THE VILLAGE OF PHILLIPSBURG
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 21, 2026

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: Heather Craft – yes, Hope Hoard – yes, Chrystal Beavers – yes, Jacob – yes. FO Hartman stated that there are two open Council positions.

Derek Shell made a presentation. He stated that on July 22, 2026, there will be an annual EPA inspection. Mr. Shell presented the totally redone contingency plan. It contains a lot of very important and useful information. The plan provides actions relating to short-term power failure, long-term power failure, disruption of service, the tower falls over, etc. It lists people to call and contractors to work with. The plan states step-by-step instructions on how to deal with water emergency situations. Mr. Shell is asking for $11,000 from the water fund. He talked about wellhouse 4, wellhouse 3, the water main, fire hydrant, and the service garage, and pointed them out on a map. He explained the water distribution system. He pointed out that there is a broken isolation valve. The $11,000 is needed for repairs and wellhouse isolation and other repairs. Three of the existing 4 wells were drilled in the 1950s. He spoke about the PFAS water remediation project and the addition of a new well.

Hope motioned to approve the water valve project for $11,000. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried.

Approval of last month's meeting minutes:

There were only two council members present at the June 16, 2026, regular council meeting. They did not have a quorum, so the meeting was rescheduled. Heather motioned to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2026, regular council meeting. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – abstain, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – abstain. Motion carried.

Hope motioned to approve the minutes from the emergency council meeting on June 17, 2026. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – abstain. Motion carried.

Hope motioned to approve the minutes from the special council meeting on June 26, 2026. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Heather – abstain, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried.

Mayor Simpson: Council member discussion and appointment. The mayor asked if anyone on Council has recruited any new council members. No one has as of the date of this meeting. Mayor Simpson stated that he will appoint new members before the 30-day mark. He will call a special meeting at that time.

Public Comment: No public comment

Ordinances and Resolutions: No ordinances or resolutions

Special Guests: Members of the Lutheran Church on E. Main Street are in attendance. They want to discuss deeding the church building to the Village. Mayor Simpson shared the information provided by the church members. The cost of utilities is approximately $20,000 to $25,000 per year. The church members would also like access to the sanctuary on Sundays and access to the rentals for gatherings. The church members have drafted an agreement that they would like to discuss with the Council for any changes. The mayor suggested an open meeting work session be scheduled to discuss the terms of the agreement. It was suggested that the work session take place at the church. The church members will provide some potential dates for the work session meeting. The mayor thanked the church members for considering the Village.

Reports:

Fiscal Officer Hartman stated that the Council members have been provided with the fund status report. She has also provided appropriations for payment of bills. The monthly financials are not available at the time of this meeting. FO Hartman explained that all information is now entered into the UAN system. There was a short discussion regarding $2000 that are still unaccounted for since before January of 2025. FO Hartman asked for approval for the appropriations.

Hope motioned to approve the updated reappropriations. Heather seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried.

FO Hartman spoke on the police inventory update. Some items are still missing from the former police chief including computer passwords and several keys that have yet to be returned. That gives limited access for processing and completing the inventory. Inventory lists and evidence will need to be available for the future. The Village has contacted a third-party evidence contractor that will be scheduled to come in and open the evidence locker to complete inventory. Police Chief Birk explained the process for requesting an evidence destruction order from the court.

FO Hartman stated the Kevin Fidler has been working on the inventory list. He has almost the entire bay completed except for the cruisers and a few locked boxes. Mr. Fidler stated that there were some items of tagged evidence that were not locked up. There are also some locked cabinets that may or may not contain police evidence. There are several containers that have been ruined by temperature fluctuations, age, and rodents.

FO Hartman stated that it was recently discovered that the three radios that were being used by the police department were being paid for out of the fire fund. The fire department is asking Council to transfer the radios and chargers to the fire department.

Hope motioned to transfer the three radios and chargers back to the fire department from the police department. Heather seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried.

Fire Department: Chief Alrich presented a report. He referred Council to the second paragraph which pertains to the budget he has proposed for the year 2027. The protected budget, including salary increases, comes to $476,700, which is $30,000 more than the projected 2026 budget, even though that is not what the department was able to get. The proposed budget worksheet was prepared based on a projected revenue of $584,000 in 2027, with EMS billing. This leaves a surplus of $110,000 conservatively, which could be paid back to the general fund. There was a discussion regarding how the fire department has been funded over the past several years.

Chief Aldrich then discussed equipment and maintenance. He requested that the 2010 ambulance be kept as a backup. The department spent about $10,000 on repairs to it last year. He doesn't believe that selling it for $3,000 is a smart investment. FO Hartman stated that the insurance on the vehicle is $3,800 per year to keep it as a first responder vehicle which allows it to carry patients. If it were a utility vehicle with no ability to carry patients, the insurance would cost $600 per year. Chief Aldrich asked that Council decide about the vehicle at this meeting. The Chief wants to keep it. He recognizes that it is expensive to keep, but if sold the Village will lose out on the $10,000 spent on repairs last year. There was a discussion regarding keeping the medic unit. There will be a resolution presented at the next meeting regarding this matter.

