THE VILLAGE OF PHILLIPSBURG
COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 17, 2026

Meeting called to order at 7 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Heather — yes, Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob — yes, John yes.

Approval of February 17, 2026, meeting minutes: Hope motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes from February 17, 2026. Jill seconded. All in favor — yes, no opposed — Heather abstained. Motion carried.

Mayor Simpson: Hearing on the update of the zoning code.

Public Comments: Resident 1 stated that she looked at the new zoning code. She realizes that updates and changes need to be made, but she found that there are some things she disagrees with. One of those related to having more than two vehicles. John Ritter explained the meaning of that rule to make sure that there is sufficient parking for vehicles, and to reduce street parking. There is not a limit on how many vehicles you can own. The next concern Resident I had was regarding outbuildings on the property. She already has two outbuildings on almost two acres of property, but she wants to build a pole barn on an empty section of her property. She would like some clarification on this because some lots are bigger than others. John Ritter stated that there was a change of language based on the old code that limited not by the number of buildings but by space available. It also did not regulate or limit the size of the outbuilding. This update is an attempt to define (unintelligible - people talking over each other). John said he understands the resident's concern and he has the same concern. John will revisit that part of the zoning code. The resident stated that these issues should be looked into before passing the new code as it is currently written. Derek Shell stated the resident mentioned being grandfathered in with her two existing outbuildings; it is a common practice that there is a zoning map with different jurisdictions, so this would be established an R-IA which is purposed toward future development. This would address the parking issues. Fiscal Offce Lori Hartman stated that that is how zoning laws work. As the resident said, anything existing on a property is already grandfathered in. Anything new would fall under the new code. The resident explained that she may want to build a pole barn or Waymire shed, but it won't need a driveway. John Ritter reiterated that he will look into these issues. There was a question posed about replacing a grandfathered-in outbuilding because of age or condition. There was further discussion regarding garages and outbuildings.

Resident 2 stated that this was the first meeting she has attended. She asked for the definition particularly regarding sheds and accessory structures. She explained that in the definition for an accessory structure is says "a building or a structure." Then later it defines structure again. She asked is an accessory structure a building, and a fence, and a deck or a pool? The code mentions

one accessory structure, so what is that exactly? She also wanted to discuss the lot size issue. Does that make a difference on what accessory structures are allowed? The code needs clarification on that.

She also had questions about section 5.7 regarding accessibility. There's no indication if it's for R-1 or B-1. It can get very gray. It doesn't say what this part is applicable to. John Ritter asked for clarification of the resident's question. She explained that the parking accessibility issue isn't clearly defined for residential parking and off street parking, and questions about landscaping. John Ritter asked for the resident's written notes, which are more detailed than what she spoke about. John Ritter stated that he would look into the issues.

Mayor Simpson asked if there were any more questions about the zoning code. No one spoke up.

Councilmember Heather Craft asked if there would be further discussion about the zoning code. She had some questions. Section 4.03 states that the resident has 30 days to correct the situation. Heather feels like 10 days is enough time for minor issues. There was discussion about the "cure period." John Ritter stated that they tried to separate zoning into building and yard maintenance. Heather reiterated that 10 days is long enough to correct yard maintenance issues. John will clarify the rules. Someone mentioned that elderly residents may not be able to correct a situation within that amount of time, but Derek clarified that it pertains to tall grass, minor repairs, etc. The Mayor spoke on this issue that the goal is not to nick pick, but it gives the Village the option to take care of problems. There was more discussion regarding the timeframe given to fix the violations. There was a discussion about squatters, and about people using a residential zone to conduct business.

There was a question about livestock within the village limits.

Ordinances and Resolutions: Ordinance 2026-0005 and Ordinance 2026-0006

There was a brief discussion as to whether or not to do the second reading of Ordinance 20260005 and Ordinance 2026-0006, since some changes have been proposed. Hope motioned to table the reading of Ordinance 2026-0005 due to changes needed. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather — yes, Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob — yes, John — yes. Motion passed. Hope motioned to table the reading of Ordinance 2026-0006 due to changes needed. Jacob seconded. Vote taken: Heather — yes, Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob — yes, John — yes. Motion passed.

