

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: June 2, 2025

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, here; Mark Smith, here; Robert Bergfeld, absent; Lincoln Fox, here; Paul Neal, absent at roll call, but arrived at 7:03 p.m. Also present was Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Deputy M. Meyers from the Wood County Sheriff's Office. Minutes from the April 21st meeting were approved as submitted (there were no minutes from May 5th or May 19th, since those meetings were cancelled due to lack of a quorum).

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. Councilwoman Mehring seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Copies of the May Bank Reconciliation, Fund Status, Revenue Status, and Appropriation Status Reports were given to the mayor and the Finance Committee to review.

Mayor Shanahan asked if members had anything to discuss with the sheriff's deputy. Councilman Fox asked how long the temporary radar speed sign would be up on Kellogg Road. Deputy Meyers answered that they are usually up for a week; then they get moved around. He commented that they get a few wild speeds recorded, but for the most part they show drivers going at, or below, the speed limit. The deputy asked if the new house under construction on Tontogany Creek Road is in the village. Mayor Shanahan answered that it is and that it was annexed into the village. With nothing more to discuss, the mayor thanked the deputy and he left the meeting.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that there are four upcoming hall rentals in June: Saturday, June 7th; Saturday, June 14th; Saturday, June 21st; and Sunday, June 22nd. He noted that the last two are back-to-back rentals.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that fundraiser and donation revenue received for the 150th Celebration to date totals \$4,803, broken down as follows: \$1,902 from the sale of cookbooks and ornaments; \$2,201 from the sale of Murder Mystery tickets; \$200 donated by Downy Plumbing for the 5K and pancake breakfast; \$500 donated by Lucky Farmers, Inc. He pointed out that just under \$1,234 was spent to purchase the fundraiser ornaments and cookbooks, which means that there was a net profit of about \$668 from those fundraisers so far. He also reported that he sent thank-you letters to those who donated funds for the 150th.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger provided everyone with copies of his proposed 2026 Estimate of Revenues, which must be adopted on or before the 15th of July each year and must be submitted to the County Auditor by July 20th for consideration and approval by the Wood County Budget Commission. He explained that the Estimate of Revenues is a best educated guess of revenues you expect to receive in the upcoming calendar year. If the Budget Commission approves your Estimate of Revenues (which is usually the case), the Wood County Auditor then uses these numbers to issue your Official Certificate of Estimated Revenues, which governs the legal limits of your appropriations (spending) budget for the upcoming year. Mr. Harnishfeger explained that the first page of the Estimate of Revenues deals with only the general fund. The left column shows the actual general fund beginning balance for 2025 and the actual budgeted revenues for the various general fund revenue accounts, with the combined total of beginning balance plus revenues at the bottom of the column. The right column shows your estimated starting balance and estimated revenues for the various general fund accounts for 2026, with the combined total of estimated beginning balance and revenues at the bottom of the column. Beginning balances for the upcoming year are basically figured by taking the current-year beginning balance, adding revenue budget amounts, and subtracting appropriation budget amounts. The expected revenue for the upcoming year is a best guess, based on considerations of what was received last year, what has been received so far this year, and any other known factors. Mr. Harnishfeger told members that the various funds on the other pages of the Estimate of Revenues were all figured similarly. He pointed out

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that the right column on each page shows the combined estimate of beginning balance and expected revenue for each fund, which is the full amount, if approved by the Budget Commission, that we can spend from each fund in 2026. He told members that he estimated street light fund and trees fund revenues for 2026 at the same amounts as 2025—\$4,000 and \$5,000, respectively—which are acquired by the adoption of special assessment ordinances. He said he could change those amounts if Council wished. Members did not voice any desire to change the assessment amounts for 2026. Mr. Harnishfeger told members that, if his proposed revenues look good to them, all we would need is a motion to adopt the Estimate of Revenues and then he will submit it to the County Auditor tomorrow. Councilwoman Mehring made a motion to adopt the proposed 2026 Estimate of Revenues. Councilman Smith seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Councilman Neal said he had one small question to ask. He observed that the general fund appropriations for 2025 were greater than the revenues expected to be received in 2025. He asked if that was accurate. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger answered that the combined amount of beginning balance and expected revenues (revenue budget) is the amount out of which appropriations (spending) is budgeted. You are able, therefore, to appropriate more than your expected revenues by tapping into your remaining beginning-of-year balance. And you don't have to spend all that you appropriate, but appropriating is needed to make it available for spending. However, it is a good question, because if you continually spend more than your expected revenues, you will eventually run out of backup money and will be in danger putting the Village in a fiscal emergency situation.

