

CALL TO ORDER:

7:00 p.m., Council Chamber at City Hall by President Pro Tem Larry Morrison

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Lori Elmore
Larry Morrison
Amy Harcar
Mike Adkins
Brian McCann
Gerald Dixon
Devin Brown

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

July 7, 2026 Agenda & Regular Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2026 Committee Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2026 Agenda & Regular Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2026 Special Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2026 Committee Meeting Minutes

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Administration and Financial Management – Chairperson Elmore
Community and Elder Advocacy – Chairperson Harcar
Community Standards and Enforcement – Chairperson McCann
Economic Development – Chairperson Dixon
Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Services – Chairperson Brown
Public Safety – Chairperson Morrison
Parks and Recreation – Chairperson Adkins

OFFICIALS' REPORTS:

Mayor Michael T. Bivens

City Auditor Shaquille Alexander

City Attorney Bradley S. Nicodemus

Treasurer - Vacant

Director of Public Service Casey Rowlands

Director of Economic Development Jackie Russell

Director of Public Safety Van Gregg

Director of Neighborhoods Gerald Wright

President Pro Tem Larry Morrison

COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS AND CLAIMS:

POLL PUBLIC:

VERIFICATION OF COPIES:

Roll call on whether each member of the Council was given a copy of each item of legislation listed on the agenda prior to the meeting and including any add-on legislation.

THIRD READING:

NO LEGISLATION FOR THIRD READING.

SECOND READING:

ORDINANCE NO. 064-2026

AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ATTACHED TO CHAPTER 1101.06 OF THE 2023 CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO AND AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED, CHANGING THE ZONING ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 4870 POTH ROAD, PARCEL NUMBERS 090-008399 and 090-007555, FROM COMMUNITY CROSSROADS DISTRICT (CCD), TO INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (INDD), PROPERTY OWNED BY THE WHITEHALL COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 065-2026

AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ATTACHED TO CHAPTER 1101.06 OF THE 2023 CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO AND AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED, CHANGING THE ZONING ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 265 NORTH HAMILTON ROAD, PARCEL NUMBER 090-008397, FROM COMMUNITY CROSSROADS DISTRICT (CCD), TO INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (INDD), PROPERTY OWNED BY BCORE DEFENDER OH1M05 LLC AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 066-2026

AMENDING THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE TO LIMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OR

OPERATION OF GASOLINE STATIONS.

FIRST READING:

ORDINANCE NO. 073 -2026

AMENDING ORDINANCE 129-2025; AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO 161.38 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 074-2026

AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF EIGHTY THOUSAND AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$80,000.00) FROM UNAPPROPRIATED MONIES IN THE GENERAL FUND TO THE CODE ENFORCEMENT SALARIES ACCOUNT (101.600.51100) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 075-2026

AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS IN TOTAL OF THIRTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$30,000.00) CONSISTING OF THE AMOUNTS OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$15,000.00) FROM THE ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBORHOODS EXPENSE ACCOUNT (101.204.51300) AND FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$15,000.00) FROM THE SAFETY DIRECTOR SALARY EXPENSE ACCOUNT (101.960.51000) TO THE CITY PLANNER EXPENSE ACCOUNT (101.209.51500) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

RESOLUTION NO. 034-2026

AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE ASSOCIATED PLUMBING & HYDRONIC CONTRACTORS (APHC) OF CENTRAL OHIO, OR A DESIGNEE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

POLL PUBLIC:

COMMUNITY DATE BOARD:

POLL COUNCIL:

ELMORE; MORRISON; HARCAR; ADKINS; MCCANN; DIXON; BROWN

ADJOURN

City Council Meeting

July 7, 2026 Meeting Minutes

President Potter ordered the Tuesday, July 7, 2026, agenda meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present, with the exception of Councilor Brown who arrived at 6:37 p.m.

President Potter reviewed the agenda and confirmed who would handle the required motions this evening.

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Submitted by,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

City Council Meeting

July 7, 2026 Meeting minutes

Call to Order

President Potter called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, July 7, 2026, in the Council Chamber at City Hall. He began with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present: Councilor Brian McCann, Councilor Gerald Dixon, Councilor Devin Brown, Councilor Lori Elmore, Councilor Larry Morrison, Councilor Amy Harcar, Councilor Mike Adkins, and Council President Thomas Potter

Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

Three sets of minutes were presented for approval: the June 16, 2026 Agenda & Regular Meeting Minutes, the June 24, 2026 Emergency Special Meeting Minutes, and the June 24, 2026 Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve all three sets of minutes was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Harcar. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Standing Committee Reports

Administration and Financial Management – Chairperson Elmore

Councilor Elmore reported that the Administration and Financial Management Committee met the prior week, that several pieces of legislation appear on the evening's agenda, that minutes are on file, and that the committee will meet again the following Tuesday.

Community and Elder Advocacy – Chairperson Harcar

Councilor Harcar reported that the Community and Elder Advocacy Committee met the prior week, that no drafts or pending legislation are before council this evening, and that the committee will meet again the following Tuesday.

Community Standards and Enforcement – Chairperson McCann

Councilor McCann reported that the Community Standards and Enforcement Committee met the prior Tuesday, that minutes are on file, and that the committee will meet again the following Tuesday.

Economic Development – Chairperson Dixon

Councilor Dixon reported that the Economic Development Committee met the prior Tuesday, that minutes are on file, and that the committee will meet again the following Tuesday.

Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Services – Chairperson Brown

Councilor Brown reported the Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Services Committee met the prior Tuesday, that minutes are on file, and that the committee will meet again the following Tuesday.

Public Safety – Chairperson Morrison

Councilor Morrison reported that the Public Safety Committee also met the prior week, that minutes are on file, and that the committee will meet the following Tuesday after 6:30 p.m.

Parks and Recreation – Chairperson Adkins

Councilor Adkins reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee met the prior Tuesday, that minutes are on file, and that the committee will meet again the following Tuesday.

Officials' Reports

Mayor Michael T. Bivens

Mayor Bivens offered three items in his report. First, he congratulated the Whitehall Community Celebration Association (WCCA) on another successful Fourth of July parade, expressing hope to march up Yearling Road again in the future. Second, he thanked city administration staff, Parks and Recreation, and the Whitehall City Schools for a highly successful fireworks program held at the school campus. He shared comparative public safety statistics underscoring the value of that venue: in a two-year period (2015–2016) when fireworks were held at John Bishop Park, there were 19 arrests, 11 fights, 4 shots fired, 3 robberies, 1 stolen car, 1 shooting victim, and multiple police uses of force. Since the event moved to the school grounds beginning in 2017, the past ten years have seen only 1 shots-fired call, 3 marijuana citations, and 3 alcohol-related citations. Mayor Bivens credited residents, the schools, and the Whitehall Division of Police for this transformation. Third, he reminded the public to mark their calendars for the Food Truck Festival at John Bishop Park on July 25.

City Auditor Shaquille Alexander

City Auditor Alexander provided a report. The transcript of the auditor's remarks was not fully captured in the available recording.

City Attorney Bradley S. Nicodemus

City Attorney Nicodemus had no official report.

Treasurer – Vacant

Director of Public Service Casey Rowlands

Director of Public Service Rowlands indicated she had no official report at this time.

Director of Economic Development Jackie Russell

Was not in attendance.

Director of Public Safety Van Gregg

No official report was given.

Director of Neighborhoods Gerald Wright

Director Wright reported that the Department of Neighborhoods has no official report at this time but is continuing to build the foundational infrastructure for its long-term work. He noted that the department's focus areas include resident engagement, family support, and youth leadership. Director Wright indicated that as the administration shapes these initiatives, Council will hear more, and that through the summer the department will continue to lean into resident engagement.

President Thomas M. Potter

Council President Potter noted that no official reports had been filed with the Council office since the last meeting.

Communications, Petitions, and Claims

Council President Potter presented one item: a Notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control for a transfer of location-only (TRFLD4) license from Diva Den LLC, d/b/a De La Soul, from 797 Saint Clair Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43201, to 3878 East Main Street, Columbus, Ohio 43213.

Public Hearing: Ordinance No. 050-2026

Amending Section 1111.10 of the Planning and Zoning Code to Promote the Safety of Drive-Thru Facilities by Requiring Bypass Lanes and Emergency Vehicle Egress in the City of Whitehall; and Declaring an Emergency.

President Potter opened the public hearing on Ordinance No. 050-2026 at 7:24 PM.

Staff representative Curtis Nutter provided a legislative analysis of the ordinance. He explained that the measure is an adaptation of a statewide initiative known as "Megan's Way Out," originating after a tragic murder-suicide incident in Stow, Ohio. The proposed changes to Section 1111.10 would establish defined dimensional standards for bypass lanes (specifically 12 feet in width), extend bypass lane requirements to include major renovations of existing facilities—not just new construction—and require proper signage and marked egress routes to facilitate emergency vehicle access. The existing process for drive-thru approvals through the Whitehall Planning Commission and City Council remains unchanged; the ordinance adds substantive requirements only. The staff representative noted that the dimensional and design requirements are largely consistent with best practices already used by major corporations, and used the newly constructed Culver's drive-thru as a real-world example of a compliant design.

Councilor McCann asked whether the waiting stations within the dual-lane configuration of such a facility would still leave room for egress and the representative confirmed that the exterior bypass lane satisfies the ordinance's standard regardless. Councilor Harcar inquired whether the bypass lane would be marked in a manner similar to fire lanes. Mr. Nutter confirmed that signage requirements are included in the legislation, and that signage must show the duration of the bypass lane to guide the flow of traffic. Councilor Dixon asked whether businesses have generally been supportive of the changes, and Mr. Nutter noted that while a wide-scale outreach had not been conducted, the requirements reflect standard public safety best practices typically included in corporate design standards. Councilor Brown noted that the critical innovation is ensuring emergency vehicles can access a vehicle without having to mount a curb—a factor that was significant in Megan's case specifically, where a large berm prevented first responders from reaching the vehicle in time.

The ordinance was also tied back to the city's comprehensive plan, Whitehall Works, with public safety identified as a paramount priority therein.

Councilor Harcar addressed the Council and thanked city staff for reviewing the legislation and confirming its workability. She read a statement submitted on behalf of Megan's family—her father Nick, mother Kelly, and brother Matthew—expressing gratitude to the City of Whitehall for considering adoption of Megan's Way Out, and expressing the family's hope that the ordinance will serve as a model for other communities and ultimately lead to statewide legislation.

Micole Spicer of Whitehall also addressed the Council in support of the ordinance.

No opponents came forward. The Clerk confirmed no written correspondence had been received regarding Ordinance No. 050-2026.

Council President Potter closed the public hearing at 7:24 PM.

Public Hearing: Resolution No. 025-2026

Adopting the Tax Budget for the City of Whitehall, Ohio, for the Fiscal Year Beginning January 1, 2027 and Submitting Same to the County Auditor.

President Potter opened the public hearing on Resolution No. 025-2026 at 7:24 PM. City Auditor Alexander indicated no formal presentation was necessary, as copies of the budget had been distributed to Council.

During Council discussion, Councilor Dixon noted two items of interest: a proposed \$13,000 budget line for the farmers' market, about which he sought clarification, and a cannabis revenue line of \$140,000, which he noted for public transparency, attributing it to the dispensary.

No proponents or opponents came forward. The Clerk confirmed no written correspondence had been received.

President Potter closed the public hearing at 7:29 PM.

Poll Public

Micole Spicer of Whitehall thanked everyone who came out and voted Yes for Progress. She was excited to see the smiles of Mayor Bivens, Councilor Elmore, and Councilor Harcar. She told them to let the work continue.

Tiffanie Haver publicly announced a recall petition for the removal of Ward 1 Council Member Gerald Dixon, citing concerns about his judgment, conduct, and the negative impact of ongoing public controversy and allegations on public confidence in his leadership. She stated the first signature on the petition was gathered on July 2, 2026.

Sean Eshleman, identifying himself as the uncle of an alleged victim, spoke emotionally about the death of his nephew on May 2 and the impact of the matters surrounding Council Member Dixon on his family.

Joel Harcar addressed Council regarding community engagement and attendance at city events. President Potter took the opportunity to clarify the circumstances surrounding Council's absence from the Fourth of July parade, explaining that the decision to withdraw the Council's participation was his alone, made due to the limited number of members available to participate, and that it was not a reflection of any other members choosing not to attend.

Keon Washington of Columbus stood silently during his three minutes. He said one word, and that was accountability.

Deon Washington of Columbus stood silently during his three minutes.

Lena former Whitehall resident currently living in Columbus, identifying herself as the daughter of a sitting Council member, congratulated Councilors Elmore and Harcar and Mayor Bivens following the recent recall election outcome. She expressed concern about the consistency of decorum standards applied to Council members, noting that a silent protest by members of the public should not be characterized as intimidation.

Diane Peters of Whitehall stated how proud she was of Whitehall and the process they just went through. It was within the recallers' rights to do the recall. It was within their rights to vote yay or nay. She has been a provisional ballot judge for years and she spoke positively about the democratic process, praising the 19 provisional ballot voters who fulfilled their obligations in the recent recall election. She also

called on all Council members to be mindful of the tone and content of their social media posts, urging them to uplift the community rather than contribute to division.

Verification of Copies

Roll call was conducted to confirm that each Council member had received a copy of all legislation listed on the agenda, including any add-on legislation. All members confirmed receipt.

Third Reading

Ordinance No. 049-2026

An Ordinance to Amend 505.23 of the Whitehall Codified Ordinances to Prohibit the Feeding of Deer.

