

Canal Winchester

*City Hall
Council Chambers
45 East Waterloo Street
Canal Winchester, OH 43110*



Meeting Minutes – FINAL

April 6, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Work Session

*Richard Moore - Chair
Laurie Amick
Will Bennett
Hanna Detwiler
Alec McLaughlin
David Payne
Patrick Shea*

City YouTube Channel – [CityofCW YouTube Page](#)

City Council will also continue to accept written public comments prior to a council meeting. To be included on the Council agenda, comments must be received by noon on Monday before the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be included on the next agenda. To submit a comment to City Council, click on the link below.

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A. Call To Order

Moore called the meeting to order at 6:23 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present 7 – Amick, Bennett, Detwiler, McLaughlin, Moore, Payne, Shea

C. Also In Attendance

Mayor Steager, Matt Peoples, Lucas Haire, Amanda Jackson

D. Request for Council Action**RES-26-018**

City Administrator

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND/OR CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR THE PARTICIPATION IN THE ODOT ROAD SALT CONTRACTS AWARDED IN 2026

- Request to move to full Council

A motion was made by Shea, seconded by McLaughlin to move RES-26-018 to full Council. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 7 – Shea, McLaughlin, Moore, Payne, Amick, Bennett, Detwiler

Discussion started at 56:47 on YouTube Channel

Peoples – This is our annual contract to participate in the ODOT road salt program. In 2025, we purchased 350 tons through that program. Based on the amount of snow we had this year, we are requesting 600 tons. That would bring us up to our storage capacity of 1,200 tons in the barn, assuming none was used.

Amick – Did the price go up?

Peoples – This is a bid-based process. We submit how much we're requesting, ODOT puts it out for bids, and then they come back with pricing and the contractor. We do expect prices to increase. There have been some supply issues in northeastern Ohio and in Pennsylvania regarding salt availability. We didn't have any problems obtaining salt this year, but we'll see how it plays out.

Payne – Is any salt that isn't used during the year rolled over into the next year and kept in storage?

Peoples – If we request 600 tons, we are required to take at least 90% of that amount and no more than 110%, so we're fairly locked into that range.

Moore – He's asking what we do with the leftover.

Peoples – So, regarding leftover salt, our storage barn has a capacity of 1,200 tons. We currently have about 500 tons on hand. Bringing in the additional supply would take us up to that 1,200-ton maximum capacity.

ORD-26-009

Development

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART 11 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES AND THE ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF CANAL WINCHESTER, REZONING 9.27 ACRES FROM GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GC) TO LIMITED MANUFACTURING (LM), OWNED BY PMR LLC, AND LOCATED AT 6270 BOWEN ROAD (PID 184-000882 AND 184-000932)

- Request to move to full Council

A motion was made by Bennett, seconded by Moore to move ORD-26-009 to full Council. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yes 7 – Bennett, Moore, Payne, Shea, Amick, Detwiler, McLaughlin

Discussion started at 59:09 on YouTube Channel

Moore – I know this was just discussed, but do you have anything else to add?

Haire – No.

