

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

July 7, 2025

The Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting of Council was called to order by Mr. Furry, President of Council, immediately following the Special Meeting in the David J. Cook Council Chambers.

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

Council Members Absent: Mr. Shipp

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

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Bobst welcomed two scouts along with their dad to this evening's meeting. James Tuscan from Troup 421 and his sister Alana Tuscan from Troup 743 introduced themselves. Mr. Matt Tuscan introduced himself as the proud father of these two scouts. They are checking off one of their Eagle requirement badges for Citizenship in the Community. The Mayor said that she and Director Snyder keep folders of Eagle Scout projects in their offices and to feel free to contact them when the scouts get to that point. The Mayor mentioned that the scouts must be also proud of their dad. Thank you for joining us this evening.

The Mayor stated that since the last Council Meeting, the Rocky River Brewing Company had a devastating fire on about a 95-degree day. Several fire departments were called out to fight the fire due to the weather temperature. Firefighters need to be rotated out of the building while they are fighting the fire and it worked beautifully. A big thank you to WestCom, our Consolidated Dispatch. They did a tremendous job. All those call outs are done directly from WestCom even though there is a Chief on the scene, they are supporting his efforts by getting those other departments on the scene. The Mayor extends huge thanks to all of those departments and WestCom for coordinating all of it. Even with all of that, there were two firefighters who were transported and spent the night in the hospital. It was an extremely hot day under some very extreme circumstances. There was considerable damage but the Mayor hopes that Rocky River Brewing Company will open soon. The family that owns Rocky River Brewing Company is a wonderful family who has been extremely generous to this community over the years through the restaurant and has opened their doors for many celebrations for many families and the city is anxious to have them back up and running. To that end, the Mayor extends thanks to the community. That night there were Go Fund Me Accounts for their employees along with all kinds of support that has been extended to the Rocky River Brewing Company and the owner said, this is why he and his family live in this community and why they do business in this community. A big shout out to everyone who has extended their support to the Cintron Family and to the Rocky River Brewing Company and their employees. Thank you to the Rocky River Police Department for their help in controlling the traffic. Thank you to Wendy's who were very helpful in supplying cold drinks and ice along with several other things to those that were on the scene. They allowed the squads to position themselves in their parking lot so they could easily be mobilized in case they had to transport anyone, Luckily, no one was hurt in an extreme way. The Mayor also thanked the Community Emergency Response Team for their availability to come out and help with firefighters getting their vitals checked, organizing cold drinks and relief for the firefighters.

The Mayor stated that on this evening's agenda is the authorization to place four RRFB's, three on Wagar and one at Elmwood and Maplewood by the park. There are a lot of students and children crossing Wagar Road. Thank you to Rich for being part of that.

The Mayor said that the city welcomed Chris Vasco, the Sewer Coordinator, who will be working on the Residential Infiltration and Inflow Program, helping Rich. He is a wonderful employee to have found and that the city was able to recruit him. He most recently worked for the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District and the city has worked with him on an ongoing basis for a few years. Please join the Mayor in welcoming Chris.

The Mayor shared some of the highlights of the State Budget as there were 67 vetoes when it reached the Governor's desk.

- It enacts a 2.75% flat income tax that will go into effect on January 1, 2026.
- The Local Government Fund saw a small increase from 1.7% to 1.75% but with the flat income tax going into place, the health of the General Revenue Fund, which the Local Government Fund is based on, the city may see a reduction or that it will stay about the same.
 - 50% of the GRF is Medicaid
 - K-12 accounts for about 26% of the State's GRF
- There are no major revisions to Municipal Income Tax.
- There are no pension rate revisions.
- All the property tax restrictions were removed.
- There were several things specific to school districts about reserve limits and County budget commission authorities.
- The City of Rocky River prohibited the sale of recreational marijuana in the city. It is not a moratorium. It is a complete prohibition. The budget maintains a 36% revenue share to host communities of recreational marijuana but it removed the appropriations to those communities. It eliminates local authority to limit cannabis businesses. The City of Rocky River has already done that so would be grandfathered in. The Mayor will continue to watch this closely, but now, those communities are not receiving any tax benefit from having recreational marijuana sold in their communities.
- There is also a Cyber Security mandate. The good news is the City of Rocky River already has all of this in place and has had it in place for some time. They must meet industry's best practices. Hopefully there will be more guidance and the city can compare the cyber security efforts to that but for now the city meets or exceeds those.
- The city must seek legislative approval for the paying of any ransom ware. Basically, they have outlawed the payment of ransom ware. The state is not allowing it unless the state legislature approves it.
- Next Generation 911 Funding was preserved. This is the triangulation of mobile cellular calls for 911 that will be directed to the closest dispatch center. There are some new rules that will be forthcoming for those answering points and that is why consolidation is important.
- The MARCS provisions and the funding for the MARCS Radio System, which is the multi-agency communication system that allows interoperability between police departments, other levels of government (sheriff, county, state offices) are extremely important and has been preserved.

