

Record of Proceedings

Minutes of West Lafayette Village Council Special Meeting

West Lafayette Village Council met in special session on March 11, 2026 at 8:15p.m. in the municipal building with Mayor Jessica Tubbs presiding.

Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer

Roll Call: Adam Fisher, Jason Hursey, Kenny Koch, Tyler Maple, Christie Maurer and Jacob Yoho were present. Chief Eckelberry and several other village residents were present.

Mayor Tubbs commented that the purpose of this special meeting was for resolutions regarding the parks and a .gov grant application. Residents were given the opportunity to address Council.

Joe Scott spoke to express his disappointment in the resolution for the park grant funding being voted down. He recalled years ago being in Rotary and being a part of putting in the dugouts and the visions they had for the future of the park. He stated the importance of the grant funding to help with improving the community, especially for the kids. Tabitha Patterson, the President of Ridgewood Recreation, spoke stating her involvement in RW Rec for over 15 years and that she feels very strongly about the improvements to the facilities and is present to answer any questions regarding the RW Rec portion of the project. Mayor Tubbs asked how much it is projected to cost for the new ball field installation. Tabitha responded that it will cost roughly \$50,000 but some of that will be covered by labor donations of local businesses and residents offering time and equipment to move and level dirt. Ridgewood schools donated 15 loads of dirt for the baseball and soccer fields. With past and future fundraising, Tabitha feels they will have the majority of the money to cover the cost of the baseball field, but wanted to partner with WE R WL and the village to apply for grant funding to be able to do more at the park such as improvements to the concession stand, restrooms, etc. They have also completed in-kind donation forms for all of the volunteer work already done at the park to use as a match for the grant, if needed. There are currently 342 kids registered this year for RW Rec sharing the 3 fields for practices and there were over 200 games in the 2025 season. Further discussion was held regarding the size of the current fields and the new field and the possibility of tournaments. Tabitha stated that the RW Rec board is the one to maintain the fields during the ball season. Chief Eckelberry spoke on behalf of Councilman Yoho to ask "Do we have a contractor, a drawing of the mockup and the cost of the project?". Mayor Tubbs responded that there is a cost estimate and it has been submitted with all of the grant so far. Tabitha stated that pieces of the project has been broken down into smaller chunks. Brittany Howell spoke to say that she used to be on Council and was chair of the Revitalization committee for 4 years, and the ideas such as the walking trails, splash pads, soccer fields, pickle ball courts, etc. and to see it all come together has been thrilling, but to see it all die because of a technicality is disappointing. Howell asked the Council members to reconsider their vote and to vote yes for the grant funding. It is to benefit the whole community and give the kids something to do when many complain there is nothing. Richard Miller spoke stating he grew up in the area, is back now raising his own family and has a small son and was disheartened when he heard the resolution didn't pass. He commented there isn't much to do in the area and he feels the community really needs this. He also asked the Council to reconsider and vote yes. Frank Mathews spoke to say there is a reason that 50-60 kids are looking to open enroll in Ridgewood because of the programs they have to offer and he feels it all fits together. If it's about the kids, let's

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worry about the details later and find a place for the kids to go. Councilman Hursey commented that the success that Ridgewood has had with its sporting programs boils down to coming straight out of Waterworks Park. Chief Eckelberry spoke on behalf of Councilman Yoho to ask "I have heard that this project will not effect our property taxes, but will it in the future?" Mayor Tubbs responded to say that the addition of another ball field will actually increase the lawn maintenance of RW Rec and lessen the village's responsibility. The new bathrooms will also add to RW Rec maintenance, the splash pad will be minimal maintenance. Councilman Hursey stated that this project will not affect property taxes at all.

