

VILLAGE OF OAKWOOD
WORK SESSION MINUTES
2024-2-13

ATTENDANCE

Erica Nikolic, President
Johnnie Warren, President Pro-Tem
Taunya Scruggs, Ward 1
Eloise Hardin, Ward 2
Paggie Matlock, Ward 3
Mary Davis, Ward 4
Candace Williams, Ward 5

ABSENT

Ed Hren, Village Engineer	Carlean Perez – Recreation Director
Ross Cirincione, Prosecutor	Gary V Gottschalk, Mayor
James Climer, Law Director	Tom Haba, Service Director
Dave Tapp, Fire Department	Mark Garratt, Police Department
Brian Thompson, Finance Director	Daniel Marinucci, Chief Bldg. Official

Meeting opened at 9:34pm by Nikolic

Nikolic: First we have,

2024-WS-02(Amended) Introduced 2-13-24 By Mayor	AN ORDINANCE GRANTING A FIVE PERCENT (5%) PAY RAISE TO RETROACTIVE TO JANUARY 1, 2024, TO ALL NON-ELECTED EMPLOYEES OF THE VILLAGE OTHER THAN MEMBERS OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNIT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY
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Nikolic: I believe we can leave this for now, as we do not have the documents to discuss it. Is there any other discussion that we could have outside of waiting for the documents that we requested? Maybe we can create that list that we want to send to them. I know what I've requested. So, if everybody knows what they've requested, we can email it to Tanya. Then she can collate it and send a final request to Brian so he has that. Then CC us so we all see that he knows what he should get to us by next Monday or Tuesday. I believe that's what he said.

Williams: I'm also going to add some language that you can include from Council. Regarding the March 31st deadline. **Joseph:** Okay. **Williams:** Just so he's aware that those documents are necessary in order for us to move. I just want that to be very clear. Because I don't want to get to March 31st and it's like Council won't approve the budget for the Village. No, we asked for documents. **Warren:** I just suggested, as a follow up to what Councilperson Williams is saying. Make sure that it's said that this has been requested more than once. You know, this has been requested repeatedly or something to that nature. **Hardin:** So, when do we want to have it by? Would tomorrow be enough time or do you need more days if we email our request of what we want from Mr. Thompson to you? We're supposed to email it to you and then you're going to...

Nikolic: Right, I'm thinking that... **Warren:** Brian is out of town. **Davis:** I know he's on the road. **Nikolic:** Right, by tomorrow we all send our list. I know we've sent it before, but let's get

our updated list. In case we all individually, to Tanya by tomorrow, let's say noon. Then she can CC us all what she sends to Brian. So, we can be mindful of everybody else's list. Any further discussion on this legislation? **Hardin:** I have a question; we're talking about money. Why didn't we get this tonight? **Nikolic:** It's on the agenda. So typically, I mean, they're items that we're going to discuss. It's going to be under matters deemed appropriate. Typically, you would get an agenda with the items listed out. But there are many things to discuss. Unfinished business that we discussed in organizational meeting. Or if you would rather leave those to another meeting. We can schedule an entire organizational meeting, as this work session was specifically for the legislation. But I think there's a few things we can get through tonight, so we don't leave it.

Williams: We can discuss whatever we want to in work session. **Nikolic:** Okay, so the first thing I'd like to discuss. I'll get through my list and then everybody can discuss what they want. **Davis:** Can we go back to the ordinance, I just had one question on it. We had it on the actual reading, too, so do we... **Williams:** No, we didn't. **Davis:** Didn't we get a new amended one today?

Williams: No, the actual legislation was amended but it was still in the work session. **Joseph:** Yeah, just to add a line to it. **Davis:** What did he add to it? I couldn't figure it out. **Joseph:** What was added was the 5% raise was subjected to the supervisor's approval. **Davis:** Okay. **Nikolic:** And this I just wanted to say, this is from my request. I asked for specific per employee. This was not useful because my request was that they give recommendations per employee. Saying that they approved a recommendation up to 5% does not get us anywhere. So, although this they provided this. This does not fulfill my request. **Williams:** You asked them to send us this?

Nikolic: I asked him to send us manager and director recommendations for pay raises, specific. So, this employee should get 2%, this employee should get three, this employee should get five. And this is what he sent and it's basically a letter... **Williams:** Basically, saying we don't have the authority to do budget which is... **Nikolic:** I don't know, he's basically saying they approve it. Meaning they agree that it's okay if we go up to 5%, which is not what we're asking for.

Williams: This is saying they have a sole discretion to do it with the approval of the Mayor. Like we don't have to (inaudible) which is a false statement. **Hardin:** Which does not refer to anything to do with the budget. **Nikolic:** Please be mindful of the language. This is the Police Chiefs, so they are under collective bargaining. So, I'm not sure that... **Williams:** We still have to approve theirs. The language is just not factual in any of them. **Warren:** All of them are saying the same thing. **Williams:** Nobody has the sole discretion with the budget, we appropriate the budget period point blank. **Nikolic:** Yeah, the language, this does not help. This isn't what I asked for. **Hardin:** May I ask you one more question since you requested it. Legislation 2024-02, did you see what that is? That has nothing to do with it. **Williams:** It Refers to the engineers, a specification for a bid for a project. So, I don't even know why 2024-02 was in there. **Nikolic:** This isn't what I asked for. I said, Mayor, can you have a director say this employee should get three or five. Then we can base our appropriation based on their recommendations. So, I was expected to get specific recommendations per employees. Which they did not provide, this is a wastepaper. **Davis:** She said that the new amended one is about the supervisor. But this one does not say anything about supervisor. **Joseph:** Where are you looking? **Williams:** The language. **Davis:** The language for the work session. **Joseph:** It is in the legislation. **Williams:** No, within the legislation, go to the legislation. **Davis:** Okay, thank you. **Nikolic:** Regardless of what this letter says, it does not fulfill my request. It was an attempt to get us to vote on it tonight. I told

him this does not suffice to make us vote on it tonight. So, this we can scrap. **Matlock:** All it did was really... **Davis:** Agitate, I thought it made like a hornet's nest to me. **Williams:** Yeah, it was just completely... And to have it delivered to my house after you told me you can't deliver my stuff anymore. Like, so you deliver when you want to deliver. It was just completely disrespectful and out of context and not factual. The legislation cited was not correct. This is clearly like nobody is working together. You're trying to create an environment where we're working against each other. And it doesn't need to be that way, nor does it have to be. **Matlock:** And matter of fact, for personnel matters. When you're requesting that they say or state how much percentage would be the percentage of each employee. That should basically be not on paper like that. That should be in front of every individual manager or director of that department. They should sit down and talk to us confidentially and tell us, I think this person. But it's got to be based off of their job description and off of what their actual salary is. When was the last time they had an increase? Does the job really sustain for them to get percentage on they or increase? Because we need to find out, first of all, all these jobs, who is in them? We don't know who in these jobs. If the job is obsolete and they don't need it anymore. We give up the five, three, or two percent, no. **Nikolic:** I agree. **Williams:** Mr. Haba should be in executive session. **Matlock:** That should be in an executive session, and that should be with each individual director. Because really, honestly, they tried to put our backs up against the wall. Because, you know, intimidation doesn't really get it. But the point is behind it. They should not even be discussing their salaries with other employees. Even though we see that they do. **Williams:** And I want to be clear, our backs are against the wall for state-imposed deadline on March 31st. However, we can also say that we are passing another temporary budget as our full measure budget. That is completely legal and allowable. Then we can do a full, once they do everything we want. So, our backs aren't up against the wall. We would like to have it done by March 31st, but we do still have another option. **Warren:** Then the other option we have is that we can always amend the budget any time. **Williams:** That's what we will have to. **Warren:** I'm saying that even if we submitted it March 31st. On June 1st we can still amend the budget based on expenditures or whatever. **Williams:** Right. **Nikolic:** Any further discussion on legislation? I'm going to move through these quickly. This the unfinished business from our organizational meeting and some updates. Number one-time clocks, it was brought to my attention that some employees are now using them more than before. My question to you all is do we still want to codify process? Because I know last time, Councilwoman Williams, the question was, how are we going to manage this? They're punching the time clocks and now what? We need to meet and codify once they've punched the time clocks they're going to be porting to. And once that happens, do we want them to be providing their hours on a regular basis? What are your thoughts on that? Do we want to codify something? **Williams:** If we don't do that, nothing is going to change. Also, we should follow up with saying. As part of our finance report, we want you to give us a monthly report of people's hours. We're not going to be diving into them all the time. But that will start to get things in control in terms of people taking off time. And it's not being accurately recorded. Like they will know we are paying attention. They as in the Finance Department. We just make it part of our finance report. Print that out because it comes from the system. It should be already done, you're clicking buttons. That is part of our report. Then that way, we start keeping up with the management of this process and ensuring that it's happening.