It is too early to know if the General Assembly is going to try to override any of the governor's vetoes and that is a possibility. The Legislative leaders have said they might consider it on a couple of matters but which matters is unknown. There are additional dollars for education, additional dollars for children's mental health, for workers, for childcare, for training, for economic development and infrastructure investments.

The Mayor said that next week the mid-year budget reviews begin. The Mayor will be meeting with all the Directors to go through what mid-year looks like and then begin the conversation of the 2026 Budget. The 2026 Budgets will be due to the Mayor's and Director Thomas' office by the last Friday of September. A big thank you to Mike Thomas, the Directors and the Finance Department staff for the communication received. At any point in time, we can look at the system and look at the budget, but it is Director Thomas putting together the financial narratives, financial summaries, and the monthly reports which are guiding documents and extremely helpful as the Directors and staff are monitoring the budget. Thank you for all the detail that is found in these reports.

The Mayor shared highlights for this coming weekend:

- The Sunflower Wine Festival is Saturday evening on Depot Street.
- Red River and Blue is this Sunday featuring:
 - A Car Show
 - A Safety Forces Touch a Truck in front of Hamilton Ice Arena
 - Pie in the Park (6:00 p.m.) followed by the Revolution Pie, a Beatles Tribute Band (7:00 p.m.)
 - The CLE Flea Vendors
 - Between 1:15-1:45 several motorcycles will go by City Hall on Hilliard Blvd. on their way to Fairview Hospital with gifts for children in the hospital

The Mayor announced that the Senior Center as a facility is closed for a couple of weeks. City Hall is hosting some of the staff members. Programming continues at the Recreation Center, Memorial Hall and other places. They are doing a great job keeping the classes up and running and maintaining operations. Transportation is still available.

President Furry added as a side note, that City Council's Dog Days will be held on August 3rd.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Furry said that on behalf of the Law Director, his Little League Team has precured their first win 5-4 this evening. They are halfway through to the best of three series.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Resolution No. 35-25: This has been read twice and is like the annual sewer bill ordinance that certifies unpaid sewer assessments. Resolution No. 35-25 is to certify assessments of sidewalk maintenance costs 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. Like the sewer assessments, Mr. Furry anticipates that Council will amend by substitution to reflect any payments received. Residents had until today to pay their balance. The County charges a 1% administrative fee for processing.

Resolution No. 39-25: This is the annual request that the City has made which allows the city to receive their money quicker from the County prior to the final reconciliation settlement and disbursement. The city will receive the 2025 property taxes in 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. This has been read twice and is a procedural item. This will be placed on the consent agenda.

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 10.0 mills. This has been read twice and will be added to the consent agenda.

Resolution No. 42-25: Similar to how Mr. Furry referenced the unpaid sidewalk bills and certifying special assessments to real estate taxes for the sidewalks referencing 35-25, this is the original ordinance that Council does annually. The attached exhibit represents all those accounts with outstanding balances. A letter went out on June 15, 2025 stating residents had until July 17th to pay before unpaid balances went to the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer. The rolling five-year average of initial sewer bills eligible for assessment was 525 and the rolling five-year average of bills certified was 321. This will be held for a couple of weeks as payment is not due until July 17th.

Ordinance No. 43-25: Mr. Sindelar said this has been read twice. It involves authorizing the administration to enter a contract with Crossroads Asphalt Recycling, Inc., located in Columbia Station, for the 2025 Street Repair Program. As Mr. Sindelar said before, the administration does a great job in ranking the streets and then getting to them before they become major issues in the city. Mr. Snyder said the program this year entails Higley from Westwood to Spencer, a portion of that will be paid for by Fairview Park with full depth repairs, curb and apron repairs with a milling and an overlay. Additionally, the city will address Prospect and Wright Avenue, a portion of the driveway for Elmwood Park including the parking lot at the cabin and also a portion of the driveway at the Service Garage. The Mayor added that this is not the asphalt recycling the city has been dealing with. That is just their name. This is full-depth repairs where needed with traditional paving. Mr. Snyder said they will mill off somewhere between 2-2 ½ inches and do an intermediate course of asphalt. Mr. Snyder said the city has not had the best results with the recycled asphalt and is working on a couple of things with the contractor to get that finalized. This will be on the consent agenda.

Ordinance No. 44-25: Mr. Sindelar said similarly as the title describes, this is for water main, pavement and sewer work. Mr. Snyder said that this project is similar to Morewood Parkway, Oak and Culver Projects where there are inverted sewers and old infrastructure. The sewers will be separated and brand-new sanitary storm sewers will be in place with new connections up to the edge of the right of way for property owners. Also, a portion of this includes new waterlines and complete resurfacing with full depth repairs. Upon completion of this, the city will work with them on the I & I Program. This project has outside funding associated with it. The city received \$2.52 million from the Federal Government and \$640,000 from Cleveland Water equaling approximately \$3.2 million. This will be on the consent agenda.