ZONING: Mayor Shanahan reported that Zoning Inspector Johnson did a zoning permit for Jamie Mehring for a shed or some type of storage building. Councilwoman Mackey reported that Mr. Johnson had said he got a new padlock for the hall shed. She said that we need to get the key to the new lock put into the key box. Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger replied that the new key for the new padlock is in the key box now.

UTILITIES: Mayor Shanahan reported that we had two water line breaks on Main Street. He looked to see if Palmer had billed for that repair yet. Councilman Smith and Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger stated that we have not yet received a bill from Palmer, although Mr. Smith noted that about \$2,000 worth of water line repair parts were listed on the invoices sheet. The mayor went on to explain that the original water leak that the resident reported was just a small hole. Palmer fixed it, but the next morning the street and yards in the area were flooded. The mayor said he had hoped maybe it was the same leak that just hadn't been successfully repaired. But it turned out to be another completely different leak on the same line. So, there were two leaks that had to be repaired on a weekend, meaning extra cost for weekend work. The mayor reported that now we have discovered a third leak at Thelma Wires's location. Mr. Smith added that we thought it was just runoff, but Mr. Johnson tested it and found it has fluoride in it, meaning it is drinking water. The mayor commented that most likely the new sidewalk will have to be torn out in the process of fixing the leak. Mr. Smith added that Mr. Johnson will get with a leak detection company to find out the actual location of the line break, so we can pinpoint where to do the repair and not tear up a larger than necessary area. The mayor said that we are on hold until we get the results of the leak detection operation. Meanwhile, Mr. Smith will keep Thelma up to date on what is happening to get the leak fixed. Councilwoman Mehring asked if we need to put in a whole new water line, due to a history of breakage. Mr. Smith responded that it has been a discussion for years on Broad Street. Councilwoman Mackey added that years ago we had decided that a new water line needs to be put in on Broad Street before we repave the street. The mayor added that Mr. Johnson had checked to see if there is a way we could get around replacing the Broad Street water line, but that idea didn't work out. He speculated that it would probably cost a few hundred thousand dollars to replace the water line and repave Broad Street. Councilman Neal asked about the condition of the water lines throughout the village. Councilman Smith answered that some lines are in better condition than others; the Broad Street water line is the biggest problem line and therefore the first priority. Councilman Fox commented

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that a lot of the east-west lines are newer, and he remembered Mr. Johnson saying that the Broad Street line is the oldest and has the most problems. Councilwoman Mackey reminded members that Jamin Roe had come to a meeting in the past and offered his company's services for our projects, including assistance in seeking grants. She wondered if we might want to give Jamin a call. Mr. Smith commented that H2Ohio is a big source of grant funding, which would be worth looking into. He added that he is sure Jamin's company, American Structurepoint Inc., would be happy to do some consulting work for us and guide us to a full solution of our problem. Ms. Mehring commented that fixing multiple water line breaks over the years adds up to the cost of a new line. The mayor noted that this is the first break we have had for a while on Broad Street; usually it has happened on Tontogany Road, such as in front of the Legion. Councilman Fox commented that they often want you to pay half on grant projects and they want to know what money you have in the bank and what is appropriated for repairs. Mr. Smith noted that they like to get the biggest bang for their grant dollars too, but the Broad Street water line only serves about 100 people. Mr. Fox said he thought he recalled that a minimum project needed to be at least \$250,000. Mr. Smith responded that the full Broad Street water line replacement and repaving would probably be a \$250,000 project. There would be upfront engineering costs as part of the project. Mr. Neal asked if this would be something that could be done in stages and spread the expense over years. Mr. Fox answered that you have to put all of your chips in, if you want grant money; that is how it works. He added that a water line is not something you want to do in stages; it needs to be done all at one time. Mayor Shanahan commented that there is an updated technology, which the line on Broad Street may be too old for. Instead of digging down to where the leak is, the new technology sends a plumbing device through the line to clean it out; then it sends an epoxy through the line to seal it, and it is supposed to hold up for about fifty years. The mayor said he would send members a group-text of the video about this new method of water line repair. Mr. Smith said his only concern is how this would work with so many branches in our distribution system. The mayor responded that, since we know the technology is out there, it would be worth asking and getting more information about it, and to find out when is the right time and the right circumstances to make use of it. Mr. Smith commented that it doesn't take tearing up the whole water line; you just make a hole at the starting point and the end point and blow the stuff through the line to clean and repair it. Members commented that it might save a lot of expense.