Councilor McCann voiced reservations, expressing his preference for a public education approach over a punitive one, and indicating concern about the prospect of fining residents for incidental acts such as leaving an ear of corn in a backyard. President Potter and Director Wright noted that enforcement follows a warning-first process and is not a heavy-handed approach, pointing to comparable prior legislation regarding the feeding of migratory birds. Councilor Harcar shared an account relayed by a colleague in Westerville in which a child was attacked by a deer and encouraged all Council members to take ownership of communicating the new ordinance to their constituents through social media and direct outreach. Councilors Dixon, Brown, and Morrison all expressed general support for the legislation while agreeing that public education remains important. Mayor Bivens indicated that the administration could promptly post educational materials to the city website upon passage.

Motion to introduce and adopt Ordinance No. 049-2026 was made by Councilor McCann and seconded by Councilor Elmore. The motion carried 6-1 (McCann – No; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Ordinance No. 050-2026

Amending Section 1111.10 of the Planning and Zoning Code to Promote the Safety of Drive-Thru Facilities by Requiring By-Pass Lanes and Emergency Vehicle Egress in the City of Whitehall; and Declaring an Emergency.

No additional discussion was held beyond the earlier public hearing.

Motion to introduce and adopt Ordinance No. 050-2026 was made by Councilor McCann and seconded by Councilor Harcar. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Councilor Harcar thanked all members of Council for passing the ordinance, noting it would be meaningful to Megan's family. Councilor McCann in turn thanked Councilor Harcar for continuing to advance the legislation through what had been a difficult period personally.

Second Reading

Ordinance No. 060-2026

An Ordinance Authorizing the Mayor to Execute Necessary Conveyance Documents to Acquire Property from She Buys Houses 365 LLC Located at 3791 East Broad Street, Whitehall, Ohio 43213 and Declaring an Emergency.

Read by title only. No action taken at this reading.

Resolution No. 025-2026

Adopting the Tax Budget for the City of Whitehall, Ohio, for the Fiscal Year Beginning January 1, 2027 and Submitting Same to the County Auditor.

Councilor McCann moved to introduce Resolution No. 025-2026 and for the suspension of all rules. Seconded by Councilor Morrison. Rules suspended 7-0. (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 025-2026 was made by Councilor McCann and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

First Reading

Ordinance No. 062-2026

Authorizing and Approving a Supplemental Appropriation in the Amount of \$5,308.24 from Unappropriated Monies in the General Fund (101) to the Repair of Equipment Expense Account (101.970.56800) and Declaring an Emergency.

Motion to introduce and suspend all rules on Ordinance No. 062-2026 was made by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Harcar. Rules suspended 7-0. (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 062-2026 was made by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Harcar. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Ordinance No. 063-2026

Approving a Fund Transfer in the Amount of \$40,715.88 from Unappropriated Monies in the Sewer Utility Fund (840) to the Debt Service Fund (401).

Motion to suspend all rules and introduce Ordinance No. 063-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Brown. Rules suspended 7-0. (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 063-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Councilor Brown took a moment to publicly thank Auditor Alexander for his accessibility and helpfulness on questions related to financial matters.

Resolution No. 027-2026

Authorizing the Mayor to Apply for, Accept and Enter Into a Grant Acceptance Agreement on Behalf of the City of Whitehall, Ohio for the Public Entities Pool of Ohio (PEP) Grant.

Councilor Morrison moved to introduce Resolution No. 027-2026 and for the suspension of all rules, seconded by Councilor Harcar. Rules suspended 7-0. (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Councilor Morrison moved to adopt, seconded by Councilor Harcar. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Resolution No. 028-2026

Authorizing the Mayor to Apply for, Accept and Enter Into a Grant Acceptance Agreement on Behalf of the City of Whitehall, Ohio for the 2025 BJA JAG Local Allocation Grant.

Councilor Morrison moved to introduce Resolution No. 028-2026 and for the suspension of all rules, seconded by Councilor Adkins.

Prior to the vote on adoption, Councilor Dixon indicated he had sought a meeting with the Deputy Chief of Police regarding one component of the grant: the WRAP Restraint System. He expressed concern that the device appeared intensive in nature and requested to see a use-of-force policy governing its deployment before voting in favor. Councilor Morrison also noted the absence of an existing policy and asked whether one could be drafted prior to the next committee meeting.

Deputy Chief Plesich addressed the Council directly. He explained that no policy currently exists for the WRAP Restraint because the department does not yet own the device, and that policy is typically written concurrently with or immediately prior to implementation. He described the WRAP as one of the most humane restraint tools he had encountered in nearly 40 years of law enforcement, noting it keeps subjects in a seated, upright position that supports respiratory recovery and allows for medical care. He stated that the device is intended exclusively for combative subjects during transport and that it is not a weapon. He confirmed that all use of any equipment is accompanied by officer training, and that the goal is always to transport arrested individuals to the Franklin County jail as expeditiously as possible, making prolonged use of the device inconsistent with departmental practice.

Councilor McCann asked whether a training program would accompany the equipment and whether guidelines on maximum duration of restraint would be established. Deputy Chief Plesich confirmed training would be provided and stated he would consult with the Chief of Police regarding a time limit. He noted that the negative coverage associated with the WRAP has primarily concerned its use by federal agencies during international transport over extended periods—a scenario fundamentally different from local law enforcement use during a short local transport.

Director of Public Safety Gregg, who was present in the audience, provided a specific incident from Whitehall's recent history in which a suspect managed to free himself during transport, bite an officer's thumb, and require the deployment of chemical agents in the vehicle—an incident that likely would have been prevented with the WRAP. Deputy Chief Plesich offered a parallel example from his tenure in Charleston, South Carolina, in which a restrained prisoner kicked out the window of a transport van and jumped from the moving vehicle.

Mayor Bivens confirmed he had reviewed the grant and signed off on it with the Deputy Chief, citing officer safety during interactions with the public as his primary concern, and urged Council's full support for a grant that would not draw on General Fund dollars.

Councilor Harcar asked about the current protocol used when a subject is too combative for standard restraints. Deputy Chief Plesich described having officers physically hold subjects, using seat belts as possible, or calling for a larger transport vehicle—all less controlled approaches. He confirmed that in typical circumstances a transport to the county jail would take approximately thirty minutes, and that the idea of someone being left in the WRAP for a prolonged period would be contrary to how the department operates.

Councilor Dixon reiterated that his questions stemmed from his duty as a Council member to understand what he was authorizing, not from any lack of support for the police department. He stated that because no policy was yet available for review, he would be casting a no vote. Deputy Chief Plesich confirmed that the grant's timing was not jeopardized by a delayed vote, and that a draft policy could be prepared within a week.

Councilor Harcar raised a broader procedural concern, questioning whether it falls within Council's purview to review internal police department policies, noting that such decisions appropriately belong to the Chief of Police and the Mayor's administration. President Potter confirmed that point. Councilor Elmore echoed the sentiment, stating that Council's role is to enact laws and approve appropriations,

not to micromanage departmental operations, and suggested that Public Safety Committee Chairperson Morrison would be the appropriate channel for ongoing input once the grant is received. Councilor Brown noted that even if a draft policy were furnished before a vote, the department could amend it at any time thereafter, making such a requirement largely symbolic.

Rules suspended 7-0. (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 028-2026 was made by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Adkins. The motion carried 6-1 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – No; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Resolution No. 029-2026

Authorizing the Mayor to Apply for, Accept and Enter Into a Grant Acceptance Agreement on Behalf of the City of Whitehall, Ohio for the 2026 Ohio Law Enforcement Body Armor Program Grant.

Councilor Morrison moved to introduce Resolution No. 029-2026 and for the suspension of all rules, seconded by Councilor Dixon. Rules suspended 7-0.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 029-2026 was made by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Dixon. The motion carried 7-0 (McCann – Yes; Dixon – Yes; Brown – Yes; Elmore – Yes; Morrison – Yes; Harcar – Yes; Adkins – Yes).

Poll Public

A Whitehall Ward 4 resident, Juan Reyes Oxley, expressed appreciation to Deputy Chief Plesich and the police department for their commitment to officer and public safety, but raised concerns regarding a January 2026 Bloomberg Law investigative report identifying 41 incidents involving law enforcement use of the WRAP Restraint System in which 41 people died, with 32 of those deaths occurring while the manufacturer's instructions were being followed. He also noted media reports of use of the WRAP by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in deportation proceedings.

Community Date Board

Councilor Adkins announced that Music in the Park begins July 12 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. He also announced sports clinics beginning Wednesday, July 15 from 1:00–5:00 PM and Monday, July 27 from 8:00 AM–12:00 PM, noting that registration requires contacting Heart of Ohio and scheduling an appointment.

Councilor Harcar added that Whitehall Parks is hosting a tryout pickle ball event on the upcoming weekend from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, and reminded residents that the Food Truck Festival is scheduled for July 25 at John Bishop Park.

Poll Council

Councilor McCann encouraged all members of Council, the dais, and the community to spend the week reflecting on how to move forward constructively, noting that progress cannot occur while unproductive behaviors continue. He announced his upcoming community conversation, tentatively scheduled for August 7 at 6:30 PM at New Life Church, open to all Whitehall residents.

Councilor Dixon thanked Councilor Harcar for her work in advancing the drive-thru bypass lane legislation. He addressed the public comments made during the evening, reiterating the principle of presumption of innocence and stating that his decision to turn away during a prolonged silent stare-

down was a personal choice he was entitled to make. He reiterated that his questions regarding the WRAP Restraint System were not a reflection of opposition to the police department.

Councilor Brown reflected on the importance of genuine community engagement and the need for those who campaigned for unity to demonstrate that commitment consistently, not only when outcomes favor them. He shared observations from recent international travel noting strong community involvement in civic life and expressed optimism about Whitehall's trajectory. He affirmed that raising concerns and offering constructive critique are healthy contributions, provided they are solution-oriented rather than divisive.

Councilor Elmore thanked the public for attending and for the importance of voting. She reminded all parties of Article 13, Item G of Council rules, which requires speakers to refrain from defamatory or obscene statements and encourages Council members to refrain from engaging with the public from the dais, directing them to speak with administration after the meeting. She called for greater adherence to the Council's own rules as a prerequisite for unity, and noted that emotional reactions to perceived slights from the dais are inconsistent with Council members' responsibilities to serve the health, safety, welfare, and peace of the community.

Councilor Morrison thanked those in attendance and those watching at home for their comments and patience, and wished all residents a safe weekend during the continuing heat.

Councilor Harcar thanked the WCCA for the successful Fourth of July celebration and reflected that she and Councilor Elmore were able to contribute at short notice with a display of Corvettes and community giveaways. She agreed with Councilor McCann's call for unity, while noting that the willingness to collaborate must be genuine and consistent. She called out the use of social media by some to harass Council members, referencing sexist comments directed at her regarding the drive-thru legislation, and stated that those who align themselves with individuals who make such comments reveal their own character in doing so. She praised Councilor Elmore for her directness and integrity.

Councilor Adkins briefly echoed the sentiments of his colleagues, acknowledging that there is significant work ahead for Council and expressing determination to find a way to accomplish it together.

Adjourn

There being no further business, President Potter adjourned the meeting at 8:52 PM.

Submitted by,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

City of Whitehall

City Council Committee Meeting

July 14, 2026 Minutes

Committee of the Whole Matters

President Potter opened the meeting and noted that there are five pieces of draft legislation on the agenda. Before proceeding to the legislation, President Potter made a personal announcement that at the conclusion of the following week's meeting, he would be submitting his letter of resignation to the Mayor. He explained that he would no longer be a qualified elector of the City of Whitehall and therefore could not maintain his post. He noted that he would make a formal statement at that time and wished to give council members advance notice.

Draft #1 — Resolution No. 030-2026

Public Service Director Rowlands presented Resolution No. 030-2026, which authorizes the Mayor to prepare and submit an application to the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) for State Capital Improvement and/or Local Transportation Improvement Program funding, and to execute contracts as required. The Director explained that this represents Phase 5 of an ongoing road improvement project — the same type of OPWC funding used for Phases 1 through 4, structured as a 75% grant and 25% loan.

Phase 5 covers the remaining middle gap on Fairway Boulevard, from Pinewood to Beech Tree. The Director clarified that Phase 4, covering Pine View/Pinewood to Eastway Village, has already been bid and is under contract. Phase 5 was separated from Phase 4 because the combined scope would have been too large for OPWC funding thresholds. Construction under Phase 5 is anticipated to commence in 2028, pending funding approval in the fall of 2026.

In response to a public question relayed about the paving of Fairway Boulevard, the Director noted that the trail project and the repaving are two separate projects, with the goal of bidding them concurrently so that a single contractor may work on both. Bidding is expected in the spring of the following year, with construction beginning in the summer. The Director also confirmed that crews are currently making patch repairs on the worst spots on Fairway and similar streets, including a recently addressed section on Collingwood between Etna and Elbern, and that a new milling machine is expected to improve future patching operations.

Motion to introduce Resolution No. 030-2026 will be made by Councilor Dixon, seconded by Councilor Morrison. The resolution was referred for first reading with suspension and adoption scheduled for July 21, 2026.

Third Reading — Ordinance No. 060-2026

President Potter introduced Ordinance No. 060-2026, authorizing the Mayor to execute necessary conveyance documents to acquire property from She Buys Houses 365 LLC located at 3791 East Broad Street, Whitehall, Ohio 43213. The ordinance will be introduced by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor Adkins.