Special Guest:

The Village's new solicitor, Kirsten Knight, introduced herself. The mayor thanked her for coming to the meeting.

Old Business:

Fiscal Officer Lori Hartman stated that Resolution 2026-0007 was not listed on the agenda but needs to be addressed. John Ritter stated that Resolution 2026-0007 is a resolution declaring that the previously authorized Police Chief Employment Contract offer has expired and is withdrawn, and it will not be executed as to further Council action declaring it an emergency. Essentially, the employment contract that we offered Chief Wysong at the last meeting had a 14 day limit on it. He has not signed or responded to it or entered into negotiations at that time, so

the offer is being withdrawn, pending what action the Council is going to take in this matter to improve the Village's police coverage.

Chief Wysong interjected that he did reach out to the Mayor, stating that attachments to the most recent contract, which had been updated, had two exhibits which were not provided. Mr. Wysong stated that he could not fully execute a contract without having all the pertinent information. John Ritter stated that he believed the Mayor responded that both resolutions were made public on the website. Mr. Wysong said he was told that he was going to receive that information. There was a brief discussion among the Council members. John Ritter stated that Mr. Wysong did not respond within the 14 day timeframe, and that the offer was being withdrawn. The Council will decide how to proceed. Hope Hoard asked if the position will proceed as it has been. John Ritter stated that it will until something else is decided by the Council. Mayor Simpson proposed that the Council reissue a new resolution or new contract and just evaluate the options for new provisions. The Mayor read Section 3 of the Resolution stating that the Police Chief will continue until or unless action is taken by the Council in accordance with applicable law.

Hope Hoard motioned to declare Resolution 2026-0007 an emergency and waived the 3 reading rule. Jill seconded; Vote taken: Heather — yes. Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob yes, John — yes. Hope Hoard motioned to approve Resolution 2()26-()007 Resolution declaring that the previously authorized Police Chief Employment Contract has expired and is withdrawn, directing that it shall not be executed absent further Council action declaring an emergency. Hope Hoard motioned to approve Resolution 2()26-()0()7. Jill Ritter seconded. Vote taken: Heather — yes, Hope — yes, Jill yes. Chrystal yes, Jacob — yes, John yes. Motion passed.

Reports:

Fiscal Officer Lori Hartman stated that she provided a folder with end of month figures for January. Next month she will provide end of month for February and March, as she was working with the Auditor of State regarding workers' compensation settlement issues. The issue is taken care of, and FO Hartman can proceed with February's end of month. The Council was also provided the current fund summaries. Also included are the outstanding invoices. The fire fund is in the negative. Essential bills were paid. More monies will be coming in from Clay Township. FO Hartman is working with Local Government Services in order to create the new permanent budget. She will email the monthly financial records to the Council in the future.

FO Hartman mentioned the open contract with Dignified Financial Solutions. Those services are no longer needed. Richard Ford (traveling fiscal officer) and Chris McCoy (auditor's office) were able to help with year end. She asked if Council wanted to continue the contract. Hope motioned to cancel the agreement with Dignified Financial Solutions with a 30 day notice. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather — yes, Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob — yes, John — yes. Motion passed.

Fire Chief: Mayor Simpson informed Council that the Fire Chief is on vacation. The Brookville Fire Chief is covering. There was a fire on Blank Road today that was handled by the Brookville Fire Department and other departments through mutual aid.

The Mayor distributed two fire department applications. Pay rates for both would be $13/hour. Aydan Ballengee would like to pick up shifts as needed. He plans to pursue a fire certification. Coleton Hoke would like to be shifted upon being hired. His intention is to move closer to the area, thus allowing him to run POC as well. Chief Aldrich recommends hiring both. After the Council has a chance to review the applications, they can vote on whether to hire.

The AFG grant for the SCBAs should be in by month's end.

There was a fire in the Township today (March 17, 2026). All went well according to Chief Fletcher. No further details at this point.

Hope motioned to approve the hiring of Coleton Hoke as a shifted firefighter with a starting pay of $13/hr. Jacob seconded. Vote taken: Heather — abstain, Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob — yes, John — yes. Motion passed.

