THE VILLAGE OF PHILLIPSBURG

COUNCIL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

Mayor Simpson: Meeting called to order at 7 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Momen of silence for police, fire, military, all first responders, Charlie Kirk

Roll Call: Heather (absent), Hope-here; Chris (absent); Jake-here; John-here; Jill-here

Hope motioned to excuse Heather Craft from the meeting; Jake seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Hope motioned to excuse Chris Steiner from the meeting; John seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chief Wysong is absent.

Hope Hoard motioned to change the order of the Agenda for the Fire Chief to go first. Jill seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chief Aldrich:

Personnel matters. Oath of Office for Captain Seth Himes. Seth Himes was sworn in by Mayor Simpson as Fire/EMS Captain of the Village of Phillipsburg Fire Department.

The Chief received an application for a part-time EMT from Gracie Koeblin. She is an EMT in Harrison Township, she volunteers in the Gratis area, and she is attending paramedic school and will graduate in December. She plans to work for the Village after graduation as a paramedic and then attend fire school. The Chief recommended hiring her as a part-time EMT. Her starting pay would be $13 per hour until she graduates paramedic school and clears as a paramedic in December/January at the latest. Then she will be paid $15 per hour. She will currently be on a 24- hour shift every sixth day and will be working with Captain Buker for orientation until she's finished with paramedic training. Chief Aldrich presented her application and resume to Council. He also included a copy of the pay scale. Hope Hoard motioned to hire Gracie Koeblin at part-time EMT, starting at $13 per hour, pending background check. John seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chief Aldrich will be out of service for a hernia operation on October 7. He should still be able to attend the October Council meeting. If not, he will provide a report. Captains Himes and Buker will be in charge of the department during Chief Aldrich's absence.

Chief Aldrich (continued)

Equipment maintenance: Tanker 80 is scheduled for extensive repairs (water valves, fuel gauge, slide up door repairs) on September 29, in order to pass annual pump test. No cost estimate yet. Medic 80 went in for extensive break and suspension work. All repairs are necessary. No equipment purchases.

Grants/Outside Funding: The department received a grant from the BWC for nozzles. This will allow for a remote-control nozzle to the front of the Brush Truck. The purchase of a ground monitor nozzle and two hose line nozzles were awarded. Seth was instrumental in giving information to the BWC. The new nozzles will supply more water. Still working on other grants.

Medical Director: The Chief has a meeting with a possible medical director from Miami Valley Hospital North.

General Health of the organization is good. Five-year plan is in the research phase. We have reduced mutual and automatic aid. The roster is adequate to allow us to request less help from our neighboring departments.

Funding and sustainability: The study involving several other fire departments of comparable size throughout the state is in process. The goal is to have a report to compare how we stand with regard to long term sustainability.

Mayor called for approval of previous meeting minutes. Hope Hoard motioned to approve the minutes from the council meeting on August 19, 2025. Jacob Groh seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Ordinances and Resolutions: The creation of a Stripe Account for online payment system. Resolution No. 2025-0064 A resolution authorizing the acceptance of payments by financial transaction devices, including electronic payments processed by Stripe, Inc. for Village expenses and declaring an emergency and waiving the three-reading rule. (Resolution attached).

Short discussion regarding the resolution and need for online payments.

Hope Hoard motioned to waive the three reading rule for Resolution 2025-0064 accepting payments by a financial transaction device processed by Stripe, Inc. Jill Ritter seconded. All in favor. The motion to waive the three-reading rule passed.

Hope Hoard motioned to approve Resolution 2025-0064 accepting electronic payment through the company Stripe, Inc. Jacob Groh seconded. All in favor Motion passed.

No special guests. Mayor Simpson stated that he appreciates Ms. Kay being here from the newspaper. She`s always a welcome guest.

Old Business:

Mayor Simpson gave an update on the basketball court. It has been newly paved and one side has been lined. Council has decided to keep old hoop and add new one. The other side will be lined as well. New hoop and pole have been delivered. Looking for volunteers to install the new pole and hoop.

ODOT update from Mayor Simpson regarding St. Rt. 49. The roads have been marked where repairs are needed. The Village will pay for the asphalt. ODOT will pay for the paving and repairs. Work should start this week.

Mayor Simpson reported that we have volunteers refurbishing the baseball fields. A traveling league will be using them. We will have contracts for the use of the fields.

Report from Fiscal Officer. No monthly report at this time, but she is working on reconciliations and met with the State Auditor. Things look good. Thank you to Chief Pat Aldrich for his help.

Mayor recognized all the hard work from Fiscal Officer Lori Hartman.

Mayor Simpson reported on resident, John Lawhorn at 70 E. Main Street, who wants to build a pole barn. Information was provided to Council. The building needs a variance because of the size. Mr. Wysong provided a variance form, which doesn't mention a variance fee. It usually costs $300. Council needs to decide how to handle the fee and have a meeting vote on allowing variance and updating zoning code. Hope Hoard asked about waiving the $300 fee. Mayor stated we have 20 days to hold a public hearing. This will be posted on Facebook and mentioned the new newspaper. The meeting requires two council members and the Mayor for the public hearing and vote. The meeting is set for September 23, 2025. Hope motioned to waive the $300 fee for Mr. Lawhorn at 70 E. Main Street. Jacob Groh seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Mayor Simpson stated that we need a motion to accept this variance and set a public hearing. Hope Hoard motioned to accept the variance at 70 E. Main Street, and set a public hearing for Tuesday, September 23, 2025, at 7 p.m. Jill Ritter seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed.

Mayor Simpson reminded the Council that the zoning rules need to be updated. The Village is in the process of creating a zoning board.

Mayor Simpson stated that the Village needs to create a committee regarding staffing and staffing issues. Wendell Harleman needs to retire. He handles multiple duties. The Village would like input from the community to get that position covered, and possibility form a committee for that purpose. Wendell is irreplaceable. He and his father before him have been great for this Village. The water Operator of Record is working on a proposal to take over Wendell's day to day tasks (inspecting towers, meter reads).

No new business

Public Comments: someone asked if anything was going to be done about the Dollar General. The Mayor noted that we are updating our zoning. Some repairs have been made, though. The Fiscal Officer found the agreement with Dollar General and stated that the business is supposed to keep the property maintained. The F.O. stated that the new zoning code needs to address building repairs. The Village need to form a planning commission for zoning. The Council is part of the appeals process. The Mayor said that once the zoning code is updated, the Village may need to abate the problems and assess the costs to the owner's taxes.

Council Reports: Hope Hoard talked about Community events. A Harvest Party on October 25, 2025, a Christmas Party on December 13, 2025, and an Easter Party on March 28, 2026. Hope has received an application for park board member, and she would like to appoint this person as Chair. Hope Hoard made a motion to appoint Kelsi Maxwell as Chair of the Park Board. Hope Hoard made a motion to appoint Kelsi Maxwell as Chair of the Park Board. Jill Ritter seconded. All in favor. The motion passed. The Mayor noted that the Village now has a community member to have some say with what goes on in the park and more volunteers are needed. The Mayor stated that the Village is seeking some funding from state representatives. The Mayor swore in Kelsi Maxwell as Chair of the Park Board.

Mayor Simpson talked about the Community Harvest Party on October 25, and the bonfire on Beggar's Night.

Hope Hoard stated that Amber Smith will be the new housekeeper for the Hunters Club, the Community Center, and the office space. She will be paid $12 per hour, working about 8 to 14 hours per week. She will prepare the Hunters Club for painting and other renovations. Hope Hoard made a motion to hire Amber Smith at $12 per hour up to 14 hours per week for housekeeping. Jacob seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

John Ritter explained that next Monday there will be new, faster, and less expensive internet installed. The Village will save approximately $300 per month. The Village is paying for unused phone lines, so there will be new phone lines installed in the Village offices and the Fire Department. John also stated that the Ohio House passed House Bill 96 in June. It will go into effect at the end of September regarding cybersecurity requirements. There will be training and policy notifications that will be presented at the next meeting. Also, the new website is being built. New content needs to be added. All meeting minutes from 2024 through 2025 need to be uploaded to the website, along with department application forms, and the rental agreement, parks and rec community center pictures, etc. Lori Hartman will supply the minutes. The Village will have new .gov emails. John Ritter explained the email policy and training in compliance with the O.R.C. All Village emails are subject to the public records policy and can only be used for Village business purposes. The Mayor thanked John for all his work on this matter.

Upcoming Community Events will be posted on the new website. Discussion about the Beggar's Night Bonfire regarding refreshments.

The Mayor announced that Council will go into executive session regarding the purchase or sale of property in accordance with O.R.C. 121.22. He stated that this pertains to the property that is leased to Brown's Nursery.

Hope Hoard motions to enter into executive session to discuss the sale of property in accordance with O.R.C. 121.22, also inviting Lori Hartman, Fiscal Officer. Jacob seconded. All in favor. The motion passed. Council entered into executive session at 8:11 p.m.

Hope Hoard motioned to return to regular session. Jacob seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

The Mayor stated that the discussion was regarding 22 acres of land that the Village leases to Brown's Nursery. The Council has decided that it would be better for the Village to sell that property. The property will be available for public offer. The Village will sell to the highest bidder. Hope Hoard motioned to initiate the process to sell the 22 acres that is now leased to Brown's Nursery to the highest bidder. Jill seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Mayor Simpson will update the Village residents about the process.

Hope Hoard motioned to adjourn the meeting. Jill seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Mayor: 

Fiscal Officer: _____