Director Rowlands read responses prepared by Director of Economic Development Russell to questions previously submitted by residents and circulated among council. The questions and responses addressed the following substantive matters:

Purpose of Acquisition: The current property owner had intended to redevelop the site as a used car lot. Because this use is not permitted by right, the city engaged with the owner to explore alternative development opportunities. When no agreement could be reached, the city moved forward with acquisition in order to control the site's development future.

Building Permits: Questions had been raised regarding whether improvements to the property were permitted. The Director noted that permits are on file with the city, and that their absence from Franklin County's records does not indicate they do not exist.

Purchase Price: The \$320,000 purchase price was reached through negotiation. The property owner initially requested a significantly higher amount; the city countered with a lower figure, and both parties arrived at \$320,000. No formal appraisal was completed prior to establishing the offer price, which the Director noted is common practice. The Director also confirmed that the city's obligation will not exceed \$320,000 regardless of any subsequent appraisal.

Intended Use: At this time, the city does not have a specific development plan for the property. The intent is to work with a developer or business whose proposed use aligns with the city's strategic plan and vision, generating future income tax revenue and improving the Broad Street corridor.

Councilor Adkins, noting his background in real estate, observed that neither Zillow estimates nor county auditor assessed values are reliable indicators of fair market value. He noted that the true value of the property lies primarily in the land given its Broad Street frontage, and that any existing structure would likely be demolished by a future developer. He also noted that post-demolition grant programs have previously been utilized by the city and may be applicable here.

Councilor Adkins and Director of Economic Development Russell both emphasized that owning the property places the city "in the driver's seat" to shape the development of Broad Street consistent with the community's vision — either through direct ownership or financial incentives to developers. The Director noted that the city had been interested in this property since it was listed for sale in 2021, but was unable to acquire it before it was sold at that time.

Councilor Morrison raised concerns about online misinformation, specifically allegations that individual council members stood to gain financially from the acquisition. Councilor Morrison and other council members strongly rejected those assertions and urged residents to ask questions and seek factual information before forming conclusions. Councilor Harcar echoed that sentiment, encouraging focus on the legitimate questions surrounding the process rather than unsubstantiated conspiracy theories.

Council member discussion acknowledged the importance of balancing public input with factual deliberation, recognizing that even strongly held community opinions based on misinformation must be weighed against the documented facts before casting a vote.

Ordinance No. 060-2026 was referred for third reading with adoption scheduled for July 21, 2026, introduced by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor Adkins.

Additional Item — Resolution No. 032-2026

At the request of Councilor Dixon, an additional resolution was brought forward under Committee of the Whole. President Potter read Resolution No. 032-2026, which authorizes the Mayor to apply for and accept an entrance grant and agreement on behalf of the City of Whitehall for the 2026 OCJS JAG Byrne Grant, prepared at the request of Deputy Chief of Police Flesh.

Police Chief Crispen, present at the meeting, confirmed familiarity with the JAG grant, which the department uses annually. In response to questions from Councilor Elmore, Chief Crispen indicated that the grant amount of \$19,500 is designated for the purchase of open source intelligence tools — software programs to be used by the department's crime analysts. Councilor Adkins clarified that these are primarily software-based tools.

Councilor Brown separately acknowledged Deputy Chief Plesich for his conduct following the previous council meeting, noting that after a resident named Juan raised concerns about the WRAP (restraint) system, the Deputy Chief remained after the meeting to have a direct conversation with the resident. Councilor Brown also corrected for the record a statistic cited during the prior meeting, clarifying that the source referenced indicated 32 of approximately 60 fatalities involved improper use of the equipment — not that 32 were used properly.

The Chief briefly addressed questions about the WRAP program, noting that rather than drafting policy in a vacuum before equipment is received, the department intends to review existing policies from other agencies that have implemented the system, adapt them to fit Whitehall's culture and standards, and then finalize a policy. He indicated that sample policies from other agencies could be shared with council upon request.

Resolution No. 032-2026 was referred for first reading with adoption scheduled for July 21, 2026, introduced by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Brown.

Standing Committees

Administration and Financial Management — Chairperson Elmore

Councilor Elmore opened the Administration and Financial Management Committee at 6:36 PM.

Draft #2 — Resolution No. 031-2026

Councilor Elmore presented Resolution No. 031-2026, resolving to approve "Then and Now" certificates. She described this as standard operating procedure, noting that once an acquisition is received, payment must be made within 30 days.

Motion to introduce Resolution No. 031-2026 will be made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The resolution was referred for first reading with suspension and adoption scheduled for July 21, 2026.

There being no further business, Councilor Elmore closed the Administration and Financial Management Committee at 7:02 PM.

Community and Elder Advocacy — Chairperson Harcar

Councilor Harcar opened the Community and Elder Advocacy Committee at 7:03 PM.

Senior Recognition Breakfast: Councilor Morrison shared information about an upcoming event hosted by Grace and Wisdom Ministry — a Senior Recognition Breakfast scheduled for Saturday, July 25, from 9:00 to 11:00 AM at Black Book Woods Golf Course. The event is open to individuals 60 and over and requires advance registration.

CART Program / Hearing Accessibility: Councilor Morrison reported that she has been researching ways to improve hearing accessibility in the council chambers, noting that the current sound quality presents a significant barrier for residents — particularly those who are deaf or hard of hearing. She introduced the concept of implementing a CART (Communication Access Real Time Translation) program, which would provide live closed captioning during council meetings, displayed on a screen in the chambers.

Councilor Morrison clarified that this would not be an ASL interpretation service, as not all members of the deaf community use ASL, and a captioning service would benefit a broader audience — including residents without hearing impairments who struggle to hear proceedings. She noted she has been in contact with the city's IT department to assess technical requirements, and that draft legislation with a budget estimate will be forthcoming in the coming weeks.

Councilor Elmore expressed support for the initiative, recalling that a former council member had a family member who was deaf and faced difficulty participating in meetings, and that even speakers at the podium are sometimes difficult to hear. The broader discussion affirmed that improving accessibility in the chambers would benefit inclusion for all community members. A supplemental suggestion was raised that a screen visible both to those present and to viewers at home could enhance the reach of such a system, and that a mobile link option might allow residents to follow captioned remarks on their phones.

There being no further business, Councilor Harcar closed the Community and Elder Advocacy Committee at 7:07 PM.

Community Standards and Enforcement — Chairperson McCann

Councilor McCann opened the Community Standards and Enforcement Committee at 7:08 PM. There are no drafts or pending legislation.

Rental Property Standards / Habitability Concerns: Councilor Elmore raised concerns brought to her by residents regarding apartment complexes failing to maintain habitability standards, specifically the failure to provide or repair air conditioning during extreme heat. She inquired whether the city has a role in ensuring rental properties meet minimum standards.

Director of Economic Development Russell clarified that multi-family residential unit's fall under the jurisdiction of Chief Building Official Don Day, not the standard code enforcement division, as required by state law. Residents experiencing these issues were encouraged to contact either the Director's office or the Building Department directly.

Director of Neighborhoods Wright noted that several residents had recently reached out to her office as well. She and Councilor Elmore affirmed that while landlord responsiveness sometimes only improves after official intervention, the expectation should be that landlords maintain their properties without requiring escalation.

Councilor Morrison noted that Legal Aid is a valuable resource for tenants facing unresponsive landlords, citing a past instance in which a single phone call led to rapid resolution of a window repair issue. The American Lung Association was also mentioned as a possible source of free fans for residents with breathing conditions as an immediate, short-term measure.

Councilor McCann indicated that something is being developed in coordination with the city attorney that may create additional leverage to compel landlords to meet their obligations, though the details remain in early stages and were not disclosed. He expressed that landlords should be held to their commitments without tenants needing to threaten legal action, particularly during periods of extreme heat.

Councilor Brown raised a cautionary note that any new requirements imposed on landlords — particularly regarding retrofitting air conditioning — should be carefully considered so that resulting costs are not passed on to tenants in the form of rent increases. Councilor McCann acknowledged that this concern is part of the ongoing legal discussions, and that the goal is to prevent cost shifting to renters.

Megan's Way Out Legislation: Councilor Morrison reported that the Megan's Way Out legislation has received media coverage, including a television interview with the legislation's namesake's father, Nick Kellerman, on NBC4. Director Russell was noted to be sharing information about the legislation at a professional conference she is attending. President Potter added that Director Russell had presented the legislation at the conference on two separate occasions to positive response, and that given her professional network, the legislation may gain traction in other jurisdictions.

There being no further business, Councilor McCann closed the Community Standards and Enforcement Committee at 7:19 PM.

Economic Development — Chairperson Dixon

Councilor Dixon opened the Economic Development Committee at 7:19 PM.

Draft #3 — Ordinance No. 064-2026

Councilor Dixon presented Ordinance No. 064-2026, which amends the zoning map to change the zoning classification of property located at 4870 Poth Road (Parcel Numbers 090-008399 and 090-007555), owned by the Whitehall Community Improvement Corporation, from Community Crossroads District (CCD) to Industrial District (INDD). Curtis Nutter prepared the ordinance at the applicant's request. A Whitehall Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2026, and a public hearing in Council Chambers is scheduled for August 18, 2026, with adoption targeted for that date.

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 064-2026 will be made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor McCann. The ordinance was referred for third reading with adoption scheduled for August 18, 2026.

Draft #4 — Ordinance No. 065-2026

Councilor Dixon presented Ordinance No. 065-2026, which amends the zoning map to change the zoning classification of property located at 265 North Hamilton Road (Parcel Number 090-008397), owned by BCORE Defender OH1M05 LLC, from Community Crossroads District (CCD) to Industrial District (INDD). The ordinance was similarly prepared by Curtis Nutter, with the same Planning Commission and public hearing schedule as Ordinance No. 064-2026.

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 065-2026 will be made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The ordinance was referred for third reading with adoption scheduled for August 18, 2026.

Draft #5 — Ordinance No. 066-2026

Councilor Dixon presented Ordinance No. 066-2026, which amends the Planning and Zoning Code to limit the construction or operation of gasoline stations. Requested by Director of Economic Development Russell and prepared by Curtis Nutter, the ordinance follows the same Planning Commission review and public hearing schedule.

Director of Economic Development Russell explained that the ordinance's primary objective is to designate Broad Street as a corridor where new gasoline stations would require a special use permit. Main Street would be designated as a corridor where new gasoline stations are prohibited entirely. The ordinance applies only to future establishments; all existing gas stations will be grandfathered under their status. Hamilton Road is not addressed in this legislation.

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 066-2026 will be made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor McCann. The ordinance was referred for third reading with adoption scheduled for August 18, 2026.

There being no further business, Councilor Dixon closed the Economic Development Committee at 7:26 PM.

Infrastructure, Maintenance and Services — Chairperson Brown

Councilor Brown opened the Infrastructure, Maintenance and Services Committee at 7:26 PM. There are no drafts or pending legislation.

Fairway Boulevard / Phase 5 Update: Councilor Brown noted that the committee had heard an update earlier in the meeting from the Public Service Director regarding Phase 5 of the Broad Street road improvement project, which involves the remaining section of Fairway Boulevard.

Speeding Concerns / Community Input: Councilor Brown reported that he had previously issued a public call for residents to share concerns about speeding in the city, and had received only one response. He renewed his request for community members to contact him or other council members with specific locations or concerns, noting that addressing these issues requires direct input from residents.

Doney Street Project Update: Director Rowlands advised that residents on Doney Street were notified that beginning Friday, crews will begin blocking driveways to remove curbing for the Doney Street reconstruction project. Residents were encouraged to coordinate with neighbors across the street for driveway access during this time, or to use off-street parking. Construction is expected to begin in earnest the following week, with a maximum contract duration of 180 days. The project will proceed in rolling sections, with one lane remaining open at all times via flaggers.

Norton Field Waterline: Director Rowlands confirmed that the waterline project at Norton Field is expected to begin within the next couple of weeks, with a priority on completing projects before the school year resumes.

Additional Infrastructure Projects: The Director noted several other active projects within the current construction program, including a small section of Mount, the deteriorating approach at the Kroger on Hamilton Road, and asphalt trail replacements at several parks including the recently completed work at Lamby Land Park.

Hamilton Road / Broad Street Intersection Construction: Councilor Elmore raised resident concerns about driver confusion at the Hamilton Road and Broad Street intersection due to ongoing ODOT construction. Director of Public Services reported that the project completion date has been pushed to November 2, 2026, due to utility delays on the southeast corner, but that the project is back on track. ODOT and its MOT team have installed additional signage and painted extra lane markings to assist drivers. Council members encouraged residents to be patient and extend courtesy to other drivers who may be unfamiliar with the changed lane configuration.

Curb Conditions at Broad Street / Beech Tree Area: Councilor Dixon noted that the curbs near Beech Tree and Broad Street by the Firestone location have been in poor condition for many years. Director Rowlands acknowledged the issue and confirmed it is on the project list, noting that an attempt was made to include it in a prior phase of the Broad Street project but was not feasible at the time.

There being no further business, Councilor Brown closed the Infrastructure, Maintenance and Services Committee at 7:32 PM.

Public Safety — Chairperson Morrison

Councilor Morrison opened the Public Safety Committee at 7:32 PM. There are no drafts or pending legislation.

Daycare / Children at Council Meeting: Councilor Morrison addressed a matter that had been referred to him by Councilor Harcar regarding children being bused into a prior council meeting by an outside organization, which prompted public concern and questions. Councilor Morrison clarified that the city of Whitehall does not license daycare or childcare facilities — that jurisdiction lies with the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. He stated that any formal complaints regarding the organization involved should be directed to that agency, and expressed the view that this matter is not within the purview of city council.

