

## TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

### MEETING MINUTES FROM: May 4, 2026

Council called to order in regular session at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Matthew Shanahan presiding. Opening ceremony: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Shanahan. Roll call of members: Brenda Mackey, here; Connie Mehring, absent at roll call, but arrived at 7:01 p.m.; Mark Smith, here; Robert Bergfeld, absent at roll call, but arrived at 7:10 p.m.; Paul Neal, here; Keri Hain, here. Also present was Zoning Inspector Brad Hain and Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Deputy M. Meyers, from the Wood County Sheriff's Office. Minutes from the April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as submitted.

**FINANCE and CLAIMS:** A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilwoman Mackey made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilman Neal seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Copies of the April Bank Reconciliation, Fund Status, Revenue Status, and Appropriation Status reports were given to the mayor and the Finance Committee to review.

Mayor Shanahan did a third reading, by title only, of Resolution #994-26, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2027 WOOD COUNTY PARK DISTRICT PARKS GRANT PROGRAM. Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution #994-26. Councilman Neal seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried.

Mayor Shanahan did a second reading, by title only, of Resolution #996-26, CONTRACT TO FURNISH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BETWEEN WOOD COUNTY, OHIO AND THE VILLAGE OF TONTOGANY.

Mayor Shanahan did a first reading, by title only, of Ordinance #997-26, ORDINANCE ADOPTING VILLAGE CYBER SECURITY POLICIES, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. The mayor commented that we are not declaring an emergency. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger clarified that Solicitor Skaff advised giving this ordinance the normal three readings, even though it is worded as an emergency measure, and then to suspend the rules and declare an emergency after the third reading, so that the ordinance goes into effect immediately to meet the requirement of Ohio Revised Code 9.64 to adopt and implement cybersecurity policies and protocols before July 1, 2026.

Copies of the April incident report were provided to everyone. Mayor Shanahan asked if members had any questions or concerns for the visiting deputy. There were none. With nothing more to discuss, the mayor thanked Deputy Meyers and he left the meeting.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported on upcoming hall rentals scheduled in May and June: Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>. He commented that people have contacted him with interest in other dates as well, but have not yet finalized reservations.

**ZONING:** Zoning Inspector Hain reported that he noticed that they have a dumpster at the place with the problem camper situation. He reminded members that we are giving them a little time, but he hoped that the dumpster means they are working on cleaning things out. He said he will be working late hours next week, but he will be going there again sometime to have another conversation with them.

Mayor Shanahan mentioned the need to send a tow truck to the house on Lincoln Street where the vehicle has been sitting in the driveway for years with a flat tire and without proper registration. He stated that the property owner has been notified with a letter and has not responded. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger asked the mayor what Zoning Inspector Hain's next move would be about this problem. The mayor answered that he will get with Mr. Hain to fill him in on what we have done so far, since everything we have done was before he became zoning inspector; then we will set up a plan to get the vehicle removed.

Councilwoman Mackey asked Mayor Shanahan if he found out anything about dealing with the cat problem brought up at the last meeting. The mayor answered that he had emailed Solicitor Skaff (copied also to Zoning Inspector Hain and Councilman Smith) and let him know about the issues concerning

## TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

upwards of eleven cats causing problems in town, and that residents had voiced their concerns at a council meeting, along with pictures and videos. He said he asked Mr. Skaff if any of the other villages he works with might have an ordinance that we could adopt for ourselves to hold residents accountable. The mayor said he did not feel that Mr. Skaff gave a clear answer on that question. Instead, he told us that pretty much the only legal thing we could do is a TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return). The mayor said he let Mr. Skaff know that we didn't want the problem cats returned, but removed. Mr. Skaff then mentioned that Weston has a program to handle their cats. The mayor said he therefore sent a text to the mayors of Weston, Haskins, and Grand Rapids, telling them about our issues with eleven feral cats and asking them if they also had cat issues and, if so, how they handled it. He said Weston's Mayor Easterwood responded almost right away and said they use their Suburban Natural Gas grant to pay for TNR (there is a fee per cat for TNR services); they also purchased live traps with the Suburban money. Councilman Smith remarked that TNR fees are \$40 per cat, and the mayor added that the fees can go up to \$65 per cat. The mayor commented that we would have to have someone go out and trap the cats as the first step for a TNR to happen. The mayor posed a challenge that we face: we could go to the resident(s) where we think the problem started, but the resident(s) can deny owning any cats. So, it turns into a "he said, she said" situation, and we need to be able to prove responsibility if we are going to hold someone accountable. Councilman Neal asked about the Humane Society. The mayor responded that he had reached out to the Humane Society and they also talked about the TNR, at \$65 per cat. The mayor said he had asked Solicitor Skaff about a possible ordinance so we would have something with which to hold people accountable, but Mr. Skaff did not yet give a clear answer on an ordinance. Members discussed possible solutions and possible unintended problems concerning dealing with the issue of feral cats, with no clear solution decided upon at this time.