Ordinance No. 45-25: Mr. Hunt said the Mayor briefly talked about this in her report this evening. This ordinance would authorize the Mayor and Director Snyder to enter a contract with Signal Services Company for the installation of four RRFB’s at various locations. Three will be on Wagar Road at different intersections and one at the corner of Elmwood and Maplewood by Elmwood Park.

- Mr. Hunt asked about one RRFB that was not quoted, located by the high school football stadium. Mr. Snyder’s intention is to hold off on that until next year because they are looking at the Detroit Road Corridor.
- Mr. Hunt asked if the flashing light at Wagar and Morewood would stay. Mr. Snyder concurred that it will stay along with the flashing light at Kenwood. The RRFB’s will be added to compliment that.

- In the ordinance it states there are four sites but will there be eight actual units. Mr. Snyder said that is correct.
- Mr. Sindelar asked if the flashing lights will bother residents near the lights. Mr. Snyder said that there have not been any complaints from residents near Safety Town of the flashing lights but he has received lots of compliments. The Mayor said that there could be shielding added but the lights will not face the house.
- Mr. Furry asked if they are solar powered. Mr. Snyder said yes.
- Mrs. Gallagher said she looked it up and there are no unresolved findings.
- Mrs. Morris asked when installation will be. Mr. Snyder said late summer early fall.
- Mr. Sindelar asked about a warranty and life span. Mr. Snyder will get this information. Signal Service helps the city with everything and are fantastic to work with.

Mr. Hunt echoed that parents in his neighborhood whose kids ride bikes, these crosswalks will be most beneficial. Mr. Snyder said that with these education needs to increase.

Ordinance No. 46-25: Mr. Hunt said this authorizes the Mayor and Director Snyder to enter a contract with Infinity Construction, who will oversee the installation of temporary housing for the Fire Department. As discussed this is where the housing of personnel will be during the transformation of the Fire Department on City Hall Campus. Housing of the equipment will be in the Sewer Garage but this ordinance allows for temporary housing to be connected to the garage for easy access. There is more to come and more discussion. Mr. Snyder said there are five 12 x 60 trailers that are all together. Mr. Hunt sent a picture around to Council. Infinity is providing temporary housing and the utility infrastructure, but the city is providing everything inside. There were no unresolved findings on the Auditor's Database.

- Mrs. Morris asked what happens to these when the Fire Department is done with them. Mr. Snyder said they are rentals and will be disassembled and taken away. The trailers will sit behind the Service Garage.
- Mrs. Gallagher said she looked it up and there are no unresolved findings.

Mr. Snyder gives a lot of appreciation to the Sewer Division and Service Department for being willing to accommodate the Fire Department. The Mayor added that it was Director Snyder's idea to look at the Service Garage because of the space for the apparatuses to be kept. There has been a lot of work regarding this move along with coordination with the mutual aid partners. Thank you too to Chief Lenart for thinking this all through. It is the goal to have the firefighters in place at the Service Garage by October 1st so asbestos abatement can take place in the existing facility.

- Mr. Hunt asked if there would be some type of temporary emergency light on Lake Road. Mr. Snyder said that it was not presented to him by Chief Lenart as a concern. They are saying full lights and sirens. He will have a conversation regarding a light.

Ordinance No. 47-25: Mr. Sindelar said this ordinance is for the 2025 Sidewalk Repair Program. There were five bids but We Fix Sidewalks was \$40,000 lower than the second lowest bid and \$50,000 lower than the engineer's estimate. There are no unresolved findings on the Auditor's Database. This sidewalk repair

will be everything south of Center Ridge in the Christianson Estates and everything off of Wooster. The quoted price for the city will also apply to any resident where the sidewalk falls to their responsibility. The cost equates to approximately \$13.00 a square foot. The assessments are wrapped up and letters will be mailed shortly. Once the letters are mailed, there will be 45 days' notice to allow residents to make the correction or opt into the city's program. Residents are allowed to get their own contractor.

- Mr. Furry asked if pricing of cement is more in line. Mr. Snyder said it has plateaued a little bit.
- Mr. Sindelar said that this company must follow the city's code specification. A typical four-inch sidewalk does not include wire mesh, but an apron sidewalk does. Mr. Snyder said the city does not recommend fiber-filled cement aprons.
- Mr. Snyder said the owner's name is Pat Corte and has worked closely with many residents in making repairs since Mr. Snyder started the program in 2021/2022. He has always been willing to help residents out and he has not heard anything but compliments about him. He took the time to bid the project this year.
- Mrs. Gallagher said she looked it up and there are no unresolved findings.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

President Furry said that the next meeting will be a Legislative Meeting on Monday, July 14, 2025 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

David W. Furry
President of Council

Susan G. Pease
Clerk of Council