THE VILLAGE OF PHILLIPSBURG

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 21, 2026

Mayor Simpson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Fiscal Officer Hartman took roll call: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – absent, John – yes, Josh – yes. Jacob has informed the mayor that he would not be here.

Heather motioned to approve Jacob Groh's absence. Hope seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes. Motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Hartman stated that the meeting minutes from March 17, 2026, have been corrected and provided to Council for approval. The April 9, 2026, special meeting minutes have also been presented to Council for approval.

Hope Hoard motioned to approve the March 17, 2026, regular meeting minutes. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope –yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes. Motion passed.

Hope Hoard motioned to approve the April 9, 2026, special meeting minutes. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather – abstain, Hope – yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes. Motion passed.

Fiscal Officer Hartman stated that the Ordinances regarding zoning and property management have been removed from this meeting's Agenda. John Ritter has provided a summary of proposed changes. John explained that, once the amendments are discussed, Council can continue with the approval process at the next meeting. John discussed changes proposed by residents who were at the previous meeting. There was a discussion among Council members about the zoning and property maintenance code changes. There was a question about the zoning committee, and when changes can be approved. There was discussion about who appoints committee members and who can be on the committee. Discussion proceeded regarding the zoning code and what should be changed or amended. There was further discussion about the zoning board of appeals. It was suggested that the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) review the zoning code. Council decided that Ordinance 2026-0005 will be tabled until changes and updates are reviewed by the MVRPC.

Hope motioned to approve an update to the text of the zoning code, Ordinance 2026-0005 amendment before presenting it to the MVRPC. Heather seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope –yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes. Motion passed.

Hope motioned to approve amendments to Ordinance 2026-0006, Property Maintenance code. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope –yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes.

The special guest for the meeting, Mr. Kevin Fidler, spoke about the Fire and EMS levy. Mr. Fidler introduced himself as a medic. He is also a member of the Clay Township Zoning Commission. He is speaking as a member of the community and the Citizens for Clay Township Fire/EMS. There is a levy on the ballot for May 5. If it does not pass, it will cause some major issues for the entire region. Mr. Fidler mentioned that he has been providing information about the levy to the citizens. He has received some positive feedback from residents. There is a

website (citizensforclaytwpfireems.org) and Facebook page (Citizens for Clay Township Fire and EMS) devoted to information about the levy. There are also still some yard signs available. Mr. Fidler mentioned two upcoming events. On April 25, the Phillipsburg Fire Association is having a Waffle Fry fundraiser and levy information session, and it is also opening day for Brookville baseball. On April 29 at the Brookville Fire Department there is a co-sponsored event with the Chamber of Commerce. It is an information session regarding the levy. Mr. Fidler wants the people at the Council meeting to discuss the levy with anyone and everyone in the Clay Township area. The Council thanked Mr. Fidler for his presentation.

Old Business

Park Grant Update: Mayor Simpson stated that the Village applied for a Capital Grant through the State of Ohio for $200,000 worth of park equipment. Roughly $98,000 of that would go toward updating the tennis courts to pickleball courts with a resurfacing and new nets. The decision regarding who gets the grants will be made later this year, and the funds will be released in January of 2027. The mayor then explained that there are other park grants that can be applied for in the meantime. The mayor stated that Council is considering multiple updates to the park. The Village purchased baseball equipment, and there are plans for updating the bathroom facilities. A local baseball league is already using and maintaining the fields for practice.

Reports

Fiscal Officer: February financials are being circulated for signatures. March financials were emailed to Council prior to this meeting. March financials are on hold because during bank reconciliation, some errors were found in both Huntington and Chase accounts. Fiscal Officer Hartman has been working with the banks to rectify their errors. The Star Ohio account has a balance of $200,729.85. Since starting the account at the end of January, the Village has earned $729 in interest. Fiscal Officer Hartman has been working on a record retention policy to determine what records need to be retained and what records can be destroyed. The Council/Village will need to hire a professional shredding company. The Fiscal Officer stated that the land sale closing is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, 2026. She also informed that most of the $8,000 + that was unaccounted for is now accounted for, with only about $1,000 unaccounted for remaining. The Auditor has provided a list of documentation she wants, and Fiscal Officer Hartman is working on assembling those documents. Current employee records are being reviewed for accuracy and status. Historical Ordinances, Resolutions, and Meeting Minutes are being copied, scanned, and put in binders for easy public access. The Village has received requests for authorization letters for the water project from engineering companies, and they are currently under review for additional information and possible additional requests for information by Councilmember Jill Ritter and Village Administrator Derek Shell.

Fire Chief: Chief Aldrich is attending the Brookville Council Meeting, so Mayor Simpson read the Fire Chief's report. Personnel coverage exceeds 95%. All equipment is operational as on the day they were placed in service. Two trainees have passed their fire classes and are waiting to take the state certification test. EMT-Basic trainee class is going well and should be certified by mid-May. The SCBA Grant is complete, and $170,000 worth of new MSA air packs have been placed in service. Brush Truck 80 is back in service with a new nozzle. This was from a BWC grant. No other grants are currently in progress.

The Clay Township Fire Levy vote is on May 5. Chief Aldrich is asking the Council to support the levy. If it doesn't pass, Phillipsburg will, at the very least, cease EMS operations. Additional service cuts may be necessary, including complete closure of the Phillipsburg Fire Department and liquidation of assets. There was discussion about past levies and the history of the fire department. There was further discussion regarding the Fire and EMS levy and how important it is to the entire area.

Police Chief: Chief Wysong reported that he responded to a call noted as a welfare check, but it was reclassified as a domestic dispute, based on details gathered upon arrival. The problem had already resolved. The Chief held an impromptu meeting in March to discuss some things talked about in previous meetings, such as contract revisions. Officer Leslie Heatherman and the Chief came up with a preliminary plan based on their ability outside of their full-time employment. The plan is not what is described in the currently proposed contract, but Chief Wysong feels like it's a step in the right direction. They will add some additional patrols and work on recruiting efforts. He also mentioned a possible wage increase from $14/hr. to $17/hr. for Officer Heatherman, who has been with the department for 8 years. Hope Hoard motioned to approve a pay increase for Leslie Heatherman from the current $14/hr. to $17/hr. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes. Motion passed. Chief Wysong thanked the Council. Mayor Simpson thanked Officer Leslie Heatherman for her service and dedication. The Chief briefly mentioned uniform and computer issues. He also mentioned tagging nuisance vehicles parked on the street and plans for removing those vehicles. The cost for towing will be charged to the vehicle owners. There was a discussion regarding fading street markings and blind spots.

Zoning: Nate Davis spoke about what is needed to do his job properly. He wants a tablet and software. Mr. Davis attended an iWorq demonstration. There was a discussion about the iWorq reporting software. The Village Council doesn't want employees to use their personal devices for Village work. Nate Davis wants special equipment to do his zoning work. He stated that he did not want to ask office staff to help him in any way because he feels it is not their job. Heather asked if there is a procedure to send letters regarding violations and then reporting that to Council.

Village Administrator: Derek Shell stated he would weed around the outside of the Village offices and add some flowers to make it look nicer. He received permission from Mayor Simpson. He asked that the Council consider a salt truck. There is some equipment maintenance taking place. Water main breaks have been repaired, and new asphalt has been applied. The tractor needs to be repaired before continuing Village yard restoration. Soil has been delivered. The City of Clayton will bring their street sweeper in to clean the roads. Once the roads are cleaned, the curb lines will be refreshed. The residents can be notified of this through street signs, the Village website, and social media. On the water side, some meters have been replaced. Derek worked with Fiscal Officer Lori Hartman and Water Clerk Stephanie Booker to make up red cards to remind residents to pay their water bill. Mr. Shell explained that he received a call at 2:39 a.m. regarding payment of a water bill where the water had been shut off due to non-payment. He does not want to answer calls at 2:39 a.m. regarding payment of water bills and when will the water be turned back on. The red cards should take care of that problem, because it will alert residents that the water bill is due to avoid shut off. Mr. Shell informed Council about the water remediation pilot study. Mr. Shell also talked about the AWW southwest conference meeting that he attended last week. The water remediation project for Phillipsburg was brought

up at the meeting, and that was exciting news. Derek asked for any questions. Mayor Simpson asked about selling the old trucks. Derek stated that should be discussed later.

Mayor: Mayor Simpson encouraged everyone to get out and vote on May 5. There is a work session meeting at Clay Township on Thursday to discuss potential police coverage.

New Business: none

Chief Aldrich joined the meeting. Mayor Simpson stated that he had read the Chief's report to the Council. Chief Aldrich asked about Vik Gulati's project. FO Hartman stated that the County claimed to have not received proper notice. Ms. Hartman found the Council minutes relating to approval and sent that to the County.

Public Comment: Someone asked about raising chickens on their property. They were told that it has never been allowed within the Village limits. The resident asked about who owns the property at 29 W. Walnut. The owner passed away last year. The people on the property do not own it. The resident was assured that the Village solicitor is aware of that property and the old elementary school. There are no legal utilities at that address on Walnut, but someone may be stealing electricity.

Heather motioned to support the Clay Township Fire Levy. Jill seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Jill – yes, Chrystal – yes, John – yes. Motion passed.

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

Meeting adjourned.

Mayor: 

Fiscal Officer: Lori L. Hartman