**UTILITIES:** Mayor Shanahan reported that he spoke with Utilities Superintendent Johnson about the repaired spot on Tontogany Road in front of the Legion, which he had also received a call about from Steve Powell. The mayor said he went and looked at it himself and thought it looked like the edge of the patch had been paved properly. However, Mr. Johnson told him that there is another dip forming in the other lane across from the patch and he was wondering if there is an issue there. The mayor said he asked Mr. Johnson to follow up on it. Councilwoman Hain and Zoning Inspector Hain commented that the edge of the patch is still broken and not repaired properly. The mayor acknowledged that he may not have seen it clearly, but he reiterated that he had asked Mr. Johnson to look into the matter again.

Councilman Neal reported regarding the water utility that had been discussed and the rate increases that were approved a couple of meetings ago. He said he had asked Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger if it was possible to get some of our annual financial data for the water fund, which Mr. Harnishfeger provided. Mr. Neal passed out copies of the 5-Year Comparison of Total Revenue & Expenses and End of Year Fund Balances report that Mr. Harnishfeger had provided, as well as Mr. Neal's 5-Year Comparison Review giving his observations about the numbers. He told members that he brought this up because he thought it would be nice to have these annual numbers from time to time when we want to talk about the water fund. Councilwoman Mackey voiced her agreement. Mr. Neal commented that Mr. Harnishfeger told him it was easy to provide these numbers each year after finishing the annual financial report. Mr. Neal pointed members to his observations on the 5-Year Comparison Review sheet. He noted that his first observation was that water revenue had exceeded water expenses every year from 2021 through 2024. He also observed that the end-of-year water fund balance increased by 47% over the last five years. He commented that those are some pretty good numbers. But he noted he had observed that in 2025 things turned south: expenses for 2025 exceeded revenue by 14%; expenses for 2025 were 28% higher than the average expenses of the previous four years; and 2025 revenue was 12% lower than the average revenue in the previous four years (a double whammy of greater expenses and lower revenues in 2025). Mr. Neal then pointed out the good news that the first quarter report that Mr. Harnishfeger had sent to everyone showed that water revenue exceeded water expenses in the first

## TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

quarter of 2026. He commented that there may have been a variety of reasons for the difference in 2025, some of which he listed at the bottom of his review sheet. He noted that we had issues with the meter reading device and he wondered if there may have been some unbilled water usage. He also noted that water leaks cause losses of water revenue. And he commented that the Backflow Preventer Project had added \$40,000 to our water expenses, not to mention how much water may have been lost there. Mr. Neal told the mayor and members that he was not trying to make any conclusions, but he was trying to suggest that these numbers are readily available after the first of the year and, since he is on the Utilities Committee, he would like to volunteer to update the 5-year chart sometime probably in April each year with the latest data supplied by the fiscal officer, so we can get a good picture of where the water fund stands. He said he will probably do the same thing for electric, but he wanted to focus on water since it was the most recent thing we talked about. The mayor and members thanked Councilman Neal.

Utilities Clerk Harnishfeger reported that he had his first remote Teams meeting with Muni-Link on April 30<sup>th</sup>. He said they went over a basic proposed implementation schedule that included a Go Live date of August 31<sup>st</sup> and the completing of one billing cycle by October 2<sup>nd</sup>. He said they gave him 29 pages of questions to answer, as well as 2 more pages of "homework." He told members that part of the process will be for Muni-Link to convert the data in our current utility database to the Muni-Link database. He said they asked him to contact Tyler Technologies to ask them to produce the files needed for the data conversion. Mr. Harnishfeger said he contacted a technician at Tyler Tech that he has dealt with before and requested the data file(s) that Muni-Link needs for the conversion. He said the technician told him how he could run a program within our Fundbalance UB-Win software to produce the file or files needed by Muni-Link. If that data does not meet Muni-Link's requirements, then Mr. Harnishfeger will have to call Tyler Tech again to do it, but there will be a fee for doing so. Mr. Harnishfeger told members that the Muni-Link implementation rep told him that sometimes utility software companies are reluctant to be cooperative in the process of helping a customer move to another company's utilities software solution, and they have been known to charge as much as \$10,000 to assist in the process. Mr. Harnishfeger said he would try the method the Tyler Tech technician suggested, but he can't guarantee it will work, so he wanted Council to be forewarned of a possible extra expense for data conversion. He also told members that the Muni-Link rep had suggested that he try to impress upon Council that they should try to get another person in place to take the Muni-Link training along with Mr. Harnishfeger, because they would have to charge a training fee again for a new person to take over, if Mr. Harnishfeger retires without a replacement having already been trained in the use of Muni-Link. Mr. Harnishfeger said he wasn't sure when training would start, but the proposed schedule looked like maybe in July.