That is my recommendation. **Nikolic:** My second question is, it appears that it's just the hourly employees that have been added. I don't know exactly; we can talk to Brian at the finance meeting. But looking at it, and I don't know if this is executive session, you guys correct me. But do we also want to look at a conflict-of-interest clause where directors. For example, cannot be employing themselves for tasks they should be hired for. So right now, we have a part time director. She works Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Her classes are at 11am, she's there from 8am to 3:30pm. Should we also be requiring part-time directors to be punching the clock? Because how many hours is a part time employee required to work before leads into personal time? So, I don't know, she's there from 8am to 3pm. She's doing a workout class from 11 to something else. Should we either one does a conflict of interest that will prevent a director from hiring themselves to do a task that they should be hiring another person to do? Because right now, there's no other fitness instructor, no classes in the evening. And right now, if I'm a director and I'm going to hire myself, you know, to clean the rooms, to go get this. Should we look at a conflict-of-interest clause where directors are not permitted to do that? **Williams:** Well, I think the bigger issue is not directors. But do we want hourly and salary individuals to clock in, that's the broader issue. It's who we are asking to punch the time clock. Because there are salary people that punch a time clock too. So that that could be the thing. But I don't think that's necessarily a conflict of interest right there. That just goes back to, we're not getting pay ordinances done. Like, we didn't even know she was being paid as much as she was being paid. So, if we have the pay ordinances in place. Those things should be coming to us. **Nikolic:** I do see it as a conflict of interest. Because when you see that there once was a team of fitness instructor. **Williams:** Oh, it is a conflict. **Nikolic:** Now, I'm the only one that's teaching the classes, and there's none in the evening. The response that I received was there was no participation. Well, the residents say that's not accurate. **Williams:** That's not accurate. **Davis:** I went to her class yesterday, it was 11am to 11:45am. I wanted to see, there were like thirty something people there. There were only like 12 of us that signed in. She didn't require all the other ones to sign in. So, I don't even know if they're from Oakwood, or if they're from other cities. I mean, she had 30 something people there, but we don't know. She had us sign in if we were from... I was number nine and there was only a couple of people. But then she told us right after. That she's going to her wellness doctor appointment because she has a doctor appointment at 12:45pm for a wellness check. So, she was leaving after that class, and nobody...I mean, that's another thing. **Williams:** So, that's a good point because when we talk about things that should be revenue producing. If you have people from other communities coming. I pay for all my gym memberships. So, they should be paying \$10 per, that can create a little bit of revenue. For us to purchase supplies, equipment, whatever. **Davis:** We used to have to pay many years ago. Like I said there were almost 30 people there and only about 8 people to 12 people signed it. **Nikolic:** And if that's happening four times a week. **Matlock:** There are a lot of individuals in that 11am class. It is a good class don't get me wrong, it is an excellent class. But a lot of those individuals are not from Oakwood. **Davis:** I don't think they were; I didn't recognize them. **Matlock:** If they want to take that, that's a good point. They can pay \$5 for the class because it is only Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. **Williams:** If we're paying her to instruct. Why you should let people come for free that don't even live here. No community does that, we are not paying for service for other people's residents. **Matlock:** How much is North Randall's? **Williams:** I don't know, but

the fee is usually anywhere from \$5 to \$20. **Matlock:** I want to know. **Nikolic:** So, what I what I'm hearing is, her class is valuable. So, we should allow her to continue to teach. But at the same time, we should require that...what are we going to do? We can send a letter to the Mayor to request that everyone sign in. And that there will be a fee going forward. **Williams:** Also, she is not to receive an additional check for that. That was our basis for this. **Davis:** that was our problem. **Williams:** You are not going to be compensated on top of compensation. **Matlock:** You're the director. **Williams:** So, (inaudible) work hours. **Nikolic:** So, my thing is this, how many hours is she supposed to be working? Because I can't imagine you're still part time. You're from 8am to 3pm, you're leaving you have to get there and come back. I mean, how many hours is she supposed to be working? So, to answer your question, Candace. I think salary and hourly should be punching the time clock. Because there is an issue with both the directors and the hourly rate. **Williams:** We had this conversation before. We said the same thing salary and hourly should. **Matlock:** I talked to her about that. She said that the Mayor told her she only works Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. She is not here on Tuesday or Thursday. She works approximately four hours a day. Some days she may be in there a little longer. Or she'll say, I took a break from here, like a split shift. Where she could go teach her class, then she'll come back to work. She needs to hit a clock like everybody else. **Williams:** Other thing that could help with what you're talking about. Where is her job description? Because some of the things that Dionna does, like setting up down there for some of the events. If it is a part of recreation, why is Dionna doing it? It should be the recreation whoever. It should not be added to Dionna's role. I think a job description would help too with some very concrete... **Warren:** I just think, I agree. But I also think that when we have the meetings with the directors. As far as budget and everything. She'll be the director for recreation and the Mayor can join her. **Davis:** Didn't we request her to come this meeting? **Nikolic:** I did, and I'll have Tanya request. I have a full reporting similar to what we have here for recreation for the last three years. So, we can go line by line to see, this is what they're spending for recreation. Just like we have here for Council. So that's to be determined, I mean she's not coming. So, I didn't give it to you guys, I got that from Brian. I can pass that on to you guys. And we can make sure that she comes to discuss this. **Williams:** Well, I think it will be helpful if you're having all these meetings. And there's information that's being gained, share it with everybody. **Nikolic:** The purpose of that was, I sent an email and I said, do you all want to have an additional finance meeting? Because I have a lot more to learn than you all. So, I'm here to share with you now in the work session. I requested an additional finance committee session just so we could go over the budget together without Brian. There was no response, we could talk about that. But for me, I have a lot of questions that can't be answered in that tiny little hour. **Warren:** But I think the only thing was, you got a document. That you should share with all of Council. The additional meeting is a different issue than you getting a document and sharing it with the rest of Council. **Nikolic:** Well, here's the thing. I don't know what questions you all have. So, my questions may not be your questions. But as I mentioned, something like that, the recreation budget, of course I will share that. **Warren:** That's what we are saying. **Nikolic:** But you know everything that I am asking him for. We can have additional finance committee meetings so you all can sit in and hear what I'm talking to him about. Or, certain things can go without. But if you all don't want to have additional finance committee meetings. Where we sit in with Brian, and we go through these things together. I am

going to meet with him on my own and get my questions answered. That's my request for that information. Because I'm specifically looking at the Recreation Department. So, if we are together, then you all would understand this is something that I'm interested in. **Williams:** I'm going to suggest, that maybe you capture that by sharing what your question was. And this is the information you received. Because, what we clearly have is a situation where information has not been shared for years. So, whatever questions you may have, you might feel like a new question to you. But it could have been a question asked seven years ago and we still haven't gotten the answer. So, in this environment, all information is good information because there's been such a lack of information shared. **Warren:** Right. **Nikolic:** Okay, with that then I would suggest we have additional finance committee meetings. That way, I can ask Brian the questions while we're all sitting here together. Then that way you can follow up and ask the questions.

Warren: Well, I'm not going to be in any and I told you that in the beginning. You could still go and get Brian. All we're saying is just to share the information. You don't have to try to hold it over our heads. **Nikolic:** No one's trying to hold it over your head. **Warren:** All I'm asking, to be frank, just send us the information that you receive from others. Because we all the same here.

Nikolic: Yeah, we all the same but again, I... **Warren:** You can learn your own, but like I said. You should still share the information, that is all we are saying. **Nikolic:** I don't know what you all don't know. **Warren:** Well, just give it to us and we'll let you know if we know it or not.

Scruggs: I know we're still trying to understand processes and stuff. But when a director does not show up or as a request to present whatever we've asked for. They didn't come and we're still asking. Can we put a hold on anything to say until you come and meet with us. You can't spend any more dollars in this area. Do they have to present a report? Every week that I've been here, certain ones come every single time. They're presenting their report, and they're happy to present it. But if we're having people that supposedly have a really, really large budget. But they can't show up. Do we have any jurisdiction over that? If there's anything that we can do? I'm asking because I'm not really sure how you can get this person to show up. **Warren:** Recreation, she is going to come anyway. Or we will have to do something. It is not making an excuse but, we always have known. Just to let you know that every year. And this is why the insult to me is.

