

CITY OF ROCKY RIVER

March 2, 2026

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

Council Members Present: Mrs. Gallagher, Mr. Moran, Mr. Shipp, Ms. Havemann, Mr. Hunt

Council Members Absent: Mr. Furry & Ms. Morris

Administration: Mayor Bobst, Mr. Lindow, Mr. Snyder, Mr. O'Shea

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Rocky River Daisy Troop 21226.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

The Mayor began by announcing that the March Sewer bills went out last week. She advised that a new online portal is available for residents which started in December and includes several new options for their 6,883 sewer accounts. To date 717 are registered for the online portal, 195 E-billing, 287 prescheduled autopayments, and 9 text to pay option and they expect those numbers to increase overtime.

She noted that Director Snyder has applied for the 50/50 County Grant which they've used several times where the County will pay 50% of the materials for projects that are done on county roads. This time it will be for the Gasser, Westway and Hilliard intersection. Director Snyder has been working with OHM, an engineering firm, to determine how to best create a safe intersection.

Mayor Bobst advised that the City gets a lot of calls about sidewalk snow removal which continues to be an ongoing issue. Enforcement of sidewalk snow removal is driven by complaints, but when the Building Department goes out, they see additional homes that have not cleared their sidewalks. She and Director Snyder reached out, through Cuyahoga County Mayors and Managers, to all 59 communities asking what their laws are and how they handle enforcement. The results were that they seem to have the same issues as Rocky River. It is difficult to enforce – you go to one house, and you'll see others at the same time. She advised that she and Director Snyder are looking at the code as well as commercial areas vs. residential. Commercial areas, especially on Center Ridge, clear the large lots, but oftentimes ice forms and then they can't get their equipment through which is frustrating. Enforcing in the commercial areas remains more straightforward. When it comes to residential areas, there is a school route that has been in existence for decades. This is a prescribed route around each of the schools and after all the plowing and salting is done, and it stops snowing, the City will go out and plow these routes. They will do the bridges and they do those areas, but that still leaves all the other residential streets where enforcement is almost impossible. If the City requires a resident to clear their sidewalk and then ice forms, it creates an additional issue. The Administration continues to traverse these issues and they're looking at the code, but they don't want this to be an issue in neighborhoods. What they would hope is that something positive comes out of this. If you see a neighbor can't shovel their sidewalk or plow their sidewalk that there is some help available. She noted that the Senior Center can be very helpful to individuals as well as neighborhood groups. She will continue to look at this, but by surveying all these communities they've learned that it's simply very difficult and it requires resident compliance. The best thing that can be done right now is public education by sending out ReadyNotify.

- Director Snyder remarked that this is tough thing for lots of reasons. Rocky River is a very pedestrian community which is incredibly important to a lot of people. It's hard because there is a code that states adjacent property owners shall clear their walks, but as the Mayor pointed out it's difficult for our Building Department to enforce. The Building Department spends an immense amount of energy going out to complaints and when they request a property owner clear their walk, the owner points out that there are other neighbors that need to do the same. There is a law that we are being tasked with enforcing on a selective basis based on complaints. What he is hoping for is some guidance from City Council who represent this community. He is hoping they can discuss what can be done to accommodate this to the best of their abilities. His department will continue to provide information to property owners and advise them to 'Be a champion of your neighborhood and community', but there is always those people that are out of town for winter, people who may not be physically able to do this, and in a perfect world you pick up the slack for your neighbor, but that is difficult and not everyone does that. He gets the calls 'You need to have someone clear this walk', but at what point are they tasked with citing people. He ended by noting that there are a lot of gray areas.
- The Mayor reiterated that it's something they need to work on together and they hoped they'd get some good ideas from the other communities, adding that if Rocky River can figure it out they have an opportunity to be a good model for the other communities.
- Director Snyder remarked that he believes if they work together, they can come up with a solid response that works and makes sense to help this situation.
- Councilwoman Gallagher noted that Lakewood gives out free salt to residents.
- Director O'Shea advised that the Ordinance 904.05, which has been on the books since around 1997, states 'the sidewalks are to be free and clear of ice and snow to a width of 24" and the snow and ice accumulation shall be removed within a reasonable time which will not ordinarily exceed 24 hours after the abatement of any storm'. Those nice little gray areas are there to give residents a reasonable amount of time to take care of the snow.
- Mayor Bobst remarked that it's especially difficult in years when we have continuous snowfall – at what point does the snow really stop and when do we start to enforce. Some residents clear the snow as it accumulates, but this year there were several days of snow in addition to deep cold temperatures.
- Director Snyder advised that this is not something that results in one or two calls to himself or the building department. There are certain people that are walkers and they find treacherous situations and they report those, but they likely had well over 20 calls after the last major snow event.

