

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Orwell Village Council

REGULAR Meeting

Date: August 19, 2025

Council President Ruks called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Clerk-Finance Director Kim McKinley performed roll call and the following council members were present: Mr. Cottrell, Ms. Cozad, Mr. Denihan, Mr. Hartz and Mr. Ruks.

Others Present: Village Manager Dr. Sean Ratican and Solicitor Chris Newcomb

Agenda: Under new business, Solicitor Newcomb requested Purdue Opioid Settlement be added. Mr. Hartz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell to amend and accept agenda. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cozad – yea, Denihan – yea, Hartz – yea, Ruks – yea, Mr. Cottrell. Motion passed.

Public: Gabriel McVey, Gazette. Jackie Foote, Renee Takacs, Debbie Schimley, Tiffany Beal, Kelsy and Duane Squibbs were also in attendance.

Ms. Foote along with Parks and Recreation Committee is attending to show support for the creation of a new fund for community events. Council President Ruks announced legislation will be considered later in the meeting. Ms. Foote reported that the garage bay where Christmas decorations are located is filled with flooring and equipment preventing committee from working on decorations. There are only two months to get everything in order before weather turns. She asked if the items in their way to be moved to the second bay. Ms. McKinley mentioned committees concerns up to Mr. Gregor; he will have items moved.

Minutes: Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Denihan to approve the minutes of the regular council meeting held on July 29, 2025. Roll call, 5 yeas: Denihan - yea, Hartz – yea, Ruks - yea, Cottrell – yea, Cozad – yea. Motion passed.

Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hartz to approve the minutes of the special council meeting held on August 12, 2025. Roll call, 5 yeas: Hartz – yea, Ruks - yea, Cottrell – yea, Cozad – yea, Denihan – yea. Motion passed.

Mr. Hartz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell to approve the minutes, as amended, on the work session held on August 12, 2025. Roll call, 5 yeas: Ruks - yea, Cottrell – yea, Cozad – yea, Denihan - yea, Hartz – yea, Motion passed.

Bills: Mr. Hartz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell, to approve the payment of bills. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cottrell – yea, Cozad – yea, Denihan - yea, Hartz – yea, Ruks – yea. Motion passed.

SCAD: Mr. Hartz read written report from meeting held on August 11, 2025. Report includes monthly and YTD call numbers. Jack Scott, Midway Tire donated \$3,000 proceeds from car show to SCAD. The board approved the hiring of 3 new paramedics allowing 2 crews on each shift. There have been discussions on forming a new ambulance district with townships east of SCAD; this will be an expensive undertaking that will take some years to develop.

Village Manager Report: Dr. Ratican reported that the village has had a couple of waterline breaks that are being addressed. There have been complaints of sewer smell in a couple of areas of village. The superintendent found stagnant water laying in dried creek bed.

Dr. Ratican has been lobbying First Energy on the streetlights that are out. First Energy shows only four lights being reported. He has encouraged the company to come out and see for themselves.

Dr. Ratican reported that there has been a transition within the Fire Dept. Department. The department has three new applicants and will continue to recruit talent. Dr. Ratican will have further discussion with council on restructuring of the fire department.

Ms. Cozad discussed the prior water project where the old water tower was replaced with PVR vaults. At the time, water pressure was low, with small adjustments needed overtime to prevent the blowing of lines. Ms. Cozad continues to have low water pressure in her bathroom. The pressure is not what it once was. Mr. Sency is welcome to stop by her home to check for himself. Ms. Cozad wanted to know if anyone else had complaints. Ms. Squibbs said her water is highly chlorinated because she is one of the first properties at the beginning of line.

Police Department: Chief Fernandez submitted a written report.

Park and Recreation: None

Planning & Zoning Commission: A report for meeting held on May 28, 2028, was included in agenda packet.

Solicitors' report: He discussed the Purdue Settlement at beginning of meeting. A resolution has been presented on the creation of the Community Enrichment Fund.

Finance Report: Ms. McKinley provided a summary of the submitted July reports. Ms. McKinley will be attending hearing in front of Ashtabula Co. Budget Commission on September 10, 2025. With pending legislation at the state level, the commission is conducting a thorough review of subdivisions. I will report on items not included in the budget such as the proposed garage. Having too much carryover could reduce the millage the village receives. Solicitor Newcomb explained that the state wants to reduce inside millage and property taxes along with trying to prevent schools and municipalities from having carryover even though it is sound fiscal management to prepare for emergencies. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Denihan, to approve the finance report. The motion passed with all in favor.

Zoning: Zoning: A written report was included in agenda packet. Mr. Bellas reviewed at work session.

Old Business:

RESOLUTION NO. 25-08-01R: AN RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE MANAGER TO ADVERTISE AND/OR SOLICIT BIDS AS RECOMMENDED BY GPD GROUP FOR THE VILLAGE OF ORWELL ROAD DEPARTMENT STORAGE BUILDING AND TO EXECUTE ANY DOCUMENTS AS REQUIRED AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Mr. Hartz wants more information on GDP, the cost of engineering and the estimated construction cost. Mr. Denihan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell to move Resolution 25-08-01R to second reading. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION 25-08-02R: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF A COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT FUND NO. 2901 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hartz, to pass as an emergency. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea. Motion passed. Mr. Hartz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell, to waive the three-reading rule. Roll call, 5 yeas: Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea. Motion passed. Mr. Hartz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell, to pass Resolution 25-08-02R. Roll call, 5 yeas: Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION 25-08-03R: A RESOLUTION APPOINTING SHANE GREGORY AS *INTERIM* FIRE CHIEF TO THE VILLAGE OF ORWELL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR A ONE (1) YEAR TERM COMMENCING AUGUST 1, 2025 AND ENDING JULY 31, 2026 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Denihan, to pass as an emergency. Roll call, 5 yeas: Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea. Motion passed. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruks, to waive the three-reading rule. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea. Motion passed. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hartz, to pass Resolution 25-08-03R. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea. Motion passed.

ORDINANCE 25-08-04: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE EMPLOYEE SALARY WAGE SCALE OF THE VILLAGE OF ORWELL AND REPLACING ANY AND ALL PREVIOUS ORDINANCES AND/OR RESOLUTIONS REGARDING THE SAME TO REFLECT NEW WAGE SCALES ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBITS A & B, RESPECTIVELY AND INCORPORATED HEREIN TO BE EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2025 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruks, to pass as an emergency. Roll call, 5 yeas: Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea. Motion passed. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hartz, to waive the three-reading rule. Roll call, 5 yeas: Hartz-yea, Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea. Motion passed. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hartz, to pass Ordinance 25-08-04R. Roll call, 5 yeas: Ruks-yea, Cottrell-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea, Motion passed.

New Business: Solicitor Newcomb recommended council accept the bankruptcy plan of Purdue Pharma to move forward with the Opioid Settlement Plan. Mr. Hartz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell to accept the Chapter 11 Plan of Reorganization of Purdue Pharm LP classified as the opioid lawsuit. Motion passed unanimously.

Public: Debbie Schimley watched a disturbing video of Cortland Village meeting held last night. Since the individual is with Cortland and Orwell, she distributed copies of meeting on thumb drives for council to view and to do their own assessment. Mr. Ruks is aware of the video. He believed accusations are without merit and he, for one, is happy of the work and product that has been received thus far from the village manager and the assistant manager. Ms. Foote said that from the library standpoint, she felt everything in video mirrored the conversations held between library and village. She felt it was concerning from a village resident standpoint and as a director of the library, having to deal with the issues and conversations she has had with village. As we live in the village, we vote you in and you work for us. If we find something concerning, while you are happy with his work, it needs to be investigated and if warranted, it needs to be addressed. Mr. Ruks assured those in attendance that if there is anything illegal going on, he would be the first on to speak up. He has done so in the past with other village managers. Ms. Schimley said Cortland is contacting AG office. Solicitor Newcomb said State of Ohio will conduct their own investigation and if they make a recommendation to the solicitor he would then report to council without input from managers. Ms. Foote acknowledged that if there was nothing illegal going on that is fine, allegations just need to be investigated. Solicitor Newcomb said he finds the situation of allowing what occurred at the meeting concerning, setting that council up for their own liability. Ms. Foote added that village needs to know who the owner of the company is or where the company is located from any company doing business with village whether it may be an LLC, partnership, engineering or construction firm. Solicitor Newcomb reminded everyone that these are only allegations that have yet to be investigated.

Another member of the public commented that the fire department is not a volunteer fire department if members get paid.

Mr. Hartz reported that he and Mr. Denihan reviewed the video this morning. He had some concerns and discussed those concerns with the village manager. Mr. Hartz is not aware of anything wrong. If there is an investigation in Cortland, he is sure village will know about it. The residents appreciated his response.

Mr. Hartz thanked the concert committee for putting together a group great entertainment this summer. The farmer's market was a welcomed addition this year. He would like to see the concerts and participation continue to grow. Mr. Denihan reported that the concert committee will have a follow-up meeting in September. Mr. Denihan welcomed any suggestions or ideas.

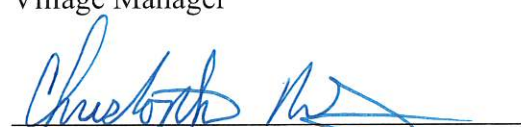
Media: Gabriel McVey, Gazette confirmed that Shane Gregory was appointed the Interim Fire Chief.

Executive Session: Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ruks, to go into executive session with Council, Village Manager and Solicitor, to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee with no action to follow. Roll call, 5 yeas: Cottrell – yea, Cozad – yea, Denihan-yea, Mr. Hartz – yea, Ruks-yea. Motion passed. Council entered executive session at 5.25 p.m. Mr. Cottrell made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cozad, to adjourn executive session. Motion passed with all in favor. Council exited executive session at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Ruks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cottrell to adjourn the meeting. Roll Call, 4 yeas: Ruks-yea, Cozad-yea, Denihan-yea, Hartz-yea. Motion passed. Motion passed with all in favor. Mr. Ruks adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Approved: September 16, 2025


Clerk of Council

Village Manager


President of Council