Mayor Shanahan reported that Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger had shared with him a résumé that we received for the fiscal officer position. He added that we are in the process of reviewing that information.

**STREETS and ALLEYS:** Councilman Smith reported that he received an estimate from Morlock for crack sealing on North Street and Washington Street, a total of 14,932 linear feet for \$6,300 (\$3,870 for North Street and \$2,430 for Washington Street). He said he had not heard anything back from them yet on the chip sealing for Broad Street, but they are waiting for our decision on the crack sealing estimate. Councilman Neal asked if there are two types of sealing—latex and oil. Mr. Smith answered that he didn't know about different types of sealing; he just asked for a quote for them to do crack sealing the same way they have done it for us before. Mr. Neal commented that he just had his driveway sealed and he was told afterward that he did the wrong thing. He said he hadn't asked and they sealed it with a latex sealer, when it had actually needed an oil sealer. Councilman Bergfeld and Councilman Smith clarified that they are not sealing the asphalt of the streets, but they are just filling the cracks with a sealer. Mr. Smith asked again if Council wanted to move on the crack sealing. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger

## TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

commented that it helps to save the streets from breaking up and needing repaved. Mr. Smith agreed that crack sealing adds a few more years to the streets and North and Washington Streets are the last two in town that still need to be done besides Broad Street. Councilwoman Mehring asked if there was enough money to do it. Mr. Harnishfeger replied that plenty of money was appropriated to cover the cost. Councilwoman Mehring said she thought we should do it if it will save the streets for another couple of years, and she made a motion to accept Morlock's quote of \$6,300 to do crack sealing on North Street and Washington Street. Councilman Smith seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Councilwoman Mackey asked if Morlock was going to give a quote for Broad Street, including lines. Mr. Smith responded that he is waiting on the estimate from them to do chip sealing and painting of Broad Street. He said he would ask for an update on that when he emails them about the crack sealing estimate having been approved.

**SIDEWALKS and TREES:** Councilman Smith reported that he has been busy trying to get other things done, so he didn't have much to report on sidewalks. He still needs to contact people and get a firm decision from them on whether they want to participate in the sidewalk program or not. He suggested that maybe we could find some time on weekends to go out and talk to people. Councilwoman Mackey agreed.

**DRAINS and SEWERS:** Mayor Shanahan reminded members that Councilwoman Mackey had reported that Ron Mackey dug a trench at the park to drain off the standing water. Ms. Mackey commented that she thought it should handle the problem unless we get a torrential downpour, but she would keep an eye on it.

Zoning Inspector Hain asked if a vac truck was going to be brought in to deal with the drainage problem on Main Street that was talked about at the last meeting. Mayor Shanahan answered that he didn't think about that when he was talking to Utilities Superintendent Johnson, but he would follow up with him about it.

**CITY HALL and PARKS:** Councilwoman Mehring reported a hole at Mehring Park and the need for a mat under a swing there. Councilwoman Mackey commented that she hasn't checked Centennial Park to see if we need some mats there as well. She said maybe we just need to order some additional mats. Councilman Smith remarked that he just inherited about 300 horse stall mats that he doesn't know what he will do with, so the village is welcome to take one for the park. Ms. Mehring also reported that the merry-go-round at Centennial Park needs filled in around it. The mayor commented that we could put dirt in there but it will go back to like it was before, due to a lot of use it gets with kids running around it. Councilwoman Hain suggested maybe putting some of Mr. Smith's horse stall mats around it. The mayor commented that, if we spend money to put something in there, it will just be gone in a couple of weeks, especially with the end of the school year coming and all of the classes walking down there to use the park. He suggested that we wait until after the end of school days to look at it again and see if we want to do something.

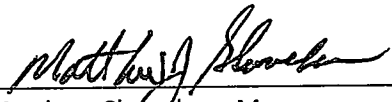
Councilwoman Mackey reported that she was contacted by Renewed Outdoors, wanting to know if we wanted an estimate on mulch for the parks. She said it was the year before last that we had it done and she thought we could probably let it go another year before doing it again. Councilman Smith agreed that it is still safe and in good enough condition to go another year without re-mulching.

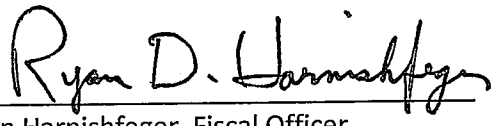
Councilwoman Mehring reported that she tried putting in some plants at Mehring Park again to see if they will work.

Mayor Shanahan told members that he would send out a text to see if there may be a Sunday afternoon or an evening when we can go around and get some veteran banners put up before Memorial Day. He said we have new brackets in the office, and he noticed that we have one broken banner bracket on Tontogany Creek Road by the Carryout.

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew Shanahan, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer