

**REGULAR MEETING  
December 8, 2025**

**Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Barbara J. Lloyd with the recitation of the “Pledge of Allegiance”.**

**Roll Call: In Attendance - Paul Lowe, Kim St. Clair, Ed Harlan,  
Mike Nunley, Bo Coconis, Greg Gibson**

**Ed moved to accept the minutes of the Regular Village Council Meeting held November 3, 2025. Seconded by Paul. Gibson– yea, Coconis – yay, Nunley – yay, Harlan - yay, St. Clair – yay, and Lowe - yay. Motion Carried.**

**Greg moved to accept the minutes of the Special Village Council Meeting held November 26, 2025. Seconded by Paul. Lowe – yay, St. Clair – yay, Harlan – yay, Nunley – yay, Coconis – yay, and Gibson – yay. Motion Carried.**

**Paul moved to dispense the Fiscal Officer’s Bank Reconciliation Report for October 2025. Seconded by Ed. Gibson– yea, Coconis – yay, Nunley – yay, Harlan - yay, St. Clair – yay, and Lowe - yay. Motion Carried.**

**Ed moved to dispense the Fiscal Officer’s Bank Reconciliation Report for November 2025. Seconded by Bo. Lowe – yay, St. Clair – yay, Harlan – yay, Nunley – yay, Coconis – yay, and Gibson – yay. Motion Carried.**

**Mayor Lloyd asked Council if they saw the November 2025 Mayor’s Court Data?**

**CITIZENS AND GUESTS**

**Alan Brown – Verdantas**

**Alan Brown of Verdantas opened the meeting by introducing himself as the Water Services Department Lead, overseeing a team of approximately 30 engineers, technicians, and designers in Ohio focused on water and wastewater distribution and treatment projects. He provided council with copies of Verdantas’ statement of qualifications to outline the firm’s broader service capabilities beyond water projects (including environmental, parks and recreation, roads, bridges, sidewalks, and funding assistance). Brown noted Verdantas has approximately 400 professionals across 10 Ohio offices and one office in Wheeling, West Virginia. He emphasized the team’s long-standing working relationship and experience, and thanked council for considering Verdantas for what he acknowledged is a significant decision and major project for the Village.**

**Keith Doll then introduced himself as the proposed project manager. He shared that he has approximately 30 years of engineering experience, including eight years with the State of Ohio and most recently as Assistant Chief Engineer with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, working on numerous water and wastewater projects. Doll referenced his recent work on regionalization efforts at Dillon State Park with Muskingum County staff and stated that after leaving the public sector**

he returned to private consulting specifically with Verdantas due to their prior performance as a consultant while he was at ODNR. Doll expressed interest in supporting South Zanesville not only on the immediate water project but as a long-term partner, noting many of Verdantas' clients are repeat clients.

Grant Schooley followed with a summary of his experience, noting 18 years in water and sewer engineering and 10 years as a professional engineer. Schooley reviewed several example projects from the firm's handouts, including a major Crooksville Water System Improvement project involving approximately 60,000 feet of 6-inch and 8-inch PVC water main replacement, construction of a 200,000-gallon storage tank, and significant reduction in water loss from over 50% to near 10%. He explained that the project cost was approximately \$6 million and was reportedly around 80% grant-funded through multiple funding sources such as Ohio EPA's WSRLA program, CDBG, and the Army Corps of Engineers, with the village needing only a relatively small loan. Schooley also described other large projects including the Tappers Plains/Chester Water District work (including a tank, booster station, and approximately 34,000 feet of waterline), and a Burr Regional Water project in Athens County involving approximately 120,000 feet of rural waterline expansion supported by infrastructure grant funding. He emphasized that Verdantas routinely assists communities in securing funding and managing disruption during construction through careful design and planning.