Mayor Bobst advised that the Fire Department was one of the 30 teams that participated in the Fight For Air Climb at Key Tower and the Rocky River team took second place. There were several firefighters that participated including two retirees, Frank Schaefer and Scott Sollars, and from our current Fire Department: Collin Cunningham, Zack Wallenhorst, Tom Pettry, Bob Hallen, Adam Pettitt, Jack Bailey, Dan Wolf, and Wayne Gerbasi. She thanked them for representing the city so well and continuing to do this annually to raise funds.

Mayor Bobst reported that they had a meeting for Elle's Enchanted Forest a couple weeks ago and they have a draft of the Master Plan process which is to be led by Kathryn Kerber. She will be managing the stakeholder engagement which will begin sometime this spring and be done in the fall. Their goal is to

create some continuity in that space. A lot of money has been raised, and the equipment has been purchased, but they want to bring that all together. Elle's mother has been very involved as has Harlan Radford who has raised significant dollars for the park.

Mayor Bobst advised that Rec software is down and that department can't currently access membership information which is the case for all the communities using Sportsman Software. They hope to have it fixed by tomorrow so that they don't have to postpone camp registration.

Mayor Bobst advised that the Solid Waste District will be sponsoring a Reduce Reuse Repair Fair March 21st from 10am-2pm in Independence. The event is all about repairing and reusing things. There will be several vendors which will highlight waste reduction activities as well as businesses dedicated to repairing personal goods with the goal of reducing the amount of waste we create and changing the mindset from throwing things away. There will be a freecycle swap table – where you leave and item take an item and repair booths to help you extend the life of various items. Hopefully the Green Team will be able to help promote this great event.

Mayor Bobst advised that she recently received a letter from Cuyahoga Community College and she wanted to highlight the large impact that they have on our community especially as the Westshore campus has grown. Over 400 of our residents currently attend classes in Westlake. For students the college credit plus is an early start to higher education which starts as early as 7th grade. Instead of students going out to Tri-C they train teachers so those college level courses can be taught right in our high schools. They also offer a 2+2 program which allows students to start at Tri-C for 2 years and then go on to get their bachelors in those second 2 years from many universities. The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program is offered at Tri-C which is a free opportunity for business owners to grow and flourish. The next session of that is May 6 and registration is open. Tri-c also does a lot with veterans to support their educational needs. The Encore Program, for older adults, will now celebrate its 50th anniversary – they have all kinds of programs where you can audit them and don't get credit, but you can attend college courses and is designed for lifelong learners. There is a center for entrepreneurs which helps business owners and idea generators build pathways to their success. She summarized that Tri-C is a huge positive influence and it's a good reminder that they do a lot of things beyond what we traditionally think of.

