

COVINGTON VILLAGE COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

Mayor Lee Harmon called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The following roll call was taken for council:

Council Members Present:

- Derrick Canan
- Jesse Reynolds
- Steven Blei
- Amy Welborn
- Martin Leistner
- Julie Blumenstock

Non-member Staff participating:

- Jordan Hodges – Village Administrator
- Lisa Cavender – Fiscal Officer
- David Friend – Police Chief

Consent Agenda:

The consent agenda included:

- Approval of Council Minutes (August 17, 2026, Meeting)

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Mr. Blei, seconded by Ms. Welborn. All ayes. Motion passed.

Visitors

Mindy Gearhardt is a concerned citizen that has deep family roots in the Village of Covington and she came today to ask council to formally draft a resolution in opposition to the grid growth project. She emotionally explained how important her family farm has been in the family for generations since 1911. She noted how the new towers would stand 175 feet tall and require 180 ft of right of way noting the project will degrade property values and strip away Covington's ability to expand. She stated the final deadline to submit opposition to the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) is October 15th and she is asking for council for their support in opposing the project.

Ryan Helton is also a concerned citizen that would also like to see a formal resolution in opposition of the grid growth project. He stated that a tower could be placed less than 250 feet from his home where he resides with his wife and children. These lines bring potential health

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risks so close to his property and would also disrupt the spring near their property as well. For the historical preservation of his property and the community, he is asking council to send a message to the Ohio Power Siting Board before it is too late.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Harmon was excited to introduce the new Covington School Superintendent Dr. Katina Childers. Dr. Childers has over two decades of experience in education and was most recently the high school principal and superintendent designee at New Lebanon Local Schools. She stated that she is very excited to be here and that the community has been very supportive and welcoming.

Administrator's Report

Mr. Hodges noted that door is in for the conference room and that project could now begin. He gave a brief update regarding the streetlight poles that had been damaged. One pole was due to ship on September 11th and he was working on getting a second quote for the other damaged pole at the insurance company's request. Mr. Hodges had a good meeting with the Covington Events Association (CEA) developing their relationship and he is working on finalizing the MOU with them which he will bring to council at a future meeting. He stated that he and Mr. Patrizio met with consultants on the fiber line project and presented their concerns with the possible route. He reminded everyone that the Grid Growth Ventures will hold a public information meeting for Miami County on Sept. 30th at Romer's Catering in Piqua from 4-7:30 p.m.

Discussion Items

Mr. Hodges noted that it has been a collaborative effort to get an ordinance drafted for e-bikes and scooters for them to review. If they have any suggestions, Mr. Hodges will review and bring the ordinance to council for approval at the next meeting.

Mr. Hodges discussed with council the current Hometown Hero Banner program and some of the challenges he is facing with the banners having to be on a rotation for display since we do not have enough poles for them and how the banners have been damaged in the past from taking them up and down. He asked if council would mind a program that would allow us to display the banners on the wooden poles throughout the village. It was noted after approval from AES to use the poles, everyone agreed to move forward.

Mr. Hodges then discussed the time limit noted for the parking lot at the municipal building and if that is something they would like to see stay the same or if adjusting it would be possible. Council agreed that they could move the no parking hours to a later time while keeping the three-hour time limit. Mr. Hodges will revise the ordinance and bring back to council at the next meeting.

Old Business

Resolution 37-26 – A resolution to levy a special assessment for the purpose of paying the cost of lighting the streets in the village of Covington, Ohio for the year 2027.

Mr. Hodges stated this is the third reading of this resolution. It is an annual item that needs passed so the street lighting can be assessed for next year. This resolution will be due to the County Auditor in September.

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A motion to approve Resolution 37-26 was made by Mr. Leistner, seconded by Mr. Blei. All ayes. Motion passed

Resolution 38-26 – A resolution levying assessments upon various lots and lands located in the Village of Covington for failure to pay utilities.