Hope motioned to approve the hiring of Aydan Ballengee as a volunteer firefighter with a starting pay of $13/hr. Jacob seconded. Vote taken: Heather — yes, Hope — yes, Jill — yes, Chrystal — yes, Jacob — yes, John — yes. Motion passed.

Police Chief: Administrative - Chief Wysong provided Council with the 2026 Village police stats for January and February. Historically, through the winter months, the department sees less activity. The department will see the activity increase as the weather turns warmer. Chief Wysong will continue to provide this report on a monthly basis. He was asked to increase police coverage for the Village, and he will reach out to local police academies. He will create a job posting for part-time positions, which will be presented to the Mayor and Council for review and any adjustments. Training and Development - Mr. Wysong spoke on the continuing police training requirements. The department has until the end of the year to complete that training. Equipment and Uniforms — Department computers need to be replaced. The search is continuing for another patrol vehicle. The Chief is researching available Incident Based Reporting programs to update the current reporting program. All of this will be presented to Council for approval. Heather asked if there was going to be a new police contract. There was a discussion about the contract that was presented and withdrawn. The Council is investigating another contract or avenue. Village Administrator: Derek Shell asked the Fiscal Officer for clarification on an unpaid bill from Coolidge Wall. She explained that it was for services provided by previous Village counsel. Mr. Shell then spoke on the water remediation plan. It has been submitted to the EPA. When the EPA responds, the Village can bring in the temporary plant. The estimated cost of a new water treatment plant, water tower, and third well can be used from funds previously applied for but not used. The engineering company has also applied for a grant. The total cost of design and construction is $3.2 million. That includes a treatment plant, a brand new water tower, and a third well. This means the Village will only have to borrow about $1.5 million instead of the $7 million suggested under the previous plan. There was a discussion about selling the existing tower and two wells to Brown's Nursery for irrigation purposes. That would be a cost savings for the Village, possibly up to 50% of what it will take to get the new system. Mr. Shell stated that he is excited about this new plan, and it will benefit the Village to retain its own water system. There was discussion about water quality.

Zoning: Nathaniel Davis stated that there are a few ongoing issues. There was a situation with an abandoned trailer that escalated on the weekend of March 8, 2026. Mr. Davis had to contact law

enforcement. The trailer was voluntarily removed, but the issue regarding it led to an arrest on an outstanding warrant for the individual who brought the trailer to the Village. A big issue in the Village is that there are a lot of abandoned vehicles with no tags sitting in yards. The Village is making some progress with that, but it will be an ongoing issue.

Mayor Simpson had nothing to report on.

He asked if there was any new business. No one spoke up.

Public Comment: A resident spoke on an ongoing situation that has not been taken care of. She has called the Montgomery County Sheriff a few times. The person who answered the phone said that they didn't want the Village of Phillipsburg to "pawn the problem off to them." A deputy returned her call and said it was not their problem. The resident stopped calling the Montgomery County Sheriffs Office. A Council member asked for clarification regarding the Sheriffs Office statement that it's not their problem. The resident said yes, that is what was said. The resident said the person told her that Village residents pay taxes to the Village, so the problem should be addressed by the Village. The Council member stated that the residents also pay County taxes, and it's the Sheriff's job to respond to calls. There was discussion between the resident and the Council regarding the problems with that property. Mayor Simpson thanked the resident for bringing up this issue again.

Mayor Simpson asked for any reports from Council. John Ritter mentioned that the Village has received a couple of new computers. They are configured to be House Bill 96 compliant. Mr. Ritter was told that the first two computers were for the water department and village administrator. The computers are ready to go in "local mode." He is still working on the network. He asked if the Council wanted the computers in local mode only and not on a network. The Mayor commented that whatever Mr. Ritter thinks is best.

The Community Easter Party and Egg Hunt is scheduled for March 28, 2026. It has been advertised in the paper, on the water bills, and on the website.

The Mayor mentioned going into executive session. Hope motioned to enter into executive session to discuss the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official. Jill seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried. The Council went into executive session at approximately 9:00 p.m.

The Mayor announced that the Council had returned from Executive Session at 9: 19 p.m. Hope motioned to return from executive session. Jill seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Hope motioned to adjourn the Council meeting. John seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.

Mayor: 

Fiscal Officer: 