrative Assistant job posting and in the process of reviewing applications.

Discussion then turned to the earlier proposal to dedicate part-time administrative hours to assist the Street Department. The Fiscal Officer stated that she had contacted the Street Commissioner several times and asked him to identify specific administrative needs. She indicated that she had not yet received a response outlining those needs. Committee members suggested that the topic

be added to the agenda for the upcoming Street Committee meeting so that the Commissioner could clarify whether additional administrative support would be beneficial.

The committee next discussed safety compliance responsibilities for the Street Department. The issue had previously been raised at a Streets Committee meeting, where the Street Commissioner stated that he had not been aware that he was responsible for serving as the safety compliance officer and indicated that he did not have a job description outlining those duties. It was also noted that the Village had not conducted formal training related to those responsibilities. The committee agreed that the job description for the Street Commissioner would likely need to be amended to formally incorporate safety compliance responsibilities.

This discussion expanded into a broader conversation about the need to review and update all Village job descriptions. Members noted that many positions have evolved significantly over time and that various responsibilities have been assumed informally under the “other duties as assigned” provision. Examples were provided illustrating how staff members have taken on duties not specifically reflected in their job descriptions, such as technology oversight, investment management, and Building Department administrative responsibilities. Committee members agreed that a comprehensive review and update of job descriptions would be appropriate to accurately reflect current duties.

The conversation then shifted to the organizational structure and oversight of the Building Department. The Fiscal Officer expressed concern that there is currently no clear department head actively managing the department. She explained that the mayor has not been regularly attending Building Committee meetings and has stepped back from day-to-day involvement. As a result, many administrative responsibilities related to the department have been falling to the administrative staff under her supervision.

She also described a recent situation in which a potential special meeting was discussed regarding a zoning matter that had escalated unnecessarily. Considerable staff time and resources were spent preparing for the possibility of the meeting before it became clear that the issue did not require formal action. The Fiscal Officer noted that because there is no clear departmental leadership, staff are often left scrambling to respond to issues that arise.

Committee members discussed the legal requirements for the position of Building Department head under the Ohio Revised Code, noting that the position must be held by a licensed building inspector. Because the Village’s former building official now works as a contractor rather than as an employee, it appears that no current employee meets the statutory qualifications to serve as the department head. The Fiscal Officer said she was not confident that was accurate, and she would check with the solicitor to verify. Nevertheless, members agreed that the department still requires administrative management and oversight, particularly as the Village transitions to new building software and anticipates upcoming staff changes.

Members reviewed the current organizational structure, noting that under the Village’s system, department heads typically report to the mayor, with the Fiscal Officer reporting to both the mayor and council. However, it was noted that discussions with the solicitor suggested that the reporting structure for department heads may need to be clarified and potentially revised so that

department heads report to both the mayor and council. The committee agreed that this issue should be addressed as part of the broader job description review.

At 8:16 a.m., Berger made a motion to enter executive session to consider the discipline of a public official pursuant to Section 121.22(G)(1) of the Ohio Revised Code and invited in the Fiscal Officer and Police Chief, seconded by Bell. Roll call – ayes, Berger, Bell, Rensel. Motion carried.

Meeting reconvened at 8:39 a.m.

The committee reviewed several personnel matters related to the Police Department. The Chief reported that at the upcoming council meeting he would recommend the promotion of Julie Aveni to the rank of Sergeant. He also planned to recommend the appointment of Justin Kimery as a full-time officer and Nicholas DiMaria as a part-time officer.

The Chief explained that DiMaria is new to law enforcement and currently works in the private sector in a hospital setting. For that reason, the department intends to begin his employment in a part-time capacity to allow him to adapt to the role. If his transition is successful, the department may consider promoting him to full-time status in April.

The Chief also explained that with the promotion of Aveni, the department would have two sergeants covering the night shift, ensuring supervisory coverage seven days per week. Another recently sworn-in officer, Steve Nadaud, is scheduled to begin work on March 16th. The various personnel changes will be timed to take effect at the beginning of the same pay period so that training and administrative paperwork can be coordinated efficiently.

The committee also briefly revisited the recent change to the comp-time bank policy for Village employees. Members reported that employees in the Service Department were pleased with the adjustment, as they had originally hoped for a lower cap and were satisfied with the final decision. Some concerns had been expressed regarding scheduling flexibility, but committee members emphasized that department supervisors remain responsible for approving time off and managing staffing levels.

The discussion then turned to employee evaluations. Members indicated that most staff evaluations were nearly complete and would be finalized soon.

The Fiscal Officer provided an update on occupational health and drug-free workplace services. She explained that the village's previous provider, Safety Controls, had gone out of business. The Village already maintains an account with University Hospitals for Department of Transportation drug testing for Service Department employees. That account has now been expanded to include pre-employment drug testing and Ohio Police and Fire pension physicals. Several testing locations are available, including one in Chardon, which will likely be the primary location used.

Toward the end of the meeting, several additional topics were raised. One council member suggested contacting teachers at Gurney Elementary School to ask if students might write thank-

you notes to police officers and Village employees in appreciation for their work during the heavy snow season. Members responded positively to the idea, noting that the police and service departments had worked extensively throughout the winter.

The Chief also informed the committee that he would be submitting a list of surplus items for disposal through GovDeals and wanted to make the committee aware that the matter would be presented for council approval.

The committee briefly discussed the possibility of removing two administrative vehicles from service and retaining only one, which would reduce insurance costs. Members indicated support for that approach.

Another issue raised involved the temporary absence of the Village's cleaning contractor. The Fiscal Officer explained that she had ordered cleaning supplies and the staff was willing to assist with cleaning, but expressed concern about the sustainability of that arrangement. Members agreed that it would be inappropriate for administrative staff to assume responsibility for cleaning bathrooms and other maintenance tasks. The possibility of hiring a temporary cleaning service was discussed, though it was noted that anyone with after-hours access to the Police Department would require background checks and fingerprinting. If that cannot be arranged, a cleaning service could be scheduled during regular business hours. Several members offered to explore possible cleaning service options, including individuals who already provide cleaning services for local organizations.

Finally, the committee discussed the status of the Farmers Market. Members noted that they had not yet received a formal request for the use of Village property for the upcoming season, even though planning would normally already be underway by March. Concerns were also raised about parking limitations and the impact of upcoming construction in the area. With the event growing significantly in size over the years, some members suggested exploring alternative locations with larger parking capacity, such as the Family Life Center or other nearby properties. However, it was acknowledged that moving the market outside the Village could raise cost or jurisdictional issues for that group. Members agreed that the organizers would need to submit the appropriate agreement and insurance documentation and that the matter would likely need further discussion with the Properties Committee.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:54 a.m.