The team discussed South Zanesville's current water system challenges, noting Verdantas had already conducted preliminary research and obtained a map of the village water lines from Muskingum County GIS. The map was described as showing line sizes by thickness/color, with larger mains identified separately. The consultants acknowledged known concerns such as low pressure in some areas reportedly down to approximately 20 psi and indicated that early steps would include gathering all available village system information (including tank elevation data) and creating a hydraulic model to identify problem areas and evaluate solutions. Verdantas stressed their approach would be collaborative rather than producing recommendations without village input, stating that village staff and operators know the system best. They also highlighted their ability to support public outreach and resident communication as projects move forward, along with funding strategy development.

A council member (Paul) expressed strong concern and anxiety about the financial scale of the project, citing current village fund levels of approximately \$1.4 million and minimal year-over-year increases, and stated that the cost would ultimately impact residents through rate increases. Paul noted he felt more comfortable with Verdantas compared to another firm previously presented, particularly due to Verdantas' experience securing grants and their established working relationships. He emphasized the importance of improved water volume and pressure for community growth and future development, stating that poor pressure hinders residential building and expansion. He raised questions about whether the village should pursue improvements line-by-line or through broader phases, and voiced concern about unintended consequences such as new leaks appearing when others are repaired.

Verdantas responded that a phased approach is possible and often appropriate, but that system-wide evaluation is needed to plan phases effectively. They explained that Crooksville considered phasing but ultimately completed a comprehensive approach because the availability of grant funding made a full project feasible, and because

water loss reduction helped offset cost impacts. The consultants explained that funding levels depend heavily on community eligibility factors such as household income and population, and that funding programs often have capped amounts (for example CDBG and certain EPA principal forgiveness limits). They noted that funding agencies generally prefer a plan that solves the overall problem rather than leaving persistent deficiencies that require repeated funding requests. The team described participation in Ohio's Small Community Infrastructure Program meetings in Columbus, where agencies convene to hear community needs and build familiarity with projects prior to application submission, strengthening future funding competitiveness.

Paul asked specifically whether grant funding is available to cover portions of both the planning process and engineering/design. Doll explained that while planning grants can be more difficult because agencies want communities to demonstrate vested interest, there are opportunities such as the Mayor's Partnership for Progress program, which can provide technical assistance for planning activities including hydraulic modeling. Additionally, Ohio EPA offers planning and design loans at 0% interest that can later be rolled into long-term construction financing, reducing financial burden by spreading costs over a longer term (for example 30 years rather than a short-term planning loan). The consultants acknowledged that the project will take time and that funding cycles are annual, requiring strategic coordination of multiple sources over several cycles. They also discussed the uncertainty related to the village's existing water tank issues, including a leaking tank and unknown long-term needs, reinforcing the importance of early modeling and evaluation before final scope decisions.

When asked about next steps, Verdantas recommended beginning with a hydraulic model and initial planning effort, using the village's GIS data as a foundation while confirming its accuracy. They estimated hydraulic modeling for a village of this size could cost approximately \$25,000–\$30,000 as part of the planning process and noted that Mayor's Partnership for Progress funding could potentially cover a substantial portion (up to approximately \$50,000). The team also addressed concerns about consultant cost, stating that although Verdantas is a larger firm, they remain rooted in local community work and maintain competitive pricing due to market conditions; they cited long-term service relationships with multiple nearby small communities (including Zanesville, Crooksville, Roseville, Pleasantville, Bremen, and Amanda). The meeting concluded with Verdantas leaving the system map with council for review, reiterating their goal of forming a long-term partnership and supporting the village through planning, funding strategy, and phased implementation. Council indicated a decision timeline of approximately one to two months, likely after new council members take office, with an intent to respond by mid-February. Verdantas noted that Ohio EPA construction funding applications typically have a March deadline, though planning and design financing is available on an open cycle, and that the Mayor's Partnership for Progress deadline is generally in July. The consultants encouraged council to reach out with any questions in the meantime and thanked attendees for their time.

## DEPARTMENT HEADS

### Administrator – Joe Miller

The administrator reported that Travis was assigned responsibility for vehicle and equipment maintenance, including tracking oil changes for all village vehicles and performing routine greasing and upkeep on equipment such as the Backhoe and other village equipment. It was also announced that the village finally received reimbursement grant funds from the Ohio Attorney General's Office for ballistic vests for the police department in the amount of \$3,940.50, noting the award had been approved months earlier but payment was delayed. Updates were provided on village maintenance work at the park located at Montague and East Main Street, where staff repaired and replaced boards on benches and a picnic table and completed power-washing of the playground equipment. The administrator also reported that the impound lot was cleaned and reorganized, removing long-standing stored items and selling two loads of scrap aluminum for \$206.50, with a full container of steel and iron still awaiting pickup and expected to generate additional revenue. Several residents reportedly commented positively on the improved organization and cleanliness of the lot.

The administrator then reviewed the results of an Ohio EPA inspection conducted on November 6, noting the village received an inspection report identifying eight violations. The administrator emphasized that none of the violations were considered life-threatening or urgent, and that approximately half were paperwork-related items that can be corrected through proper documentation and submission. Additional issues were described as manageable, including one example involving three scales on-site where two were inoperable; the village has already budgeted funds to replace the equipment and Wesley is in the process of ordering new scales. The EPA report also included 11 recommendations (not formal orders) to help guide corrective actions, and the village indicated it is already working toward resolving the identified items and moving in the right direction. Wesley has 30 days to submit a corrective action plan outlining how the village will address and resolve the violations and recommendations identified in the EPA report. The administrator confirmed the report was received on December 4, meaning the village's plan is due around January 3. The administrator noted the EPA provided a clear list of required corrections, so the primary obligation at this stage is for Wesley to formally submit the plan describing the steps the village will take. The administrator stated they still need to follow up with Wesley, who has been on vacation, to ensure the plan is completed and submitted within the required timeframe.

### Fire – Russell Taylor

The fire department reported a total of 106 calls for the previous month, including 46 calls to the township and 44 calls to the village, with the remaining calls occurring in other areas. It was noted that three calls came in while crews were already handling other incidents, and the backup ambulance was able to cover two of those calls, while one was handled by another unit due to the use of 1402. Backup coverage is being used on weekends to allow time to recharge equipment and ensure it remains operational. Additionally, the department anticipates announcing and introducing promotions of new officers to council at next month's meeting.

**Police – Mark Ross (absent)**

**Nothing.**

**Water/ Street – Wesley Wiseman**

**Wesley stated that most items from the EPA report had already been discussed, and his next step is to submit the required corrective action plan outlining how the village intends to address the violations. He noted that his goal is not only to respond to the required violations but also to incorporate the EPA’s recommendations by assigning them priority and building a solid plan for completion. Wesley explained that demonstrating progress and good-faith effort should help the village during future inspections, as regulators may view the village more favorably if they can see consistent work toward resolving issues, even if everything is not immediately perfect. Council acknowledged the update and thanked Wesley.**

#### **REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

**Finance Committee –**

**Council discussed several items related to 2026 appropriation changes, including adjustments to ensure sufficient funds were appropriated to pay for additional fire hydrants that are needed. The meeting also included discussion of wage/raise adjustments that were made based on the finance committee’s recommendations. In addition, council reviewed a personnel-related request submitted by employee Rob Guenther concerning vacation pay for 2026. The matter was discussed and denied as part of mid-year policy change considerations.**

**Personnel Committee –**

**During the Personnel Committee report, Greg asked for an update on how things were going with village employees. Joe responded that overall things were going well and stated that efforts are ongoing to get everyone aligned and operating on the same page, particularly regarding communication expectations and adherence to the chain of command.**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS AND LETTERS**

**Under communications and letters, the Fiscal Officer reported receipt of a Salt Bin closeout letter, confirming that the village has satisfied all obligations tied to the salt bin grant. As a result, the village expects to receive an additional payment of a little over \$7,000, which should arrive by the end of the year. The administrator also shared information regarding a rate increase for EMS collections, noting it was included for transparency. Russell and the department are currently comfortable continuing with PMMG for EMS collections; however, PMMG also sent additional communication regarding potential changes related to fire service collections, and it was noted that this may require further discussion depending on whether services beyond EMS are affected. The Fiscal Officer stated the increase appears to be slight. Lastly, a retail liquor permit objection notice was mentioned, and the administrator indicated that the village typically allows existing permits to remain in place.**

**ORDINANCE 2025-5**            **APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH ZANESVILLE, STATE OF OHIO DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2026, (REVISED CODE SECTION 5705.38) (3<sup>RD</sup> READING)**

**Ed made a motion to pass the third reading of Ordinance 2025-5. Seconded by Greg. Gibson– yea, Coconis – yay, Nunley – yay, Harlan - yay, St. Clair – yay, and Lowe - yay. Motion Carried.**

**ORDINANCE 2025-6**            **AN ORDINANCE FOR THE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH ZANESVILLE TO PROVIDE FIRE PROTECTION TO SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP (3<sup>RD</sup> READING)**

**Greg made a motion to pass the third reading of Ordinance 2025-6. Seconded by Ed. Lowe – yay, St. Clair – yay, Harlan – yay, Nunley – yay, Coconis – yay, and Gibson – yay. Motion Carried.**

**ORDINANCE 2025-7**            **AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE FIRST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH TO BE THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH ZANESVILLE AND COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULED SUGGESTIONS FOR THE YEAR 2026 (3<sup>RD</sup> READING)**

**Bo made a motion to pass the third reading of Ordinance 2025-7. Seconded by Ed. Gibson– yea, Coconis – yay, Nunley – yay, Harlan - yay, St. Clair – yay, and Lowe - yay. Motion Carried.**

**ORDINANCE 2025-8**            **AN ORDINANCE SETTING THE REFUSE PICKUP RATES FOR THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH ZANESVILLE, OHIO (3<sup>RD</sup> READING)**

**Paul motioned to pass the third reading of Ordinance 2025-8. Seconded by Ed. Lowe – yay, St. Clair – yay, Harlan – yay, Nunley – yay, Coconis – yay, and Gibson – yay. Motion Carried.**

**RESOLUTION 1136**            **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAY RAISES FOR CERTAIN VILLAGE OF SOUTH ZANESVILLE EMPLOYEES (3<sup>RD</sup> READING)**

**Bo made a motion to pass the third reading of Resolution 1136. Seconded by Ed. Gibson– yea, Coconis – yay, Nunley – yay, Harlan - yay, St. Clair – yay, and Lowe - yay. Motion Carried.**

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Taylor Bennett to Regular Status – End of Probation**

**Council reviewed a personnel request to remove Taylor Bennett from probation and grant permanent regular status, noting the change technically should have taken effect on November 30, but the employee agreed to wait for council action at the current meeting. With no objections raised, Mike made a motion to approve the status change, which was seconded by Paul. A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed unanimously, with affirmative votes recorded from Paul, Kim, Ed, Mike, Bo, and Greg.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**None.**

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**Council briefly discussed the “Council Do’s and Don’ts” document that had been provided, explaining it was intended as a guidance tool to help council, staff, and Joe maintain consistency regarding communication expectations and the established chain of command. It was requested that all council members sign and return a copy of the document for recordkeeping, and it was confirmed that signed copies would be retained and also provided back for council records.**

**The village will hold its annual safety Christmas meeting, and anyone wishing to attend should RSVP to Taylor. The office will be closed the afternoon of the meeting, as well as on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, with no objections raised. The meeting was described as a combination of safety-related activity and a social gathering, continuing a tradition started the prior year, including a “safety poem.” The meeting time was set for 12:30 p.m., and food was expected to be provided by Texas Roadhouse, with details on whether it would be catered pans or a menu still pending. Discussion confirmed the date as Tuesday the 23rd, and council members indicated they planned to attend.**

**Council also revisited the village’s financial standing, referencing materials provided under finances that compared year-end totals. Despite recent unexpected costs and challenges, including major equipment expenses such as the fire truck, council expressed appreciation that the village’s finances remained stable and ended the year in a slightly improved position compared to the previous year.**

## **ADJOURN**

**Mike moved to adjourn, seconded by Greg. Mayor Lloyd asked all to vote by stating I. All did. Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM.**

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**Barbara Lloyd - Mayor**

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**Taylor Bennett - Fiscal Officer**