E. Old/New Business**OTH-26-003**

Court Presentation

Discussion started at 1:01:00 on YouTube Channel

Boggs – So, one of the things that ended up on your agenda as an item for discussion is that we had some questions come up a couple of weeks ago. In talking with Sergeant Strawn and others on staff, it occurred to me that we may not have really provided an overview of what law enforcement does day to day, what courts and prosecutors are responsible for depending on the type of offense, and how that affects what the City of Canal Winchester has authority to address on a daily basis. As we go through this, I just want to provide a broad orientation on those topics. We'll talk about the different courts that receive cases originating in Canal Winchester and some of the unique aspects of each. To start with some general principles that apply to all criminal matters—this includes both criminal and traffic cases—you must have probable cause for a citation or an arrest. Probable cause means that, under the totality of the circumstances, there is evidence that a criminal offense has likely been committed by the person in question. When a case goes to court, a conviction requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt. Individuals have a right to counsel, including a public defender if they are indigent. The accused also has the right to confront their accusers. So, when we have a trial, witnesses have to be physically present to testify to what they have seen. The rules of evidence and the rules of criminal and traffic procedure also determine the framework for the judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney. You cannot prosecute someone twice for the same crime—that's the double jeopardy clause. The ethical duty of the prosecution is to seek justice, not simply to obtain convictions. Whether it is me or Joe, our obligation is to get to the truth. We're not operating like in a civil case where the goal is to win for a client. We also have open discovery, meaning we are required to provide exculpatory material to the defense. If there is information that suggests someone may not be guilty, we have to share it. If there is reason to believe an officer or deputy has been dishonest, that must be disclosed as well. Not that we commonly encounter that, but it gives you a sense of what is operating in the background as we go through this. For purposes of sentencing, one goal is deterrence—showing society and others not to commit certain acts by punishing them in a particular way. Another is incapacitation, keeping that individual from repeating the act, whether by placing them in jail for a period of time or in prison in the case of a felony. There is also rehabilitation, trying to help the person improve so they do not continue to have these issues. And retribution, meaning the offense is morally wrong and the punishment reflects that. Lastly, one of the things we deal with frequently in mayor's court, and especially in municipal court, is collateral sanctions. These include license suspensions that result from various traffic offenses. Misdemeanors. Everything prosecuted by the City of Canal Winchester, and everything the city can define through its ordinances, is a misdemeanor. The maximum penalty is six months in prison and a \$1,000 fine for a first-degree misdemeanor, down to minor misdemeanors that carry \$150 fines. The cost of incarcerating someone is about \$107 per day. That is typically not something individuals in that situation are able to pay back, and a person cannot be kept in jail solely due to an inability to pay. Felonies are defined by state law and are prosecuted by county prosecutors. Deputy sheriffs have the authority to arrest and investigate felonies, but that is not something that mayor's court, municipal court, or any prosecuting attorneys working on behalf of the city have a role in. Officers can either make arrests on site when they witness an offense, or based on witness or victim reports. So, when Sergeant Strawn provides reports, you may see that a certain number of offenses were reported—for example, a number of robberies. However, that does not necessarily mean