Councilor Morrison shared a written response he had previously sent to a constituent who raised the issue, noting that any council investigation of this matter would need to be conducted collectively, and that council should also review documentation provided in January regarding a separate, related allegation of more serious misconduct before determining whether to investigate the narrower issue. Councilor Morrison reiterated her position that council members have had ample time — more than six

months — to review materials previously distributed, and encouraged colleagues who had not yet done so to review them and make an informed decision.

Parliamentary Procedure Clarification — Motion to Postpone: Councilor Dixon raised a matter of procedure stemming from the prior week's council meeting. City Attorney Nicodemus confirmed that during the previous meeting, Councilor Dixon's motion to postpone a piece of legislation to a second reading was denied by President Potter on parliamentary grounds, based on advice provided at the time. City Attorney Nicodemus stated that upon reviewing the council's updated rules after the meeting, Councilor Dixon's motion was in fact appropriate under the current rules and should have been permitted. He acknowledged notifying Councilor Dixon and President Potter of this finding after the meeting.

City Attorney Nicodemus noted that because the vote had already occurred and the legislation signed by the Mayor, no procedural remedy is available for that specific instance. However, he clarified that the updated rules also include an appeal right, which must be exercised at the time a ruling is made — if a future motion is improperly denied, the affected member should immediately invoke that appeal right so proceedings can be paused and the rule reviewed.

President Potter acknowledged that he had looked to City Attorney Nicodemus for guidance during the meeting, followed the advice given, and noted that the outcome would have been different had the correct information been available in the moment.

Councilor Dixon offered a prepared statement reflecting on the events of the prior week's meeting. He expressed that his request to review administrative policy before voting on legislation authorizing a new program was met with mischaracterizations — including suggestions that his inquiry implied misconduct by the police department, that it was anti-police in nature, or that policy review by council exceeds its proper role. Councilor Dixon read aloud a researched response confirming that legislative review of administrative policy prior to approving legislation is considered a core legislative responsibility under principles of separation of powers, impact assessment, and public accountability.

Discussion became tense as council members engaged in exchanges about broader characterizations made during and after the meeting. Council members offered differing perspectives on the conduct of the recall campaign and related public discourse. President Potter called the discussion to a close.

Silent Protest at Prior Meeting: Councilor Elmore raised the matter of two individuals who, during public participation at the prior meeting, chose to exercise their allotted time by standing silently rather than speaking. Councilor Elmore noted that silent protest is a recognized and protected form of expression with historical precedent, and stated that council members should be cautious in characterizing such conduct in language that could be inflammatory or misleading. Councilor Elmore also noted that security measures — including a magnetometer and officers present in the chambers — are in place to ensure public safety. Councilor Morrison and Councilor Brown offered additional remarks on the broader context of safety and community conduct. President Potter closed the discussion and directed the committee to conclude.

There being no further business, Councilor Morrison closed the Public Safety Committee at 7:54 PM.

Parks and Recreation — Chairperson Adkins

In the absence of Chairperson Adkins, Councilor Harcar presided over the Parks and Recreation Committee, opening at 7:54 PM.

Upcoming Events:

Director of Neighborhoods Wright announced that the following evening, Wednesday, July 15, from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, Parks and Recreation will host a "Pixels Live" themed party at Lamby Lane Park. The event will feature slot car racing, an obstacle course and slide, face painting, a balloon artist, and DJ Nerd.

Councilor Morrison noted the upcoming Food Truck Festival on July 25, and a Kids Market event to be held at Community Park.

Music in the Park: Councilor Elmore and Councilor Morrison expressed strong enthusiasm for the recent Music in the Park event, noting that the band received widespread praise from community members in attendance. Councilor Elmore reported that several residents approached her after the event asking when the series would continue, recalling that the event previously included refreshments such as hot dogs and beverages. Council members broadly expressed support for reviving the Music in the Park program as a community-building initiative.

Parks Tour: Councilor McCann reported a positive experience accompanying Director Brady on a comprehensive tour of all parks within the city. He noted that the tour revealed green spaces he had not previously been aware of, and praised the quality and variety of the city's parks given Whitehall's landlocked geography and proximity to three major intersections. Councilor McCann encouraged residents to explore the city's parks and expressed a commitment to attending more Parks and Recreation events in the future.

Council members offered general praise for the Parks and Recreation Department and Director Brady for the organization and cleanliness of events. Councilor Morrison encouraged all council members and residents to attend Parks and Recreation events as an opportunity to engage with the community in an informal setting. Residents were directed to the Parks and Recreation calendar on the city's website for a full listing of upcoming events.

There being no further business, Councilor Elmore closed the Parks and Recreation Committee at 8:00 PM.

There being no additional business, President Potter adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Submitted by:

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

City Council Meeting

July 21, 2026 Meeting Minutes

President Potter ordered the Tuesday, July 21, 2026, agenda meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present.

President Potter reviewed the agenda and confirmed who would handle the required motions this evening.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Submitted by,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

City Council Meeting

July 21, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

President Potter called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, in the Council Chamber at City Hall. He began with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present: Councilor Dixon, Councilor Brown, Councilor Elmore, Councilor Morrison, Councilor Harcar, Councilor Adkins, Councilor McCann, Council President Thomas M. Potter

Absent: None

Special Presentation

Mayor Bivens delivered a special presentation honoring President Thomas M. Potter on his impending resignation from council, necessitated by his relocation outside the city limits.

Mayor Bivens offered extended remarks reflecting on President Potter's character and tenure, noting that the two had run together in 2023 and, despite belonging to different political parties, had always maintained a collegial, civil, and honorable working relationship. Mayor Bivens observed that President Potter embodied the values of integrity, civility, and dependability, and emphasized that while his address may change, he would never be considered an outsider to the City of Whitehall. On behalf of the Mayor's Office, Mayor Bivens presented President Potter with a commemorative plaque reading: "In honor of Tom Potter, President, Whitehall City Council, with sincere gratitude for your years of dedicated public service, steadfast leadership, and unwavering commitment to the residents of the City of Whitehall. Your integrity, vision, and dedication have helped shape our community, leaving a lasting legacy for future generations."

Auditor Alexander also addressed the chamber, offering personal thanks to President Potter for his friendship, steady leadership, and partnership in the sound fiscal governance of the city. Auditor Alexander presented President Potter with an additional token of appreciation commemorating approximately 13 years of service to the Whitehall City Council.

Councilor Harcar then came forward on behalf of the full council to present President Potter with a gift card and Whitehall-themed items as a gesture of appreciation, expressing that the council wished him well while making clear that Whitehall would always have a seat at the table for him.

President Potter offered formal remarks in response, stating that when he was first elected, he hoped to make a positive difference, but reflected that he received more than he had given. He expressed that public service at its best brings people of different perspectives together around a shared love of community. He acknowledged that because he and his wife Pamela are relocating outside the city limits, it was time to step away, but he did so with a full heart. He offered special thanks to City Clerk Julie Ogg for her invaluable service and friendship, and to his wife and in-laws for their steadfast support.

He closed by stating: "While I may be living outside the city, rest assured, Whitehall will never leave me."

Standing Committee Reports

Administration and Financial Management – Chairperson Elmore

Councilor Elmore reported that the Administration and Financial Management Committee met the previous week and has several pieces of legislation on the evening's agenda. The committee will meet again the following Tuesday at 6:30 PM.

Community and Elder Advocacy – Chairperson Harcar

Councilor Harcar reported that the Community and Elder Advocacy Committee met the previous week. No draft or pending legislation was brought forward. The committee will meet again the following week after 6:30 PM.

Community Standards and Enforcement – Chairperson McCann

Councilor McCann reported that the Community Standards and Enforcement Committee met the previous Tuesday. Minutes are on file. No legislation was presented for the evening. The committee will meet again the following Tuesday after 6:30 PM.

Economic Development – Chairperson Dixon

Councilor Dixon reported that the Economic Development Committee met the previous week. Minutes are on file. Two pieces of legislation appear on the evening's agenda by title only. The committee will meet in the chambers the following week after 6:30 PM.

Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Services – Chairperson Brown

Councilor Brown reported that the Infrastructure, Maintenance, and Services Committee met the previous week. Minutes are on file. Council Member Brown noted that Phase 5 of the Broad Street Transformation is anticipated to begin soon. The committee will meet again the following Tuesday at 6:30 PM.

Public Safety – Chairperson Morrison

Councilor Morrison reported that the Public Safety Committee met the previous week. Minutes are on file. The committee will meet again the following week sometime after 6:30 PM.

Parks and Recreation – Chairperson Adkins

Councilor Adkins noted he was on vacation the previous week. Councilor Harcar confirmed she had filled in and that the committee met, with minutes on file.

Officials' Reports

Mayor Michael T. Bivens

Mayor Bivens delivered two items as official acts. First, he reported receiving calls from residents requesting that council hold vacancy appointment meetings publicly so that citizens can observe the candidates and the questions posed. He noted that the council had posted a vacancy for the Treasurer position and that a council seat vacancy is expected upon receipt of Council President Potter's formal resignation. Mayor Bivens placed on the record his right, pursuant to Charter Section 25, to be invited and present at all such meetings, as they constitute meetings of council, though he acknowledged he would have no vote.

Second, Mayor Bivens announced the Whitehall Food Truck Festival, scheduled for Saturday, July 25, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM at John Bishop Park. He noted the event would feature over 20 food trucks, a talent show, and various activities for all ages.

City Auditor Shaquille Alexander

Auditor Alexander announced that the City of Whitehall had received an unmodified audit opinion — the highest standard achievable — from an independent outside firm, confirming that the city's financial statements fairly present its financial position in all material respects in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The unmodified opinion covered governmental activities, the component unit (Whitehall Community Improvement Corporation), and every major fund. Auditor Alexander also reported that a federal Single Audit was conducted on federal dollars received and spent, and that no findings were identified. He extended particular recognition to Deputy Auditor Chris Peterson, Deputy Tax Commissioner Michelle Carberry, and outgoing Auditor Steve Quincel, whose fiscal year is under the current audit. The full audit report will be made available on the city's website and is currently accessible on the Auditor of State's website.

City Attorney Bradley S. Nicodemus

City Attorney Bradley S. Nicodemus was not in attendance.

Treasurer Vacant

The Treasurer's position is currently vacant.

Director of Public Service Casey Rowlands

Director Rowlands offered no official report but noted a favorable recommendation for Resolution No. 030-2026 and Ordinance No. 068-2026. Director Rowlands also offered personal thanks and best wishes to Council President Potter.

Director of Economic Development Jackie Russell

Director Russell offered several items. She thanked Director Rowlands for filling in at the Economic Development Committee the previous week. She announced that Curtis Nutter had accepted the position of City Planner, with a start date of the following Monday, and expressed enthusiasm about his addition to the team following a competitive search.

Director Russell also requested that council consider postponing Ordinance No. 060-2026 (the property acquisition at 3791 East Broad Street) by one week to allow a special meeting. She explained that concerns had been raised about proceeding with the purchase prior to receiving an appraisal, which was expected later in the week. Moving the vote to a special meeting would allow the full appraisal package to be provided to council while still accommodating the existing closing schedule by shifting the closing date to Friday of the following week.

Finally, Director Russell indicated she wished to provide comments on the record regarding Ordinance No. 065-2026 during its presentation later in the meeting.

Director of Public Safety Van Gregg

Director of Public Safety Van Gregg was not in attendance.

Director of Neighborhoods Gerald Wright

Director of Neighborhoods Gerald Wright was not in attendance.

President Thomas M. Potter

President Potter noted that Treasurer's Reports had been filed in the council office since the last meeting: reports for November and December 2025, and reports for January, February, and March 2026.

Communications, Petitions, and Claims

President Potter reported that no communications, petitions, or claims had been filed in the council office since the last meeting.

Public Hearing

President Potter opened the public hearing at 7:20 PM on Resolution No. 030-2026, a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to prepare and submit an application to participate in the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) State Capital Improvement and/or Local Transportation Improvement Program(s), to execute contracts as required, and declaring an emergency.

Ryan Andrews, a professional engineer serving as project consultant, presented on behalf of the city. He provided an overview of the East Broad Street Improvement Project, now entering its fifth and final phase.

Mr. Andrews explained that the OPWC funding program is supported by the state gasoline tax and provides competitive grants to local municipalities for roadway infrastructure improvements. The city has successfully leveraged this program for all previous phases of East Broad Street, as well as for projects on Hamilton Road and North Yearling Road. The application is competitive against other Franklin County municipalities including the City of Columbus and the Franklin County Engineer's Office, though the East Broad Street corridor has consistently scored well in OPWC's ranking criteria.

Mr. Andrews described the overall project scope as a comprehensive roadway reconstruction from the city's western limit on East Broad Street to the intersection with Hamilton Road, encompassing ADA compliance improvements, shared-use paths, sidewalk upgrades, street lighting, and storm sewer repairs. The project was divided into five phases primarily to conform to OPWC funding caps per application cycle. Phases 1 through 3 are substantially complete, Phase 4 is about to begin construction with a contractor already selected, and Phase 5 — the smallest and final segment near Beechwood Road — is the subject of the current application.

The estimated project cost for Phase 5 is approximately \$3.7 million. The city intends to request the full amount from OPWC, structured as 75% grant and 25% zero-interest loan repayable over 25 years. Mr. Andrews noted the application deadline is August 28, 2026, with funding decisions expected on or around December 18, 2026. If funded, the city would receive funds in summer 2027, with final engineering and design to follow and construction anticipated in 2028. Mr. Andrews distributed public comment sign-in sheets and paper questionnaires, and displayed a QR code linking to an online survey for public feedback to be included in the grant application.

Councilor Brown asked Mr. Andrews to estimate the total cost of the project across all five phases. Mr. Andrews indicated that each phase cost roughly \$4 million, placing the total at approximately \$20 million, noting that Phase 5 is the smallest phase.

Councilor Brown directed a question to Auditor Alexander regarding the financial impact of the project. Auditor Alexander stated that in his professional opinion there is no negative financial impact. He noted that the annual debt service on the loan portion would amount to approximately \$150,000 to \$160,000 over two semi-annual payments, against a General Fund budget of over \$40 million — a manageable obligation. He further emphasized the immeasurable public benefit of improving the roadway, noting personal familiarity with poor road conditions on the corridor. Councilor Brown further highlighted that

the ability to defer large upfront expenditures while earning returns on retained funds represents an additional net benefit to the city's finances.

Director Russell issued a statement of support, recommending a favorable vote on Resolution No. 030-2026.

No proponents from the public came forward. No opponents came forward. Clerk Ogg confirmed no written correspondence had been received regarding this matter.

President Potter closed the public hearing at 7:35 PM.

Poll Public

Joel Harcar, Whitehall resident, spoke as a concerned citizen about the ongoing situation involving Councilor Gerald Dixon. He stated that when a council member is connected to a serious criminal allegation and an active investigation, that individual should not continue representing the community as though nothing has occurred. He recounted publicly reported facts, including that Councilor Dixon was arrested in December 2025, and charged with gross sexual imposition and compelling prostitution; that the investigation involved local police and the FBI; that the charges were dismissed for future indictment as a procedural step in a complex case; and that the public was informed the investigation remained active. He asked council and the public not to minimize the allegations and called on Councilor Dixon to step aside until the matter is fully resolved.

Mark Butler, Whitehall resident, stated that several weeks prior he had sent each council member a letter asking them to reconsider whether Councilor Dixon's continued service is consistent with the trust the office requires. He clarified that he was not asking council to determine criminal guilt, but rather to assess fitness for public office. He noted that he had spent more than 20 years working in child sexual abuse prevention and that, upon reading journal excerpts that had circulated publicly, one section stood out involving written descriptions of sexual attraction to an underage boy at a local swimming facility. He also described reviewing more than a decade of Councilor Dixon's public blog posts and expressed concern about patterns of self-justification and dismissiveness toward critics that he found consistent with those journal entries. He asked each council member to review the full body of the writings and determine whether they are consistent with the standards of public trust for elected office, and if not, to have a further discussion; and if so, to explain to citizens of Whitehall why they believe the writings meet those standards.

Trina Mackey, lifelong Whitehall resident, expressed frustration that the Dixon matter continues to be raised at council meetings, stating it is the courts' responsibility to resolve, not the council's. She congratulated recently elected and retained council members and acknowledged that the recent recall vote results were close, reflecting division in the community. She urged the council and community to put aside personal issues, work together professionally, and focus on building a better Whitehall for all residents.

Lena Collins, former Whitehall resident (now Columbus), addressed Councilor Dixon directly, noting that council rules regarding communication from the dais apply to all members equally. She referenced what she described as Councilor Dixon shouting at silent protesters during the July 7 meeting and subsequently portraying himself as a victim online. She questioned the sincerity of Councilor Dixon's stated commitment to unity, contrasting his public call for unity at the previous meeting with online commentary she described as divisive. She asserted that unity requires addressing the underlying problems causing division.

Amanda Waller, Whitehall resident, offered a more measured perspective, noting that citizens have effectively chosen their government through a series of recent elections and that the recall process had run its course. She expressed a preference for allowing the voters' decisions to stand and for council to

focus on the legislative work before it. She drew an analogy from her professional experience in research, observing that being "hard on the science, but not on the people" — debating issues rigorously while maintaining respect for individuals — leads to better outcomes.

Jeff Thoburn, Whitehall resident (comment read into the record by Councilor Dixon in Mr. Thoburn's absence): Mr. Thoburn's written statement urged a definitive no vote on Ordinance No. 060-2026, the proposed acquisition of 3791 East Broad Street. His written objections cited four concerns: (1) distortion of land values along commercial corridors that incentivizes land banking over productive private investment; (2) misuse of public capital in spending \$320,000 on a parcel without a vetted reuse plan; (3) bypassing established governance mechanisms such as zoning codes, planning commissions, and code enforcement; and (4) damage to public trust through fast-tracked acquisitions that set a dangerous precedent for fiscal management. He urged council members to vote no as stewards of public funds. Councilor Dixon noted for the record that given the motion to postpone the ordinance had already been presented, some of the comments were moot in the immediate term, but elected to read them in full, as he did not feel it was his right to edit the constituent's submission.

Verification of Copies

Clerk Ogg conducted roll call confirming that each member of council had received a copy of each item of legislation listed on the agenda prior to the meeting, including any add-on legislation. All members responded affirmatively.

Third Reading:

Ordinance No. 060-2026

President Potter noted that Director Russell had requested postponement of Ordinance No. 060-2026 to allow the property appraisal — expected later in the week — to be included in the materials provided to council prior to a vote. Director Russell confirmed that the purchase and sale agreement had contemplated a closing the following week, and that by scheduling a special meeting, the closing date could be shifted to Friday of that week while still honoring the terms of the agreement.

Councilor Brown raised a brief question about whether the matter needed to go to a special meeting or could wait for the next regular meeting. Director Russell confirmed the special meeting timing was necessary to meet the closing deadline.

Councilor Brown noted for the public record that he is also developing legislation to address some of the broader concerns raised by public comment regarding city property acquisition processes, and indicated he would be working with the Economic Development Department on that effort.

Motion to postpone Ordinance No. 060-2026 to a special meeting to be convened on July 28, 2026, was made by Councilor Brown and seconded by Councilor Elmore. The motion carried 7-0.

Second Reading

No legislation was presented for second reading.

First Reading:

Ordinance No. 064-2026

Ordinance No. 064-2026 was read by title only. The ordinance proposes to amend the zoning map to change the designation of property located at 4870 Poth Road (Parcel Nos. 090-008399 and 090-007555), owned by the Whitehall Community Improvement Corporation, from Community Crossroads District (CCD) to Industrial District (INDD), and declares an emergency. The ordinance is scheduled to go before the Whitehall Planning Commission on August 6, 2026, with a public hearing to follow on August 18, 2026.

Ordinance No. 065-2026

Ordinance No. 065-2026 was read by title only. The ordinance proposes to amend the zoning map to change the designation of property located at 265 North Hamilton Road (Parcel No. 090-008397), owned by BCORE Defender OH1M05 LLC, from Community Crossroads District (CCD) to Industrial District (INDD), and declares an emergency. The ordinance is scheduled to go before the Whitehall Planning Commission on August 6, 2026, with a public hearing to follow on August 18, 2026.

Director Russell provided supplementary remarks on this ordinance to clarify what she described as a misleading narrative in a recent Columbus Dispatch article. She explained that BCORE Defender OH1M05 LLC is a standard real estate holding LLC — a structure very common in real estate development — and is distinct from a defense and intelligence company that had been referenced in press coverage. The actual project involves an expansion of an existing warehouse on the site by approximately 35,000 square feet. The applicant on the rezoning application is Link Logistics, the building owner and developer of record, which is an established real estate firm active in the Central Ohio area. Director Russell indicated that one of the existing tenants in the building is expected to expand into the additional square footage, which would result in increased income tax revenue for the city, though she was unable to disclose further details due to active negotiations protected under House Bill 184, which remains in effect through September 23, 2026.

Director Russell also addressed the question of land value, noting that per recorder's office records, the WCIC received the land at a \$0 transfer. The WCIC approved the sale price of \$320,000 in January of the current year. On the question of the rezoning being inconsistent with the current master plan — which designates the area as the Community Crossroads District — Director Russell acknowledged the discrepancy but noted that historical strategic plans also indicated the area had previously been considered for industrial use. She stated that the new strategic plan being developed calls for the area to return to industrial designation, and that accommodating an existing employer's desire to expand and generate additional income tax revenue represents sound economic development practice.

Councilor Morrison asked about the acreage of the properties involved. Director Russell confirmed that 265 North Hamilton Road is just over 2 acres, and that when combined with the 4870 Poth Road parcel the combined tract is approximately 9.5 acres.

Ordinance No. 066-2026

Ordinance No. 066-2026 was read by title only. The ordinance proposes to amend the Planning and Zoning Code to limit the construction or operation of gasoline stations. The ordinance is scheduled to go before the Whitehall Planning Commission on August 6, 2026, with a public hearing to follow on August 18, 2026. No discussion was held at this reading.

Resolution No. 030-2026

A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to prepare and submit an application to participate in the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) State Capital Improvement and/or Local Transportation Improvement Program(s), to execute contracts as required, and declaring an emergency.

Motion to introduce Resolution No. 030-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 030-2026 was made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0. Resolution No. 030-2026 was adopted.

Resolution No. 031-2026

Resolving to approve “then and now” certificates.

Motion to introduce Resolution No. 031-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 031-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0. Resolution No. 031-2026 was adopted.

Resolution No. 032-2026

Authorizing the mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a grant acceptance agreement on behalf of the City of Whitehall, Ohio for the 2026 OCJS Jag Byrne Grant.

Motion to introduce Resolution No. 032-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 032-2026 was made by Councilor Morrison and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0. Resolution No. 032-2026 was adopted.

Resolution No. 033-2026

Authorizing the mayor to apply for, accept, and enter into a grant acceptance agreement on behalf of the City of Whitehall, Ohio for funding awarded through the Office of Economic Engagement & Community Development and declaring an emergency.

Motion to introduce Resolution No. 033-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Harcar and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 033-2026 was made by Councilor Harcar and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0. Resolution No. 033-2026 was adopted.

Ordinance No. 067-2026

Authorizing an appropriation in the amount of seventy-five thousand and 00/100 dollars (\$75,000.00) from unappropriated monies in the Mayor's Department Grant Fund (215) to the Food Truck Inclusion Grant Expense Account 215.000.50000.

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 067-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 067-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0. Ordinance No. 067-2026 was adopted.

Ordinance No. 068-2026

Making and approving a supplemental appropriation of four hundred thousand dollars and 00/100 dollars (\$400,000.00) from unappropriated monies in the general fund (101) to the utilities expense account (101.950.53800).

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 068-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 068-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Brown. The motion carried 7-0. Ordinance No. 068-2026 was adopted.

Ordinance No. 069-2026

Authorizing and approving a supplemental appropriation of twenty five thousand dollars and 00/100 dollars (\$25,000.00) from unappropriated monies in the general fund (101) to the election expense account (101.950.59000).

Motion to introduce Ordinance No. 069-2026 and suspend all rules was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor McCann. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 069-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor McCann. The motion carried 7-0. Ordinance No. 069-2026 was adopted.

Poll Public

Mark Butler, Whitehall resident, returned to offer a more constructive message following his earlier remarks. Drawing on more than 20 years of experience in child sexual abuse prevention, he reminded the chamber that child sexual abuse is not inevitable and that proven policies, procedures, and training programs exist to help parents, caregivers, and adults who work with youth recognize warning signs and respond appropriately. He encouraged the council to consider implementing child sexual abuse prevention training for employees and volunteers involved in city youth programs, and to make such resources available to parents and community organizations. He offered to provide such training at no cost, noting that he had previously delivered similar training to the Whitehall City Schools faculty in 2018 at the invitation of Superintendent Brian Hamler.

Amanda Waller, Whitehall resident, offered extended thanks and recognition to President Potter. She recounted her appreciation for his engaged and encouraging presence from the dais during public comments, and specifically acknowledged his tie-breaking vote in a previous matter related to the Fairway Cliffs citizen petition, which she felt demonstrated civic integrity.

Diane Peters, Whitehall resident, also offered personal thanks to Council President Potter, noting his consistent ability to make residents feel comfortable and encouraged when approaching the podium.

Kim Maggard, Whitehall (former Mayor), provided a detailed account of Council President Potter's service record, citing council terms beginning in 1994–1995, 1998–2001, and 2002–2003, and noting that she first came to know President Potter in 2003 upon her appointment as City Auditor. She described him as a mentor during that period and credited him with having helped guide her professionalism during her own time as mayor. She also noted his service on the WCIC, the BZBA, and the Charter Review Commission.

Jim Graham, Whitehall resident, spoke to the demands and complexity of the Council President role, emphasizing that it requires not only conducting formal business but also managing diverse personalities, handling procedural matters in real time, and serving as the city's second-ranking official should the mayor be unable to perform his duties. He noted that the position has historically gone uncontested, which he attributed to a general under-appreciation of how substantial the role truly is.

Dion Washington, Columbus, offered recognition to President Potter for his professionalism and fairness under difficult circumstances, stating that the city needs more of that caliber of leadership in positions of public responsibility.

Marie Long, Whitehall resident, briefly expressed gratitude for the city's continued fiscal stability, noting in contrast a recent news report about a neighboring Ohio city facing financial distress.

Community Date Board

- Whitehall Food Truck Festival – Saturday, July 25, 2026, at John Bishop Park, featuring over 20 food trucks, a talent show, workforce development programming, and activities for all ages.
- Whitehall United Methodist Church – Bless the Pets Event – Friday, August 15, 2026, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, featuring a pet blessing, food, sidewalk chalk, sock puppets for children, and treats for attendees.