Councilwoman Mehring said she didn't think our fire hydrants have been tested in a while. The mayor responded that he thinks they were tested in the last few years, but it is a question for Utilities Superintendent Chad Johnson or Fire Chief Bill Gase. Councilwoman Mackey commented that the fire department used to test them twice a year. The mayor said he would ask Bill Gase about it.

Utilities Clerk Harnishfeger reported that some big changes are coming for Tontogany's utility billing. Tyler Technology has informed us that they will no longer be supporting their Fundbalance software that we use for utility billing after December 31, 2026. They recommend transitioning to their ERP Pro solution and asked us to let them know by the end of June if we wish to do so. Mr. Harnishfeger said he attended a webinar introducing ERP Pro, but it hardly touched on utility billing and focused more on accounting and other types of billing and customer interactions, since their program is a package that covers financial, human resources, revenue management, and utilities as an integrated local government software solution. He said Fundbalance was the same way, but we just used the utility billing module, since we use Uniform Accounting Network (UAN), a financial software package created by the Ohio Auditor of State's office, for municipal accounting and payroll. He said he emailed some questions about ERP Pro to a sales rep and he is supposed to receive a call back at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday. He said his questions included things like: Why the June 30 deadline to switch to ERP Pro, since Fundbalance will be supported through 12/31/26? What is involved in the upgrade process; how does it handle our current utility accounts and their history? What training is included? How does the cost of using ERP Pro compare with the cost of using Fundbalance? Mr. Harnishfeger said his initial impression from the webinar he attended was that ERP Pro is probably a good software solution and it adds the ability for utility customers to access their account information online, see their balances, make