that all of those are sustained after investigation. That's why there can be a difference between what is reported and what ultimately moves forward in the system. Deputies must have probable cause to make an arrest or issue a citation. In some cases, they will obtain a judicial search warrant to continue an investigation, depending on the nature of the offense. In other cases, they may need to obtain an arrest warrant once a suspect has been identified. All of those actions require approval from a judge. Sometimes offenses result in arrests, but not every offense is arrestable, and even if it is, officers may choose not to make an arrest. Many citations are issued as a summons, whether for traffic or certain criminal matters. A summons is simply a notice to appear in court on a specific date to answer a charge. Once a person is placed in custody, they must be given a Miranda warning—you have the right to remain silent, anything you say can be used against you in a court of law, you have the right to an attorney, and if you cannot afford one, one will be provided. After that point, officers cannot question the person about the offense without having given that warning. An arrested person will either post bond based on a schedule maintained by the court, which can often be done at the window, or they will be held for a bond hearing at the next available court date. The primary purpose of bond is to ensure the person returns to court, not to punish them. So, with all of that background, the distinction for Canal Winchester is that all of its prosecutions are misdemeanors, and those cases are handled either in mayor's court or municipal court. Mayor's court jurisdiction, as mentioned earlier, is established by the Ohio Revised Code. The Revised Code provides that mayor's courts hear misdemeanor violations of local ordinances. However, that does not include OVI offenses, domestic violence charges, or violations of protection orders. Not all mayor's courts hear OVI cases, as that requires additional certification and can involve more complex and often contested prosecutions. Canal Winchester Mayor's Court does not hear OVI cases. Mayor's courts are presided over either by the mayor or an appointed magistrate. In this case, it is an appointed magistrate. That magistrate determines both law and fact, as there are no juries in mayor's court. It is not a court of record, meaning a case cannot be directly appealed to a higher appellate court. Instead, if a case is appealed, it goes to municipal court, where the record is then created. Essentially, it functions as a new trial if someone is dissatisfied with the outcome in mayor's court. Mayor's court convenes twice a month, on the first and third Thursdays. Because there are no juries, if a person is facing potential jail time—even for a fourth-degree misdemeanor with a maximum of 30 days—they have the right to a jury and to an attorney. If they choose to exercise those rights, the case is transferred to municipal court. Similarly, if there is a language barrier and an interpreter is needed, the case is also transferred to municipal court, since mayor's court does not provide interpreters. In sentencing, mayor's court often imposes non-reporting community control or probation, which can include additional consequences or restitution to victims. That is not checking in with an officer—we don't have a probation officer. If an offender needs that level of supervision, that case will likely move to municipal court. Municipal court—since Canal Winchester spans two counties, but mostly lies in Franklin County—most cases go to the Franklin County Municipal Court. There are 15 elected judges there. They handle both criminal and civil matters involving smaller amounts, but much of their work is misdemeanors and traffic cases. They operate daily dockets in each courtroom, including misdemeanor and traffic arraignments, and they have jurisdiction over all of Franklin County. Because of that, they have one of the largest trial court dockets in the country by case volume. They can conduct jury trials and have a probation department for more intensive supervision. They also provide interpreter services—these must be Supreme Court-certified interpreters, not just anyone bilingual—and they have public defender services. Each year, you see that contract come through, which is for those public defender services through municipal court. Felonies are more serious offenses. They are not defined by Canal Winchester ordinance and are not prosecuted by the city. Instead, they are handled by the elected county prosecutors. So, while you may see felony-level offenses in reports, once they leave the sheriff's office, they are handled at the county level. In Franklin County, felony cases go to the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, which has 17 elected judges in its general division. That is

where the most serious crimes are handled, including those that can result in prison time or significant fines. That's a lot of information, but the goal is to provide a general orientation—how cases move through the system, who is responsible at each level, and how to interpret the reports you receive. I'll open it up for questions.

Amick – I've attended mayor's court here, and one thing I noticed was that when there was a jail sentence associated with an offense, the magistrate waived it in every case I observed. I also saw fines of around \$1,000 reduced to about \$250. Why would that be?

Boggs – Often, that is not a true reduction but a suspension of the jail time and a portion of the fine. For example, in a theft case, the magistrate may impose 180 days in jail but suspend all 180 days, and impose a \$1,000 fine but suspend \$750 of it. That would typically be tied to conditions such as two years of non-reporting probation, not returning to the store involved, paying restitution if property was not recovered, and committing no further theft offenses in the city. So, what that does—by suspending those days and suspending that fine—that's the hook that allows the imposition of that non-reporting probation. So, if that person comes back again, not only do they face whatever consequences come with the new offense, they would also have the \$750 and 180 days in jail hanging over their head. There was a recent example where someone reoffended, and the full 180-day jail sentence was enforced as a result. So, the reason you see those suspensions is to create accountability and an incentive for compliance.

Amick – So it would be rare that we see repeat offenders in mayor's court?

Boggs – It would be rare that we have people who come through our mayor's court twice or multiple times.

Jackson – We get a lot of repeats but not necessarily for the same offense.

Amick – So it generally applies if they come back for the same offense—like theft. If they come through once and the magistrate suspends the 180 days and all but \$250 of the fine—if they commit a different type of offense and return to mayor's court, that can be treated as a separate issue. But if they come back again for theft, that's when the suspended time could come into play.

Boggs – They wouldn't necessarily always get the full 180 days. It wouldn't necessarily have to be the same offense. If it's another criminal offense, depending on how the original sentencing was structured—such as a condition of no theft or no other criminal offenses—that could still be a violation of the non-reporting probation. Typically, though, traffic and criminal cases don't overlap that way. So, if someone comes back for a speeding violation but is on probation for a theft offense, that would not trigger a violation of the theft probation.