Why would you set a meeting that you're going to be on the 13th. When you know, historically, him and his brothers go to the Super Bowl every year, and that's where he's at. Every year they go to the Super Bowl. So why did you set the meeting up for a day that you're going to be at the Super Bowl? **Nikolic:** Taunya, just to respond to you. I put that question into Jim Climer. I've asked him that, and he has yet to respond, but it's in writing. I asked him, what are the consequences? And I even asked him in a meeting when we were talking about Brian. What are the consequences for his failure to, what is our authority? What can we do? And it goes back to Councilwoman Williams said to him. We can cut your salary to part time; we can do that.

Warren: Are we talking about something as a matter of personnel now? **Nikolic:** No, it's budget.

Warren: But budget and personnel is parallel to... **Williams:** But we are in a work session...

Scruggs: I was thinking my question was more so budget. Not necessarily geared towards salary. My question was geared toward budget and not geared towards staff. So, my question was, basically, and I don't know that each director has to be at every single Council meeting.

Williams: They do, per Charter it says they should be at every meeting. **Scruggs:** If it's per Charter and they can't. They don't put anything in writing, they're not giving any valid excuse,

not reaching out to leadership to say I just can't make it. Then I'm just wondering, what do we do to enforce that? And that's just I'm trying to figure that piece out. **Warren:** The piece is to make them individually accountable. **Nikolic:** How is the question. **Warren:** Well, we've got to figure that out. But I just want to show you the dynamic. And Eloise can confirm this, that nine times out of ten. The Mayor tells them they don't have to come. And that is the issue. **Nikolic:** So, what I am hearing, I'll ask Jim. You all correct me if this is an accurate reflection of our conversation. To begin drafting legislation to enforce all salaried, hourly employees, to punch the time clock and to provide monthly reports. To include monthly reports in our finances. **Hardin:** That was why I had my hand up. It was so important I wanted to go back and capture that. **Nikolic:** Okay, I will tell him to draft that, and it will go to work session like all other legislation. **Hardin:** This this place has taught me something. Every rule you set; I might try to figure out how to work around it. Or, I have to know there are consequences. So, you kind of start thinking, if I choose not to hit the time clock. What are you going to do? **Warren:** So, we have that included in the legislation, that's a good idea. **Hardin:** That's what I'm trying to say, so let's think about it. **Matlock:** Also put on there, if anyone is caught falsifying their time. It will be grounds for immediate termination. Because you could have other people. Take a time badge and clock somebody in. No one else should be able to clock you in. **Nikolic:** Okay, so salary, hourly employees, if they don't punch a time clock, falsifying time records, immediate termination. And of course, it'll be a draft. We're going to work session it, so we don't have to go through everything. But those are the main points. **Warren:** And we should say could be, can't say would be. **Williams:** He'll word it correctly. **Warren:** I thought you said would be. **Nikolic:** Next thing, unfinished business, the contingency fund. Was there ever a proposed amount? And have we identified where the money would come from? **Williams:** Money can come from the general revenue. **Nikolic:** Was there a proposed amount? **Williams:** We never agreed on an amount. **Davis:** Maybe I misunderstood, contingency of what? **Nikolic:** The contingency fund that you all had been requesting. **Hardin:** Remember, Mary, it was Candace idea. **Williams:** The reserve budget, contingency fund, rainy day fund, whatever. **Davis:** Okay. **Nikolic:** I'm assuming it would be a transfer like all the others from the general fund. But then we just need to think about, and we can put this for later. What would be that number, is it a percentage. You know, we should be able to pay total payroll for a year. Just think of what that initial amount should be. If it is total payroll, I asked Brian. He said total payroll is 60% of the budget. So that'll give you an idea of what that number might be. **Williams:** You mean as a target number to put in there? **Nikolic:** Right, so just think of what... **Williams:** Well, I'll tell you what a neighboring community does. Their finance committee meets, and once they go through the entire budget. Then they have a special discussion about, okay, now what are we going to put in the reserve fund this year? So, after we've gone through the entire budget, we know what we're going to in for the year. What portion of that are we putting in the reserve fund. So, they may have a and I can't remember whether they said they always put an extra amount of dollars. Then go over that once they see where the budget is going to be. I can't remember, but they take a look at the budget in its totality. Then they make a decision about that number for every year. **Matlock:** Are they naming it a reserve fund? **Williams:** There are communities, they call it a rainy-day fund, a reserve budget, a contingency budget. There's like probably 12 different names. That's completely up to the municipal, like us, what we choose to call it. **Warren:** Let me suggest that

we could think of. One of the things is a percentage of the projected carryover. You know, you give us a budget and you show that you're going to have \$300,000 carryover. Well, we can't say well, you got to save \$240,000 and then only have \$60,000. You see what I mean? So, if we can say what percentage of the carryover. **Williams:** Yeah we could do that. **Warren:** And just figure out what the percentage is. **Williams:** I'm sorry, that is separate from the fund that we need to establish for sick and vacation time payout. Those two things don't go in the same fund. **Warren:** Right. **Williams:** Because that emergency fund is restricted to what we vote upon as an emergency. But whatever stipulations we create, that sick and vacation fund is only for that. And that is not an emergency because we know that's coming. **Matlock:** That is something, he should have a line item for sick and vacation fund. Then keep in mind again, I'm going to tell you guys. Forty hours is their limit to carry over every year. Use it or lose it, because well I seen that report with two thousand and something hours on it. Owing him \$144,000 if he walked out his door tomorrow. We don't have a rainy-day fund because that's a \$144,000 you have to pay. My thing is this is what I want to know. The directors, that employee handbook, because they know how many hours they can carry over every year. And you can't say they don't know because they been here every year. I'm quite sure they know their vacation time. Sick time is totally different because that's when you get sick. So, you probably carry that over. But vacation time is forty hours. But they have to do it in writing to tell their employer. When they're going to take it, how long they want it to be. But they can only carry over forty hours. **Warren:** But because they already carried it over, and we owe them that. Maybe we should consider something too. To have a specific goal to start paying down that vacation. We need a fund to start paying down the vacation. Because, let me say, the employees, if I worked for you and you told me, I'm carrying over. I didn't even know about it, or I forgot about it. Well, we're obligated, so all I'm saying is we not taking no money from no one. All I'm saying is that we should start paying it down. So, it won't be a huge impact on us. **Williams:** You mean sending in the funds? **Warren:** Yeah, what about even paying some of that down if they went over. **Williams:** We can't pay it down by law. We can't pay until they leave. **Warren:** Okay, I didn't know that. So, we just trying to get the money because we know how much we are going to owe them. **Williams:** Yeah, we know how much it is. **Warren:** That's a good idea, I agree. **Williams:** You just keep putting it away until we reach the goal or whatever we know. That's why I asked for the next five-year retiree. So, we have some type of idea. **Matlock:** Right now, what we want to find out is. Everyone who's on that payroll, what is their leave balance. Starting this year, they are only going to carry over forty hours. **Warren:** Right, that's the goal. **Matlock:** That means that if you have any hours over, you better use it. Have them start using it. Because from what I've see, we have a lot of waste. So, if one person is off for three weeks, whatever, using that time up, we're still paying. But at least we can per pay period. They're not here, but they need to start using that time. Because I'm even looking at people who retired have 20,000. They are using it as a bank account, and it is not a bank account. **Hardin:** We have talked about having Brian do this, I know for two years. So, tonight you're going to give the Law Directors these directives. Starting with the time, can we make sure that we give the Law Director the directive to have these line items, at the next meeting. Have those set up by the next meeting. **Williams:** We need to first decide what we're going to call these funds. We need to decide that because that's what he needs to put in the legislation. **Hardin:** Well, let's do that tonight. **Williams:** Well, I could tell you all the names the

