Mayor Kincannon called the Council Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. After the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, roll call was taken with Flynn, Price, Gregory, Karpinski, Honer, and Smith present.

Mayor Kincannon swore in full-time police officer Marc Merriweather.

**Gregory moved to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting as written, which was seconded by Karpinski;** 5 yeas; 1 abstention; motion passed.

**Karpinski moved to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2025, Council meeting as written, which was seconded by Price;** 5 yeas; 1 abstention; motion passed.

***Public Participation:***

Shawn MacQueen and Beth Zanick of 601 Longstreet explained that their basement recently had a sewage back up. They did not file an insurance claim as they have only lived there for a few months. They incurred approximately $5,161 in damages - $950 to a plumber and $4,211 to a restoration company (carpet removal, cleaning, disinfecting, etc.). Solicitor Breunig indicated that the state of Ohio has political subdivision immunity and that if the Village had a liability, it would only be for the property owner’s deductible. If the homeowners had filed an insurance claim, their deductible would have been $1,000. Council will discuss this during February’s Committee-of-the-Whole meeting.

Utility Clerk Kim Ruhl shared the following water meter information with the mayor and council.

1. Neptune --- Our original meters are Neptune meters. As of October 17, 2025, they no longer will be supported unless we invest $11,000 to upgrade to a Cloud-based system. The Neptune meters (old and new) require personnel to drive the Village to read the meters. Although requested, we have not received updated pricing from Neptune for their meters since 2023. Neptune 360 is cloud based. Their pricing includes $2,000 for software, $5,600 for a belt clip to read meters, and $1.76 per meter read per year.
2. Metron --- The newer meters we have are from Metron.
   1. Metron quoted $413,420 for new meters throughout the Village. That includes a basic warranty but does not include installation.
   2. They also quoted a lease option of $114,462 a year for 10 years, which includes installation and full warranties for 10 years. They could complete installation in 3 to 4 months. We would be able to invoice the lease cost via our monthly utility billing program at $7 to $8 per month for 10 years.
   3. Metron also quoted a $500,555 loan option at 4 percent interest for 10 years for meters only (no installation and only a limited warranty).

Metron meters are read via cell service through Verizon. Village employees would not need to drive the Village to read meters as is the case with Neptune meters.

Kincannon reminded the group that the Village’s median family income is too high for us to qualify for grants. Working with Todd Brandenburg of Great Lakes Community Action Partnership (GLCAP) / Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP), we might be able to get a loan in 2027.

Gates reminded the group that aging meters read slow, not fast. Replacing meters is necessary to reduce our water loss (i.e., unmetered water). The Metron representative estimated a 9 to 13 percent increase in billing amounts due to meters running more accurately.

Water meters will be a discussion item for February’s Committee-of-the-Whole meeting. Breunig will review the draft agreement. Ruhl will get additional information from Metron on the warranty differences between the lease (full) and loan (limited) options and a list of communities using their meters. She also will follow up with Neptune. Kincannon will reach out to Sheffield’s mayor for information on the meters they use. Gregory and Karpinski will reach out to their respective contacts at Rural Lorain County Water Authority.

***Mayor’s Report:***

Mayor Kincannon shared the following:

1. Gates and Kincannon visited Cleveland Quarries. It was reported in the newspaper and on a local television news network.
2. Kincannon met with Ruhl and Laubenthal concerning mayor’s court. He also talked with area mayors about communities with mayor’s courts. They have magistrates. Their mayors do not run their mayor’s courts. After gathering more information, he prefers to continue with our violations’ bureau and utilization of the Elyria Municipal Court.
3. The next meeting on the Memorial Day weekend events will be next Monday.
4. Kincannon and Laubenthal recently interviewed Marc Merriweather who was sworn in this evening.

***Police Chief’s Report:***

Chief Laubenthal mentioned that there was a Facebook posting about another driver who went through the traffic circle. Instead of reporting the incident on Facebook, it would have been better to have reported it directly to the police department.

Laubenthal reported on the following statistics for the period of December 26th through January 22nd:

1) There were 156 non-criminal requests for assistance.

2) There were 10 criminal complaints / investigations - 0 felonies; 0 misdemeanors; 0 juvenile charges. They included 1 peddler without a permit, 1 juvenile curfew, 1 snow in roadway, 3 domestic disputes, 3 noise complaints, and 1 identify theft / fraud.

3) There were 247 traffic-related incidents including 5 crash investigations, 62 operating and equipment charges, and 143 warnings.

4) There were 17 parking violations issued and 15 warnings issued.

On the 20th, we had a few encounters with Spanish-speaking illegal immigrants. We had to communicate via language app. We need to find a Spanish interpreter(s) who can assist us on an as-needed basis.

Honer asked about cooperation with the snow ban. Unfortunately, folks park on the streets during snow bans. Fortunately, they will move their vehicles when they have been contacted.

***Solicitor’s Report:***

Solicitor Breunig did not have a report.

***Village Administrator’s Report:***

Village Administrator Gates reported on the following:

1. Rafter A has the design plan for Loperwood Lane and is preparing the bid specifications. We are hoping to advertise the bid in February.
2. A copy of the 2024 monthly water loss report was provided to council along with the yearly water loss history report.

***Fiscal Officer’s Report:***

Fiscal Officer Homer-Miller reported on the following:

1. The County Auditor’s office shared an inside millage revenue comparison document. It showed a $55,774 revenue increase for the Village based on the recent reappraisal value increases.
2. On the 16th Homer-Miller emailed council and the mayor an update from the Ohio Municipal League (OML) that AT&T withdrew its request with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO).
3. Saturday, September 27th, is available should we want to host another shred event in the Village. Council would like to host another shred event and indicated that September 27th was good. Homer-Miller will follow up with the Lorain County Solid Waste Management District.
4. Homer-Miller will be at the Ohio Township Association conference the second half of next week.

Smith asked if we could negotiate rates with the local gas stations. Homer-Miller will add this to her to-do list.

***Old Business:***

N/A

***New Business:***

**Resolution 2025 – 1024** --- A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO STATE AUDITOR TO ASSIST THE FISCAL OFFICER IN THE RECONCILIATION OF THE VILLAGE’S CASH JOURNAL FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2025, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2025, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY --- **Karpinski moved to suspend the rules, which was seconded by Price**; 6 yeas; motion passed. **Karpinski moved to adopt and declare an emergency, which was seconded by Gregory**; 6 yeas; motion passed.

***Miscellaneous Business:***

Price asked if council should go into executive session to discuss 601 Longstreet. It will be discussed at the February Committee of the Whole meeting.

***Committee Reports*:**

**Park Board** – Kincannon reported the following:

1. The treasurer and secretary resigned.
2. The remaining members discussed the Memorial Day weekend events.
3. New members may join soon.

Flynn asked if park board members have to be bonded. Homer-Miller stated that would be up to the park board, not the Village as the park board is a separate entity. Certain positions are supposed to be bonded. Additionally, there is coverage called faithful performance that replaced bonds.

Price asked about the Village and Township discussing the possibility of involving the Lorain County Metro Parks in the LaGrange Community Park. If there is more than a quorum with either body, it will need to be posted as a public meeting. Kincannon is open to that but does not want several side bar conversations going on during a meeting. The consensus of council was for Kincannon and Karpinski to attend the Township’s next trustee meeting to discuss this matter with the trustees. If the trustees are in favor of this, next steps will be determined.

**Planning Commission** – Kincannon reported the following:

1. There was a special meeting concerning West Roofing. The Kleinfelder representative did a good job at this meeting.

Smith asked about the bus and boat on Railroad Street with weeds. The international property maintenance code applies to residential and commercial properties. Breunig will look into whether this falls under the police department or building inspector.

**LaGrange Community Improvement Corp**. – Flynn reported that there was an LCIC meeting before this evening’s council meeting. The bank accounts (checking and CDs) will be transitioned from Huntington to Buckeye. The next meeting will be on April 24th and will include the 3 businesses to discuss potential changes to the bylaws and uses of the properties.

***Presentation of Bills:***

The Fiscal Officer presented the list of warrants and electronic payments issued between January 10 and 23, 2025, totaling $125,612.72 per the payment listing provided. **Flynn moved to accept, which was seconded by Price**; 6 yeas; motion passed.

There being no further business, **Smith moved to adjourn, which was seconded by Gregory**; 6 yeas; motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Attested by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Gary R. Kincannon, Mayor Christie Homer-Miller, Fiscal Officer