Lastly, the Mayor mentioned that she attended the Continuum of Care (CoC) meeting last Monday for the unhoused and homeless along with Ms. Gallagher and Ms. Morris. They had a very good session, more of an overview, not so much address with what they've been working on, but she did reach out to the County on a couple of their programs. Cuyahoga County is the COC for this area – there are nine COC's around the state and one that covers the entire state. There is a lot of good information and resources and as those become helpful, she will share that information with Council.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 52-25: Councilman Hunt remarked that he hopes everyone has had an opportunity to revisit the materials especially the information from Chief Lichman and the memo from President Shipp. He advised that he thinks it's important to note that the pending ordinance talks about prohibition of low speed and under speed vehicles. Currently, under Ohio law, under-speed vehicles (USVs) are prohibited on public streets and highways unless a municipality authorizes their use. It takes an affirmative resolution ordinances to permit those operations. The low-speed vehicles (LSV) may operate without affirmative authorization on streets with posted speed limits of 35 miles or less, but municipalities could restrict it further than the state allowance. The state code specifically mentions golf carts in the definition of under-speed vehicles. He advised it's interesting that they've talked about it and there is a distinction of the miles per hour (MPH). He acknowledged that it would be difficult to determine the exact speed of a particular golf cart. He's not sure if they are regulated to only go 25 mph, but the golf cart being listed as an under-

speed vehicle means it's currently prohibited depending on the speed. There are several factors they need to consider and discuss. Council ultimately needs to determine if they are going to prohibit USV's or LSV's based upon the MPH. He acknowledged that the whole thing makes his head spin especially considering they were discussing doing it in conjunction with, what seems to be a more pressing need, the proliferation of scooters and electric bikes. He would like to get Councils' feedback on this or perhaps they should refer to a Council Committee.

- The Mayor offered that the Police Chief would be happy to meet with Council or their committee.
- Mr. Hunt remarked that every summer that they don't address this they will see more of these vehicles.
- Ms. Gallagher agreed.
- President Shipp concurred and advised that it was in September of 2025 that these ordinances were introduced and at their first Committee of the Whole Meeting Chief Lichman spoke and those minutes are helpful to refresh everyone's memory as to why this legislation was requested. They had also looked at other cities in Ohio that have imposed a regulatory scheme on these kinds of vehicles which included, in one city, that in addition to having safety equipment like lights, mirrors, and seatbelts the vehicles had to be inspected by the local police department and had to be licensed to be driven on the city streets. That's something he'd like some feedback from the Chief on. Is that something that the Police Department would oversee or is that not the best use of resources? Perhaps it would be a burden to the safety force, but they did see more cities that were regulating that way rather than banning them. At the time, before these went on hold, it was his opinion that they should have safe infrastructure for any kind of vehicle to coexist with cyclists and pedestrians. The eBikes on sidewalks is a safety concern for non-riders and he would also prefer that Council try to look at some sort of regulatory scheme before banning. He received a lot of calls and a lot of people with good arguments. Director O'Shea sent some sample ordinances on eBikes to show how other cities have dealt with this issue. He believes that as the weather starts to break it will be something they need to look at.
- Mr. Moran remarked that he thinks that there are some areas and some communities that would really lend themselves to having some of these under-speed vehicles and they probably have more open areas whereas Rocky River is so strongly residential and compacted. With golf carts there are many different types and there are some that are regulated and some that are not. In Las Vegas or Florida, you find those private communities that might have their 3rd garage dedicated to their golf cart which they've spent thousands of dollars getting ready. He's not one that is for having golf carts on their streets or sidewalks, but he would love to have the discussion, but he doesn't know if they belong in the City of Rocky River in a safe manner.
- Ms. Havemann advised that she attended some of the meetings in the fall and spoke with the Police Chief at that time. It seems both from talking to the chief and residents that no one seems to object to banning the under-speed vehicles because they are already not legal in Ohio. Her understanding is that the LSV's are licensed so she's not sure if they'd need to license them again because that does seem that it would be burdensome. She was curious about the legislation for other communities have they limited which streets they could be on? It seems that most of the vehicles, unless they have been modified in some way, only go up to 25 mph.
- Mayor Bobst offered that they could limit them to no state or county roads.