funds go by. But the vacation and sick time fund we can just call it that. **Hardin:** That's fine. **Nikolic:** Just call it a contingency fund because that makes the most sense. If it makes any difference, that's what Bedford Heights calls it. **Hardin:** Okay, we're going to ask by the next meeting that Brain have those line items. Now I'm going to tell you why it's important. Because every time you mentioned that contingency fund. This one over here, just almost flips out. Because, you know, once it's in there, it cannot be taken out. **Williams:** Specifically, for whatever we legislate it for. Specifically, when we create the legislation, so that's the important thing. So, it's called a reserve fund, an emergency fund, a contingency reserve, a contingency fund, a crisis fund, a rainy-day fund, a safety net fund. **Matlock:** If we hold up any money because we're a Village, we're not a city. Will that reflect on us, upon getting any type of great grants or money to do whatever we have left? Because normally they go by what's in your account. What do you have on hold on standing and then they would say. Well, we're not going to give them this because of the fact. They have enough money or so much money to pay down on this. Is there any such thing as that? **Warren:** I don't think that because of the fact, look at the city of Cleveland and the money they got. And Bedford Heights but even the go further... **Matlock:** They are cities. **Warren:** It's still the same thing. **Williams:** We are all Municipalities. **Matlock:** Anyway, we can find that out first from that engineer? Because if that's the case, we may want to put it into a more creative name. **Warren:** Let me just explain something. When they look at that, they look at the need. They send the engineer for the roads, they look at your presentation, and all of that. They don't even look at the funds, they look at how much you're asking for. It not like you are going to the bank and trying to get a loan. And then they say, well, how are you going to pay me back? **Williams:** Remember, it is going to be a restricted fund. **Matlock:** But I'm just saying, they said they look at the need. Is there any way we can just double check that? Because, I could have sworn I heard an engineer say that. **Davis:** Somebody told us that, he told us that when they apply for the grants. **Williams:** If you have X amount of dollars in your general fund and you asking for \$500,000. And there is fifty million in your general fund, why would you need this \$500,000? **Warren:** They would just award you accordingly. **Williams:** And there's so many other communities that get these grants and have these funds established. **Matlock:** I just want to make sure that we don't have to be more creative with the name to put it under. **Warren:** Oh, okay. **Matlock:** Because they're looking at general fund and it that was for certain things. I agree we still need that fund. But do we just have to put it under a more creative name than like a reserve fund. **Williams:** It's not the name, it's the language that you use. So, you have to make sure you use language. So, the language has to be restrictive enough that they're not just dipping into it for whatever they consider an emergency. We got to put parameters on it like it takes a two thirds vote of council, etc. We have to agree on what emergency, what constitutes an emergency. That all has to go into that legislation. **Nikolic:** And it would be a transfer, so with any transfer you can't move that money out. So that's first right? My thought is, I'm not sure, but how many times are they asking for Village finances when they're making these grant. Or is it project finances. So, if it's largely project finance, you know, this is something we could workshop with our contacts at different... Beachwood, Shaker, they're getting tons of grants. And I can't imagine that they don't have funds. So, I think the Mayor mentioned that. It may just be something that

people might be using to keep that from going through. But everybody understands that this is something that's required for any business it's operating. You just need to have reserves.

Scruggs: I have a question that I don't know if I'm allowed to ask it. So just tell me if it is not worth the time. But it relates to residents reaching out to like, our Finance Director, and not receiving, any correspondence back. Is there a time frame for that? **Nikolic:** We can talk to this, this kind of ropes in, a question. Councilwoman Williams, have you gotten a response for your request? **Williams:** No. **Nikolic:** Nothing at all, and this is similar because she sent a public information request to who? Climer or Brian? **Williams:** Climer and Brian, I sent it January 10th. I didn't get any follow up until January 22nd. And just said he was working to gather the information. Then I asked him, when will you have the information? And I don't remember what he responded, but he told me February 10th. But that's come and gone. **Nikolic:** Okay, so just in response to that. I had done, there was a Sunshine Laws training. You may have seen it, Tanya circulated it. So, I actually did that training, and it highlighted the fact of how we are exposed. If those requests aren't met in a timely fashion. So, with that, I reached out to Climer, and I asked him about the situation with Councilwoman Williams. I asked him to draft the policy. He fought me on it. He said he would only do it if administration requested it. And I told him that as his job as the Law Director, he is here to prevent the Village from being sued. He was saying it was not within his purview to do that. And I told him it absolutely was because a failure to respond to those requests exposes the Village to litigation. So, as elected officials, we need to be sure that there's something in place. So, we're not getting sued, wasting taxpayers' dollars. So, I told him to draw up a policy that they would recommend. He said, I can't enforce it. Draw up a policy of communication protocol of how to respond, i.e. checklist of redactions. That would make it easy for the directors or anyone to respond. And just make it a policy and recommend it. So, it's on the books that that's what should be happening. Because right now and I told him, if you have a Councilwoman complaining about the way that it's being handled. **Hardin:** The way what's being handled? **Nikolic:** The way the responses... **Williams:** Public Records, let me edit that. So, I sent my original on January 10th. He sent a response on January 22nd, and then I redirected on January 25th to say, can you give me dates? And then he responded, so he would give me he would give them to me on February 19th. So, my request was January 10th. So, we're talking about six weeks to provide responses to what I asked. **Warren:** Why don't we find out if there's some kind of a legislation or some kind of a protocol or whatever? **Nikolic:** He's going to draft a recommendation based on the sunshine laws. because with anything a court will look at a municipality's response level or any entities response level. What did they do to communicate with the person? Are they complying with the laws. **Scruggs:** Is the time frame different for us requesting it versus resident? **Nikolic:** No, it is everybody. That's a public information request, but what you're talking. Is just getting any response. So, the Village should have a general policy. Like I sent a message to Nikki. Weeks went by, and I said, do you work every day? The idea was, yes I do, but I didn't feel I needed to respond. So, I just think that there needs to be some sort of training or an understanding of this is the way we're going to communicate with residents. We're going to respect them. Especially Council people, because if we're having these problems. Imagine residents having it. Two-day response after an email. How are you not responding to an email, and you work every day. **Scruggs:** We lost an opportunity for a grant, based off of Brian not responding to me. All I needed to know was one number and I couldn't even apply for the

grant. It was like \$30,000. **Matlock:** Even Congress gets three days, he should be responding back to you. **Scruggs:** So, I'm just wondering the time frame. **Nikolic:** Once that is in place, that can be a guideline for other communications. The next thing I wanted to talk to you guys about was... **Hardin:** For clarification, is it agreed that we're going to ask for those two line items to be added, what are their names, and by what date? **Nikolic:** So I don't know, because right now. My understanding was, that you all have been talking about it for three years. But you don't have an amount. I was thinking that you had an amount and that you had come to that conclusion. So now there needs to be a discussion about an amount. And what that's based on. So is it a percentage of projected carry over a year of payroll, a half year of payroll. So, you guys, the next work session we could delve into that. And after we've had time to maybe consult with other people, other municipalities. We can kind of delve into that as unfinished business, a fair number that we can start with. **Hardin:** Okay, that's the one, what are we going to do about the other line item. **Nikolic:** So, forty hours of sick vacation can be carried over. This is something our committees could discuss amongst each other. This would go into the healthcare committee, for example. If you all wanted to dive into that and get to the nitty gritty of when the waivers are required. Then you could report back to us. Then we can say, okay, great job, we understand. I would think that would be a good... **Warren:** I don't think that we require a committee. All we're doing is telling them, listen, you guys' swipe in and out and we want a report every month. **Nikolic:** No, no, it's about how much do we want to have in the fund. Councilwoman Williams said that we already have an idea based on those reports, for retirement. So that's an. **Warren:** Right, isn't that the one we said, that we either get a certain amount or a percentage of that carryover? **Nikolic:** That's the contingency fund. So, with the sick and vacation fund. **Warren:** No, the sick and vacation is what I was talking about. **Matlock:** Well, you could call it a retirement fund. Call it what you want. But that money should be you. **Williams:** You can't call it a retirement fund because retirement is something different in the States eyes. So, we got to be careful with this. **Matlock:** Let's keep it simple, we want for vacation and there should be one for sick. But your main important one is vacation. **Williams:** But they get paid for sick time too, one third or whatever the sick time they have. **Matlock:** They get paid for sick time. But sick time is something... when they leave this place, how much sick time do they get? **Williams:** One third of whatever they have. **Matlock:** So, one third of each one of their things. They should be putting it into a fund each week. They should put that in there. Just one third of what their sick leave. But it should be placed on the side because in reality, it's not our money. It's not ours, it is not something that we should be using. **Williams:** We should have a fund. **Hardin:** We agreed that there's going to be a fund. So, are we going to agree that specifically it's a third? We already know that at least a third of what is already accumulated. **Warren:** Well, I think that the third is what the state pays, we don't pay the third. **Davis:** That would be their PERS. **Warren:** We're paying a percentage of that third. So, we just find out what the percentage is of the third. **Williams:** PERS is different, you're talking about the fourteen percent? **Davis:** No, whatever they put in, plus the employee takes out from their paid towards PERS. So PERS are the ones who's going to be paying them. **Williams:** Not for sick time, vacation, and sick time we pay. That's why I said you can't call it retirement. Because that's totally, completely different. **Matlock:** Just keep it simple as a vacation and sick time. **Williams:** Just a vacation and sick time fund. **Warren:** Okay, that's fine, we just have to figure out what we're going to put aside.

