

Village of Shawnee Hills Council Meeting Minutes

September 28, 2026

Mayor Mathews called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Council in Attendance: Mary Gates, Kathy Isern, Michael Koren, Justin LaRosa, Robert Thatcher and Todd Zimmerman

Also Present: Fiscal Officer Shirley Roskoski, Administrator Russell Baron and Solicitor Brian Zets

Minutes

It was moved by Zimmerman, seconded by Isern to approve the minutes of September 14, 2026. Following vote on the motion is recorded; yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, LaRosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman. Nay, none.

Agenda

It was moved by Zimmerman, seconded by LaRosa to approve the agenda. Following vote on the motion is recorded; yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, LaRosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman. Nay, none.

Solicitor

Brian – I attended the Evans Farm JEDD Board meeting last week.

Village Administrator

Russ – Fall Festival is this Saturday from 2-7. Live music will be at Glick Park starting at 7:00 p.m. The Village has been recognized by MORPC for Sustainable 2050. We started this several years ago and Curtis was able to tie it all together. We received a bronze status, which was the highest level of participation we could get due to our size.

Sewers – We have had significant infiltration into our sewers. We have narrowed it down and repairs were made, but we are still having infiltration and trying to figure out where the rest is coming from. To put that into perspective, when it rains, we rush out and start popping manholes and pray we find the right one based off of water running that shouldn't be running or running faster than it should be. There was a lateral hit on Shawnee Trail, someone's service, caused by AT & T putting their cable through the lateral. There are probably some others along Shawnee Trail. I want to ask the residents along Shawnee Trail to please call us if you notice anything different with your sewer. We will start using our camera to look at the lateral lines.

Last year we talked about a Healthy Communities grant that Delaware County Public Health offers about a fitness trail. I did submit the grant for the fitness trail. It would be three signs in three different parks and there will be a QR code to scan, and you would do your cardio thing. These signs will be at Buckeye Drive, Monahan Park and Frambes Park.

MainStreet Plan – ODOT denied our funds again and asked us to change the project. They asked us to remove some things from the project and we resubmitted, and then they denied it because we didn't have those things that we removed from the project in there. We are resubmitting in

November for Ohio Public Works Funds. There will be legislation coming before council to support the submittal of the grant.

I spoke with Curtis, and he identified an area we could use for people to have a shortcut from here to Eli Pinney. We are going to research this some more and try to get MORPC involved since they are all about linking communities with trails. We spoke with MORPC about linking us all the way to Home Road.

America in Bloom Symposium – Last week, it was supposed to be Zach and Richard attending the symposium with Morag, Tom and Craig. I found out that I was nominated for one of the awards personally, so Curtis and I decided to drive there. It was a big trip for the village, and we haven't done anything like this before. I did put together a summary for everyone, kind of detailing what it was about and our experience there, some things that we learned and some photographs of our employees at that symposium and some testimonials from the employees. The best one was from Zach. He and Richard, who has worked here for a long time, came back energized and looking forward to some of the projects. Not just the Blooms, the environmental initiatives, but his job overall. They connected with a lot of folks, they learned a lot and I think it was beneficial overall. We won two major awards while we were there. The population category, we scored the highest in the category of less than 1,350 residents. Out of everyone that is in the pool of Blooms, we received Butterfly City USA for 2026. Morag was wearing the butterfly shirt they gave us. We will have to pass the shirt on to another community next year. We also received runner up for Community Involvement, Urban Forestry, Leading through the Seasons, our seasonal displays that we put around the village, and our Sunfinity Seed Sunflower award for a display we had in one of the parks. Craig Baldrige, Kim Lascola and I were up for the Community Champion Award. Overall, sitting in that room, again, Shawnee Hills was on that screen seven times. The communities that we visited while we were there were similar, different demographics, different socioeconomical environment but similarly situated to Washington D.C as we are to Columbus and they were all around the same size as our community. One was smaller. We received our report from the visit we had this summer. We found some items I think we can take care of.

