

TONTOGANY VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FROM: October 20, 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, here; Lincoln Fox, here; Paul Neal, here. Also present was Fiscal Officer/Utilities Clerk Ryan Harnishfeger. Visitors present: Ryker Cordova for a school class; Vickie Scott, accompanying Ryker Cordova. Minutes from the October 6th meeting were approved as submitted.

FINANCE and CLAIMS: A spreadsheet of the current invoices was reviewed and approved by members. Councilman Smith made a motion that these bills be allowed and orders drawn for same. Councilman Neal seconded this motion. All were in favor; motion carried. Councilwoman Mackey noted that the bill from C & L Sanitation was for the rental of the park porta johns from 10/8/25 to 11/4/25. She asked members if they would like for her to contact C & L to remove the porta johns after 11/4/25. The mayor and members answered that she should do so, since cold weather is setting in and we have no specific need to keep them any longer this year. Councilman Fox asked if we had ever sought quotes from a different company than C & L for porta john rentals. Ms. Mackey and other members replied that we had not. Mr. Fox said he didn't know if it would save us much money, but he knew of someone who uses Ace porta johns and he would be interested in getting a quote. Mayor Shanahan commented that Togany Fest uses Ace, and we could ask them what they pay; however, they only rent for a day rather than multiple months like we do. Ms. Mackey noted that we like to keep them available each year through trick-or-treat night.

Mayor Shanahan reported that we received an invitation to the Northwest Ohio Mayors & Managers Association's Annual Steak Dinner, which will be in Pemberville on Thursday, November 20th. He noted that property tax reform is a hot topic that will be discussed at the dinner event. Councilman Fox asked if it started at 6 p.m. again. The mayor replied that Social Hour will be at 5:30 p.m. and the Steak Dinner will be at 6:30 p.m. He added that, since we are members of N.O.M.M.A., it will be \$45 per ticket. He said he will be attending the dinner, since he is on N.O.M.M.A.'s board now, and he asked any members who also want to attend to let Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger know.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that the person who had asked about renting the hall on Sunday, November 2nd, has made payment, so we now have back-to-back rentals on November 1st and 2nd.

Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that Joe Pemberton emailed today, asking to be included on our agenda for the November 17th meeting to give his annual Suburban Natural Gas presentation on gas safety. He will arrive around 7:30 p.m.

ZONING: Mayor Shanahan reported that on October 15th we sent the sidewalk violation letter by certified mail, as discussed at the last meeting. He told members that, as of this meeting, we have not yet received a signed receipt showing that the certified mail was received, and we have not otherwise heard from the resident. The mayor reported that he emailed Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger today and asked him to send out three more letters to residents with inoperable vehicles, as discussed at the last meeting. He said that Mr. Harnishfeger will send them by certified mail tomorrow, and he added that he has asked Mr. Harnishfeger to automatically use certified mail for any zoning letters, in an effort to get signatures and to help establish a timeline. The mayor told Councilman Neal that he thought he remembered a form in the back of the zoning packet he had compiled, for tracking the actions and status pertaining to specific zoning nuisances. Councilman Neal responded in the affirmative. The mayor asked Mr. Neal if he could send him an electronic version of that tracking form, so he could just fill it in as he goes and randomly send copies of the updated form to members. Mr. Neal asked the mayor what format he would like it in. The mayor answered that Excel or Word would be fine, but Excel would

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probably be the easiest to work with as we add information going into the future. Mr. Neal offered to alter the layout of the form, if needed, to make it easier to use. The mayor replied that he would try using it first and then seek Mr. Neal's expertise if any changes need to be made to the form. Councilman Fox asked the mayor if he had talked to anyone else about violations, since he had mentioned four at the last meeting. The mayor answered that the fourth violation we talked about was weeds, but he had been held up a little bit in finding the ordinance covering that issue.

Councilwoman Mehring reported a large utility trailer sitting downtown on Main Street in front of Hefflinger's, parked in such a way that it blocks a large portion of the area. Mayor Shanahan responded that we will look at it and keep an eye on it. If it remains there a week or ten days, we will address the issue. If it is someone doing a quick project in 24 or 48 hours, we will not worry about it.

Councilman Neal reported that he inquired about where Solicitor Skaff stood on the zoning code audit that he had submitted to him, and he had replied that he would have his answer this coming week. He said that Solicitor Skaff had also verified that the documentation that Mr. Neal had collected as representing our current law was accurate and wasn't nullified by any preceding or subsequent legislation.

UTILITIES: Mayor Shanahan reported that he had not received an update on anything from Utilities Superintendent Johnson, and he did not know if he touched base yet with Bowling Green about the streetlight we had discussed.

STREETS and ALLEYS: Councilman Smith reported that he sent out a request to Morlock Asphalt for an estimate to crack-seal North, Washington, and Main Streets, because those are the only ones that haven't been done yet, except for Broad Street which he left alone for now. We did Wall and Lincoln Streets two years ago, as well as Harley Woods. He commented that Crom Street was repaved a few years ago and doesn't need crack-sealing yet. He said he is just waiting to hear back from Morlock. He added that he didn't know if it could be done yet this fall, but most likely it would be done in the spring.

SIDEWALKS and TREES: Councilman Smith reported that Abe Rowe came out and trimmed the trees for us last week. He commented that the tree in front of Richard Downs's house looks pretty nice now; it looks healthy and is back off of his house. He remarked that Abe does solid work, as usual. Mayor Shanahan added that the one on Washington Street and Tontogany Creek Road looks nice too; the banner is very clear. Visitor Vickie Scott asked who does the Village's tree work. Members answered that it is Abe Rowe's Tree Service. Mr. Smith offered to give Abe's phone number to her.

Councilman Neal noted that the grant information the mayor had sent out, regarding villages of 50,000 people or less, included pedestrian crossings for railroad tracks. Councilman Smith thanked him for pointing that out, which he had not noticed. He added that we will probably use that.

DRAINS and SEWERS: Nothing to report.

CITY HALL and PARKS: Councilman Smith reported that he met with Travis from Downey PHCE last week and they looked around at Centennial Park. They will be happy to provide us with an estimate for updating the lights at the park. While he was there, Travis pointed out several deficiencies in everything from the pole to the lights. The wiring is a little questionable. Mayor Shanahan asked if this includes the pavilion as well. Mr. Smith replied that it does; it is everything that serves from the last pole, or like the service entrance to a home where an electric meter would be, but we just have metal prongs blocked off to provide electricity. Travis said that it probably should all be updated. Mr. Smith said that Travis just got back from vacation, so he is waiting for him to get back to him with an estimate for the lights and an estimate for everything on the other side as well. He suggested to members that we might want to hold off on the grant for lights until next year and just fix all of the other things this year. He said he

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guessed that just fixing all of the other things will probably be a pretty hefty bill. Councilwoman Mackey commented that it may be more important to fix those other things before we install new lights anyway. Mr. Smith agreed that that is probably the higher priority for safety and reliability and everything else. He added that it would be a good selling point when applying for a grant for the lights, to be able to say that we did all of this to improve the safety and the infrastructure around the lights. Ms. Mackey told members that we had forgotten that we needed to pass a resolution authorizing the Village to participate in the 2026 parks grant program, which is a requirement each year if you want to participate. She apologized that she didn't think of it. Mayor Shanahan agreed that we forgot it and it is a requirement, so it will make us ineligible to participate in the application process this year. He said that he will email Solicitor Skaff and ask him to prepare a resolution for us to participate in the grant process next year, and we will start readings of the resolution in January. The mayor also commented that, depending on the timing of receiving estimates from Downey, we may be able to use the information to help in budgeting for 2026, and we can decide if we want to make our own funding available, in case we are not awarded a park grant to cover the park lighting improvements.

Mayor Shanahan reminded members that he sent them all a text after the TMACOG meeting that he attended. He clarified that it wasn't really an organized meeting, but they were just putting out various opportunities of work for municipalities. They didn't say it was a job fair, but he kind of got the idea that that is what it was for, where interested parties could go and get information on all kinds of employment opportunities with municipalities. He said the only reason he went is because it was an evening event and he had told TMACOG that 99 percent of their events are during the workday, and small municipalities often have a mayor and council members who have full-time jobs and can't always leave work to attend. He said it turned out that he was the only elected official there. It was not well attended, but it worked in his favor because he got a lot of one-on-one time with the TMACOG Director Sandy Spang and her team. They were telling him of all kinds of creative grants and grant writing and how they can potentially have a grant writer write our grants for us. There are grants where part of the grant will pay for the grant writer. They talked about grants for empty buildings that can be done to get them up to ADA standards and to help make them a little more attractive to rent out or sell. He said that he has been emailing back and forth with TMACOG and came to an agreement that on November 13th Sandy and a couple of her team members are going to meet us at the village hall at 5:30 p.m. He encouraged as many council members as can to join with him at that meeting to hear the information that TMACOG has to share. He said that the plan is to start at the hall and either walk downtown first to look at buildings and then come back to talk about the different funding we might be able to tap into, or we may start with discussing the funding opportunities and then go downtown to look around. The mayor told members that he thought it would be a very beneficial meeting for us, to learn what is out there and how to apply for it. They will even talk to us about available low-interest or no-interest loans that may be beneficial to us.

Mayor Shanahan reported that today he scheduled a meeting with Councilman Neal on November 5th at 6:30 p.m. to talk about downtown revitalization and what type of communication we think we need to use for building owners. They will start taking some of the data that Gail Christofferson collected for us on the survey and hopefully create a framework and a timeline of what we want to do 30, 60, 90 days out—what is the right direction for us. He said that he thinks Gail will be joining with them at that meeting and any council members are welcome to join with them as well. He said they may walk around downtown or they may just stay at the hall, since the status of the buildings is already known. The mayor told Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger that he may send him a request for names, addresses, and contact information for downtown building owners. The mayor asked Mr. Neal if he had contact information for the building owners. He answered that he did. Mr. Harnishfeger suggested that Mr. Neal may have more complete name, address, and contact information for the building owners than he did. The mayor commented that another thing that had been discussed was about who would be vital to be on the revitalization committee. He suggested that it might be beneficial to have on the committee

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people who we know that either have a business or want to create a business in the village, such as Steve Powell, the owners of Doc's, or Dylan Hefflinger. Councilman Neal commented that the conversations he had with Steve Powell during the process indicated that decision making was just stuck, as owners vacillated over conflicting elements such as wanting to make a change versus expenses and benefits. He said he thought that the decision-making exercise would be good to discuss, since the building owners are in the critical path of success. Councilman Fox commented that, as much as you want the business owners to make changes to their buildings, it is really hard to make them do that. The mayor agreed. Councilman Smith added that you can't make people sell their places or develop their places. The mayor commented that, as long as they are paying their utilities and property taxes and doing what they are legally supposed to be doing, they are okay. Mr. Neal commented that he noticed in the grant information that there are grants for downtown building restoration, which he noted could change our position on the matter and provide us with incentives to offer owners. Mr. Smith stated that you still need the building owners to play along. Mayor Shanahan encouraged members, as he forwards emails to them, to take the opportunity, if available, to get on the email lists themselves, so they get the information directly and everyone can be keeping up to date on the information. Mr. Neal told the mayor that he would compile for him a packet of reference data for the storefronts and owners of downtown buildings, when he gets home after the meeting.

Mayor Shanahan told members that they may have seen on his mayor's page on Facebook that we have a Christmas tree picked out. Bernie and Jean Scott are donating a tree next to their house. The mayor told members that they are creating commemorative tree lighting sweatshirts with the downtown image of a Christmas tree on them, which will be for sale. He said that we will be setting up for a total of four days to take pre-orders for the sweatshirts. People will pay first and then we will put the money into the 150th revenue account and then make payment for the sweatshirt order from the 150th appropriation account. People will have the option of a hoodie or a crewneck sweatshirt, in sage green or red—Christmas colors. The mayor remarked that, to his surprise, the prices for purchasing the designed sweatshirts was not bad: the crewneck is \$18 and the hoodie is \$23, so we will probably sell them for \$25 and \$30, respectively. He commented that, by way of comparison, a good sweatshirt these days may cost you \$50, \$60, or even \$80. Visitor Vickie Scott asked how people like her would know about this. Councilman Smith replied that we have a page on Facebook for the 150th, and now that this has been scheduled, it will be posted on Facebook. Ms. Scott asked what the page was called. The mayor answered that it is called Tontogany 150th Celebration; he added that if you just put "150th" in a search, it will come up. He added that he also has a Mayor Matt Shanahan page on Facebook, where he puts all kinds of announcements for the village, such as for brush pickup, leaf pickup, road closures, or anything pertaining to the village. Mr. Smith remarked that the tree for the tree lighting is the most beautiful tree we have picked so far; it is picture perfect.

Councilwoman Mackey asked if we have found out what the schedule will be for leaf pickup this year. Mayor Shanahan replied that he would contact Isaac again, but he thought we wanted to maybe have him start a week early this year. Councilman Smith recommended starting a week early, taking Thanksgiving week off, and then coming back again the first week of December, rather than just every Monday in November as in previous years. The mayor said he would contact Isaac tomorrow. Ms. Mackey reminded members that we have brush pickup on October 27th and banner presentation on November 3rd. Councilwoman Mehring told the mayor that Sandy Woodbury had said she didn't know if she was going to come to the banner presentation. The mayor responded that we would like for every family of the banner recipients to be represented at the presentation, but we can't make someone come if they don't wish to. He said that it would help us to know why someone doesn't intend to come, such as if they didn't have a ride to the event and we could offer them a ride. The mayor also said that we could set up a date when we could take the banner to the relative's home and present it to them, if they didn't want to attend the presentation at the hall.

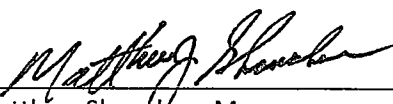
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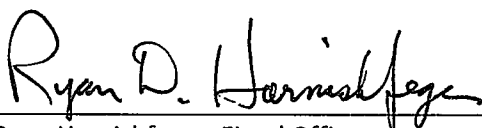
Fiscal Officer Harnishfeger reported that the pilot light went out in the gas heating unit in the hall office, but it takes two people to get it relit, so he has been using a space heater brought from home for the past week. Councilman Smith replied that we will take care of it after the meeting. Mayor Shanahan asked when was the last time the office heating unit was serviced. Mr. Harnishfeger responded that he didn't know, but it is nothing new for the pilot light to go out while the heater sits idle through the summer months. The heater still works fine. The mayor suggested it might be pretty old and need a servicing or maybe we should get a quote for a new one. Mr. Smith asked if there is air conditioning in the office. Mr. Harnishfeger replied that there is an AC unit in the wall and it works well. Councilwoman Mackey asked if the pilot light for the furnace is for the whole building or just for the office. Mr. Harnishfeger replied that it is just for the office. Mr. Smith commented that, if it was him, he would go with a ductless mini-split system, which is all electric with a heat pump and you can control the temperature with a remote. Councilman Fox added that he got a quote for one and it was around \$5,000. The mayor commented that in the long run it would be a cheap purchase. Mr. Smith added that it would last for years and he couldn't recommend it enough for a space like the hall office. The mayor suggested that we get the current heater going tonight and then look at some options.

Councilman Neal said he thought it was announced at the last meeting that there would be a leaf pickup on October 27th. Mayor Shanahan clarified that that was an announcement for brush pickup. Mr. Neal said that several people have asked if there are any other dates, since most of the leaves are a little slow this year. Councilman Bergfeld again clarified that the October 27th pickup previously talked about was only for brush, not leaves. Mr. Smith added that brush from storm damage will be picked up on the 27th and then leaf pickup will start the week after. The mayor added that leaf pickup is generally every Monday in November. Mr. Neal asked who he could call to get the exact dates for leaf pickup. The mayor and members responded that it will be every Monday in November, unless we change it. Mr. Neal said that he would have it posted on the website.

Mayor Shanahan asked members to be thinking about budget items for the discussion coming up at the end of November and early December. He said he appreciated everything members are doing.

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


Matthew Shanahan, Mayor


Ryan Harnishfeger, Fiscal Officer