Nikolic: So, determining that, my suggestion was this be something that go to committee. Where some you could kind of hash through the details and come back with something a little more concrete for us. Because there is a healthcare personnel committee. So, and that brings me to our next thing with the committees. When do you want to meet? I sent a couple suggestions, but there are a lot of options. I will list them out, one would be, these are suggestions. We can meet as a whole one hour before that first Tuesday. **Matlock:** We talking about finance? **Nikolic:** I'm talking about other communities. **Matlock:** Let's get this straight, because this is going to roll into what you're about to say. **Nikolic:** Are you talking about the ordinance for meetings. **Warren:** The Charter. **Nikolic:** It's right here, what do you want to know? **Matlock:** If I am the chairperson of my committee. **Nikolic:** Should I read this? **Matlock:** Go ahead. **Nikolic:** Meeting of committees:

“Meetings of any committees may be called by the chairperson thereof, or by a majority of the members of such committee. Upon motion adopted by Council it may convened a committee of the whole. In which event, the President of Council shall preside at such committee meeting, unless the committee of the whole shall select some other member to preside their act. Upon the calling of a committee meeting, the Clerk of Council, be and is hereby authorized and directed to post a notification of said meeting, giving the time, place, and purpose of the meeting at least 24 hours in advance of said meeting upon the bulletin board in the village Hall. Furthermore, a upon being advised that Council will hold a committee meeting as indicated here in. The Clerk of Council shall give at least 24 hours advance notice of time, place, and purpose of the meeting to the news media that have requested notification. In the event an emergency exists requiring immediate official action, the notification to the news media shall be immediate”.

Nikolic: So, my question is right, I understand what you're saying. Chairs may call a meeting at any time. But for the purpose of public record, when are we going to meet in terms of committees? It's really small, let me just say the options. Chairs have the authority if they want to call a meeting. But as a whole, because it is public record. My suggestions and then we can open it for discussion. All committees meet that hour before their first Tuesday meeting. Except for the finance meeting, which is already scheduled for this second Tuesday before. Or if chairs want to have their own schedules, or we can report, we can have committee meetings in the general meeting. But, if it gets to a point where there's so much discussion going on, then we can move it to the first and third Tuesday of the month. Half of the committee's report the first, the second half report the second. But as a small now, I think we can maybe just use that one hour as we get them up and running. Not to put too much strain, but that one hour on that first Tuesday meeting to hold any discussions. But it would be each committee meeting about 15 minutes. We can clock it, you know, maybe the first one will be this, first of this, etc. And we could show up or we can all show up. **Matlock:** Can I say something? **Nikolic:** Sure. **Matlock:** Are you telling us how to run the committee meeting? **Nikolic:** No, this is just when we meet. **Matlock:** So, my thing is, you would meet when the chairperson, say, okay, we're going to have a meeting. We can put it out with Clerk of Council to let them know when we're having a meeting. We don't have to set all of this up like the way you want to set it up. We know to investigate and do whatever we have to, to find out. I'll give you an example. I am utility, I already know about NOPEC. But

there's other utility entities that I can start researching. And I could get that information because I put in my newsletters already about utilities. Utilities like homes serve, different little things that our residents need to know that they can sign up for. **Nikolic:** Okay, so you don't want to meet all at the same time or at a specific time? **Matlock:** When I decide to do a meeting, I have my individuals and I will get with them. We could find out when we're going to have a collective meeting on utilities. Then what we'll do is we'll talk to the Clerk of Council, and we'll give you guys information, saying when that meeting is going to take place. **Nikolic:** Okay, so you don't want to have it on a regular basis. Just when you feel like? **Matlock:** No, I don't think I need to have a utility meeting on a regular basis. **Nikolic:** Okay, so for example, if we say this will be committee meeting hour. The ones that want to come... **Matlock:** If that's what they want to do. But I'm just telling you how it's going to be for utility. **Hardin:** We have more than one committee too by the way. **Matlock:** So, we're going to be meeting on these committees every week? **Nikolic:** No, it's not every week. **Williams:** Can we just have everybody's input on meeting. Because I would agree it does need to be at the discretion of the chair. Whatever chair decides when they want to meet. Now, some chairs will say we're going to meet every month. Some would say quarterly, but I think that should be up to the chair. Because you know how much needs to be met about. I just think every committee is going to be different. So, to establish a schedule is not going to be fitting for all of the committees. Like utilities is only going to be so much talked about. Then we often have work sessions where we can say, okay, you know, these things are coming up. So, I think let's talk about scheduling a meeting. **Warren:** A lot of our work sessions are a reflection of the things that's specific to the committees actually. **Williams:** Well, that's what I'm saying. Once we touch that conversation. Then we're all here and we can say, okay, well I think utilities is going to meet such and such and we're all here. One reason I don't answer emails a lot is just because, as we conveyed earlier about sunshine laws. And things being considered a meeting, everything is public record. When you have an email with all of us on it, it can be construed as a meeting. The back and forth dialog, so I don't respond a lot of the time. Because just because you want to talk about a meeting. Doesn't mean Susie Q is not going to jump in and start talking about, oh, well, when such and such happen. I don't like to get there because that's what happens sometimes. **Nikolic:** I learned that with the training. So, coming before that, I did not have any knowledge of that. And I was just thinking that's how we communicate. **Nikolic:** So, I'm fine with it. I just wanted to put some suggestions out there to start the conversation. Does everyone feel like chairs should call meetings at their discretion? (Everyone agreed unanimously). **Davis:** Yes, Because I'm safety and service department, whatever committee. I already emailed Fire Chief Dave Tapp, Service Director Tom Haba, and the Police Chief, Mark Garratt. And told them that if there's any because they report to us every month. **Hardin:** Would you check with the Fire Department to make certain that... There used to be at one time, a safety committee. They had to meet because at that time we were a volunteer Fire Department, I think. I know we're not volunteer, but just verifying that there's no safety meeting once a year that is still required. Just ask him that. **Davis:** I will ask him, but otherwise I said we get the reports from them. So, I said, if they have anything that they want me to present to Council separately. Like in a work session or whatever, just let me know. **Williams:** These are also resident issues that we are bringing in too. So, if things are raised in they are pertinent to your committee. Those also get pulled in, not just our employees and our directors. **Hardin:** We

need to have a forum that allows for complaints. **Warren:** I was thinking about that, did they have a forum or something. **Williams:** That can go in your committee. Because honestly if it doesn't go on your committee. It's not our responsibility because that's administrative. So, we really are walking a fine line. So, it needs to go into a committee for that reason. Because that is actually something that should be created by the administration. **Nikolic:** And that's what he was trying to communicate when we were talking to when I told him about a policy. He was saying that has to come from administration. I said, but we can request that he draft recommendations. And so at least we're covered. If our residents say, oh, well, we got sued, where were you guys? We can say, oh, we were right here. We requested litigation to send a policy out to administration, and they chose not to do it. So, we can always make the recommendations and the suggestions. But like he said, it's up to administration to implement them. But the best that we can do is have the conversations and make the suggestions. And at least we are we've done our job. **Williams:** We should check if other Councils have legislation around that, they may. I mean, we can legislate. I just wanted to point out, I sent an email to you all because I became aware of a situation with our IRS 941's. That will impact the budget. So, if we have not filed 941's which are required quarterly, which is four times a year. If we have not filed those forms with the IRS the last day of the quarter. There are no extensions. There's no I was understaffed; you have to have a concrete extenuating circumstance. And we're talking about the IRS, there are very, very few. If you don't file that day, there is an immediate 5% penalty at the total tax amount due. Then you're charged an additional 5% each month that return is not submitted. So, if we have a file for several years, up to five months. So, on every single one of those, there will be a penalty, then an additional penalty up to five months. So that, and I did contact the auditor when I heard about it. So, the auditor said that there have been municipalities that have paid anywhere from tens of thousands of dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties. We don't have that type of money. **Matlock:** Who would catch that? Because we don't have an accountant, right? So, when we have these audits by the state, would the state see? I mean, is that part of their audit? That we're filing a 941? **Williams:** You would think. **Matlock:** I can't believe... did he ever respond to you about that? **Williams:** No, that's where I was giving you the timeline. **Matlock:** Because he needs to respond to you, because we don't have an accountant. The only one would be Ralph. Is that the guy who normally turns everything in? **Williams:** But if we just think from a logical standpoint, we all file taxes, right? Once you file, you have immediate record of what you file. So, somebody should be able to go into a file and say, no, we did file. Let me send you all of the quarters for 2021 quarters. They should be there if they're filed. It shouldn't take six weeks. **Matlock:** Exactly, so did he get that? **Williams:** I have not gotten that yet. I told you he said he would get them to me February 19th, and I sent the request January 10th. So, if we're talking about a reasonable timeframe to respond, that's five/six weeks. **Nikolic:** So, the next thing, do you all want to move this into another organizational meeting? Because there's some other things to discuss. Just really quick with the agenda. Tanya, let me know that we needed to vote on if we were going to add in the ward reports. We discussed adding in board reports to the regular agenda. Tanya correct me if I'm wrong. We need to vote on whether or not that's an item added to the agenda. We can't just put in ward reports.