Chief Aldrich did not apply for the FEMA grant. He would prefer to use the $26,250 matching funds for salary increases. Personnel: Regarding training, there are three members (Ballangee, Hartman, and Stephenson) who will be attending a Firefighter 1 Course next week, which is a Fire Marshall/State of Ohio funded class. Pamela Stephenson will be attending paramedic class this fall. Ayden Ballengee will begin in January. They both will be medics in 2027, and then probably leave the department. There have been two resignations from shift work down to PRN. This has caused a loss of 72 hours of coverage on a six-day cycle. Several other members are on the verge of resignation or are being released due to inactivity. Out of five resumes/applications recently received, all have decided not to pursue employment with the Village due to pay levels. The Chief is once again asking for an increase in the pay scale to attract qualified employees. He is asking for a 25% increase across the board, which would cost about $75,000. There was a discussion among the Mayor, Council, the Fiscal Officer, and Chief Aldrich regarding the Fire Department budget. Chief Aldrich reported on service calls and help from Brookville Fire Department.

Police Department: Chief Birk explained that there was a total of 62 calls answered by the police department in June. This number includes 22 traffic stops, 4 arrests, 2 lock outs, 3 animal complaints, 6 follow-ups, assisted medics 8 times, and some miscellaneous calls. There were 77 hours of training, 30 hours of sick time, 30 hours of vacation, and 13.5 hours of comp time. He reported that while looking at the data, Montgomery County refused to come out for a lot of things, so he doesn't have an accurate number of calls that were actually made. The Chief noted that the Clay Township Police presence is pretty well known now. The officers are having a good time and patrolling the Village a lot. The department is having a positive impact on the community. Chief Birk spoke about the traffic data that has been collected. There were 14 warnings and 8 citations issued. Three of those citations were for semis running red lights. This a huge issue for the Village. He said information collected from the speed signs indicated that from June 1, there were 190,000 vehicles that went through town southbound on State Route 49. The top speed was 83 mph. Northbound there were 196,718 vehicles. The top speed was 89 mph.

West Main Street had 19,000 vehicles detected, with 90% compliance of under 40 mph. The top speed was 66 mph. The officers are spending time doing traffic enforcement, and they are having an impact. The police force is very visible in the Village, and Chief Birk drives through the Village once or twice per shift. The officers are spending time dealing with criminal activities and having an impact on that. There have been arrests on drug activity and a warrant. Chief Birk reported that the police department regularly responds immediately to any complaints. There are two or three officers working in the Village on all shifts.

Chief Birk complimented Kevin Fidler on this organization of the Village property room. Anything from May 12, 2026, forward will be stored in the Clay Township property room. There was an explanation about junk vehicles and how other communities are dealing with them. The Village of Phillipsburg has several junk vehicles on private property. There was a discussion about how to deal with junk vehicles and towing. Chief Birk mentioned the upcoming Unity In the Community event. Everyone is very excited about this, and there have been a lot of positive responses and comments about the event.

Zoning: Nathaniel Davis sent out an email on July 1, 2026, to everyone except Jacob (email wasn't yet set up) regarding the Iworx program. Mr. Davis negotiated for hours with the software providers to agree to a zero-dollar start-up fee and $1,500 per year rate. This comes to $4.10 per day to use the program. He explained the advantages of using this software. There was a discussion regarding sending letters regarding grass violations. Mr. Davis was questioned by Council regarding how much he has actually accomplished in the time he has been zoning officer. Mr. Davis answered that there has been a plethora of issues within the office, including computer access issues. Mayor Simpson interrupted and stated that Council needs to motion and vote regarding purchasing the Iworx software. He stated that there were delays in sending out zoning letters due to the suggested update of the zoning policy, which was never actually completed and accepted by Council. Mr. Davis was asked how the Iworx software will help to get things done. He explained the software and how it works.

Jacob motioned to approve the purchase of the Iworx program. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Heather – no, Hope – no, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Mayor votes yes as the tie breaker. Motion carried.

Mayor's Report: The department heads are asking that the Council hold two meetings per month as opposed to one. Many people have expressed that 2 to 2.5 hours of meeting time is too long. Chief Birk requested that the Village of Phillipsburg Council meet on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7 p.m. The mayor states that this change is up to the Council. A motion is needed, followed by a resolution or an ordinance. Hope motioned to change the Village of Phillipsburg Council Meetings to the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Heather – no, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried.

One Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals members is appointed by the mayor. We must have these in place to continue. Fiscal Officer Hartman stated that one member is a Council Member elected by the Council. Hope motioned that Heather Craft be elected to the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. Chrystal seconded. Vote taken: Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried. Mayor Simpson appointed Hope Hoard as a member of the Planning Commission. Mayor Simpson also appointed Kristen Cramer as a member of the Planning Commission. Mayor Simpson also appointed Lori Hartman as a member of the Planning Commission. The mayor suggested that the first Planning Commission meeting be scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on August 18, 2026, just before the regular council meeting. At the first meeting of the Planning Commission, it will be established that the same people will also serve on the Board of Zoning Appeals. will serve on the Commission or Board.

Mayor Simpson then spoke about the Unity in the Community event. There will be a car show, vendors, kids' activities, and a dunk tank. There will be a parachute team from Middletown. Fire trucks will be on display. He asked Council members to volunteer at the event.

New Business: None

The mayor announced that Council will move into executive session.

Chrystal motioned to move into executive session, including Fiscal Officer Hartman, and excluding Hope Hoard and Heather Craft. Jacob seconded. Vote taken: Heather – abstain, Hope – abstain, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried. Council moved into executive session.

Mayor Simpson announced that Council had returned from executive session at 10:04 p.m. Hope motioned to return to regular session. Heather seconded. Vote taken: Heather – yes, Hope – yes, Chrystal – yes, Jacob – yes. Motion carried.

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

Meeting adjourned.

Mayor: _____

Fiscal Officer: _____

Executive Session was held in regards to a resident (who wished to remain anonymous) complaint involving 2 council members.