Mr. Hodges stated this is the third reading of this resolution and it would allow the village to assess unpaid utilities. This resolution will be due to the County Auditor in September.

A motion to amend Resolution 39-26 was made by Mr. Reynolds, seconded by Mr. Blei. All ayes. Motion passed.

A motion to approve Resolution 38-26 was made by Mr. Blumenstock, seconded by Mr. Leistner. All ayes. Motion passed.

Resolution 39-26 – A resolution levying assessments upon various lots and lands located in the Village of Covington for nuisance abatement.

Mr. Hodges stated this is the third reading of this resolution and it would allow the village to assess nuisance abatements. This resolution will be due to the County Auditor in September.

A motion to amend Resolution 39-26 was made by Mr. Reynolds, seconded by Ms. Welborn. All ayes. Motion passed.

A motion to approve Resolution 39-26 was made by Mr. Blei, seconded by Mr. Leistner. All ayes. Motion passed.

New Business

Resolution 41-26 – A resolution authorizing the Village Administrator to enter into a donation agreement.

Mr. Hodges stated that this donation agreement between the Village and Upper Valley Medical Center (UVMC) for \$186,408 towards the new Amphitheater/Plaza in Schoolhouse Park.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule for Resolution 41-26 was made by Ms. Welborn, seconded by Mr. Leistner. All ayes. Motion passed.

A motion to approve Resolution 41-26 was made by Mr. Blei, seconded by Mr. Leistner. All ayes. Motion passed.

Resolution 42-26 – A resolution authorizing the Village Administrator to submit an application for an Ohio Department of Development grant and in support.

Mr. Hodges stated he is planning to apply again for the Brownfield Remediation Program to demolish the old Sellman's Warehouse. Although the village did not receive funding in the first round of awards, we have the opportunity to apply again under a second round that has been announced with applications being due by September 11, 2026.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule for Resolution 42-26 was made by Ms. Blumenstock, seconded by Mr. Leistner. All ayes. Motion passed.

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A motion to approve Resolution 42-26 was made by Mr. Blei, seconded by Mr. Leistner. All ayes. Motion passed

Resolution 43-26 – A resolution accepting the Miami County Budget Commission Rates of Tax for the Year 2026.

Mr. Hodges stated this is the annual rate certification required to be approved and sent to the Miami County Budget Commission by October 1, 2026. The approval of this resolution certifies the rates of tax to be levied for collection in the Village of Covington. There were no questions.

Second reading will be on September 21, 2026.

Ordinance 14-26 – An ordinance to modify appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the Village of Covington, State of Ohio, during fiscal year December 31, 2026.

Mr. Hodges explained that this supplemental appropriation is necessary for the village to continue paying current utility bills that are coming due and to adjust for other projects ongoing in the village.

A motion to waive the three-reading rule for Ordinance 14-26 was made by Ms. Welborn, seconded by Mr. Canan. All ayes. Motion passed.

A motion to approve Ordinance 14-26 was made by Mr. Canan, seconded by Mr. Blei. All ayes. Motion passed.

Council also approved the special event application for Covington Christian Church/Church of the Brethren Worship in the Park at Schoolhouse Park.

Police Chief and Elected Official's Comments

Chief Friend noted that he will have an activity report for the last quarter for council at the next meeting. He also stated how excited he was to be starting a Chiefs Advisory Club at Covington Schools. The club will meet monthly and be a great way for the students to get involved, build trust, and have a platform to voice their opinions on real world issues.

Ms. Welborn wanted to remind everyone that the fall grant cycle deadline for the Miami County Foundation is September 10, 2026. These grants are a great opportunity for non-profits.

Ms. Blumenstock noted what a great time she and her son had at the Ford Rowdy Gathering over Labor Day weekend. The weather was perfect and they really enjoyed Elvis and were thrilled to see the reenactments.

Executive Session

None

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Blei, seconded by Mr. Leistner. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

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Lee Harmon, Mayor

Lisa Cavender, Fiscal Officer

Martin Leistner, President of Council

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