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electronic payments, etc. The program operates in the cloud, rather than on your own server, and Tyler Technologies provides security for all of your data. Mr. Harnishfeger told members that he also emailed Krystal Beyer and asked her what Grand Rapids is thinking about doing, since they also use Fundbalance for utility billing. She responded that she looked at ERP Pro and also looked into Inhance and Muni-Link, two other software solutions. She said she really liked the Muni-Link demo, which is the program that Whitehouse uses for their utilities. She said she feels that Grand Rapids will probably go with Muni-Link, and she said it is supposed to work with the UAN system. Mr. Harnishfeger told members that our current computing hardware used for utilities is also old and in need of replacement. The computer is still using the Windows 7 operating system, as well as a Microsoft Office version from about 2001 or 2003. The printer now struggles to print on the postcard billing stock. Mr. Harnishfeger suggested that maybe the Utilities Committee would want to look into this and make a recommendation for an upgrade path. He said that, ideally, the village administrator would do this, since administering the utilities is one of the main functions of an administrator or a Board of Public Affairs, but we currently have no administrator. Mr. Harnishfeger told members that he would like to use these major changes as an occasion for him to retire in the not-too-distant future. He told members he will be 75 years old this month and he does not want to start over at this point and learn a whole new utility billing system. He thanked members for giving him the opportunity to be their fiscal officer and utilities clerk. He said he was a little rough around the edges when he began and he had to learn the ropes along the way, but over the years he picked up the knowledge and skills needed to do the jobs. The mayor and members voiced support for Mr. Harnishfeger in his retirement wishes. Mr. Harnishfeger said he thought Muni-Link might be a pretty good solution to look into, since it works with UAN and we already have UAN to handle accounting and payroll. Councilman Smith remarked that, on the customer end, Whitehouse's use of Muni-Link is pretty nice. He said he still gets a paper bill each month, but he goes online and pays it with a credit card with no problem. You can also drop it off at the office and pay it in person, have it automatically deducted, or however you want to do it. Councilman Neal asked Mr. Harnishfeger how long he worked with the former fiscal officer before he took over the job. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that he worked with Sherry Wallace for about two hours a week for a year before taking over the job. He learned some basic processes, but most of the intricacies of the job he learned on his own after taking over. Councilman Fox commented that the Muni-Link program might save us money on the cost of mailing bills, if even half of the customers were to sign up for electronic billing. He gave an example of the gas company giving customers the option of a paper bill or an electronic bill, with a \$1 savings for going paperless. Mr. Harnishfeger said he wondered how all of the custom work he does for customers, such as special billing letters, water leak or pool-fill adjustments, disconnection notices, and payment plan agreements would work with the new software. He also wondered if it would handle solar net billing, which he now has to do manually for Otsego, since Fundbalance does not handle it. Mr. Smith commented that Whitehouse's use of Muni-Link is done without physically going out to read meters; it is all done by radio reading where they just push a button once a month at the office to get the new readings and sync everything up. Mr. Fox commented that it could be good for residents who only live here part of the year and spend the winter somewhere else; they could access and pay their bills online. Mr. Smith asked if they had mentioned anything like smart grid technology, which would mean we would have to buy new smart meters to work with it. Mr. Harnishfeger answered that he did not know what smart grid technology was. Mr. Smith briefly explained that is a more connected system, using smart meters. He said it would require everyone to get new water and electric meters, which he has no interest in doing. Mr. Harnishfeger responded that we now have a lot of radio-read meters, which were advertised to us as being able to be read remotely from the village office, but it has never worked that way for us; Chad still has to go out and at least get near the meter to pick up the reading. Mr. Fox commented that Muni-Link seems to be more of a cloud-based software billing solution, rather than a hardware solution. The mayor asked if they are a local company. Mr. Fox looked online and found that they are out of Bellwood, PA. He then asked Mayor Shanahan if he would reach out to Waterville to see what they do for utilities. The mayor answered that he could text them. Mr. Smith said he knew they

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were with Toledo Edison for electricity years ago, and he thinks they get water from Bowling Green. The mayor told members that he would be hesitant to commit to Tyler Technologies' ERP Pro by the end of June without taking time to look into other options. Everyone agreed with the mayor. Mr. Fox commented that we really need to update our utility computer from Windows 7 to bring the operating system up to date with the latest security features to protect our data from cyber attacks. The mayor commented that if we decide to upgrade our utilities software and hardware in 2026, it will give us some time to find the right solution and include budgeting for it in November when we do the appropriation budget for 2026. He told Mr. Harnishfeger to just tell Tyler Technologies that we are looking at multiple options, when they call him back on Wednesday. Mr. Neal commented that the promise of an integrated software solution sounds great, but it is far more complicated to implement it well.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilwoman Mehring reported that the stop sign at the Main Street end of the alley beside the hall continues to lean. Mayor Shanahan responded that it seems to be getting hit by the recycling truck. He asked if the stop sign there could be attached to the telephone pole instead of on a signpost. After a brief discussion, members decided that we definitely need a stop sign at that intersection and we can put the stop sign on the telephone pole, since we own the pole. The mayor said he could talk with Isaac to see if he can help us out with moving the sign to the pole.