Joseph: Any changes to the agenda have to be voted on by the majority of Council. Council has to rule that they agree to the change to the agenda. **Hardin:** May I add that was my suggestion. I

think that we should just, whether you have something to say or not. I think each ward should be called. I think that should be on the agenda. **Nikolic:** Yeah I agree, Yeah. Do we have to do a motion, or do we just do a hand raise? **Joseph:** Motion. **Nikolic:** May I have a motion? **Williams:** We can't vote here. **Hardin:** We can't vote in a work session. **Williams:** We can take a polling to do something during the meeting, but we can't. **Nikolic:** Okay, no voting in a work session. **Warren:** You know, to make that an issue for the next meeting. **Williams:** So, we would be adding ward reports and committee meeting reports? Then we need to vote on both of those, correct? **Nikolic:** Right, those two items would need to be added. **Warren:** Let me ask you this, we're going to have ward reports and committee reports at the council meeting? **Hardin:** No, slash. **Williams:** It wouldn't be a slash. Our ward report is different than a committee report. **Warren:** Yeah, because it's going to be a long meeting. **Williams:** Well, all the committees aren't always meeting. **Warren:** Well, that's true. **Williams:** So, if you don't meet, then you say committee report, I have none. Even ward reports, we not all have an event every month. **Hardin:** I just think that should be available as a part of our record. **Williams:** I think it's a good idea. We all have to be accountable. **Hardin:** I'd like to know that we're called on, given the opportunity. **Nikolic:** Okay, so what I'm noticing in our agenda, there's nothing that says other matters deemed appropriate. Should we be adding something in here? Unfinished business or something? Because right now it just goes from legislation to adjournment. **Joseph:** That's under your work session if there's something additional. **Nikolic:** Right, but I'm saying in order to bring up this vote. **Joseph:** You could just you could just do it in the meeting. **Nikolic:** We don't need something like an additional like number here that says other matters to be discussed or unfinished. **Joseph:** Make a motion to. **Nikolic:** Just after legislation is done, just make a motion to put a vote on x, y, z? **Joseph:** You can do it after the minutes or do it whenever. **Nikolic:** Okay. **Williams:** I mean it is proper to make a motion within the legislation piece of our agenda. **Nikolic:** Okay, the other thing in the vein of sharing with you all things that, I got from Brian. I printed this out for you guys. I requested this from Brian the last time I met with him. It was just a way, because I know we're going to be talking about our budget and pointing out some things. I had her printed out with my notes on it, so you guys can kind of see what I was, you know, thinking. And, you know, we can have a discussion on our budget. But, for example, Council special events. I think we have \$9000 in our budget. I feel like that number grossly underrepresented what we could be using. I talked to Tanya about the possibility of bringing on maybe an Assistant Clerk. I saw that we had pay Debbie Hladky upwards of \$7000 in 2000. So, could we put that same amount in a fund to say if we need. **Davis:** That was for trading. **Nikolic:** That was just for training, so my point is, the money is there. And if we need additional support. **Matlock:** No, let's not waste money. **Warren:** We sitting around talking about wasting money. And telling other departments that we cutting. **Williams:** And we do need to have adequate budget. We have always operated as a Council leader. We can't be elected officials and not be out there in the community that has things where you're representing them. And able to do things as the people that are electing you. I've always had an issue with that. We are not to just sit in these seats and show up twice a month, and that's where it begins and ends. So, I do agree that our budget needs to be expanded, rightfully so. If you look at Council budgets in other communities. They have budgets to do things with. You have a Council swearing in, it is paid for, not chipping in to pay for it, it is in the Council's budget. You know why? Because

residents come, they see who their elected officials are. They see who they voted for. They see the changing of the roles. They sit in a swearing in ceremony. So, it's proper for us to expand our budget. I know I don't want to agree with waste and just add things in here. But we need to have a proper budget, we need to. **Matlock:** We can have a proper budget. But I am totally against an assistant. **Williams:** Oh no. **Matlock:** We don't need an assistant. That's what we are talking about. Because she is not a personal secretary. She is Clerk of Council. So, therefore she doesn't need an assistant. We just have to watch this, because she works for everybody, not just one person. **Nikolic:** That is understood, what I'm saying is. You know I've had probably maybe four requests that she hasn't been able to get to. **Matlock:** Then you're making a lot of requests. **Warren:** Yeah, you making too many requests, maybe. **Nikolic:** The point is I'm making the request that I feel are necessary to do my job. You can do your job the way you want to. I'm making the request that I feel are best for Council. **Matlock:** Do you have time to do that resolution for Mr. Grant? Because his mother-in-law passed? And that resolution needs to be done by Saturday, that's the funeral. Did she contact you today? **Joseph:** She didn't reach out to me. **Matlock:** Okay, I want to make sure, because she has all these minutes, 32 pages of minutes on one, 55 pages of minutes on another. There is no way, put yourself in that situation. **Warren:** And these long-protracted meetings. **Nikolic:** Okay, so that is my point. **Williams:** So, I hear what's being said. But what we cannot continue to do is... we have to find better ways to manage this. So, if she needs, we need to all look into how these minutes can be done better by us using AI or some other technology to assist her. So that's not as overwhelming. But what we can't do is reduce what needs to be done. What actually needs to be done for Council. Because we try to stay in this box, yeah, she's one person we're not going to overload her. But council hasn't been functioning in the way it should for a very long time. There's a lot we need to get up to speed. **Matlock:** My thing is, no we cannot overload her. If there's so many times we need to do research, we researched on it ourselves. **Warren:** That's right. **Matlock:** We did not put it on the Council Clerk to do the research. But because there's other things or duties in her job description that she needs to do... **Nikolic:** Research is part of that description. **Williams:** I love that we got grants right. But this is our Council Clerk., I don't know why Service Department needed her to write a grant. There is a Mayor Executive Secretary there... **Joseph:** I did not write their grant. **Williams:** He said you assisted with it. **Joseph:** Yeah, it was presented to me, and I presented it to them. To see if it was something that the Village needed. It was presented to me by the Soil and Water Conservation. **Williams:** So, what work did you do? **Joseph:** All I did was get that information over to them. And they did the follow up as far as finding out quotes, writing, and submitting that. So, I didn't write any grant. **Williams:** You did the work to follow up and get it submitted? **Joseph:** No, I just gave them the information and they worked on that afterwards. **Williams:** So that's good because that was going to be my... Sometimes I'm hearing that other departments are asking for things. That's extra work on her too, so we got to get things in order. **Matlock:** Are other departments giving you work to do? Because when you were first hired, remember you said no, you would only do just Council. That's it, not nothing from over there. Just dealing with what's up here. **Joseph:** No other department has requested for me to do anything. Because they know that I just work for Council. So, I've never gotten that. Unless they forwarded an email that they're asking to send out to the whole of Council. That is as far as it goes. There is never a request to do anything. **Warren:** One of the things that we got to realize

is. She's doing the best that she can. But the thing is when we have these meetings. If you read the minutes, there's a lot of us repeating the same thing. If Eloise says something, I shouldn't need to say it unless I have to add on to it. But you will end up repeating the same thing.

Williams: But you do repeat yourself. **Warren:** Well, if that's the case, then we got to stop, it's not just me. **Joseph:** So, one thing I did want to ask, because I know that you guys prefer verbatim minutes. However, there was a question asked by one of the clerks. Which got several responses from clerks everywhere here in Ohio. Inquiring if they do verbatim minutes or summary minutes. It's probably like five places, including us, that does verbatim minute. And I do know that one of them mentioned that the instructors for the OML training seminars for the new council. Suggested that verbatim minutes are unnecessary. **Williams:** No, It's not, and we had this conversation. **Joseph:** I wanted to ask because it would be quicker for me to do these minutes if I can summarize. **Williams:** We've had this very conversation, and it was very lengthy. Verbatim is important because of the situation we are in. I have asked you for something for 12 months and now you are saying you never got asked. So, we can go to our minutes and say this was the conversation. Here is when you were asked. A summary is going to leave us all high and dry. Also, the verbatim is also a very good resource for residents who can't make it. People do read those minutes, and since we haven't moved to recording and live streaming. Which that could help, but, for right now, what we decided in this lengthy conversation we had previously. Is that we needed a verbatim minutes to support our work. **Hardin:** The other day I talked to you; you said you were trying a new software. **Joseph:** Yeah, so I tried a demo version of a software called Trint. It helped me because I was able to transcribe that huge set of minutes, which Microsoft Word could not do because it was too much a process. It was clear, I can put in the name of who said something and it's able to detect that person's voice and like, put their names next to it. Then I have to go through and format the whole thing, review, and edit and everything. But it was just a demo version. **Williams:** Was the less time for you? **Joseph:** I felt like it was helpful for me. **Williams:** So why can't we purchase that for you? **Joseph:** I was just testing, so I was not like... **Williams:** That's what we asked you to do. We asked you to find them, test them and then tell us how much. **Joseph:** That's what I will do but it was only a demo version for like five days. So, I was able to utilize it, just to kind of get an idea of what it was. And another thing that they did was on top of doing those summary minutes, they posted the audio. So, if people wanted to listen to the audio of the minutes, you could. And if anything, like with record retention. When it comes to their time, it can stay or be pulled from the website. But that was another thing that they did... **Hardin:** They, being who? **Joseph:** Many other Clerks, as far as the survey on minutes. But they also included audio. Or if residents wanted the audio they could request it. Or when they sent out to Council members the summary minutes, they sent the audio for the actual minutes as well. **Williams:** Here's one other thing I want you to look into. Because the audio would be public record. If we were to have a consultant that transcribed minutes. That's all they do, because those people do it a lot faster, right? Because that's all they're doing. No one is coming back in the office, there's no other thing. The job is just to transcribe. Take a look and see what those costs are. Like maybe we could do just, like, once a month and add it to the budget. So, at least one week per month, they're being transcribed, and you do the other meeting. Then that frees up at least two days for you. What I don't want to see happen is that we start diminishing the importance of our work. By saying, oh, this shouldn't be done

because it's too much. We got to figure out how to manage too much. **Joseph:** And that's one thing that I do. Which is why it would take much longer. Because I do understand the importance of responding to emails. Which is something I try to stay on top of as much as possible. So, I do try to respond and get what Council needs done as soon as I can get it done. That's not an issue for me to try to get that in with my minutes. I'll just have to pause the minutes for a second just to get that done. Again, not an issue, because I'm also getting all the requests from residents when they go in from the website. When they send it out to a department, it still comes to me. Which I can still get out to them just to make sure, like did you see this? It needs a response to it.

Warren: Well, maybe the first thing is just like you said, one hour. **Nikolic:** That was the point of this exercise, to show you we did spend \$8000 for Debbie. **Williams:** What I asked was, when you're talking to the clerks, are none of them using extra tools? **Joseph:** So, a lot of them are just using templates from previously before, Microsoft Word, and then again, the software they suggested to me, no one has... **Williams:** So, maybe we need to find a different course because here's the other thing. And we're about to go to National League of Cities. I can't imagine that there's no municipality across the country does not have somebody or some system to transcribe minutes. But what I think I hear you saying, it's taking a little bit of time to do the research to find the tool one, and then demo the tool two. So maybe we need to cut that out. Like who can we talk to and see what these resources are. Who's using what and what works efficiently.

Joseph: Right, so that's why we (the clerks) were having that conversation. I'm trying to see if there are some sort of technology that can transcribe as we talk. You know, pick up on everyone's voice. I just need time to do that research. I mean, also, I'll talk IT as well to see if there's new technology that can be used to transcribe as quickly as we speak. **Nikolic:** Okay, so to your point, Councilwoman Williams. The reason why I pointed out this amount. Meaning that this amount must have been appropriated, that's the amount that was in miscellaneous contractual services. So, my suggestion of pointing out how much we paid Ms. Hladky was to say, and I asked her to sort of send out feelers. How much would an hourly rate be for someone like a transcriptionist? I asked her to send some feelers out. What would an hourly rate be, and then that way. We know that we have this amount that we pay Debbie Hladky. It doesn't have to be this amount, but we could say we put \$5000 in a budget to support any additional support she may need. You know, this is training. This isn't to say that she doesn't need additional support. We don't have to identify specifically. Doesn't have to be an assistant that sits here all day. But it can be someone that comes in on an hourly basis to do certain tasks to support her. So, I'm saying this money we have in the budget. We can discuss how much we want to put there. I wanted to identify this as a line item that we could add to our budget to further support. Things that she can't get to, better ways of managing her time and all of the needs of council. Because I hear you, Councilwoman Matlock, there are a lot of things that we need to do. There's research and in her job description, research is. I don't, we all don't have time to do specific things. But if we need research done, that's going to be for the benefit of Council. And we could line item some money. Calling someone to do it for an hour or two, to pick up that extra slack. But I just wanted to point this out. It is in the budget; it must have been appropriated for last year. So, I just wanted to share this with you guys. Because I thought it was helpful for me to see everything that Council spent. **Davis:** Well, that would be nice for every department. Because when you're doing Brian's papers, you got to keep flipping through. It's more confusing when you've got to go

through so many. I think that's a detour purposely. You're going through so many pages, where this is all condensed. It should be a press of the button to do every department. **Nikolic:** He printed this out for me in two seconds. **Davis:** That's what we want for every department. **Nikolic:** Exactly, and we can go through and see what may not be needed. **Williams:** I think we could just have a conversation about what we want to add to this budget. The attorney, we need to do a charter review or have somebody walk us through the charter and our residents. There's a number of things we need to consider, live streaming our meetings. So, there's a number of things that we can add. **Nikolic:** Yeah, just some questions I had, like with legal ads. Is that the same thing every year, or does that change based on something? **Warren:** I think it has to change. Our legal ads are announcement of projects that are coming up from the Engineer. **Nikolic:** Okay, gotcha, so this I just wanted to share with you guys. I guess we'll have another budget meeting. Where we're actually going back to our budget and appropriating specific dollar amounts. But I just want you guys to see that. **Davis:** Can we do that with Brian, asking for every department like you did for Council. **Nikolic:** For recreation, I will have you guys share because for me. When I think about where we could cut, those are the departments. **Davis:** finance the same thing. **Nikolic:** The mayor's budget, I mean, it's over \$200,000. If we printed out one of these for everything he spent. I mean, he told me that, you know, for example, what's his name? Billy Donato, he's been working on a project, and he's been receiving a certain amount each year. I saw the video, and I want everybody to understand. We have to kind of dig in, whether we're going to do it as a group. So, we start to understand. When we ask for certain things for the swearing in ceremony. But they're paying Billy five grand to do 45 minutes at the Blue Canyon. When you get like these, these are the sort of details that we absolutely need. Because then you drill down to what's being spent. And then if we could look at it and say, this isn't necessary. We could come up with a dollar amount by which we can reduce that budget. So that's just my thinking. **Hardin:** Have we received any documentation of road repair for the year? Nothing to do with the resurfacing. But that's the residential streets. **Nikolic:** I remember when I came to one of the Council meetings, there was a list, if you guys' recall, of the streets. I know Fair Oaks was at the top, Arbutus was a concern. There's like, a hole so deep on Arbutus you can bury someone in. **Hardin:** That was from the Engineer, he graded off street. So, keep that in mind and we'll go back to my question. Every year, Johnny, the Engineer was supposed to give us the street and those that were to be repaired or resurfaced. Have you seen that? **Warren:** I haven't seen it yet. **Nikolic:** What would they have sent us? I know you guys were on the email, but it's more like for the projects. **Warren:** The major projects. **Nikolic:** But it is the major projects. I haven't seen anything else. That's the only thing that I've seen. **Hardin:** Every Councilperson needs to be prepared to ask. And you might want to send an email. Johnny, these streets are not being maintained, It's time. **Warren:** The maintenance is the incumbents of the Service Department. But the major developments or resurfacing is the Engineer. **Hardin:** We have not resurfaced, we did Tryon, but that was through the County. That was a major project. We're about to do... **Davis:** Forbes and Broadway. **Matlock:** They are about to do Tryon. They about to come from Richmond all the way down to Jean. Then they will go from Jean next year, all the way to... **Hardin:** Well, they about to do Forbes. But the residential streets Johnny needs to be. The reason those are getting done is because it the County's money. We know why, we don't have the money, but we need to start dealing with these streets. **Warren:** The worst streets

right now, and the two that I really know. Is in ward five, and that's Arbutus... **Williams:** I mean, Suwanee you can't even get through the whole street. So, there's more than just Arbutus.