Poll Council

Councilor Dixon thanked those in attendance and watching from home, congratulated incoming City Planner Curtis Nutter, and read into the record an excerpt from a publication called Revitalize or Die on the nature of community revitalization as an ongoing process rather than a single destination. He used the excerpt to reinforce his view that incremental daily decisions — by council, staff, nonprofits, property owners, and residents — determine the direction of a community's health over time. He concluded with personal best wishes to President Potter.

Councilor Brown thanked those present and watching, congratulated King Gyros on 35 years in the community, congratulated Mr. Nutter on his appointment, and echoed the sentiment in the reading shared by Councilor Dixon. He noted his continued efforts to engage residents through community conversations. Councilor Brown then formally and publicly invited Councilor Dixon to participate in a joint community conversation at a neutral location, moderated by a neutral third party, in which both members could ask questions openly, and residents could participate. He expressed that the purpose would be to build public trust and transparency, and that the format would allow Councilor Dixon to ask questions of him as well.

Councilor Elmore thanked viewers and the public speakers, and acknowledged the Food Truck Festival's workforce development component. She also recognized King Gyro's owner Yianni and Whitehall's broader immigrant business community. She welcomed Mr. Nutter to the city and concluded with extended personal remarks to President Potter, describing him as fair, upstanding, honorable, and attentive, and noting that the role of council president requires a combination of knowledge, experience, and interpersonal skill that cannot simply be assumed by anyone.

Councilor Morrison thanked those in attendance and all who spoke, affirming that council does consider public input seriously even when it might not appear so. He congratulated Mr. Nutter and expressed support for the Food Truck Festival at John Bishop Park.

Councilor Harcar thanked President Potter for his guidance during her first term, described the past several months as challenging, and expressed appreciation for his continued encouragement. She also reflected on the value of public participation, noting that speaking before council takes courage.

Councilor Harcar addressed the topic of integrity and silence, stating that silence can be powerful but can also constitute complicity — particularly when false and harmful things are said about people. She offered to collaborate with Mr. Butler on trauma-responsive care and victim advocacy training for the city.

Councilor Adkins congratulated Mr. Nutter, thanked all who spoke, and offered brief but sincere best wishes to President Potter, noting a long family connection to President Potter and expressing that he would be missed.

Councilor McCann thanked those in attendance, congratulated Mr. Nutter, and offered personal remarks to President Potter, acknowledging that while they had disagreements early in McCann's tenure, those were handled professionally and he came to hold genuine respect for the President. Councilor McCann announced a Community Conversation event he is hosting on August 6, 2026, at 6:30 PM at the church across the street from City Hall. He described the format as an informal, seated discussion — not a stage presentation — open to all Whitehall citizens, and noted that Clint Hikes would assist with moderation.

President Potter congratulated Mr. Nutter on his appointment, reflected warmly on his relationships with former Mayor Maggard, former Council President Jim Graham, Mayor Bivens, and the current council members, and reiterated that while his address is changing, his connection to Whitehall is not. He noted that he is remaining on the WCIC board and intends to stay engaged with the city in various ways.

Adjourn

President Potter adjourned the meeting at 8:50 PM.

Submitted by,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

City Council Special Meeting

July 28, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

President Pro Tem Morrison called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, July 28, 2026, in the Council Chamber at City Hall.

Roll Call

Present: Councilor Brown, Councilor Elmore, Councilor Morrison, Councilor Harcar, Councilor Adkins, Councilor McCann, and Councilor Dixon,

Absent: None

Verification of Copies

Clerk Ogg conducted roll call confirming that each member of council had received a copy of each item of legislation listed on the agenda prior to the meeting, including any add-on legislation. All members responded affirmatively.

Third Reading:

Ordinance No. 060-2026

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE NECESSARY CONVEYANCE DOCUMENTS TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY FROM SHE BUYS HOUSES 365 LLC LOCATED AT 3791 EAST BROAD STREET, WHITEHALL, OHIO 43213 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Councilor Dixon introduced the ordinance and moved for adoption. The motion was seconded by Councilor Adkins. Council then engaged in substantive discussion regarding the property's appraised value and the status of the formal appraisal document.

Councilor Brown opened the discussion by asking Director Russell to summarize the appraisal findings for the benefit of the public. Director Russell explained that the city engaged Bob Weiler of the Robert Weiler Company — one of the largest appraisal firms in Central Ohio — to conduct the appraisal. Director Russell noted that the final written document had not yet been received, but that Bob Weiler had provided detailed initial findings via a lengthy phone call. The appraisal methodology considered the original 2021 purchase price of \$175,000, approximately \$100,000 in observed improvements to the property, and year-over-year appreciation of 5–10%. After analyzing comparable commercial outparcels in the area, Mr. Weiler arrived at a single appraisal figure of \$325,000, with an acceptable range of \$300,000 to \$340,000. Director Russell indicated the city's intended purchase price of \$320,000 fell well within that range and represented a fair transaction for both parties. She further noted that comparable sites pulled by Weiler lacked East Broad Street frontage, which meaningfully increased this property's value.

President Pro Tem Morrison asked whether the city was in possession of the formal appraisal document. Director Russell confirmed the final document had not yet been received, but that Weiler had committed to delivering preliminary findings by the prior Thursday and that the written report was expected imminently. She noted this was the same process followed during the Etna Road parcel acquisition, where initial findings were conveyed by phone and followed up with a comprehensive written report including photographs and comparables.

Councilor Brown inquired about the expected timeline for the final document. Director Russell estimated the turnaround would be approximately one to two weeks based on prior experience with the firm.

Councilor Dixon raised the question of whether the vote could be postponed one additional week to allow the physical appraisal to be in hand for the public's benefit. Director Russell advised that doing so would likely put the city in violation of its purchase and sale agreement and risk losing the property, as the closing was scheduled for later that week.

President Pro Tem and other members then discussed whether there was sufficient basis to proceed without the written document. President Pro Tem noted that Director Russell's email communication and their prior conversation had provided the key information, and questioned why the vote should be delayed when the verbal findings were clear and the appraisal was not expected to come in below the purchase price. Councilor McCann expressed confidence in both Director Russell's judgment and Bob Weiler's expertise, stating that he trusted Director Russell's professional assessment and would not want to delay for a piece of paper that was already forthcoming.

Councilor Dixon clarified that his questions were not a reflection of distrust toward Director Russell. Still, it was his responsibility to ensure the public — who have raised questions and concerns about the transaction — is provided with as complete a picture as possible before their representative's vote. He stated unequivocally that he places a great deal of trust in Director Russell and believes in the work she is doing.

Director Russell took the opportunity to address broader public concerns about the purchase. She noted that the city has had a longstanding interest in the property and that staff records and conversations confirm this interest predates her tenure. She explained that the city's motivation is to gain control of strategic commercial property on East Broad Street in order to direct future development intentionally, rather than being bound by by-right zoning uses. She referenced ongoing activity in the corridor — including the KFC site coming to market and Casto's reinvestment — and described conversations with multiple development partners about assembling parcels for a more significant outcome. She drew a distinction between this acquisition and the Rockwell district, noting this is a much smaller and more targeted opportunity.

Councilor Brown, who described himself as someone who had been hesitant, clarified that his hesitation stemmed from the limited value of a standalone quarter-acre outparcel. He affirmed, however, that the real value lies in the city's potential to assemble this parcel with adjacent properties — such as the KFC site — to create a meaningful hard corner for development, rather than allowing a single-tenant user to build to their own specifications. He expressed optimism about the city's ability to shape its own future through this kind of strategic acquisition.

Councilor McCann echoed similar sentiments, emphasizing that her support was rooted in trusting Director Russell's expertise and vision for the property, and that he did not wish to delay the vote pending a document whose contents were already known.

President Pro Tem Morrison acknowledged that it would have been preferable to have the appraisal and indicated that future projects should aim to have appraisals completed earlier in the process.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 060-2026 was made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor Adkins. The motion carried 7-0.

First Reading:

Ordinance No. 070-2026

APPROVING A FUND TRANSFER IN THE AMOUNT OF SEVEN HUNDRED FORTY-NINE DOLLARS AND 04/100 (\$749.04) FROM UNAPPROPRIATED MONIES IN THE WATER UTILITY FUND (841) TO THE DEBT SERVICE FUND (401).

Councilor Dixon requested that an administration representative briefly explain the ordinances on first reading for the benefit of members of the public watching, and Auditor Alexander noted that the legislation is made available at the meeting and online.

Motion to suspend all rules on Ordinance No. 070-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Adkins. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 070-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Adkins. The motion carried 7-0.

Ordinance No. 071-2026

AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF FORTY THOUSAND AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$40,000.00) FROM UNAPPROPRIATED MONIES IN THE MEDICAL SUPPLY FUND (302) TO THE MEDICAL SUPPLY EXPENSE ACCOUNT (302.000.50000).

It was noted for the record that the appropriation was related to medical supplies and that Fire Chief Preston Moore was referenced in connection with this item.

Motion to suspend all rules on Ordinance No. 071-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 071-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Morrison. The motion carried 7-0.

Ordinance No. 072-2026

AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING AN APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$500.00) FROM UNAPPROPRIATED MONIES IN THE MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT GRANT FUND (215) TO THE STEP OUTSIDE GRANT EXPENSE 215.000.50010.

It was noted that the \$500.00 appropriation represents a grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources designated for outdoor education.

Motion to suspend all rules on Ordinance No. 072-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Adkins. The motion carried 7-0.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 072-2026 was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Adkins. The motion carried 7-0.

Adjourn

There being no further business, President Pro Tem Morrison adjourned the meeting at 7:03 PM.

Submitted by,

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

City of Whitehall

City Council Committee Meeting

July 28, 2026 Minutes

Administration/Council of the Whole Matters

President Pro Tem Morrison opened the meeting at 7:03 P.M. and recognized Councilor Brown, who wished to address the public before the committee proceedings began.

Councilor Brown spoke regarding a community conversation he had recently extended an invitation to Councilor Dixon, noting that Councilor Dixon had declined. Councilor Brown emphasized that the invitation was not personal in nature, but rather motivated by a desire to promote open dialogue and healing within the Whitehall community following a recent recall election. He expressed concern that ongoing mistrust, accusations of fiscal mismanagement, and social media rhetoric were harmful to the community, and urged a focus on actions over words. He stated his intention to continue hosting community conversations and encouraging others to engage in good-faith dialogue.

Standing Committees

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Councilor Elmore opened the committee at 7:10 PM.

Councilor Elmore noted no drafts or pending legislation. Auditor Alexander noted he would be absent the following Tuesday. Discussion arose regarding anticipated legislation related to a fund transfer. Councilor Elmore and the City Auditor clarified that while one piece of legislation was forthcoming, it would involve two transfers, and that the funds in question would be drawn from already-appropriated funds rather than the general fund, which was described as performing well. Director Rowlands announced that an offer had been extended to a second code enforcement officer, who had accepted, and that legislation to fund the salary account would be presented the following week.

Councilor Elmore closed the committee at 7:15 PM.

COMMUNITY AND ELDER ADVOCACY

Councilor Harcar opened the committee at 7:15 PM.

Councilor Harcar reported attending a training and networking event hosted by the Ohio Domestic Violence Network and its affiliated group, the Ohio Men's Action Network (OMAN). She shared informational materials with council members reflecting a pledge to stand against violence and promote healthy relationships.

Councilor Harcar also announced that on August 11, information regarding the CART (Communications Access Real-Time Translation) system would be presented, with the aim of improving hearing accessibility in the council chambers. She indicated that the City Attorney was involved in preparing relevant information, noting that Disability Rights Month made the timing appropriate. She expressed her intent to pilot the system on a short-term basis and gather resident feedback before committing to a full budget.

Clerk Ogg was recognized for her presentation of the "Megan's Way Out" legislation at a recent conference, where she distributed nearly all of her materials and received significant interest from other municipalities. It was noted that a clerk from Stowe, Ohio, who attended the conference, happened to

personally know the Keleman family connected to the legislation. Councilor Harcar noted that the legislation is currently before the State House but has stalled, and expressed hope that adoption by local municipalities would generate momentum. She mentioned the possibility of accompanying the Keleman family to the State House and discussed reaching out to incoming State Senator Humphrey and Senator Craig for support.

Councilor Brown commended Councilor Harcar for her ongoing community work, emphasizing the value of education and exposure in improving quality of life.

Councilor Harcar closed the committee at 7:21 PM.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT

Councilor McCann opened the committee at 7:22 PM.

Councilor McCann stated he had no drafts or pending legislation.

Councilor Brown offered remarks thanking the administration for the food truck festival held the previous weekend, noting he had heard very positive feedback from attendees and expressed his intention to attend future events.

Councilor McCann offered two items of commentary. First, he extended thanks to Director Rowlands for thoroughness in the hiring of the new code enforcement officer, expressing confidence that the new hire would be an outstanding addition to the community. Second, Councilor McCann spoke directly to the public regarding what he described as pushback toward Councilor Harcar over her work in advancing the "Megan's Way Out" ordinance. He stated he could not understand how anyone could find fault with the legislation and pledged to address any such negativity when encountered.

Councilor McCann also announced an upcoming community conversation scheduled for August 6 at 6:30 PM at New Life Church, framing it as a positive, constructive discussion focused on what the city is doing well and where it can improve.