Shea – Since we split between two counties, do you notice a difference in enforcement between them? Franklin County is obviously much larger than Fairfield County—do you see differences in how cases are prosecuted?

Boggs – I think it's hard to say because the volume is so different between the two, and we don't have a large number of cases going through either Franklin County Municipal Court or Fairfield County Municipal Court from our jurisdiction.

Jackson – I actually received an invoice today showing what went through Franklin County. Keep in mind, not every case in Franklin County is written by Fairfield County deputies. If a case is written by Madison Township within our jurisdiction, it still goes to Franklin County and is prosecuted there by our prosecutor. I don't have the one for March, but for January there were 14 cases that our prosecutor handled on our behalf through Franklin County Municipal Court.

Amick – Sergeant Strawn, when I review your reports, I look at all of the data, but I tend to focus on the disposition section in the bottom right corner. If we're trying to get a sense of the overall safety and well-being of Canal Winchester, is that the right place to focus?

Sgt. Strawn – What I try to do, and maybe I include too much, I'm not sure—is go through every single call for service that we can be dispatched to. I want you all to see everything we're handling. A lot of the more serious items on there, like some of the sex-related offenses, those don't necessarily mean the incident actually occurred—they are allegations. We respond, take a report, and then it goes through investigation. So, some of that information isn't necessarily accurate—it's based on initial reports or allegations. The disposition section is really where you'll find the more reliable data, like arrests made, how many traffic stops deputies are making, and how many warnings versus citations are being issued. That's probably, in my opinion, the better way to get a grasp of the report. And again, I'm open—I know I'm not the best at structuring data and graphics and all that—but if there's anything in there that you feel isn't useful or you don't really care about, just let me know and I'd be happy to remove it. As far as the disposition section, I just want you to see, on these calls, what actions are actually being taken. Are we taking reports? When alarm drops come in, are they legitimate or are they burglaries? How many reports are taken? How many summonses are issued? A lot of times, for example, we'll go somewhere like Walmart for a theft and not necessarily make an arrest—we'll issue a summons to appear in court instead. So, I include that information as well. That section is really the most accurate snapshot of overall activity and what's actually happening.

[OTH-26-004](#)

E-Bikes, Scooters and Other Micro-Mobility Devices

Discussion started at 1:22:40 on YouTube Channel

Shea – I asked Mr. Bogs for a breakdown, and he had a handy-dandy chart that was incredibly confusing to look at. Did you know there are three classes of e-bikes in the state of Ohio? But we got several calls concerning e-bikes and scooters, and we all talked about it. Mr. Moore came up with a really good idea to do a safety education program for kids, maybe in conjunction with the schools.

Moore – I want to give Laurie some credit too—we both talked about focusing on education, not legislation, on something like this. Obviously, we're just two of seven, so I'm not speaking for everyone, but this has been a problem long before e-bikes and scooters. Kids get reckless on bicycles, rollerblades, skateboards—whatever it is. Right now, e-bikes and scooters are a hot topic because they're popular and a lot of kids have gotten them in the last few years. Laurie reached out to Destination Canal about possibly putting on safety seminars at the farmers market for parents and kids. I also reached out to Kiya Hunt, the superintendent of the schools. She met with her leadership team today, so I haven't followed up yet, but we discussed the possibility of the schools doing some kind of education program with elementary and middle school students—just focusing on road safety and understanding the rules of the road. Personally, I don't want to put deputies in a position where they're pulling kids off the street or putting them in the back of a cruiser to take them home. That puts a bad taste in parents' mouths, scares kids of the police, and overall, just isn't a great approach. Now obviously if a deputy sees something, say

something—like, hey, that’s not safe. Probably shouldn’t be driving head-on into a car. But the focus is really on education, not legislation.