Councilwoman Mehring reported that there is a pothole at the Broad Street entrance to the Post Office that needs to be filled. Mayor Shanahan replied that Beth Hayes has asked us to look at fixing a few potholes at various places on Broad Street, and he said the street probably needs sealed in some places. He said he would like for someone on the Streets Committee to call Morlock Asphalt to have them drive down Broad Street and give us a recommendation of what needs to be done in the way of patching or sealing. Based on what they say, we would have to have them do any sealing we want, but we could ask Isaac to do the patching. Councilman Smith agreed that Isaac has a hot patch machine that he could easily use to fix potholes for us. The mayor said he would ask Isaac to drive down Broad Street and fill any divots he finds. Mr. Smith agreed that that would be very helpful. The mayor asked if there is anything we would want Morlock to do for us on the streets before Togany Fest. Mr. Smith replied that we are kind of up against the clock now; if we got an estimate from Morlock, they are probably booked out too far to get to us when we would like. The mayor agreed that we are only about eight weeks away from Togany Fest. Councilwoman Mehring commented that we still need to do something about the unwanted vehicle and the U-Haul at or near the corner downtown. The mayor responded that he saw the people yesterday when walking his dog, but he did not ask them the purpose of the U-Haul—either for moving in or moving out. Councilman Fox added that his daughter told him that the person there is moving to Weston, so he is guessing that they are packing stuff up to move. Councilman Smith reminded the mayor and members that we can put out temporary No Parking signs for Togany Fest. The mayor added that we will ask everyone to relocate on that corner, so the corner will be open for the parade. He said it sounds like there will also potentially be a car show, and we would use Broad Street or Main Street for that. He said we also have to find a place for 15 tons of sand for the sand art; we have a professional sand artist who is going to do some sculptures and teach kids and adults how to do it. The mayor said he thought the location for the sand might need to be near some water.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilwoman Mackey reported that there is a totally dead tree right in front of Peinert Funeral Home. Councilman Smith responded that he would give Abe Rowe a call and see if we can get an estimate to remove that tree, as well as take care of Mackey's tree that had some damage last year. Mayor Shanahan asked Mr. Smith to add the completely dead tree that Scott Coon has been asking us about on the bank of the creek across from the school on Tontogany Creek Road. He said it looks like it would pull down some utility lines if it fell down.

Councilwoman Mackey reported that at the far east corner of North Street and Tontogany Road there is overgrowth that is blocking the view for vehicles coming from the North on Tontogany Road.

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The mayor suggested that we might want to ask Jim Head to trim it back. Ms. Mackey responded that she thought Jim would be happy to do it for us, and she offered to ask him. Councilman Smith commented that he has tools to make the job easier, including a pole saw and pole hedge trimmer, that he can lend to Jim if he wants to do the trimming.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilwoman Mehring reported that the playground at Mehring Park is full of weeds again. Mayor Shanahan responded that we received an email reporting poison hemlock seen growing in various places at Mehring Park, which we will get sprayed. He said he went and looked at the mulched area today and saw dandelions and other weeds popping up. Councilwoman Mackey reminded members that the company we hired to treat the lawns said they would spray the playgrounds whenever needed, and it is needed now, especially at Mehring Park. Councilman Smith responded that we haven't received a bill from GSI yet, so he didn't think they have been out to do any treatments yet, but he would follow up with them on the matter. The mayor said he would try to communicate with the railroad to clean up their property by the park, but he wouldn't hold his breath on getting any cooperation from them, even if he mentions that this is the town's 150th Celebration. Ms. Mackey commented that the lawn at Centennial Park looks good, so they may have sprayed there, but she never saw them there. Mr. Smith said he would check with GSI on our status with them.