Councilor Elmore and Councilor Harcar both thanked Councilor McCann for his public statement in support of Councilor Harcar's legislative work. Councilor Harcar noted their shared commitment to advocacy and healing within the divided community. Councilor Dixon offered a brief observation that constructive criticism can serve a positive purpose, prompting a brief exchange with Councilor Brown, who maintained that the distinction lies between legitimate critiques aimed at solutions versus rhetoric designed to foster division.

Councilor McCann closed the committee at 7:32 PM.

INFRASTRUCTURE, MAINTENANCE AND SERVICES

Chairperson Councilor Brown opened the committee at 7:33 PM.

Councilor Brown reported two items. First, he noted a 100 percent improvement in community feedback regarding speeding concerns — humorously noting the increase from one response to two — and urged residents to continue reporting speeding incidents with specific times and locations to enable data-driven enforcement decisions.

Second, Councilor Brown announced a new initiative he had been developing in collaboration with Director Rowlands and Director Wright of the Department of Neighborhoods, titled the Whitehall Ward Waste Wars. The program is designed as a friendly, resident-led competition among the city's wards to collect litter and beautify their respective neighborhoods. Councilor Brown emphasized that the initiative would be community-driven rather than administration-run, with the goal of fostering civic pride, community bonding, and laying groundwork for potential grant applications for further

beautification. Both physical and virtual sign-up options will be made available. He noted that prizes and recognition for winning wards are still being developed.

City administration expressed full support for the initiative, particularly highlighting the value of resident-led civic engagement. Councilor Harcar drew a connection to a broader discussion she had attended about community building, noting how shared activities can strengthen neighborhood relationships.

Councilor Dixon offered a compliment regarding visible signage at a street corner communicating construction or project updates to residents, acknowledging the mayor for the initiative.

Councilor Brown closed the committee at 7:41 PM.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilor Morrison opened the committee at 7:41 PM.

Councilor Morrison reported no drafts or pending legislation. He briefly noted his attendance at the food truck festival, complimenting the safety measures in place and the positive atmosphere at the event. It was noted that National Night Out would be held the following Tuesday, August 4.

Councilor Morrison closed the committee at 7:42 PM.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Councilor Adkins opened the committee at 7:42 PM.

The committee discussion centered on praise for the recent food truck festival. Councilor Elmore spoke at length about the event's success, singling out the availability of scooters for seniors and individuals with mobility challenges as a particularly noteworthy improvement. She shared that her mother attended for the first time and was delighted by the accommodation. Councilor Harcar echoed those sentiments, noting that the scooters also benefited a friend with an injury who had initially planned to skip the event. Both councilors praised the friendliness of safety forces on duty and commended Parks and Recreation staff for the quality of planning.

Councilor Brown noted the broader significance of micro-mobility options as a quality-of-life enhancement and tied it to the city's broader direction toward reduced car dependency.

Councilor Harcar announced that the next Music in the Park event was scheduled for August 2, with further details available through Whitehall Parks and Recreation.

Director Russell announced that the city's strategic plan booth, staffed in partnership with OHM, would again be present at National Night Out at John Bishop Park on August 4th from 5:00 to 8:00 PM, encouraging residents to engage with city staff about the strategic plan's focus areas.

Councilor Adkins closed the committee at 7:51 PM.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Councilor Dixon opened the committee at 7:51 PM.

Third Reading

ORDINANCE NO. 064-2026

Councilor Dixon read the ordinance amending the zoning map to change the zoning on property located at 4870 Poth Road (Parcels 090-008399 and 090-007555) from Community Crossroads District (CCD)

to Industrial District (INDD), property owned by the Whitehall Community Improvement Corporation. The ordinance is scheduled for adoption at 3rd reading on August 18, 2026, with a Whitehall Planning Commission meeting on August 6 and a public hearing on August 18. No additional discussion was had.

ORDINANCE NO. 065-2026

Councilor Dixon read the ordinance amending the zoning map to change the zoning on property at 265 North Hamilton Road (Parcel 090-008397) from CCD to Industrial District (INDD), property owned by BCORE Defender OH1M05 LLC.

Director Russell provided clarifying remarks, explaining that the property contains an existing warehouse and manufacturing building that predates the zoning change, which introduced the Community Crossroads District designation. Because the building is currently a legal nonconforming use, the owner is seeking to return to the original industrial zoning in order to expand the building. Director Russell also clarified that the rezoning applies only to the two corner parcels associated with the CIC and the warehouse expansion area, not to the broader Community Crossroads District, which remains intact. The ordinance is also scheduled for adoption on August 18, 2026, with a Planning Commission meeting on August 6 and a public hearing on August 18.

ORDINANCE NO. 066-2026

Councilor Dixon presented the ordinance amending the planning and zoning code to limit the construction or operation of gasoline stations. Councilor Dixon invited an explanation of the rationale.

Director Russell explained that the ordinance serves two main purposes: first, to remove gas stations as a by-right use along the Main Street corridor in anticipation of the planned bus rapid transit line, which is expected to reduce vehicle traffic and support transit-oriented, high-density development similar to models seen in Indianapolis; and second, to reclassify gas station use along the Broad Street corridor as a special use permit, given the impacts such uses can have on surrounding neighborhoods (traffic, lighting, extended hours). Director Russell noted that Whitehall has a notably high gas station per capita ratio of 2.5, compared to 1.8 for the City of Columbus and below 1.0 for most surrounding municipalities. Councilor Dixon observed that historically there had been even more gas stations in the community.

The City Auditor and other councilors offered additional commentary supporting a shift toward walkability, small business development, and transit-friendly land use along the Main Street corridor. The ordinance is scheduled for adoption on August 18, 2026, with a Planning Commission meeting on August 6 and a public hearing on August 18.

Presentation

Director Russell introduced Tracy Jeffries, Executive Director of the Associated Plumbing and Hydronic Contractors (APHC) of Central Ohio, noting that House Bill 184 restrictions limit city staff from publicly discussing details of economic development assistance applications, and that Ms. Jeffries had agreed to present on behalf of APHC.

Ms. Jeffries provided a comprehensive overview of the APHC, a nonprofit plumbing trade association that operates a registered apprenticeship program in Central Ohio. The association's training facility has been located in Westerville since 2011 but has significantly outgrown its space. When she joined in 2019, the program had 80 apprentices; the program is projected to enroll 250 apprentices in fall 2026. This growth reflects a nationwide trend of increasing interest in the skilled trades, driven in part by high retirement rates among journeymen plumbers and a growing recognition of the trades as a debt-free career alternative.

Ms. Jeffries announced that APHC has acquired a property in Whitehall — an L-shaped building on Broad Street, formerly a First Community Bank location — to serve as its new training facility. The facility will accommodate five training rooms with approximately 24–25 students per room, with a projected capacity of up to 100 new apprentices per year, potentially reaching 400 total apprentices

across all four class years. The property includes green space that APHC intends to develop as an outdoor underground lab for hands-on pipe-laying instruction.

The apprenticeship program is a four-year program requiring full-time employment with a participating contractor (8,000 hours of on-the-job training) and one night of classroom instruction per week (36 weeks per year). Apprentices are paid employees, starting at a minimum of \$17 per hour (50% of the \$34 average journeyman wage), with most contractors starting apprentices between \$18 and \$22 per hour. Upon completion, apprentices receive a journeyman certificate and are positioned for mid-to-high five-figure annual earnings, with many on a path to six figures. The program is also partnered with Columbus State Community College, allowing apprentices to earn 30 credit hours — sufficient for an associate's degree — at no cost to them.

Ms. Jeffries noted that APHC also conducts continuing education (CEU) classes and backflow certification and recertification courses at the facility for licensed plumbers. Regarding employment, she confirmed APHC would be bringing 11 existing positions from Westerville and adding 4 new positions in the near term, with additional instructors hired as the program grows. The facility's hours of operation for the apprenticeship program are approximately 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM; continuing education and backflow classes are held during daytime hours. Current tenants in the building will remain, with one tenant being relocated to the second floor to accommodate APHC's need to install plumbing infrastructure on the first floor.

Council members expressed strong support and enthusiasm for APHC's arrival in Whitehall. Councilor McCann, whose father was a union tradesman, noted the importance of trades as a career pathway. Councilor Elmore recalled a 2016 effort to bring building trades awareness to Whitehall Yearling High School and expressed strong support for the trades as an alternative to college. Councilor Brown highlighted the potential for apprentices to eventually start their own businesses within the community. Councilor Harcar celebrated the program's accessibility for individuals who may not pursue a traditional college path. Ms. Jeffries expressed APHC's commitment to becoming engaged members of the Whitehall community, including joining the Chamber of Commerce and participating in workforce development events.

RESOLUTION NO. 034-2026

Councilor Dixon presented the resolution authorizing execution of a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) agreement between the City of Whitehall and the Associated Plumbing and Hydronic Contractors (APHC) of Central Ohio, or a designee, and declaring an emergency. The resolution is scheduled for adoption on September 1, 2026. Councilor Dixon noted that the executive session to follow would address the confidential financial aspects of the agreement.

Motion to move Resolution No. 034-2026 forward will be made by Councilor Dixon and seconded by Councilor McCann. No final vote was taken at this stage; the matter was advanced for further consideration pending executive session.

Councilor Dixon noted the committee would remain open pending the conclusion of executive session.

Executive Session

President Pro Tem Morrison called for a motion to adjourn to executive session pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(8) to consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance.

Motion to adjourn to executive session was made by Councilor Elmore and seconded by Councilor Dixon. Motion carried 7-0.

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 8:35 P.M

The meeting reconvened at 9:20 P.M

Councilor Dixon closed the committee at 9:22 PM.

There being no additional business, President Pro Tem Morrison adjourned the meeting at 9:22 PM.

Submitted by:

Julie A. Ogg, Clerk of Council

APPROVED: August 4, 2026

Larry Morrison, President Pro Tem

ORDINANCE NO. 064-2026

AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ATTACHED TO CHAPTER 1101.06 OF THE 2023 CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO AND AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED, CHANGING THE ZONING ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 4870 POTHS ROAD, PARCEL NUMBERS 090-008399 and 090-007555, FROM COMMUNITY CROSSROADS DISTRICT (CCD), TO INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (INDD), PROPERTY OWNED BY THE WHITEHALL COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, Council has received an application from the Whitehall Community Improvement Corporation (WCIC) to rezone the property located on the west side of North Hamilton Road, north of Poth Road and east of Southern Wine and Glazers from CCD to INDD; and

WHEREAS, BCORE Defender desires to develop the site into a warehouse expansion development with an additional 35,500 square feet; and

WHEREAS, the WCIC Board of Trustees has authorized the sale of 4870 Poth Road to BCORE Defender OH1M05 LLC,

WHEREAS, this Ordinance was referred to the Planning Commission (Case No. 907), which reported a _____ recommendation, on said request; and

WHEREAS, Council has held a Public Hearing after due notice according to law; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1: That the Zoning Map attached to Chapter 1101.06 of the 2023 Codified Ordinances of the City of Whitehall, Ohio and as subsequently amended, be and the same is hereby amended by changing (CCD) to (INDD) for the sole purpose of being a warehouse facility expansion.

SECTION 2: That the City Director of Public Service be and is hereby authorized and directed to proceed with the prescribed ordinance directing the Whitehall Planning Division to change the Official Zoning Map of the City of Whitehall.

SECTION 3: That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, peace, safety and welfare, and for the further reason this ordinance is required to be immediately effective in order to induce the applicant to develop the property, all in order to create housing opportunities and improve the economic welfare of the people of the City of Whitehall and the State of Ohio; WHEREFORE, this Ordinance shall go into full force and effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor

Requested by: Applicant
Prepared by: Curtis Nutter, Planning and Development
Approved as to form: Bradley S. Nicodemus, City Attorney bsn 07/10/2026

ORDINANCE NO. 065-2026

AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ATTACHED TO CHAPTER 1101.06 OF THE 2023 CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO AND AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED, CHANGING THE ZONING ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 265 NORTH HAMILTON ROAD, PARCEL NUMBER 090-008397, FROM COMMUNITY CROSSROADS DISTRICT (CCD), TO INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (INDD), PROPERTY OWNED BY BCORE DEFENDER OH1M05 LLC AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, Council has received an application from BCORE Defender to rezone the property located on the west side of North Hamilton Road, north of Poth Road and east of Southern Wine and Glazers from CCD to INDD; and

WHEREAS, BCORE Defender desires to develop the site into a warehouse expansion development with an additional 35,500 square feet; and

WHEREAS, this Ordinance was referred to the Planning Commission (Case No. 908), which reported a _____ recommendation, on said request; and

WHEREAS, Council has held a Public Hearing after due notice according to law; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1: That the Zoning Map attached to Chapter 1101.06 of the 2023 Codified Ordinances of the City of Whitehall, Ohio and as subsequently amended, be and the same is hereby amended by changing (CCD) to (INDD) for the sole purpose of being a warehouse facility expansion.

SECTION 2: That the City Director of Public Service be and is hereby authorized and directed to proceed with the prescribed ordinance directing the Whitehall Planning Division to change the Official Zoning Map of the City of Whitehall.

SECTION 3: That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, peace, safety and welfare, and for the further reason this ordinance is required to be immediately effective in order to induce the applicant to develop the property, all in order to create housing opportunities and improve the economic welfare of the people of the City of Whitehall and the State of Ohio; WHEREFORE, this Ordinance shall go into full force and effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor

Requested by: Applicant
Prepared by: Curtis Nutter, Planning and Development
Approved as to form: Bradley S. Nicodemus, City Attorney BSN 7/8/2026

ORDINANCE NO. 066-2026

AMENDING THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE TO LIMIT THE CONSTRUCTION OR OPERATION OF GASOLINE STATIONS.

WHEREAS, the City of Whitehall has a duty to enact policies that best utilize commercial space; and

WHEREAS, amending the Planning and Zoning Code to prohibit the construction or operation of gasoline stations without a special permit supports strategic land use; and

WHEREAS, the East Main Bus Rapid Transit line will alter the transportation environment of East Main Street limiting the utility of gasoline stations; NOW THEREFORE;

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1: Table 1104.02 BRD PERMITTED LAND USES & PERMIT REQUIREMENTS shall read as follows:

* * *

TABLE 1104.02: PERMITTED LAND USES & PERMIT REQUIREMENTS		
<u>LAND USE TYPE</u>	<u>PERMIT REQUIRED BY</u> <u>DISTRICT</u> <u>BRD</u>	<u>SPECIFIC USE</u> <u>REGULATIONS</u>
<u>COMMERCIAL</u>		
* * *		
Gasoline Stations	PSUP	
* * *		

SECTION 2: Table 1104.03 MAIN PERMITTED LAND USES & PERMIT REQUIREMENTS shall read as follows:

* * *

TABLE 1104.03: PERMITTED LAND USES & PERMIT REQUIREMENTS		
<u>LAND USE TYPE</u>	<u>PERMIT REQUIRED BY</u> <u>DISTRICT</u> <u>MAIN</u>	<u>SPECIFIC USE</u> <u>REGULATIONS</u>
<u>COMMERCIAL</u>		
* * *		
Gasoline Stations	PN/A	
* * *		

ORDINANCE NO. 066-2026

SECTION 3: Table 1108.01 COMPREHENSIVE USE TABLE shall read as follows:

* * *

TABLE 1108.01 PRINCIPLE USES BY ZONING DISTRICT											USE DEFINITION & STANDARDS
	STUR	MUR	BRD	MAIN	SH	YEAR	CCD	MIL O	INDD	FP	
* * *											
PUBLIC FACILITIES, INSTITUTIONS AND TRANSPORTATION											
Gasoline Stations	N/A	N/A	<u>P</u> SUP	<u>P</u> N/A	SUP	N/A	N/A	P	SUP	N/A	

P – Permitted

PC – Permitted Subject to Conditions

SUP – Special Use Permit

* * *

SECTION 12: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the earliest time provided for by law.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026

Mayor

Requested by: Jackie Russell, Economic Development Director
Prepared by: Curtis Nutter, Planning and Development
Approved as to form: Bradley S. Nicodemus, City Attorney bsn 07/10/2026

ORDINANCE NO. 073-2026

AMENDING ORDINANCE 129-2025; AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO 161.38 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, efficient personnel and payroll record keeping requires a permanent definition of uniform published standards; and

WHEREAS, the current salary ordinance requires updating for the year 2026; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1:

161.38 SALARY SCHEDULE.

(a) The following salary ranges are hereby set, with pay to be determined by the respective appointing authority.

Clerk of Council (hourly)	2020	25.00 to 35.39
Office Assistant Part-time (hourly)	2020	11.00 to 22.57
Deputy Auditor (hourly)	2026	30.10 to 44.23
Deputy Tax Commissioner (hourly)	2026	to 48.08
Payroll Administrator (hourly)	2026	to 39.06
Accounting Specialist (hourly)	2026	to 38.46
Administrative Assistant (hourly)	2026	to 36.00
Director of Public Service (hourly)	2025	to 55.57
Administrative Assistant (hourly)	2024	to 36.00
Code Enforcement Officer (hourly)	2024 2026	to 36.00 to 39.50
Chief Building Official (hourly)	2026	to 52.61
Assistant Building Inspector Part-time (hourly)	2020	to 30.00
Director for Public Safety (salary)	2026	to 54,900.00
Assistant City Attorney/Prosecutor (salary)	2026	to 89,000.00
Assistant City Attorney, Part-time (salary)	2023	to 75,000.00
Prosecutor (Part-Time)* (salary)	2024	to 123,600.00
Legal Assistant (hourly)	2026	to 39.90
Parks and Recreation Director (hourly)	2026	to 57.69
Police Deputy Chiefs (hourly)	2026	to 82.14
Assistant Fire Chief (hourly)	2026	to 82.14
Chief of Police (hourly)	2026	to 92.81
Chief of Fire (hourly)	2026	to 92.81
Crime Analyst Supervisor	2026	to 43.82
Coordinator of Victim Services (hourly)	2020	21.00 to 33.89
Property Room Coordinator (hourly)	2026	to 27.86
Property Room Clerk (hourly)	2026	to 27.86
Crime Analyst (hourly)	2026	23.04 to 35.93
Human Resources Director (hourly)	2026	38.53 to 49.28
HR Generalist (hourly)	2026	28.00 to 33.17
Director of Development (hourly)	2022	to 55.00

ORDINANCE NO. 073-2026

Deputy Director of Public Affairs (hourly)	2023	to 42.79
Director of Information Technology (hourly)	2026	to 54.33
Systems Administrator (hourly)	2024	to 44.00
Senior Administrative Assistant (hourly)	2026	to 40.37
Executive Assistant to the Mayor (hourly)	2026	to 40.87
Clerk of Courts (hourly)	2026	to 41.20
Paralegal (hourly)	2026	20.00 to 33.65
Recreation Superintendent (hourly)	2023	to 38.25
Code Enforcement/Animal Control Officer (hourly)	2026	to 32.53
IT Security Specialist	2026	to 38.20
Full-Time IT Technician (hourly)	2024	to 37.09
Grants Administrator (hourly)	2025	to 46.34
Records Clerk Part-time (hourly)	2026	to 28.96
Economic Development Specialist (hourly)	2026	to 36.59
City Planner (hourly)	2026	to 33.17
Adult Resource & Engagement Specialist	2026	to 27.89
P&R Program Supervisor (hourly)	2025	to 34.06
Recreation Manager (full-time)	2026	22.00 – 27.00
Program Assistant (part-time)	2024	15.00 – 25.00
Assistant Clerk of Courts	2026	to 34.13
Communication and Marketing Specialist	2026	to 33.65
Police Community Coordinator	2026	to 26.25
Director of Neighborhoods	2026	to 44.23
Events and Advancement Coordinator	2026	to 29.33
Service Maintenance Custodian	2026	to 26.44
Police Custodian	2026	to 26.44

SECTION 2: That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, peace, safety, and welfare; WHEREFORE, this Ordinance shall go into full force and effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor

ORDINANCE NO. 074-2026

AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION IN THE AMOUNT OF EIGHTY THOUSAND AND NO/100 DOLLARS (\$80,000.00) FROM UNAPPROPRIATED MONIES IN THE GENERAL FUND TO THE CODE ENFORCEMENT SALARIES ACCOUNT (101.600.51100) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, the City desires to hire an additional full-time Code Enforcement Officer; and,

WHEREAS, the City desires to increase the hourly wage of both Code Enforcement officers to more closely align with the salaries of the surrounding jurisdictions in Central Ohio; and,

WHEREAS, the funds need to be transferred into the account for payroll to administer salaries; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1: The Council of the City of Whitehall, Ohio, approves the supplemental appropriation in the amount of eighty thousand and no/100 dollars (\$80,000.00) from the General Fund (101) to Code Enforcement Salaries Account (101.600.51100).

SECTION 2: That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, peace, safety and welfare and for the further reason that is necessary to have the monies available to pay these expenses in order to keep the building serviceable and open; WHEREFORE, This Ordinance shall go into full force and effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor

ORDINANCE NO. 075-2026

AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS IN TOTAL OF THIRTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$30,000.00) CONSISTING OF THE AMOUNTS OF FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$15,000.00) FROM THE ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBORHOODS EXPENSE ACCOUNT (101.204.51300) AND FIFTEEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$15,000.00) FROM THE SAFETY DIRECTOR SALARY EXPENSE ACCOUNT (101.960.51000) TO THE CITY PLANNER EXPENSE ACCOUNT (101.209.51500) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, the City has employed a full-time employee within the Department of Development, effective July 27, 2026, and appropriation authority is required to provide for the payment of wages associated with that position for the remainder of fiscal year 2026; and

WHEREAS, the City Auditor has established expense account 101.209.51500 (City Planner) on the chart of accounts for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, the City Auditor, as Chief Fiscal & Accounting Officer, has determined that the appropriation balances in the Assistant to the Director of Neighborhoods Expense Account (101.204.51300) and the Safety Director Salary Expense Account (101.960.51000) are unexpended and unencumbered in amounts sufficient to support the transfers authorized by this Ordinance, and that no appropriation is thereby reduced below an amount sufficient to cover all unliquidated and outstanding obligations certified against it; NOW, THEREFORE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1: That there is hereby transferred the sum of Fifteen Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$15,000.00) from the Assistant to the Director of Neighborhoods Expense Account (101.204.51300) and Fifteen Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$15,000.00) from the Safety Director Salary Expense Account (101.960.51000) to the City Planner Expense Account (101.209.51500), for the payment of wages of a full-time position within the Department of Development for the remainder of fiscal year 2026.

SECTION 2: That the City Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to make all entries necessary to effect the appropriation transfer authorized by this Ordinance.

SECTION 3: That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and welfare of the City of Whitehall, the emergency being the necessity of providing appropriation authority for the timely and uninterrupted payment of wages of a full-time employee of the City; wherefore, this Ordinance shall go into full force and effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor

Requested by: Jackie Russell, Economic Development Director
Prepared by: Shaquille Alexander, CPA, City Auditor
Approved as to form: Bradley S. Nicodemus, City Attorney BSN 7/30/26

RESOLUTION NO. 034-2026

AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY AND THE ASSOCIATED PLUMBING & HYDRONIC CONTRACTORS (APHC) OF CENTRAL OHIO, OR A DESIGNEE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, this Council, by its Ordinance No. 58-98 (as amended by Ordinance Nos. 049-2011, 003-2016, and 056-2021) created the East Broad Street District Community Reinvestment Area (the "CRA"); and

WHEREAS, the Associated Plumbing & Hydronic Contractors of Central Ohio ("APHC"), an Ohio Corporation for Non-Profit purchased three parcels, totaling approximately three and a half acres of real property located at 4300 East Broad Street (the "Property" as further depicted in Exhibit A attached hereto), on which Property APHC intends to relocate their operation (the "Facility") and make certain improvements in and around a portion of the Property; and

WHEREAS, APHC's investment and relocation of its operation to the Property and the Facility will create new jobs in the City and improve the welfare of the residents of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to spurring the creation of new jobs and the retention of existing jobs within the City; and

WHEREAS, in order to induce APHC's investment to complete renovations on the Facility and the creation of the related employment opportunities, this Council desires to grant to APHC a 15-year 100% CRA property tax abatement (the "Incentive"); and

WHEREAS, this Council desires to provide for the execution and delivery of a Community Reinvestment Area Agreement (the "CRA Agreement") with APHC, to provide for the Incentive; and

WHEREAS, the City has complied with the terms of the School Compensation Agreement with the Board of Education of the Whitehall City School District, including the notice provisions set forth therein, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Sections 5709.82 and 5709.83; and

WHEREAS, the City has delivered notice of the CRA abatement to the Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools (EFCTS) District within the time periods required by Ohio Revised Code Section 5709.83; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHITEHALL, OHIO:

SECTION 1: The City, assuming continuing compliance by the Company or its successors with the CRA Agreement (as described below), grants the CRA Exemption for real property improvements made to the Facility pursuant to the ORC 3735.67 which exemption shall be in the amount of 100% for a period of 15-years commencing in the first year for which the Project would first be taxable were that property not exempted from taxation. This Council finds and determines that the foregoing abatement terms are consistent with the requirements of the CRA Ordinance.

SECTION 2: This Council hereby authorizes the payment to the Whitehall City School District as outlined in the School Compensation Agreement, and authorizes any payment to the Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools (EFCTS) District of any payments required pursuant to ORC 5709.82.

SECTION 3: The CRA Agreement in the form presently on file with the Clerk of Council, providing for, among other things, the provision of the real property tax exemption for the Project and waiver of the fees provided for in Ohio Revised Code Section 3735.671, is hereby approved and authorized with changes therein and completions and amendments thereto not inconsistent with this resolution and not substantially adverse to this City and which shall be approved by the Mayor. The Mayor, for and in the name of this City, is hereby authorized to execute and deliver that CRA Agreement and any amendments thereto, provided further that the approval of changes and completions or amendments thereto by that official, and their character as not being substantially adverse to the City, shall be evidenced conclusively

RESOLUTION NO. 034-2026

by the Mayor's execution thereof. This Council further hereby authorizes the Mayor, the Director of Development and the City Attorney, and other appropriate officers of the City, to sign those instruments and make those arrangements as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this ordinance.

SECTION 4: This Council agrees that, with respect to the Project, the City will comply to the extent required with ORC 5709.82 except as set forth herein.

SECTION 5: The Director of Development is authorized and directed to forward an executed copy of the CRA Agreement to the Director of the Ohio Development Services Agency within 15 days following the execution of the CRA Agreement.

SECTION 6: This Council finds and determines that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the passage of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Council and any of its committees and that all deliberations of this Council or any of its committees that resulted in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public in compliance with the law, including RC 121.22.

SECTION 7: That this Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, peace, safety and welfare and for the further reason that legal agreements have been reached and must now be executed; WHEREFORE, this Resolution shall go into effect immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

President of Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Mayor