Amick – Along with education, there’s also an element of common courtesy. One of the things that comes up a lot is when you’re on a path that’s approved for bicycles, Class 1 and 2 e-bikes, scooters, or whatever—there’s a certain element of common courtesy; if you have a bell or a horn, use it. If not, just say “coming up on your left” so people know you’re behind them. And again, it’s about not going at excessive speeds when there are people, especially small children, walking along the path who could step out in front of you. So, there’s education, but also basic etiquette when using those devices. We had talked about, and just to piggyback on what Mr. Moore said about education, maybe doing something in the green space behind the farmers’ market coming up in May. I’ve talked with Destination about it, and maybe we could have someone come in—whether it’s from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources or a group like Bicycle Pursuits—to give a short safety course for whatever age group we think is appropriate. Maybe even raffle off a couple of helmets or something like that. I think there are a lot of ways we can bring awareness to the community about safety with these devices.

McLaughlin – I think it’s a great idea.

Detwiler – The only thing I would add is maybe having a consensus on how we respond to residents who come to us with complaints about e-bikes and e-scooters. Since we’re not pursuing any ordinances and are focusing on safety education, it would be helpful to have a consistent response when emails come in.

Moore – And keep in mind, we do already have an ordinance on file regarding slow-moving vehicles—including up through golf carts—about what is allowed on sidewalks and what isn’t. So, we can always refer residents to that. But overall, the focus should stay on safety and continuing to educate both kids and parents.

OTH-26-005

Hometown Hero Banners

Discussion started at 1:27:38 on YouTube Channel

McLaughlin – I think the last update we got from Mrs. Woodruff was that there are currently seven applications, all of which meet the requirement of city residency. So, we’re talking about city residents, from the way I understood the email. Am I incorrect in that?

Peoples – I’m sorry, I didn’t believe they were all residents. I think some of them had connections through the VFW, but I don’t know if they were all residents.

Moore – I did ask that in the email, and Hannah responded that they were all residents. I’ll double-check that between meetings just to make sure that’s correct.

McLaughlin – Yeah, I guess I’ll just say it bluntly—I think the city should absolutely pay for the event we’re putting on for these veterans. We shouldn’t be asking them to cover their own costs for something that’s meant to honor and appreciate them. That’s where I stand on it.

Amick – Mr. McLaughlin, are you thinking the city would pay for the initial purchase or every time they need to be replaced? What would your preference be?

Payne – I feel like maybe they purchase it originally, but when they sign up each year, there's no additional cost—like when they're asked if they want their banner put up again, they don't have to keep paying.

Amick – Correct. That is correct. But when it wears out over time—if it becomes faded or needs to be replaced—would the city just handle that? I'm curious what you think.

McLaughlin – My personal opinion is that if we're celebrating these residents, these veterans, they shouldn't be incurring a cost for that. So, whether it's the initial production, repairs, or replacement of the banners, I don't think that should fall on them.

Moore – And I did misspeak—Hannah responded that they all meet the eligibility requirement in that they are or were Canal Winchester residents during their time of service. So, I just wanted to clarify that. In the end, I think we're talking about \$700.

Bennett – Well, you're talking about it this time, but I think what you're really doing is setting how the program operates going forward, right?

Peoples – 75 was the original number we committed to. And we do want to keep it within a defined geographic area like we've discussed. Something else to keep in mind is that last year we did not purchase the banners for the veterans because we had opened the program up to individuals who were not current residents—they may have been residents during their time of service, but not at the time of application.

Bennett – Do we know how many were purchased last year?

Peoples – 13.

Bennett – So that's about \$1,300 last year, and around \$700 this year. I think part of the issue is that our approach has been a little inconsistent. We've handled residents and non-residents differently, and it's probably time to come to a clear consensus on how we want to move forward so we're not revisiting this every year. My perspective is pretty close to Mr. McLaughlin's, but I'd frame it this way—we're paying for banners that decorate the town. Yes, they honor veterans, and that's important, but they also serve as a visual enhancement to the community. It's a tribute to service, but it's also a beautification element for the city. From that standpoint, I think it makes sense for the city to cover the cost—not just because of the recognition, but because it benefits the community as a whole as well. My view is that it's worth it to just cover the cost from here on out and be consistent going forward. I'd also like to see more banners overall.