Councilwoman Mackey reported that Rumpke did not pick up the trash at Centennial Park on Friday, and there was a party scheduled there for Saturday. She said she called Rumpke and the rep she spoke with gave her all kinds of excuses and said she couldn't even find our account. Ms. Mackey said she told her it should be under Village of Tontogany on Main Street. The lady then found the account, but said it didn't mention anything about North Street. Ms. Mackey said she told her that our contract with Rumpke included pickup of trash at both parks. The lady answered that she didn't have that information. Ms. Mackey said she let her know that a party was scheduled for the next day and there was stinking trash sitting there that Rumpke failed to pick up. Ms. Mackey told members that Councilman Smith showed up and took care of the trash that Rumpke missed. Ms. Mackey asked if Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger could give Rumpke a call and make sure they know they need to be picking up trash at the park on Wall Street and at the park on North Street. Councilman Fox remarked that there is nothing saying that we have to stay with Rumpke for trash pickup; if we find them unreliable, we could switch to a different trash collection service. He reminded members that he had reached out previously to Stevens Disposal & Recycling Service Inc., who gave him a quote of \$17 per person, but we would have to get the whole village to do it. They would be willing to do curbside recycling too, at an additional cost. Mayor Shanahan commented that he didn't know if the whole village would agree to do it. Mr. Fox said his thought was to try to team up with Weston and Grand Rapids to get a group rate. The mayor said he thought it would be hard to convince all of the residents in three villages to get onboard. Members discussed various companies that do trash disposal and the possible scenarios of switching to Stevens or another company. Members also discussed possible billing methods for trash and recycling, and whether or not the Village would do the billing or the trash company. In consideration of Tontogany billing for trash services, Councilman Neal asked Utilities Clerk Harnishfeger what kind of percentage of utility customers don't keep up their payments. Mr. Harnishfeger replied that about 2.5% to 5% of customers may be 90 days behind in their utility payments at any given time, so he figured that there would probably be a percentage of residents that would routinely carry a balance on their trash services as well. Mr. Neal remarked that he wanted to underline that there is a clerical administration cost in adding billing for a service such as trash pickup. Councilman Smith commented that with the new billing software that we will have to change to we should be able to add billing for trash disposal, if we choose to go that route, and make it work; other towns do it. He added that we are moving toward automating the billing process, which should mean that a future utilities clerk will spend less time getting the job done.

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Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that potential renters have sometimes asked if we have pictures of the hall that they could see. He asked if someone who is handy with a camera can take some pictures of the hall that we could have Haley post on the Village website. Councilman Neal volunteered to take some pictures and send them to Haley to post.

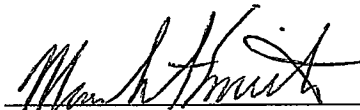
Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that Karen Current requested that we have the kitchen floor stripped and waxed again like we did in 2019, because the floor has become impossible for her to clean well. He told members that in 2019 we had Guarantee Carpet Cleaning do the kitchen for \$180 and the restrooms for \$40.50 each. Councilwoman Mackey commented that Karen had told her the same thing and she had told Karen that we may wait until after the festival and the pancake breakfast before doing it.

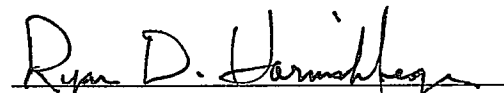
Mayor Shanahan told Councilwoman Mackey that the 150th Committee would like to do their meeting on Sunday, the 22nd of June, at the pavilion at Centennial Park. Ms. Mackey answered that she thinks someone has it reserved, but she would check and let the mayor know.

Mayor Shanahan reported that he noticed some graffiti on the gaga ball court in Centennial Park. It was names and he took a picture of the names and sent them to the school superintendent and asked him if they were Otsego students. They are Otsego students, sixth graders. The superintendent passed it along to the junior high principal, who will call the students in with their parents. The mayor said he will also be present to let them know how much work went into the Eagle Scout project that the school reached out to us and asked us to put at the park, and to ask that the students who did the graffiti have to do the work to remove their names. The mayor said he is waiting to hear back from the junior high principal.

Mayor Shanahan reminded members that he will not be in attendance at the next meeting. He asked if Council would be okay with him receiving his monthly pay check on Thursday before heading out on his vacation trip. Members voiced their agreement with him doing so, with no one voicing opposition.

With nothing further to discuss, Mayor Shanahan declared the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.


Mark Smith, President of Council


Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer