

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

June 16, 2025

The Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting of Council was called to order by Mr. Furry, President of Council, at 7:00 p.m. in the David J. Cook Council Chambers.

Council Members Present: Mr. Hunt, Mrs. Gallagher, Mr. O'Boyle, Mr. Shipp,
Mrs. Morris, Mr. Sindelar, Mr. Furry

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Snyder

The Meeting was opened with a Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor thanked everyone who attended and participated in the Flag Day Celebration. Thank you to Aria Sova, an incredibly talented fifth grader along with the Scouts that joined in on Saturday. Thank you to all the residents who took thousands of flags home with them from the City Hall Campus during the past couple of weeks.

The Mayor said that the "Taste of River" was a huge success even though it had rained all day. It was a very successful evening and the festivities could be heard far and wide in the city. If you attended, hopefully you had a very good time. Thank you to the Rocky River Chamber of Commerce and the Service Department that supports the Chamber in a variety of ways. Thank you also to Director Rich Snyder who leads the whole effort to help the Chamber. There were a lot of very positive comments including Rich's attention to detail in supporting the Chamber.

Orris Construction is ready to begin the second phase of construction of twenty-five townhomes on Center Ridge Road next to the apartment building they recently completed. The construction will begin after the Greek Festival.

The Mayor discussed the power outage that happened Friday night. There were 27,000 First Energy customers that were without power in the Westshore including North Olmsted, Westlake, part of Bay Village, Rocky River and perhaps some of Fairview Park. The Mayor gave a shout out to the First Energy Reps, including the previous and current reps. They were both answering phone calls from the city and troubleshooting. Most of the energy was restored in about twenty or thirty minutes. First Energy is still trying to diagnose exactly what happened and as of midday today, they did not know but continue to evaluate that. The Mayor was happy to report that the generators that Council supported in the purchasing and installation for various departments worked flawlessly. This is especially critical in the Police Department as the phones are connected with other technological systems that are needed. Everything worked as it should.

The Mayor said that Director Deb Huff announced this morning that the Senior Center received a very generous distribution from an estate. This woman used the Senior Center Transportation to get to various doctors' appointments allowing her to live her life a little more independently. Senior Transportation is deeply valued and allows people to live more independently. The city is happy to provide that independent service. The service has a fleet of vehicles that is diverse and the city can take most seniors where they need to go. A big thank you to Director Huff and her staff that run this program. The city is honored to receive this distribution to support the continuation of this important program.

This Sunday will be the “Summer of Fun” along with the “Hilliard Hustle Run”, the Flea Market which includes twenty plus individuals selling honey, arts and crafts, jewelry and other items. The group “Perfect Choice” will be playing that evening.

The Mayor gave a big thank you to the Community West Foundation for providing the Fire Department and the Recreation Department with a grant close to \$5,000.00 for AEDs to be placed at Bradstreet’s Landing and Rocky River Park. The city is trying to have AEDs deployed in every one of the parks and those are two important parks due to the number of people that frequent the parks in the summer.

The Mayor reported on the State Budget that hopefully has started in the Conference Committee. There is a bill currently that is taking a very close look at inside millage. The Mayor explained that there is inside and outside millage. Outside millage is voted millage and inside millage is to be shared between taxing authorities up to ten mills in a community. The Mayor explained what this means to our city. This is important and the administration has already responded to the Ohio Municipal League, the Cuyahoga County Mayors and Managers. These are important issues that directly impact this community. The ten inside mills that is currently assessed is dispersed as follows: the City of Rocky River receives 3.93 mills which is used for the police and fire pension funds and general fund; the Rocky River City School District receives 4.57 mills of those 10 mills for general fund and permanent improvements; the Cleveland MetroParks receives .05 mills and Cuyahoga County receives 1.45 of the ten mills for general fund and debt service. The city’s portion is just a little over \$4 million, which is significant. The city is working with the State Legislature and various groups to highlight the impact of this legislation. One of the concerns is that this is a separate bill that could potentially roll in to the budget bill. A lot of this impacts the schools. It deals with replacement levies and things the city does not have, but it would impact the schools. The Mayor is watching this very closely. As the Mayor learns more information, as always, she will share it with Council.

The Mayor discussed the letter City Council received from a resident on Beachwood regarding the volume of noise from lawn mowers, leaf blowers, edgers, et cetera. Of course, at this time of the year, residents’ windows are open and there are still a number of people that work from home and these things become disruptive. To ban this equipment would not have a reasonableness that the residents would find acceptable. One of the thoughts is to curtail their use. The city does have limits on when machines can be used, motors and tools, et cetera, but if this is something that Council would like to pursue and tighten up, that is certainly open for discussion. The Mayor will provide the existing legislation for Council to review. It is hard as residents come home from work and begin their yard work. Weekends have been very rainy and the Mayor imagines that this is happening more during the week.

Councilwoman Morris received a question regarding electric bikes in the parks, on sidewalks et cetera. The Mayor stated that motorized vehicles of any type are not allowed when their motors are running in parks, on sidewalks, et cetera. The Mayor asked Chief Lichman to send out a letter to the leadership of the Police Department that if they see this, they need to stop people and ask them to turn their motor off. Bikes can be pedaled, but no motors can be running.

The discussion of electric bikes brought up the issue of golf carts. There have been a few more golf carts around the city that have been seen in the past. There are low speed vehicles and under speed vehicles. Low speed vehicles that are capable of speeds between 20-25 mph, are permitted on the city’s streets by State Law, unless Council wants to prohibit them. They must be street legal, which means lights and also must be a registered vehicle. Under speed vehicles can go no more than 20 mph and be under 3,000 lbs. Golf Carts are generally USBs so they would be prohibited unless Council wants to change that. Things like mopeds and vespas, like a scooter and not an electric bike, are permitted on any street that has a speed limit of 45 mph or lower. This is a lot of information and detail.

- Mr. Sindelar asked about stand-up scooters that can go almost 20 mph. The Mayor said they are motorized so they are not allowed on the sidewalks. The Mayor will have the Chief weigh in on this along with public education regarding this topic. The Mayor said a resident brought it to Councilwoman Morris' attention at Tri-City Park. Mrs. Morris did a lot of research looking at Westlake and Fairview Park. It was a Rocky River resident that called about a Rocky River (Tri-City) Park, it is Rocky River's laws and they are prohibited. The Mayor encourages any residents to call the city directly so the city can respond.

The Mayor announced that City Hall will be closed this Thursday, June 19th, in observance of the Juneteenth Holiday. A ReadyNotify message will go out regarding refuse being delayed a day on Thursday and Friday by one day.

- Mr. Sindelar asked if the Mayor knew the reason the power went out. The Mayor reiterated that she has been waiting all day to hear the cause and First Energy has not reported it yet.
- Mrs. Morris asked about the bill name or number that the Mayor discussed earlier. The Mayor said it is House Bill 335 and 28.
- Mrs. Gallagher asked if Dave Conley is still the First Energy contact. The Mayor said no but he was responsive to the city. The city's new contact is Niketas Katsaros. The Mayor will send out his contact information.
- Director Snyder elaborated one thing regarding the Hilliard Hustle. Hilliard Blvd. will have a temporary closure between Wagar Road and Tonawanda from 5:15 p.m. until 7:15 p.m. this Sunday. Notices went out to all the property owners on Hilliard Blvd. The Streets Division will be working along with the Police Department on the closure. Mr. Furry asked if it was just one lane that would be closed. Director Snyder said it will be both westbound lanes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 29-25: Mr. Furry said that every new term, the current Council needs to set compensation for the newly elected Council. The filing deadline has been reached so some may be sitting in the same seats and some may not. The previous two cycles have had a cost-of-living adjustment and President Furry did not think any further adjustments were necessary. There has not been a lot of discussion and this will be placed on the consent agenda.

Ordinance No. 30-25: President Furry said that this ordinance provides for the compensation for the Council President. Similar to 29-25, every new term the current council needs to set the compensation for the Council President, who is elected by the newly elected Council. The previous two cycles had a cost-of-living adjustment but President Furry did not think any further adjustments were necessary. This will also be placed on the consent agenda.

Amended Ordinance No. 31-25: President Furry said this ordinance provides for the compensation for the Director of Law commencing January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2027. Again, Council sets this. The salary for this position had a good bump last cycle so will remain the same. This also has an additional

compensation component which was amended last week to \$150.00 per hour for the first year, January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026 and \$175.00 per hour for January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2027 up to a ceiling of \$50,000 annually. This will be on the consent agenda.

Ordinance No. 32-25: President Furry said like all the previous ordinances, this ordinance is providing for the compensation of the Mayor of the City of Rocky River term commencing January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027. Again, Council sets this. This had a slight bump last cycle with the longevity piece added and no further increase was looked at for this cycle. This will be on the consent agenda.

Resolution No. 33-25: President Furry said that this is a resolution establishing that Rocky River City Council shall recess during the month of August 2025. This has been a practice for a long time but during President Furry's tenure, there have been times that Council did have to meet for emergency situations during the month of August. The next meeting following the August break will be September 8, 2025 with the possibility of having a Special Meeting during the month of September. This will be on the consent agenda also.

Ordinance No. 34-25: Mr. Furry stated that 34-25 is authorizing an updated employee deferred compensation plan agreement. The city offers three different deferred compensation plans for employees through the following three organizations: the Ohio Public Employees Deferred Compensation Program, VOYA (formerly known as ING), and Equitable (formerly known as AXA). The Equitable plan document needs to be updated to align with legislative changes and IRS regulatory changes including the CARES/SECURE Acts, Miner's Act and portions of SECURE 2.0. There is also some restructuring of the agreement since certain legislated and regulatory changes impact safety forces only.

Resolution No. 35-25: Similar to the annual sewer bill ordinances that certify unpaid sewer assessments, Resolution No. 35-25 is to certify assessments of sidewalk maintenance costs. This is for the period from 2022 to 2024. After citing the sidewalks that needed to be repaired or replaced, residents had the option of finding their own contractor. Where the city incurred maintenance costs, residents have been billed and there remain some unpaid accounts. Similar to the sewer assessments, Mr. Furry anticipates that there may be an amendment by substitution to reflect payments received. Like the sewer maintenance, the County charges 1% administrative fee for processing.

- Mrs. Morris noticed a damaged sidewalk after it was inspected a few years ago so this section may not be re-evaluated for a couple of years. What do you do in a situation like that? Director Snyder said that if Council is out and sees something that is an immediate trip hazard, let the Safety Service Director know and it will get looked at. It can always be shoehorned into a project.

Resolution No. 36-25: Mr. Furry said this is to submit the Alternative Tax Budget information for fiscal year beginning January 1, 2026. As Council knows this is not the final budget as that will be addressed at the end of the year, but a procedural item that needs to be submitted to the County. The full budget will be addressed later this year. This includes things that are known expenditures due to cost-of-living adjustments or the various CBAs.

Ordinance No. 37-25: Mrs. Gallagher said that this allows for the purchase of a new 25 cubic yard Leach Refuse Collector to replace a 2008 that the Service Department has been using for back up. The 2008 truck's frame is bad, hopper and blade are rotted, the engine needs a complete overhaul, brakes and hoppers need replaced and the truck has 15,743 hours on the engine and 140,262 miles on the chassis. In other words, this truck needs to be replaced. The cost of the truck is not to exceed \$279,950. These funds shall be paid from the equipment fund, refuse and recycling vehicles and large equipment under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Agreement. If approved, this will be purchased from Best Equipment and this unit is available for delivery. On a typical day in the summer, the city uses one truck strictly for recycling, they

fill 2.5 packers with refuse and two trucks for lawn waste. With the purchase of this additional packer, the fleet will consist of only two trucks that are nine years old or older. This will three full reads.

Ordinance No. 38-25: This is for the purchase of one new Vactor Truck with a mounted sewer cleaner at a cost not to exceed \$642,585.08. This will be purchased from A & H Equipment Company also under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Agreement. These funds come from the equipment purchase sanitary sewer vehicles and large equipment account. This truck will replace a 2017 Van-Con truck with 5,139 hours on the engine, 2,320 on the vacuum engine and only 22,966 miles on the chassis. The past three years, the city has had significant issues with this truck including electronic, compressor issues, fan issues, counter for the hose and it currently needs a debris tank which would cost an estimated \$100,000. This equipment is used almost daily by the sewer division. In 2024 the sewer division cleaned over 47 miles of sewer main within the city. The sewer jet is the most important piece of equipment in the sewer division. It opens sewer laterals for homeowners, cleans the mains and laterals for the camera truck and it can flush lines. The stainless-steel components on the debris tank and vacuum unit on this truck will make this last significantly longer than the 2017 which will be sold on Gov.deals. Avon Lake, Strongsville and Amherst are all very happy with their Vactors. This will have three full reads.

- Mrs. Gallagher asked Director Snyder how long the warranty is. Mr. Snyder will get back to her on that as there are different warranty periods on different components.

Resolution No. 39-25: This is a resolution requesting the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer to advance taxes from the proceeds of all tax levies in the tax year 2025 pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code. Basically, the city is getting their money earlier. The city must ask for it via a resolution to get payment in roughly mid-January with a second payment in February rather than waiting until the final reconciliation in late March or early April. This also applies to the last half of the 2025 cycle which is basically six months later.

Resolution No. 40-25: This is a resolution accepting the amounts and rates as determined by the Cuyahoga County Budget Commission and authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer. The State Constitution authorizes each taxing authority up to 10 mills which is “inside” millage of which the city receives 3.93 mills. Outside millage is voter approved of which we have 5.97 mills. When the city paid off the debt millage in 2024, the city had it below 10 mills. The Mayor added that Director Thomas has been very helpful. He is the Treasurer for the Cuyahoga County Mayors and Managers. Last week he put together numbers after numbers after numbers and it was Mike’s good work that communicated all of this to the State and to the County. The Mayor thanked Director Thomas for all that quick work while he had other things going on last week as well. It was very helpful.

Ordinance No. 41-25: Mr. Hunt said Ordinance No. 41-25 is an ordinance that proposes authorizing the Mayor and the Safety Service Director to purchase a Drive Test Scanner and software for the Police Department. The cost will be \$235,939.00. Council should notice that there was a revised ordinance for this at Council’s seat this evening with a new section added indicating and being transparent on its face that these funds are being reimbursed from a grant and to know at the end of the day, there is no outlie of funds for this equipment. This drive test scanner and geolocation analysis would utilize available technology to assist law enforcement in investigating violent crimes involving cellular detail records and geolocation analysis. It provides a real time analysis and up to date image of the cellular network and cell sites near a crime scent. This will be an invaluable tool for the police department and detectives. Included on the memorandum attached, Chief Lichman indicated on the bottom an email with documents that might help explain. Mr. Hunt requested that Chief Lichman send the emails over and provide any other detail. This will have three full reads.

- Mr. Furry said this is a reimbursement grant with no matching funds. Mr. Furry also found out tonight that time is somewhat of the essence and it may be approved after two reads. There is

concern that prices may increase in the near term so it should be ordered as soon as possible. The Mayor added that ordering it soon would allow the city to apply for the reimbursement while waiting for the piece of equipment. The Chief and Detective Asbury asked if this would be possible.

- Mrs. Morris asked if the city is ensuring people's privacy with this kind of equipment. She knows that police have all kinds of ways to get information, but this seems like it is more readily available information. Mr. Snyder said that the police would still have to follow their due process to be able to subpoena to get warrants. They cannot just do it randomly for whoever. There are protocols in place. Mr. Snyder said his understanding of this is to take a cell phone that they would take as a piece of evidence and be able to dump all that information out of the cell phone. Currently the police must go away somewhere to do this and it slows the process significantly. Mr. O'Shea said that the amount of information the Detective Bureau gets from a simple cell phone is amazing. There are a lot of crimes solved based upon the information from cell phone dumps. This is going to make it easier.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: Happy Birthday last week to Councilwoman Gallagher.

President Furry said that the next meeting will be a Legislative Meeting on Monday, June 23, 2025 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council