Councilman Tyler Maple spoke thanking the residents for coming out to show their support and to those that reached out to him personally regarding resolution 2026-13. He noted that he is in support of the improvements at the park and wants to see it succeed. His reasoning for voting no was based on speaking to prior council members and mayors that did not believe waiving the three readings and declaring it an emergency measure was for the public's health, safety or financial matters as it robs the public proper notice to weigh in on the issues. He applauds the residents for making their voices heard on the matter and announced that he will be voting yes on Resolution 2026-13. Brittany Howell questioned that with the deadline being Thursday, how did that not constitute an emergency? Tyler responded that according to his understanding it does not constitute an emergency, but many people in the community want it and he is standing with putting the people first. Mayor Tubbs responded that it is a financial emergency in that it is a grant and that is financial and it will potentially double the money that has already been raised by RW Rec and that the grant money is not to just pay bills. Councilman Hursey stated that the emergency clause does not mean that emergency funds are being used to pay for the project, but rather that it is an emergency to pass it due to the deadlines.

Councilman Jacob Yoho spoke to explain his reasoning for voting no. He stated that he was late to the committee meeting due to having his taxes done and thought that the topic was discussed while he was not there. He stated that he did not ask any questions because time was running out in the meeting. Mayor Tubbs and the Fiscal Officer noted that the resolution had been discussed at the 2 prior meetings and allowed opportunity for discussion.

Councilman Kenny Koch spoke stating that not only does the community care deeply about West Lafayette and this project, but so do those who voted "no". He believes council members should be able to vote according to their understanding and their conscience without intimidation or pressure, but should also take time to research and learn about the issues and bring questions and discussions to the meetings.

Councilman Adam Fisher presented a timeline of events leading up to the voting. He stated that 3-4 weeks ago, OMEGA reached out suggesting that the village apply for this grant. All of the projects included have been ready to go as soon as funding is available from prior grant attempts made. Congressman Mark Hiners office was contacted to be sure that the village was a good candidate for the grant and he confirmed that this is exactly what they are looking for. The resolution was first presented to Council on the February 23rd committee meeting and had its first reading later that evening at the council meeting. Council members were informed at that time it would be read twice and then asked to waive the 3rd reading and pass as an emergency due to the application deadline of March 12th at 6pm. The emergency clause was necessary so it would take effect immediately and bypass the 30-day waiting period after passing to meet the application deadline. No opposition was stated at that time. There were 2 weeks before the next meeting on March 9th when the resolution was read for the 2nd time. There was

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no opposition brought up at the committee meeting or the weeks prior. The resolution was voted down 4 to 2 as it is necessary for 5 yes votes to suspend the rules.

Councilman Hursey commented that many people comment that grant money is free money, but is actually taxpayer money. The grant money could go to anyone, but why not try to get as much of that grant money back into our community as possible, regardless of what it is for. If the village doesn't apply for and receive it, it will just go to another community that will be getting our tax dollars we have already paid.

Councilman Yoho inquired who pays for the water bill for the park with concern that it was going to raise the residents water bill. The village will be responsible for paying the water bill and there have been discussions about getting a discounted rate for the splash pad water. We R WL are also doing fundraisers to help offset the cost each year. He also asked about the road being one-way going back to the fields. Mayor Tubbs responded that it will flow the same as it always has and will be busy as usual, but there have also been discussions about possibly widening the road, better signage, or another entry road for a better flow of traffic. Chief Eckelberry commented that the traffic does flow pretty well and there have been very few accidents in that area in the several years he has worked in the village.

Solicitor Joel Blue clarified that anytime the Council meets, it is in open meeting with proper notice and minutes are kept of each meeting. According to the Ohio Sunshine Laws, Council is not permitted to meet and make decisions in private and to his knowledge, is not happening.

Joe Scott commented on the traffic during ball season that it all typically runs pretty smoothly. Councilman Yoho expressed concerns about needles and predators watching kids in bathing suits while using the splash pad and was cause for him to vote no. Tabitha and Kenny both commented that there is nothing that can be done to prevent potential predators, but were not concerned as there are enough parents in that area at all times.

Introduction to ordinances and resolutions:

2026-12 A RESOLUTION BY THE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF WEST LAFAYETTE, COSHOCTON COUNTY, OHIO, AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE VILLAGE MAYOR TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS) AND STATE AND LOCAL CYBERSECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (SLCGP) FOR THE ROUND 3 .GOV DOMAIN MIGRATION AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY Third Reading/Emergency

A motion was made by Christie Maurer and seconded by Jason Hursey to adopt Resolution 2026-12. Roll call 6 yes.