- Ms. Havemann wondered if limiting the carts to side streets would be something that Chief Lichman would consider to address safety concerns. She's been concerned when she sees golf carts leaving Heinen's crossing Detroit.
- President Shipps advised that one of the legislations he reviewed did limit them to streets that are 25 mph, but did allow them to cross streets that were 35 mph.
- Mr. Hunt noted that if they limited them in that way they could hypothetically see carts going from drive to drive on Lake Rd. which they don't want to see. He is torn – every time he looks at this, he thinks of a young Rocky River family who lost a recent graduate years ago in a golf cart accident in Put-In-Bay. The chances of something horrific happening to any resident is what he considers.
- Mayor Bobst suggested that they might consider restricting the age of operation. Perhaps no one under the age of 18 could operate it and no more than two underaged individuals could be in the cart.
- Mr. O'Shea advised that whatever ordinance Rocky River Passes cannot conflict or more severely regulate a state statute. There have been some recent Supreme Court of Ohio cases, involving other issues, saying that if the State regulates something a City cannot further restrict the State Statute. There could be someone who challenges the City on our ordinance because the state statute permits it - they need to be careful. He added that he gets down to Key West quite a bit and there are golf carts everywhere down there, but the difference is that everyone is used to it as they're everywhere. People have become adapted to the fact that golf carts are everywhere, and they all have blinkers and lights. He's not sure if those cities have any significant regulations on them. Rocky River community is not used to golf carts riding on the streets up here, they're rare. He's as concerned, as Councilman Hunt is, about someone getting hurt. He noted that when he does see golf carts it's often a dad driving around kids. If these things hit something and no one is wearing seatbelts he worries, there will be severe injuries.
- President Shipp offered that one of the arguments he has received from individuals that own these carts is that eBikes can go that fast too and you can get hurt badly on those too. The counter being that a whole family doesn't ride on an eBike. Any of these vehicles can be unsafe if they don't have an infrastructure that is safe for that type of vehicle or a regulatory scheme that they are enforcing. To the Mayor's point, he would love to see limiting the ability to have four kids in one of these vehicles. He saw a person the other day dropping kids off at the rec center – it may be a risk he wouldn't take, but each person needs to make their own decision about it.
- Ms. Havemann spoke with a resident that owns one of these carts who advised that the licensed golf carts do have seatbelts, but no airbags and obviously they do not have the crash cages of a car. Part of the existing license process is that a licensed driver needs to be operating it. The same resident pointed out that vintage cars are also not up to the same safety standards as current vehicles and they are permitted on roadways.
- President Shipp acknowledged that not everything people like to do is super safe.
- Mayor Bobst advised that she will have the Chief look at the regulatory aspects that could be applied.
- President Shipp noted that when Council was first considering this ordinance the City of Cleveland passed an ordinance to allow businesses to have these on the street for business purposes which

undercut the ban mindset as it was being expanded around Rocky River.

- Ms. Havemann agreed that she finds them to be unsafe, but she believes they need a consistent answer to address these issues. She inquired if they are not allowed to make their ordinance more restricted does this mean they couldn't limit them to slower streets because of the state law?
- Mr. Hunt replied that Ohio Revised Code 4511. 214 states that nothing in this section should prevent a local authority from adopting more stringent local ordinances. The State deliberately provided for this.
- Mr. O'Shea expressed surprise that the general assembly gave home rule power on this issue.

Ordinance No. 54-25: Mr. Hunt advised that he believes this ordinance is closer to getting on track. There is an amended version. This ordinance would add definitions to Chapter 729 with regard to definitions for aggressive solicitation and public property and row to distinguish some of the areas of restriction for the activity that they are looking to prohibit. The numerous CAD Reports and they also get complaints from business owners and residents complaining of these aggressive solicitations. What this ordinance would propose to do would be to distinguish the aggressive solicitation tactics and prohibit them in particular instances. The definition section in Exhibit A was revised. Exhibit B is the proposed enactment, and it has remained as it was written back in September '25. He requests that everyone look at the proposed enactment of Chapter 729.021, the prohibited locations and manner of solicitation to determine whether there is anything that needs to be tweaked. He recalls that they previously determined they were okay with that, and there was some discussion early on subsection B4, but they determined they would leave the language as it was written. He believes a focal point to be the prohibited locations and manner of solicitation as opposed to the definition section proposed in exhibit A however both revisions need their attention and he hopes to take it up with a second read next week at their next legislative meeting.