Warren: I know, I'm just saying the ones that they blocked off. **Williams:** We get this list of what streets are really bad, and then people just pick and choose what streets they really want to do. When it needs to go off of what streets are really bad and have never been done. The other thing is we have to stop saying there's no money for it. We can actually ask money to be put in the street fund and start building up monies for each street. **Nikolic:** This would be a good referral for the committee. We can give it to Chairperson Davis and say, look, can you work with the service team and then she can report. **Hardin:** The service department does repairs. I'm talking about basically whole streets need to be replaced. We need major street project here.

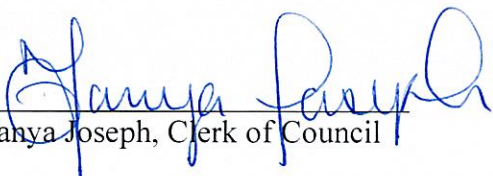
Nikolic: Should we go to the engineers and look for grants? **Davis:** Request the Engineer to look for grants. **Warren:** They always do. **Williams:** They are looking for grants. The problem is that most grants only cover your County road, your state ramp, etc. Your streets within the community are typically cost that we are supposed to incur. We need to start setting aside the funds to do those streets. We are not planning for the upkeep of our streets. **Hardin:** I have waited all night and that's where my head is. We have got to have a street fund. **Nikolic:** So, is the SCMR Fund is that the fund where the money typically comes from? **Warren:** Well, that is streets and maintenance. **Nikolic:** So, is that a transfer of just a regular line item? **Williams:** That is a special fund, when you put the money in there. It can only be used for that. We are not putting the money in there to care for our streets. **Nikolic:** Okay, so just like we did for Council. We could request everything they did last year. We can see what how much was spent on what. If we need more, or if we're going to be doing those same projects. But we need to start with what has typically been spent in that fund and how. **Hardin:** All I'm saying is, from this day, henceforth and forevermore. Those of you that didn't know, you do know now. This council has been remiss in demanding that these streets be maintained properly. **Williams:** And then appropriating the funds. **Hardin:** Our Service Department patch's great, they doing a great job. But now we've run out of patches, it looks horrible. So, I'm going to ask that you put that at the top of the list. We already have a fund, but we're not funding it. **Nikolic:** I think this would be a good referral for safety and service. **Williams:** Service's job is not to repair the whole street. This is a finance committee issue, that's what it is. **Nikolic:** I can request the specifics for that fund. So, we could do a deep dive. What are your thoughts on that. We could look at what was spent, how it was spent, and if we need more or less. **Williams:** We need that in addition to, Ed giving us an estimate of how much these streets that we know need to be repaired. What is the total cost? That's what we really need. You can't save for what you don't know you have to spend. **Warren:** Maybe I should suggest this, the Engineer gives us a list, like they said, based on it. Why don't we go and get our own list? Everybody in the ward looks at the streets and identify the streets. **Williams:** Ed's list is accurate; it is spot on. I have looked at the list, I've drove those streets. It is just not being followed by the order of what's in the most dire condition. Then also, we're not funding the SCMR Fund. **Hardin:** All of us are sitting here, the average constituent. They want to see the streets taken care of, snow removed, leaves removed, and the trash. When you do that, you are a good Council person. But right about now, these roads are terrible. As a Council, we have not given that priority, I think that should be priority. Those streets need to be taken care of. **Williams:** We had a whole developer trying to do Suwanee. I

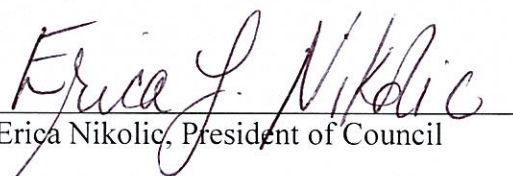
don't even know why it will stop or not move forward. But if the developer is going to pay to repair the street. Why wouldn't we move forward with that? **Davis:** I thought it was cancelled because of wetlands or something. The developers backed out is what I heard. **Williams:** We have to be looking for those. The other thing is we know our streets because our residents talk to us about our streets, and we drive these streets. We got to be a little bit more in tune with the economic development ourselves. Suwanee is perfect example, if there's a developer that is going to fix that street so you can drive completely through the street. We have to pursue those opportunities, but we just haven't been. **Warren:** One of the things you got to watch out for with some of the developers, is the houses that they're going to build. Some developers say I will put in this street. But I'm going to build 1200 square foot houses, or things of that nature. That's one of the challenges that we have to confirm to. That's the case because I'm going to tell you that right now and I'll bring you some pictures. I'm actually looking at a container houses now. I took it to the director, and I said, these things are rusting. So, whoever owns a container house, and the thing is rusting. How do patch that? But we'll see because I'm getting ready... **Nikolic:** I had one last question. I've been seeing for NLC, some extra classes and networking dinners. **Williams:** This is the way that works. If you want to go to one, you can either pay for it on your own credit card or get reimbursed. Or you can tell them what you wanted. Or you can tell them what you want to attend. They pay for it with the Village credit card, and then you attend, it is one of the two. **Nikolic:** Okay, is that is that how it's worked in the past for everybody? **Warren:** Always. **Nikolic:** So, is everybody checking with everybody with what they're doing? I think Tanya's understanding is we have to check with each other before we can do, what we want to do. Meaning, if I want to go to the black caucus dinner. We all have to agree that we want to go. **Warren:** No, that is not how it is. To go to NBC-LEO you have to join NBC-LEO. The reason we stepped out of it was because it was the most expensive constituency group. In addition, then they started dialing down. We had some great events, then they started going lower and lower. **Williams:** If they have a nonmember fee, that's okay. But sometimes you can only go if you're a member. Now that is a decision we do make as a whole. A membership all together, then yes, that goes back to all of us. **Nikolic:** So, I specifically, have been meeting with other Council presidents and everything. One specifically said that one you should be at for networking purposes. That comes from Mr. Blaine Griffin from... **Warren:** You don't have to listen, I'm serious, just because he says that. **Nikolic:** I'm just saying, when I asked him and just other people. What do you recommend I as a new person attend. And he said that is a good thing to attend for networking purposes. What is your opinion (inaudible). **Warren:** I'm saying that we have been in NBC-LEO, and we spent our money. **Williams:** It's not worthwhile event. The return on the investment, like yeah you might meet some people in exchange cards. But you could do that all through the conference. **Warren:** NBC-LEO, the events are parties, that's all you are doing, just partying. **Williams:** It's just not a good return on investment for that. **Nikolic:** Okay, so what's the cost of the membership? **Warren:** \$185, it might be more now. **Williams:** The membership was way more than that. It's like \$1200, the membership is not just for you. It is for your Council. **Nikolic:** Outside of that, there's nothing worthwhile being a member of NBC-LEO? **Williams:** I mean, if you need to get your name known. And networking is that important then that's your return on investment. That's what you're getting for it. **Nikolic:** But you guys don't want to be members, is what I'm hearing. (everyone replies no) **Warren:** It is not worth the

money. **Williams:** It wasn't worth it, all the people I met in there. I met at the workshops out during the day. **Warren:** And all they are doing is talking. You get more out of the sessions where people are standing up and they giving presentations. They're talking about something relevant. NBC-LEO is nothing pretty much. Well, cities problems, we already know they have them. They just talk about them, but there's nothing that they do together to say let's attack this. **Hardin:** Tanya, they've listed all the classes so far, yes? **Joseph:** Yeah, it is online. **Warren:** I would suggest you look at the list of classes that they have. **Nikolic:** They only have like a few classes that are at out, like executive sessions. I don't think they have the entire list. **Williams:** They usually have them by now. **Joseph:** It's a few things, I didn't see a lot. **Hardin:** They actually have each day listed already. **Warren:** Yeah, that's what they used to do. They used to send it out. **Joseph:** Probably didn't send it out yet. **Warren:** Yeah, they have each day listed and what the itinerary is. You will get that when you get there too because they give you a book. **Williams:** But you don't want to wait until you get there. Because some of them do fill up. **Nikolic:** Can I get a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn made by Hardin seconded by Davis
YES VOTE: Nikolic, Warren, Scruggs, Hardin, Matlock, Davis, Williams
MOTION PASSED
Adjourned at 11:24 p.m.

Approved 5.28.24


Tanya Joseph, Clerk of Council


Erica Nikolic, President of Council