Police Chief Report

Fall Festival is this Saturday from 2:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m. Lt. Gerdeman and I will be at the Police Booth near the kid's area from 3:00 – 6:00. Open for conversation with the community. If anyone has questions about the police department, why we do something, how we do something; we will be there. Happy to chat.

Our agency has begun the Ohio Collaborative Law Enforcement Accreditation Program. We were the first agency in Central Ohio to achieve the Collaborative standards certification. We have met 8 standards now and we continue to meet those standards. Now, we have been asked to be the first small agency in the State of Ohio to go through the accreditation program which expands on that. It's free. It expands on the requirements, policies and practices in the department. They did it onsite, two weeks ago, and they think we are going to breeze through it. We have an emergency operations plan for the village, and we activated it when the power went out. We opened this building for a warming center. It calls for a two-year update and that should be coming to council soon.

Vehicles – We just bought the Tahoe, and I have seen that there have been some questions and I want to run through the process. Four years ago, when we bought the 2023, the idea was that in a few years it was going to be kicked into the fleet and be part of the police fleet. Then we would replace that with another Tahoe. Currently sitting, we stepped back and looked at the cost of the cars, return on investment and the cost of ownership of the cars. Right now, on the market there is a Dodge Durango, Dodge Charger, Chevy Blazer EV, Chevy Tahoe and a Ford Interceptor. We have been down the Charger route, and other agencies are shying away from the Chargers due to availability issues and suspension issues. The Ford Interceptor, which we currently have, has a high cost of ownership and maintenance. We are putting a lot of money into these cars to keep them on the road. The Dodge Durango has engine issues, and I assume it has the same suspension that the Charger has. We determined, two years ago, that we wanted to go the route towards the Chevy. That's when we purchased the first Tahoe. When looking at the prices, it is really easy to say it is a \$75,000.00 vehicle. State of Ohio has bid pricing for these cars. When we buy the cars we buy them at a significantly discounted rate. The discounted rate for the Chevy Tahoe is \$55,223.00. The discounted rate for the Ford Interceptor is \$55,413.00. Two hundred dollars more than the Chevy Tahoe. The three cars sitting in our lot, if purchased today, would cost us more money than the Chevy Tahoe. The return on investment, The lower maintenance cost and the versatility of the Tahoe far outweigh that of the Ford Interceptor. Part of our conversation, village wide, is how do we become more sustainable, more green and how to cut cost. Being a small community, we settled on the Chevy Blazer EV, which comes in at \$48,000.00. Roughly three to ten thousand dollars cheaper than any other model on this list. We have visited other agencies, we have driven the car, we have spoken with Chevy and spoken to five different agencies that have these cars in their fleet and we feel that switching to the Chevy Blazer EV is the best option for our daily patrol cars. The only hitch with the EV is the weigh more and the tend to tear through the tires. There are no oil changes, no routine maintenance; we just have to make sure we rotate the tires and replace them as necessary. The Blazer EV has a 5-year warranty, a basic 8-year warranty, 100 % covered on the batteries. The Tahoe has a 3-year basic, 5-year powertrain. The best way we can see a return on investment is to switch all the cars out at one time. We have three EVs on order and we will trade in all the Fords to help offset that cost. We will see an immediate savings on our budget in year one after we put the infrastructure in. It will be an immediate savings on fuel. Any way we look at it, we have to buy police cars and I will tell you why. The 2014 Ford interceptor has 74,000.00 miles on it. Idle equivalent is 104,000.00 miles on it. The 2017 Ford Interceptor has 123,000.00 miles on it. Idle equivalent is 153,000.00. The 2020 has 40,000.00 miles on it. Idle equivalent is 80,000.00 miles. The 2017 and the 2014 we have sunk thousands of dollars in to keep these cars on the road. The 2020 is already showing the same signs as the 2017 was showing last year. The 2023 Tahoe that I passed to Lt. Gerdeman has 30,000.00 miles on it. Has no mechanical issues. The only thing we had to do is change the tires. It is currently waiting for upfitting. It has not lived a life of normal police cars. It isn't sitting idling for hours on end. Upfitting is between four and six months. The reason why we jumped to buy the Tahoe was because one cruiser was totaled and we had two cars sitting at Grismer getting thousands of dollars of repair work done. The EV's are ordered and it will be anywhere from now until 6 months to come in.

Mayor Mathews – I can't say enough about what Craig Baldrige, the Millers and Kim Lascola do. Also, Richard and Zach. The commitment to this and the community is outstanding. It's nice to be recognized outside of the village alongside larger communities. I congratulate them all.

Communications

Mayor Mathews -We met with the potential buyer of the cell tower lot. I think they are going to fine tune the concept and submit an application.

Pro tem Report

Pro tem Thatcher – I attended the economic conference hosted by Buckeye Bank. It included a report on the Intel plant, with a lot of pictures. They had the CEO of Donatos there, which is an Ohio based corporation. They had a panel talk about the economic viability of Central Ohio. It was a very interesting four plus hours. The keynote speaker was Jim Tressel. The man is an amazing speaker and spoke very well about the things he has going on and what he has been doing as Lt. Governor.

Committee Report

Council member Isern – Evans Farm JEDD Board met. We elected a new Vice Chair due to a resignation. We are not looking at any expenditures for infrastructure immediately until we have more money.

Council member LaRosa – UST met tonight. Russ covered everything we talked about. Sewer infiltration, Main Street Plan.

Council member Zimmerman – PAC met on the 16th. We discussed the butterfly wings. Maggie and Dan Boggess cut them out and paint them. At the fall fest there will be a local artist tent plus the PAC will be there. They will have a painted leaf project for the kids to do. In January or February, we will have kids come to the municipal building to paint the bat houses’

Bills

It was moved by Isern, seconded by Zimmerman to pay the bills in the amount of \$61,695.14. Following vote on the motion is recorded; yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, LaRosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman. Nay, none.

Treasurer’s Report

It was moved by Zimmerman, seconded by Thatcher to approve the following treasurer’s report:

General Fund	463,057.56	Fire Fund	138,674.93
Street Fund	102,097.91	Weed Fund	258.33
State Hwy.	51,699.79	TIF	49,869.30
PD Body Armor	2,057.83	TIF 2	78,574.38
Cont. Prof. Training	13,774.84	Police Dist. Fund	30,814.04
Drug Law Enfct.	534.31	Veteran’s Memorial	298.97
Indigent Drivers	385.84	Sewer Operating	54,665.11
Law Enforcement Trust	3,852.20	Sewer Replacement	1,910.00
Enfct. & Education	1,930.98	Storm Sewer Fund	39,698.16
OneOhio	800.11	Enterprise Improv.	23,010.08

Evans Farm JEDD 22,767.39 Debt Service Fund 91,604.88

For a total of \$1,327,790.49.

Following vote on the motion is recorded; yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, LaRosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman. Nay, none.

Executive Session

At 7:34 p.m., it was moved by Thatcher, seconded by Koren to adjourn from regular session and move into executive session pursuant to R.C. 121.22(G)(3) to conference with the solicitor concerning a dispute involving the village that is the subject of a pending court action. Following vote on the motion is recorded: yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, Larosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman.

Nay, none.

At 8:23 p.m., it was moved by Thatcher, seconded by Isern to return to regular session.

Following vote on the motion is recorded: yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, Larosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman. Nay, none.

Adjournment

There being no further business, it was moved Gates, seconded by Thatcher to adjourn.

Following vote on the motion is recorded; yea, 6; Gates, Isern, Koren, LaRosa, Thatcher and Zimmerman. Nay, none. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.