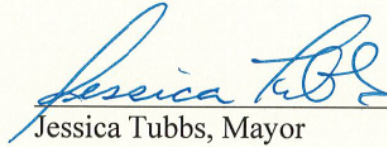
2026-13 A RESOLUTION BY THE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF WEST LAFAYETTE, COSHOCTON COUNTY, OHIO, AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE VILLAGE MAYOR TO REQUEST FUNDING FOR THE WATERWORKS PARK IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT THROUGH THE STATE CAPITAL BUDGET COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY Third Reading/Emergency

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A motion was made by Adam Fisher and seconded by Jason Hursey to adopt Resolution 2026-13. Roll call 6 yes.

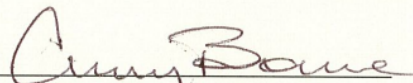
A motion was made by Adam Fisher and seconded by Kenny Koch to adjourn until the next meeting on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. Roll Call 6 yes.

A full recording of this evening's minutes can be viewed by visiting www.westlafayettevillage.com and clicking on the Facebook link at the bottom of the page under CONTACTS.



Jessica Tubbs, Mayor

Attest:



Amy Bourne, Fiscal Officer

REPLY TO REC ISSUE, ETC

Before we move forward tonight, I'd like to say something briefly. It's clear that people in this community care deeply about West Lafayette and about this project. I also believe that those who voted "no" also care, and a "no" vote does not, nor should it, imply any less concern. Caution is a good thing and disagreement does not mean someone does not have concern about the village or its future. It's actually to the contrary.

A few weeks ago, I mentioned that I never want this council, especially those of us who are new, to appear as though we are simply rubber-stamping decisions that were already in motion before some of us took office. My expectation is that administration does not view council as "obstructionists", for lack of a better term, for trying to be diligent and responsible. It is understood that they, naturally, spend a great deal of time developing projects because they work inside village operations every day. Council's responsibilities are different in that we work a couple days per month, in comparison; our role is to review those proposals carefully and decide whether to approve them. Ultimately, council is the body that authorizes actions through our votes, and with that authority comes responsibility for those decisions. No other member of the village carries that voting accountability, including the mayor who only has a circumstantial tie breaking vote, the administrator who manages the day-to-day operations of the village and carry out the policies that council and the mayor approve, and fiscal officer who is essentially the financial record-keeper and compliance officer. For these reasons, especially, it is important that EVERY member has the details regarding what we are voting on. Also, it is important to ensure that anything proposed before we, or any new member, understands what is coming down the pipe prior to being asked to vote on an emergency issue. Procedurally, the members voting "no" were correct in that they actually have a stronger procedural argument for this issue than people realize. The concern about the emergency clause and suspending the three readings isn't arbitrary. And this balance and ability to question is part of how good government works. For that, he should be applauded, not criticized, for his stance, as hard as it may be for the public to swallow.

I believe council members should be able to vote according to their understanding and their conscience without intimidation, piling on, or public pressure. I also believe it is important for each council member to take the time to research and learn about something being brought to the table for vote, which was the, if I am not mistaken, issue for this matter. If votes begin to change because of pressure, then decisions are no longer being made on judgment, but on who can withstand the most criticism.

My hope tonight is that we step back from the conflict we've seen over the past day and focus on the issue itself. Everyone here ultimately wants the same thing, what we believe is best for West Lafayette.



Kenneth Koch

West Lafayette Village Councilman

Sign In Sheet 03/11/2026 Special Meeting for GOV and Capital Projects

- 1) Joe Scott
- 2) William Patterson
- 3) Diana Landis
- 4) Rachel Miller
- 5) Rosanna Tynge
- 6) Cynthia Oshin
- 7) Emily Miller
- 8) Sarah Miller
- 9) Anthony Howell
- 10) Regina Shaw
- 11) Sarah Miller