- President Shipp noted that when this was first introduced Council was advised that when there is a complaint to the Police they will go out and the individual is gone or oftentimes the business owner doesn't want to press charges. They just want the individual to be told they're trespassing, but they're back the next week, and nothing further really seems to develop to prohibit what is happening. This is another tool in the toolbox for their officers to use in those situations to end the cycle. In their CAD they often see the same players and locations happening repeatedly and this could be a way to stop this.
- Mr. Hunt added, for clarifying purposes, that the definition section proposed for the revision in Exhibit A currently they have sections A, B,C and the definition changes were to add some language to B and add secondary subsections in D,E,F regarding aggressive solicitation definition of public property and right of way. It's not a new enactment, like what they're proposing with Exhibit B, but rather a revision of the current 729.01 definition section.
- Ms. Havemann advised that in the analysis that the Police Chief provided he referenced Hill v. Colorado which included healthcare facilities, and it made her wonder why they didn't include healthcare facilities in this ordinance. Especially considering all the new developments they have coming up, including the Urgent Care Center and Akron Children's. She thought perhaps in section 4 they could also include healthcare facilities so that individuals won't be targeted going in and out of those facilities.

- Mayor Bobst noted that the legislation lists ‘commercial buildings’ which she takes as a pretty broad definition so that may capture those locations and noted that it would be difficult to list every type of business.
- Mr. Hunt offered that he believes the term commercial buildings provides room for interpretation for an enforcing officer.
- Ms. Havemann noted that she hadn’t considered that and rather focused on the ‘waiting in line’ component of the code.
- Mr. Hunt agreed that Ms. Havemann does make a good point about those new businesses on Center Ridge, but within the code they state that if they’re within 20’ and he assumes any of those businesses will be within 20’ unless they’re setback further.
- Council and the Mayor continued to discuss the distance as listed in the proposed ordinance noting that this is ultimately an effort to address the behaviors.

Ordinance No. 10-26: Mr. Moran advised 10-26 requests authorization to enter into an agreement with the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District regarding storm water pollution prevention and technical assistance for a 24-month term at a cost not to exceed \$16,100 in ‘26 and \$17,750 for ‘27. Cuyahoga County assists the City with inspections, especially with properties of one acre or more. They have a person on staff that can help, but he can’t do it all. Cuyahoga Soil Water and Conservation District also gives planning assistance and provides administrative support. There is a slight increase in costs from last year. This is an ordinance that they would like to read for the second time next week and possibly suspend the rules and pass this next week. They’ve utilized this in the past and they’d like to do it again moving forward.

Ordinance No. 11-26: Ms. Gallagher advised that they are looking to purchase a new F600 from the Valley Truck Centers. They would use the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Contract to purchase this Truck at a cost not to exceed \$95,641. This is replacing a 2015 F550 which has 33,000 and 6,000 engine hours. The F600 chassis is better suited for hauling more weight and the aluminum dump truck bed holds twice the volume of wood chips. It may even be able to be placed on a new chassis at the end of the truck’s useful life. It can also accommodate a snowplow, but one is not included in this purchase price. She added that the current truck will be retained in the service fleet and used as backup until it’s no longer functional.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 12-26: Mr. Moran passed out guidance to provide clarity on the acronyms in the ordinance. He advised that for \$6,600 a year the Cuyahoga Soil Water and Conservation District gives us background and purpose for the program and provides public education and provide a program involvement and they provide an audit to support our MC1’s and MC2’s which are public education and outreach and public participation. This is somewhat of a continuance of Ordinance 1-21 which happened in 2021 and lasted for 5 years so now we are looking at another 5 years that would run from 2026 to 2030. This program can be cancelled with 30 days’ notice at any time. He believes this to be a good investment for Rocky River noting that two city employees will serve as a liaison.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

President Shipp advised that he received a call from a resident on Westover Ave about a group of eight deer in his neighborhood. He directed him to the city’s survey on the deer impact on the other resources they’ve

discussed.