Peoples – When we're talking about Canal Winchester residents, that's how the program was originally set up the first couple of years. We then expanded it last year, and this same discussion came up at that time as well.

Moore – Last year when those 13 applications came in, some were residents and some weren't—did everyone pay for their own banners, or did the city cover any of them?

Peoples – From the notes, there were 13 new applicants and 14 banners ordered—so there's a slight discrepancy there—but we were paid for those banners. So, we'll say those 13 were paid for.

Moore – *In the interest of not continuing to go back and forth on this, is this something you could draft legislation for? Or does it even need legislation? Could we just discuss it as full council and move forward?*

Boggs – *At a minimum, it would likely need to be appropriated if it's not already budgeted.*

Peoples – *So if it feels like this is the direction we're leaning, we probably need to put some guardrails around it—keeping it limited to Canal Winchester residents and members of the VFW Post 10523, if we can agree to that. We'd also want to keep geographic limits in place. Basically, following what I'll call the Labor Day layout—from Washington to Trine, and down to the railroad tracks on High. I don't like putting them in parking lots since they don't get as much visibility. We talked at the last meeting about focusing on the heavily walked areas. I don't have an exact number right now; we can update that and set a cap on the total number. I think we're at 88 now, and with the seven new ones—and with two banners per pole—that's something we can manage moving forward. We don't have to keep revisiting this conversation every year. If that's the direction council is comfortable with, we can formalize it into policy.*

OTHER OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Discussion started at 1:39:07 on YouTube Channel

Shea – *It's new business, and it has to do with most of the Dye Addition residents who came to visit us this evening. I was reached out to about it last week and did some investigation. It's regarding the relocation of the fuel tank. I know the residents of the Dye Addition are not happy about it. I personally spoke with the fire marshal and asked if he had any concerns. He sent me a report that I have here and can share. Is there anything we can do as a city to stop this tank from being moved to that area?*

Haire – *So, the tank is currently located on school property, and what they're proposing is to relocate it to accommodate the building addition for the performing arts center. They've already gone through the city's site development plan approval process. Public meetings were held, the planning and zoning commission supported it, and it was approved. From a zoning standpoint, that process is complete, and they do have approval to relocate the tank. They're now in the process of obtaining building permits. That's where the safety review happens—making sure the tank placement, protection measures, and overall setup meet requirements. It will also go through the state fire marshal's permitting process. I'm not sure exactly where they are in that, but that will be worked through over the next few weeks as part of the building permit review.*

Shea – *Is there any screening included in the plans?*

Haire – *I don't believe there is any screening proposed. No.*

Shea – *And at this point, the city really doesn't have any influence we can exert over the school district through our mechanisms?*

Haire – *We've already approved their plans.*

Shea – *Okay. So, for the residents of the Dye Addition, if they're looking for recourse, it would probably be best for them to reach out to their school board officials and see if they can get assistance from those they've elected there.*

Haire – *That would be an appropriate course of action. They're currently going through their approval processes for the overall project, including the building additions and the fuel tank relocation.*

Shea – Mr. Boggs, any tricks up your sleeve on this?

Boggs – I do not. Their site approvals have already been granted, so they'll proceed through the permitting process. There isn't really discretion at that stage as long as what they submit meets building code requirements.

McLaughlin – Have you spoken to the schools at all about this?

Shea – I have not. I'm still doing due diligence—I just heard about it earlier last week.

Steager – I did talk to the schools about it. They do have a reason for placing the tanks there—they've said there really isn't another suitable location. Kaya walked me through the layout over the phone, which I was already somewhat familiar with. But I'd rather have her explain it directly to the residents at one of their meetings, since I'm not here to speak on behalf of the school. They do have their reasons for wanting to place them in that location.

F. Adjournment @ 7:11 p.m.

*A motion was made by Bennett, seconded by Shea to adjourn. The motion carried with the following vote:
Yes 7 – Bennett, Shea, Amick, Detwiler, McLaughlin, Moore, Payne*