He noted that he continues to receive complaints about on street parking on Dale Avenue primarily from students at Magnificat. He thanked the Mayor for her involvement and continued dialog with the head of the school who continues to work with us to understand why students are continuing to park there. A lot of these cars are larger SUV's and some of them are receiving tickets in enforcement of an ordinance that does not allow parking within 3' of driveways. The police are giving extra enforcement attention to Dale on a daily basis. Often these vehicles are parked right on the edge of the apron and some of these residents are elderly and are having a hard time getting in and out of their driveways and it's also difficult to see around some of these larger SUV's. Noting that these cars are not parked for an event or a visit to the park, but rather an all-day every day during the week and there are often 20+ cars. He understands the frustration and he is consistently getting calls. They are working with Chief Litchman to resolve the issue.

- Mr. Moran noted that the tickets are only \$10, which may not be enough of a deterrent to stop individuals from parking illegally. He thinks of larger cities, like Chicago, where you must have a sticker that has your address so you can park your own car there and not have other vehicles there. He wonders if that would ever help in this instance.
- Ms. Gallagher inquired if there was enough parking at Magnificat.
- President Shipp advised that that is not the issue and confirmed that there is an annual pass to park on campus. Additionally, they have overflow parking, which the Mayor, has helped facilitate at the Lutheran Church, but for some reason there is a decent number of students choosing to park on Dale and it's impacting their residents.
- Mayor Bobst noted that they have had other similar situations like what happened with Orange Theory Parking, but they were able to traverse that with the business and address it and that is what they need here. They will continue to work with the school, parents and students to get some relief for those residents.
- Mr. Hunt acknowledged that there have been other issues with parking, particularly for drop off and pick up at other schools and they are lucky to have a police force, specifically the Chief, who is willing to go out and observe the situation and work in conjunction with the school to get a resolution.

Director O'Shea advised that the Police department had the unfortunate obligation to shut down an underage party a few weeks ago. He advised that there is an ordinance that makes these parties illegal, plus by state statute they're illegal. In case a constituent calls you, our police department doesn't drive around looking for these parties. Typically, there is a loud event, or a neighbor calls the department. If the police go in, they identify who is underage and anyone who is 17 and under gets cited and they usually get the opportunity to enter the diversion program. It's an interesting program where the Juvenile Court reviews the case, they don't get a case number, and they send it back here and recommend an informal diversion program that involves educating these kids, and parents, about how the law works. Additionally, at the Rocky River Court there is the young adult alcohol diversion program that is for adults that are 18, but not yet 21, that get caught at these parties. That program is similar to the juvenile program. If you successfully complete one of these programs your case is dismissed and it's expunged, but it's a one and done program. He's already gotten four calls because of this party, and he made the executive decision, because he knows too many people involved, to recused himself and they are bringing in Michael Maloney from Westlake to assist. It's important to note that if these same kids get hit again, they will not get a diversion program so it's good for everyone to educate their constituents or friends. This is how it's been done for 25 years. He's never had a

parent, who went through the program, say it was a bad experience. The way that juvenile courts enforce these statutes that they enforce it the same way that Rocky River does. Merly being there, even if you're not drinking, is still against the law. Some parents think if their kids aren't drinking it's okay, but that isn't the case. Their only goal is to keep the kids safe. He wants to make it clear that he thinks that the police did the right thing and saw a clear violation of the law. Our officers have a fiduciary responsibility to go in and mitigate that situation and make sure that people are safe.

Director O'Shea and Council continued to discuss the issue of underage drinking and consequences.

As there was no further business, President Shipp adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m. The next Council meeting will be a Legislative Meeting March 9, 2026.

Paul Shipp
President of Council

Lauren Oley
Clerk of Council